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Master Thesis:

Cultural and art projects as a tool for intercultural understanding:  
CASE STUDY *THE INTERNATIONAL ART CAMP – KOSJERIC*

Projets culturels et artistiques comme moyen de compréhension interculturelle:  
Étude du cas *Camp artistique internationale - Kosjerić*

Kulturni i umetnički projekti kao sredstvo interkulturnog razumevanja:  
Studija slučaja *Međunarodni umetnički kamp – Kosjerić*

By:  
Tanja Bjelanović

Supervisors:

Milena Dragičević Šešić, PhD, University of Arts,  
Faculty of Dramatic Arts

Slobodan Cvejić, PhD, Belgrade University,  
Faculty of Philosophy

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## *Résumé*

### **Objet de recherche, méthode de recherche et le contexte**

La présente étude a pour le but d'établir le potentiel des projets internationaux culturels, avec une composante interculturelle, organisés en Serbie, pour influencer, d'une manière effective, sur la compréhension interculturelle et de développer une atmosphère interculturelle prenant en considération les circonstances spécifiques en Serbie, surtout dans des petites communautés.

Nous jugeons que ce thème est important en contexte de la situation sociale et culturelle en Serbie, par suite de crise sociopolitique et économique, ainsi que la guerre des années quatre-vingt-dix, dont la conséquence, entre autre, est l'aggravation de nationalisme et de xénophobie parmi ces citoyens. Aussi, cette crise est à l'origine, trop souvent, d'une perception négative de Serbie dans l'opinion publique dans le monde, caractérisée par les préjugés et par des images stéréotypées de la culture dans cette région. D'autre part, la tolérance, le dialogue interculturel et les valeurs semblables seront promus d'une façon intensive par les institutions et les organisations internationales, et ainsi, par exemple, l'an 2008 est proclamé pour *L'an du dialogue interculturel* de la part de l'Union européenne. Ayant en vue le procès actuel des intégrations européennes, on attend de la Serbie d'accommoder sa politique officielle avec les valeurs en question, mais le dialogue interculturel n'est pas encore suffisamment inclus dans la politique générale et culturelle en Serbie, surtout sur le niveau local. Les organisations de la société civile sont les plus actives sur le plan de la promotion de compréhension interculturelle à travers des projets et des programmes différents en Serbie.

La base théorique des recherches se situe dans le cadre de la psychologie sociale, culturologie, politique culturelle et ménagement, et elle est fondée sur les concepts de nationalisme, chauvinisme, des Balkans (orientalisme<sup>1</sup>), interculturalisme. Les thèmes mentionnés le plus souvent sont : distance sociale/ethnique, xénophobie, attitudes sociales, stéréotypes (ethniques), préjugés, dialogue interculturel, projet international avec l'élément interculturel, colonie artistique, camp de travail avec des bénévoles, interaction, mobilisation de la communauté.

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<sup>1</sup> Terme d'Edward Saïd auquel s'ensuit Maria Todorova en étudiant les Balkans.

La recherche est conçue comme une étude du projet *Camp international artistique à Kosjerić*<sup>2</sup> que l'organisation locale des citoyens, K-Town Group, organise chaque année à Kosjerić, petite ville dans l'ouest de Serbie. *Art Camp* est une forme particulière de projet culturel, semblable à une colonie ou résidence artistique, qu'on a formé avec le but d'animer la scène culturelle qui est insuffisante dans la ville et pour qu'il devienne influençable sur la politique locale culturelle, surtout quand il s'agit des jeunes, et de même d'une expression artistique plus moderne. Le concept du *Camp* est formé selon les camps de travail internationaux des bénévoles qui sous-entend le travail en commun des bénévoles étrangers pour bien-être de la communauté à l'endroit où le camp est organisé, et il concerne le plus souvent la protection de l'environnement, reconstruction, logistique du festival. Le but et la tâche des participants étrangers de l'*Art Camp* sont l'animation de la communauté locale à travers les programmes artistiques interactifs et des activités non formelles ouvertes également pour les participants locaux<sup>3</sup>. Les participants étrangers sont hébergés gratuitement chez des habitants de Kosjerić. Ces deux aspects sont conçus pour influencer, consciemment et d'une manière expresse, sur la diminution de la xénophobie, sur étude interculturelle et pour la promotion du dialogue interculturel, ce qui représentent le but explicite, un segment du projet dès son commencement en 2002.<sup>4</sup> Après sept ans nous voudrions examiner l'efficacité du projet dans ce sens, c'est-à-dire sa contribution à l'ouverture de la communauté pour les autres cultures et de même influencer sur une image plus positive de la Serbie auprès des étrangers.

De cette façon, on peut considérer notre travail comme une recherche sociologique, de même comme une évaluation d'une étude à part. La méthode choisie est une combinaison de recherche quantitative et qualitative selon laquelle on a posé hypothèse suivante: *les projets artistiques dont une composante est le dialogue interculturel (qui comprend le travail commun des représentants des cultures différentes, ainsi que la mobilisation de la communauté) ont un grand potentiel en contribution du développement de la compréhension interculturelle en Serbie avec le but de modifier l'image que les jeunes gens de l'étranger ont de la Serbie.*

Dans le cadre de recherche quantitative on a fait un sondage sur les échantillons de 200 personnes de Kosjerić, divisée en deux sous échantillons. Un de ces échantillons était un

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<sup>2</sup> Abréviation *Art Camp* ou *Camp*

<sup>3</sup> Chaque année près de 50 jeunes gens de l'étranger et de Serbie participent dans le *Camp* avec presque 15 pays, surtout européens mais aussi d'autres continents.

<sup>4</sup> Kosjerić est un milieu homogène caractérisé surtout fermé et isolé par rapport aux autres cultures, ce qui a marqué, selon les recherches différentes, la Serbie dans ces deux dernières décennies.

échantillon expérimenté sur 100 personnes qui, d'une manière ou d'une autre, étaient en contact avec le *Camp*, soit en tant qu'organisateur, participant, soit en tant que maître de maison et autres.<sup>5</sup> L'autre échantillon était l'échantillon de contrôle choisi d'après la méthode d'échantillon occasionnel, et a compris 100 habitants de Kosjerić qui n'ont pas eu le contact avec le *Camp*<sup>6</sup>. Les deux échantillons sont équilibrés par l'âge et par sexe en utilisant un questionnaire unique qui consiste cinq groupes de questions. Une partie concerne les questions à propos du *Camp*, avec le mode, la connaissance et le niveau de participation, degré de contacts avec des étrangers et l'estimation des certaines des activités. L'autre partie se rapporte aux contacts des citoyens avec d'autres cultures, des voyages à l'étranger, relation avec la communauté. Troisième partie est formé des attitudes avec lesquelles on a mesuré, par l'échelle de Lickert, les différentes valeurs (nationalisme, traditionalisme, autoritarisme, tolérances à l'égard des autres cultures). Quatrième partie est dédiée aux descriptions des caractéristiques des 10 différentes nations, par lesquelles on a mesuré les stéréotypes. Finalement, cinquième partie contient des questions liées aux données sociodémographiques (origine, domicile, nationalité, religion, éducation, statut d'emploi).

La recherche qualitative sous entend les entretiens avec six anciens participants du *Camp* avec les thèmes qui concernent l'origine, profession, motivation pour la participation au *Camp* et aussi mode de participation, les impressions sur le *Camp* en incluant les habitants et la communauté, les autres expériences avec la Serbie, l'image de Serbie avant et après l'expérience avec le *Camp*. A part de ces entretiens, on a pris en considération de même les entretiens avec les organisateurs et les partenaires du projet, ainsi que l'analyse des données obtenues des documents de l'archive du projet

## **Résultats des recherches et les conclusions**

Avec la comparaison des positions des deux sous échantillons, ainsi qu'analyse au sein du «camp» des sous échantillons, en essayant de déterminer la franchise des personnes à l'égard des autres cultures par rapport à leurs relations avec *Camp*, c'est à dire le degré de participation au sein de *Camp* et l'intensivité d'interaction avec les participants étrangers. La recherche a montré que ceux, qui sont en relation avec le *Camp* c'est à dire le groupe «camp», montrent les attitudes plus ouvertes à l'égard des autres cultures par rapport aux citoyens qui n'ont pas eu aucun rapport

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<sup>5</sup> Nous avons nommé cette sous échantillons «camp».

<sup>6</sup> Nous avons nommé cet échantillon «citoyens».

avec le *Camp*, c'est à dire avec le groupe «citoyens»<sup>7</sup>. Aussi, les plus ouverts au sein du groupe «camp» se sont montrés ceux qui étaient inclus de plus près, ainsi que ceux qui ont eu un contact plus intensif avec les participants étrangers. On a obtenu les résultats semblables avec une analyse des stéréotypes, où le groupe «camp» a des attitudes en peu plus positives vis-à-vis les autres nations, tandis que le groupe «citoyens» tentaient d'éviter les réponses, ce que nous avons interprété comme non connaissance et non intérêt pour les autres.

Compte tenu le fait que nous avons entrepris une recherche corrélative dans des conditions naturelles, ne nous pouvons pas confirmer avec certitude dans quelle mesure le *Camp* influence sur la diminution de xénophobie et sur l'ouverture à l'égard des autres cultures. Ce que nous pouvons conclure est le fait que l'ouverture vis-à-vis des autres cultures est avec la corrélation positive avec le *Camp*, c'est à dire qu'elle s'élève avec l'augmentation du degré et d'intensité de la participation. Les personnes qui ont une attitude plus ouverte pour la participation au *Kamp* démontrent aussi que ce projet possède la capacité de promouvoir la compréhension interculturelle et le développement des études interculturelles. C'est particulièrement important à cause de degré assez élevé de nationalisme qui s'est relevé sur un échantillon, ainsi que non intérêt pour les autres cultures de la part des citoyens de Kosjerić. Le fait que le *Camp* est assez connu au milieu de la communauté et que la plupart des citoyens a exprimé les opinions positives de l'ambiance dans le *Camp*, est en faveur quand on parle de potentiel pour le développement ultérieur du projet dans ce sens.

Une affinité particulière pour la participation dans le *Camp* ont montré les jeunes et les éduqués qui, avec l'augmentation du degré et d'intensité de participation, ont pris part souvent dans toutes les activités du *Camp* d'une façon intensive et régulière. L'abord interactif dans des activités est reconnu surtout en tant que l'aspect très important est effectif, tandis que les relations avec des étrangers étaient les plus attractives pour les participants. Aussi, l'animation directe des citoyens de la part des organisateurs du *Camp* était très efficace pour qu'ils rejoignent le *Camp*.

En ce qui concerne la perception de la culture locale de la part des étrangers, on a tiré la conclusion que souvent les opinions qu'ils ont eu avant de venir concerne l'instabilité politique,

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<sup>7</sup> Corrélation liée au camp et nationalisme, traditionalisme, autoritarisme et relation avec la communauté locale s'est montrée statistiquement significative, tandis que dans le cas de tolérance envers les autres nations n'existait pas une grande différence entre les deux sous échantillons.

non civilisation, culture rurale et traditionnelle, tandis que la motivation qui les a incité à venir est le rencontre avec ces défis, le plaisir d'avoir des expériences extraordinaires, exotiques. Même si les opinions stéréotypées restent ou ils acquièrent de nouvelles expériences (par ex. ceux de l'hospitalité, hédonisme), elles sont presque toujours positives après leur séjour au *Camp*. On trouve que l'interaction avec la communauté à travers toutes sortes d'activités au sein de *Camp*, par les programmes artistiques et par les activités non formelles, est en effet la chose la plus importante pour le changement des préjugés et des stéréotypes. Les autres facteurs importants sont les programmes artistiques qui souvent ont pour le sujet les questions d'identité culturelle, les relations entre les cultures, les ressemblances et les différences, le dialogue interculturel, et de cette façon ils permettent le regard critique et la possibilité de réexaminer les attitudes sur le niveau individuel.

### **Recommandation da la politique culturelle**

Avec le but de parfaire le projet et d'augmenter les effets au sujet du développement de la compréhension interculturelle, nous conseillerions la stimulation d'une participation plus élevée des jeunes dans l'organisation du projet. De même, il faudrait trouver les modes d'animation des personnes âgées en introduisant de nouveaux programmes, ainsi que le travail sur la mobilisation de la communauté par l'animation directe de la publique et des autres citoyens de la part des organisateurs. Il faut inclure la composante interactive dans tous les éléments du projet. La liaison inter secteur stratégique avec les autres acteurs dans la communauté ouvrirait les possibilités pour le développement du projet et le dépassement du niveau local, avec PR amélioré le marketing et animation de la publique de la région et plus loin.

Ayant en vue que la Serbie manque la politique nationale, et de même la politique culturelle locale, nous proposerions certaines mesures implicites et stimulantes au sein de la communauté locale se basant sur l'analyse du *Camp*. Avec les mesures économiques, ayant en vue mise à part des moyens du budget public de la commune pour la réalisation du projet, le *Camp* pourrait servir pour le développement des trois sujets sur le niveau local – culture, les jeunes et le tourisme. Les formes plus modernes de l'expression culturelle pourraient être stimulées pendant toute l'année en collaboration avec le Centre de culture. Aussi, il faudrait stimuler la participation des jeunes dans la création de la politique locale culturelle et de même,

promouvoir l'aspect pu projet de la part des jeunes gens pour l'élargir sur le niveau régional, introduire les nouveaux programmes pour les jeunes, avant tout pour l'échange et la mobilité des jeunes. Conformément à la stratégie communale de développement qui estime que le tourisme est une des priorités, le *Camp* pourrait être utilisé pour le développement du tourisme culturel ayant en vue les impressions positives de Kosjerić de la part des étrangers. Dans ce sens, une collaboration inter secteur serait indispensable avec l'Organisation touristique et les autorités locales. En général, le *Camp* pourrait être utilisé pour que la ville devienne « brand » et pour formation d'une identité culturelle nouvelle.

Bien qu'il ait opté pour le niveau local, le *Camp* peut être convenable pour la politique nationale culturelle. Un des aspects le plus important est certainement la décentralisation qui pourrait être encore plus développé par l'enchaînement avec des programmes semblables dans la région de Serbie d'ouest et dont le but est élargissement du niveau local au niveau national. Etant donné que l'interculturalisme n'est pas reconnu en tant que le sujet à part, en tant que la priorité, et qu'il n'est pas le but de la politique culturelle en Serbie, se basant sur l'exemple du *Camp*, nous proposerions des mesures sur le niveau national qui pourraient stimuler le développement de compréhension interculturelle (par ex. introduction des éléments interculturels dans des projets internationaux, ouverture de nouveaux concours avec le sujet en question de la part du Ministère de la culture, Ministère de la jeunesse et du sport, les administrations locales, introduction de l'éducation interculturelle dans le système scolaire en tant qu'obligatoire, les projets particuliers comprenant les activités transnationales). Nous estimons que pour tout cela existe un milieu stimulant ayant en vue les programmes des organisations internationales qui favorisent ce sujet. Aussi, les activités comme celles de *Camp* peuvent être convenable en tant que « brand » de Serbie.

Finalement, nous pourrions recommander le *Camp* comme un exemple d'une bonne expérience pour la promotion de compréhension interculturelle.

## ***Abstract***

The topic of this paper is the capacity of cultural and art projects for raising intercultural understanding within the Serbian context. Taking into consideration the status of nationalistic orientation in Serbia after the crises of 90s, the current image of Serbia, as well as the internationally widespread concept of interculturalism, this work focuses on one particular international art project with an intercultural dialogue component - *Art Camp* in Kosjerić, which is thus designed as a case study. Having in mind both the socio-psychological aspect of the issue as well as its relation to cultural policy and management, on one hand this work can be considered as social research, while on the other it can be treated as an evaluation of one particular project or type of projects in terms of its effectiveness.

The theoretical framework is based on the concepts of social distance and nationalism, Balkan (orientalism), and interculturalism, while the main findings are drawn from a combination of quantitative and qualitative research methods. Field research was conducted encompassing: 1) social survey on the sample which included 200 respondents (Kosjerić residents); 2) in addition to in-depth interviews with six foreign participants at the *Camp*. The aim of the research was to conclude on the existence and the level of project effectiveness regarding intercultural understanding, breaking prejudices, stereotypes and xenophobia in the Kosjerić community, as well as among foreign young people. The openness of Kosjerić citizens towards different cultures in relation to their connection with the *Camp* is assessed, as well as construction and deconstruction of stereotypes about Serbia on the part of foreign youngsters caused by their involvement in the *Camp*.

Following the conclusions of the research, recommendations are given with respect to possible improvement and development of this particular project, possibilities for applying this model as the example of good practice, as well as its relevance for local, national and international cultural policy.

## **I Introduction: *Art Camp* and its intercultural dialogue component**

### ***1.1. The aim of the thesis***



The interest for exploring this very topic has risen from personal involvement of the author of this work in the project named *The international Art Camp - Kosjerić*. Having initiated this project and leading its realization during five years, the author had the opportunity to witness its first intention of making cultural changes in the local community.

The project is organized by a civic organization *K-Town Group*, regularly, on annual bases during seven years starting from 2002, in Kosjerić – small town in western Serbia. From the very beginning, the idea of the project was to respond to the poor cultural offer in the town, especially lack of programs for youth and those in a contemporary manner that would add to the traditional ethno style which characterizes local cultural scene and influence different local cultural policy. The other important aspect was the international character of the event, aimed at bringing new, unusual atmosphere in this ethnically homogeneous and remote community by provoking intercultural dialogue that would oppose to prevailing xenophobic and closed attitudes of its citizens, significantly increased after crisis of 90s in Serbia. This innovation has also seen as something that could improve the image of the town in the area and the country and brand it in a new way. However, community mobilization and citizens' engagement in different ways were one of the main components of the project. All this was planned to be achieved through the concept of *art camp* – specific form which is close to art residency and considers joint creation of art programs on the part of foreign and local participants, in strong interaction with local residents through performances, but direct informal contacts as well.



Thus, after seven years passed, we would like to see the effects of this project and its influence on the local community in terms of raising intercultural dialogue and understanding. Apart from positive reactions and statements of the organizers, partners on the project,

participants, audiences, we would also like to conclude on the effectiveness of the project by implementing empirical research which would measure the attitudes of Kosjerić citizens towards different cultures in addition to analysis of stereotypes about Serbia on the part of foreigners.

Considering the issue in question, we had on mind two facts. Firstly, on one hand, post-conflict period in Serbia and socio-economic crisis and isolation of 90s caused great level of xenophobia among Serbian citizens, and on the other, the Balkans and particularly Serbia are internationally perceived through strong stereotyped images.<sup>8</sup> At the same time, to great extent provoked by this situation, there is the expansion of initiatives promoting intercultural understanding through different campaigns, programs and projects, cultural as well as educational, mostly organized by civic organizations in Serbia since 2000.<sup>9</sup> In parallel to this, intercultural understanding and consistent values are being promoted through different international bodies and institutions whereas 2008 is proclaimed by European Union as a *Year of Intercultural Dialogue*. Following the process of EU integration, it is expected that Serbian official policy is going to follow these values as well. However, the appliance of intercultural understanding and related values in general and cultural policy, especially on local level, is still insufficient in Serbia.

And why we assess that the case of *Art Camp*<sup>10</sup> in Kosjerić is interesting to be analyzed in this context? We see this project as unique in several aspects. First, having been organized in the small provincial community, we find it important as an example of decentralization in rather centralized cultural policy in Serbia. With this respect, we emphasize the fact that the project is locally based, initiated by local community itself without any tendency imposed by some external or higher authority. Another argument would be that which marks this community as a closed one, not only for current Serbian context that we mentioned, but particularly for its unawareness of other cultures due to its ethnical homogeneity and ignorance towards this kind of projects due to its provincial circumstances. Finally, the concept of the project is set in a way that intercultural dialogue is not side effect, but it is one of its main components and priorities. So, we assessed this case as a very significant for the current socio – cultural context, especially due to lack of

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<sup>8</sup> This is indicated through many different researches and theoretical considerations which we will mention later in this work.

<sup>9</sup> More information about these projects is given in the second chapter of this work.

<sup>10</sup> To name *The international Art Camp – Kosjerić* we will use shorter names in this work: *Art Camp* or *Camp*.

quantitative researches that would provide relevant findings in terms of effectiveness of similar international cultural projects.

## ***1.2. The main research question***

Hence, the topic of our research is the capacity of cultural and art projects for raising intercultural understanding within the Serbian context. The issue will be explored on the example of one particular international art project with an intercultural dialogue component - *Art Camp* in Kosjerić. The research is focused to analysis of the influences of *Art Camp* project on the attitudes of its participants and Kosjerić residents towards other cultures. We will try to conclude on the existence and the level of its effectiveness regarding intercultural understanding, breaking prejudices, stereotypes and xenophobia in Kosjerić community as well as among foreign young people. So, the main aim of our research is: *To conclude on the capacity of international projects with intercultural dialogue component organized in Serbia to provide effective intercultural understanding and develop intercultural atmosphere, taking into consideration specific Serbian context especially that in small communities.* Additionally, we will also try to bring conclusions with regards to the crucial factors to influence this and the most effective aspects of such projects as well as to give recommendations for its improvement and further development. We believe that the results of this research could hopefully serve as a source of data as well as recommendations that could encourage further initiating and planning of similar projects and its possible applying in certain programs and instruments of cultural policy in Serbia, but also within the context of local community development.

Having on mind both the socio-psychological aspect of the issue as well as its relation to the cultural policy and management, on one hand our work can be considered as social research, while on the other it can be treat as evaluation of one particular project or type of projects in terms of its effectiveness. We will start from the following hypothesis: *International projects with intercultural dialogue component (which encompasses gather work of representatives of different cultures as well as community mobilization) have great capacity in contributing to development of intercultural understanding in Serbia and changing the image of Serbia among foreign youth.*

Accordingly, our specific hypothesis would be:

- International art projects with intercultural dialogue component contribute to decreasing the level of xenophobia in small communities in Serbia
- *The international Art Camp – Kosjerić* made significant contribution to Kosjerić community opening towards other cultures
- Those Kosjerić citizens who were familiar with the *Camp* have more opened attitudes towards different cultures than those who were not in contact with the *Camp*.
- The more frequent and more closely one was involved in the *Camp*, the more open his/here attitudes are
- The interactive component of art programs and audience animation is of crucial importance for achieving intercultural understanding through cultural projects
- Direct contact of representatives of different cultures is the crucial factor in breaking prejudices and stereotypes about other nations among participants involved in cultural projects
- Young people involved in intercultural projects are getting easily opened towards other cultures/ nations
- Participation in cultural projects in Serbia as well as intensive contact with local population contributes to breaking prejudices and stereotypes about Serbia among foreign youth.

### ***1.3. Method***

The research is conducted through case study. It is designed through combining quantitative research methods such as social survey design, and qualitative methods such as in-depth interview, direct observation and analysis of the written documents. Social survey includes 200 respondents being local residents, in addition to in-depth interviews done with six foreign participants.

The discussion which is planned to take the main place and the most of this paper will be raised around the findings of field research which implied social survey based on questionnaire. There will be two groups involved, one being target group and another control group, and each consisted of 100 respondents - local residents. The main distinctive criterion for dividing these two groups is: whether Kosjerić resident got in contact with the *Camp* or not. There will be age and gender balance made among both groups. While the first group will consist of those who

didn't have a contact with the *Camp* distinguishing those who heard of it from those that didn't, within the second group the level of closeness to the *Camp* will also be considered as an influential factor (way and frequency of participation, interaction with foreigners). The idea is to compare the results of those two groups and conclude on the differences among their attitudes towards different cultures depending on their closeness to the *Camp*.

The aims of the survey and quantitative research are to respond to hypothesis through giving answers to the following questions:

1. How citizens of Kosjerić see representatives of other nations? To what extent this picture and attitudes are positive or negative? How open they are towards them?
2. To what extent positive picture/ attitudes about other nations correlates with citizens participation at the *Camp*? To what it depends on their age?

To discover these aspects we will combine statements measured by Lickert's scale for measuring certain values and attitudes referring to nationalism, traditionalism, authoritarianism etc. with inquiring stereotypes about different nations, questions about the *Camp* and socio-demographic data.

Qualitative research considers in-depth interviews with six foreign participants at the *Camp* from previous years. The idea is to explore the influence of the *Camp* on perception of Serbia on the part of foreign participants, with emphasis on mechanisms that caused the creation or change of the picture.

The aim of qualitative research through interviews is to respond to hypothesis by giving answers to the following questions:

1. How participation at the *Camp* influenced foreigners' perception of Serbia? Whether participation at the *Camp* contributed to changing participants' attitudes and image of Serbia in a positive sense? To what extent?
2. Which aspects of the *Camp* had the crucial importance in influencing this image and attitudes?

The interviews will cover following topics: origin, occupation, interests of participant in his/ her own country; motivation for applying and participating at the *Camp* including information about Serbia and the *Camp* before coming; participant's main role and activities at the *Camp*; general experience with the *Camp*, host families, community; general experience during the stay in Serbia including other visits/ activities; established relations with Serbian people, contacts with them afterwards; general opinion about Serbia before and after coming to the *Camp*.

Naturally, when researching on the level of openness towards different cultures, apart from the *Camp* we will consider other influential factors such as general opening of Serbia, increased travel opportunities, communication opportunities etc.

Following the conclusions around these researches, we would like to give recommendations with respect to the improvement of project effectiveness, and the most appropriate cultural policy measures and instruments.

## **II Theoretical framework: basic theories and concepts of intercultural understanding**

### ***2.1. Social distance and related concepts***

As the focus of this work is in research that deals with changing social attitudes, the main theoretical base that we apply is from the field of social psychology, particularly its part that deals with the influence of social situations on different kinds of behavior and their psychological functions. Thus, the notions of nationalism, social distance, especially ethnic distance, xenophobia and related phenomena such as prejudices and stereotypes, which signify the level of one's openness towards others (other nations, cultures) and his/ her picture about them are frequently used in this work as well as the consideration of factors influencing them.

Taking in consideration the findings that psychological and social characteristics (like authoritarianism, social status, social mobility, working status and profession, education, residential status etc.) are related to general tendency for tolerance or intolerance towards other groups, we will rather pay attention in this work to social environment as an influencing factor when it comes to social distance.<sup>11</sup> Special watch will be done over the role of organized cultural activities and their effects on decrement of xenophobic attitudes and ethnic distance, which bring us to the field of culturology and the phenomenon of acculturation as a process which puts culture in a function of socialization.

Following the results of many researches which prove that social closeness is in negative correlation with extreme national awareness such as those of Rot and Havelka (Lazić and Cvejić 2005), that social distance indirectly signifies the existence of ethnocentrism (Kuzmanović 1994: 228), whereas those with nationalistic attitudes have more negative picture about others (Popadić and Biro 1999: 103), we took into consideration concept of nationalism and close phenomena like ethnocentrism and chauvinism. Moreover, many theories claim that these concepts are the basis for defining the "other" and even "enemy" (Milosavljević 1999: 10). Some of them, like theory of social identity points out that identification with the group serves to oneself's glorification (self-confidence) and consequently undervaluation and stigmatization of others (Tajfel and Turner 1979 in Opačić and Vujadinović, n.d: 118). We remind that from Bogardus

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<sup>11</sup> Some theoreticians like Adorno give priority for formation of prejudices and stereotypes to one's personal characteristics, whereas there are also situational theories, cultural or socio – historical theories which emphasize the influence of current situation or political and economic interests (Rot 1994: 406-411).

on, there are lots of examples showing that depending on a group is a strong factor in attitudes formation, their dispersion and persistence (Rot, 1994: 337).

In this work, we will try to explore the changes of social attitudes, i.e. attitudes of Kosjerić citizens towards different cultures caused by the *Camp* as a cultural project intentionally organized to influence these changes. We will specifically take nationalism, authoritarianism and traditionalism as the indicators when identifying the level of one's openness/ closeness towards different cultures. Particularly, ethnic stereotypes and prejudices of both Kosjerić citizens and foreign participants will be analyzed, in terms of their eventual changes due to the relations of those belonging to different cultures made during the *Camp*, as well as thanks to the art and public programs.

## ***2.2. The concept of Balkan***

The other group of concepts we will base our discussion on, are those related to Balkan phenomenon and referring theories. Based on Said's theory of "orientalism" (1978) which encompassed wider phenomena of all "non-western" societies, there are many studies nowadays focusing on Balkans as a specific phenomenon. Although Orient and Balkans are not identical concepts, these studies mostly apply the principle of „orientalization“ when treating Balkan issues (Simic 2006b: 357-358). Dichotomy between Europe understood as a model of „high civilization“ embodied in cultures of Western Europe, and the ideas of geographically undefined spaces characterized by „barbarism“, is found on hystorical clash of Otoman Impery (as a paradigm of Orient) and Habsbourg Monarchy (as a paradigm of Europe) and it represents symplified version of Said's orientalism. This dichotomy very often serves as a model of clasification of cultures on civilization scale according to widespread categories of culture and primitivism, urban and rural, European and Balkan (Ibid). The most of these concepts see Balkan as a mixture of Eastern and Western characteristics and which is often illustrated through metaphors such as „bridge“, „crossroad“ or „border“.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> Usually, three interfaced metaphors are used to describe and explain the essence of the Balkans: the BRIDGE, the CROSSROAD and the BORDER/ATTACHEDARY. Although opposite in their meaning, these metaphors depict well all the controversies, positive and negative stereotypes regarding the Balkans as a place where the East and the West, the Orient and the Occident, the Muslim and the Christian world, the Latin and the Byzantine tradition meet/divide; a place which is at the same time an encounter and a separation of different worlds. (Dragičević Šešić and Dragojević 2004: 9)

We also rely upon the insight of Maria Todorova (2006: 112) that „West“ can easily, thanks to the existing political disbalance, construct the pictures of non-western societies according to their own interests. According to Said (1978: 202), *Orient that appears in orientalism is the system of phenomena that are created after it is imported in western doctrine, western awareness, and later, western empire*. And Balkan is the inheritor of Orient in western picture of the world, as a secret, interesting, but above all dirty and retrograde place (Bakić 1999: 33).

Given that the most of foreign participants at the *Camp* come from „western“ countries, we will specifically explore current stereotypes about Balkans, and particularly Serbia, on the part of *Camp* participants, based on the above mentioned concepts. These will also be taken in account with respect to autostereotypes among Serbian population in Kosjerić. Specifically, we will analyse the interpretation of these concepts in art works and programs at the *Camp* from the perspective of their potential to influence breaking prejudices and stereotypes among *Camp* participants and Kosjerić citizens.

### ***2.3. Interculturalism and related concepts***

Finally, the third group of concepts we employ in this work is made of those phenomena connected to relations and communication among different cultures<sup>13</sup>, like internationalism, interculturalism (intercultural learning/ dialogue/ understanding/ communication), multiculturalism, transculturation, cultural pluralism, ethnicities, tolerance, cultural rights, diversity etc. The most of these concepts rise from current *revival of ethnicities, sharpening of ethnic self-awareness* (Stanovčić 2004: 16), but also different approaches to cultural diversity,<sup>14</sup> and expansion of the issue of European identity and values and its cultural market as well.

These concepts bring different understanding of culture: not only to describe ‘ways of life’ and life practices, collectivities based on location, nation, history, lifestyle and ethnicity,

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<sup>13</sup> Differentiation among cultures can be treated according to different interpretations: demographic, ideological or programmatic. Thus, in a widest sense, particular culture could be determined due to the ethnic or national identity, but also could concern the questions of class, disability, religion, sexuality, gender, geography, age, employment status and so on.

<sup>14</sup> There are only ten ethnically homogeneous countries in the world which are inhabited with only 0.5% of the whole world population. Multiethnic, multiconfessional countries became rather the rule than the exception because there are around 200 countries in parallel to a few thousands politically relevant ethnic groups or national communities. (Stanovčić 2004: 11)

systems and webs of representation and meaning, realms of artistic value and heritage, but also as a space of contestation which involves the tendency to prefer and embed some meanings over others, with preferences to involve the interaction of power and meaning (CoE 2008: 5).

While multiculturalism considers co-existence of different cultures, interculturalism goes further, bringing communication and interaction among them. Some more responses to cultural diversity are also pluriculturalism, which links plurality and participation to democratization, whereas transculturalism establish common identities that transcend particular group identity. Having on mind their function in the process of globalization, some authors criticize these phenomena pointing to their ambivalent theoretical and political conotation, which is in compliance to their assumptions that globalization doesn't create one universal, but very well planned system (Vukadinović 2001: 3).

We also believe that the intercultural approach has an ambitious aim if it tends to following: to form a new open cultural identity which is not Eurocentric nor ethnocentric, nor it is passionately tied to any particular beliefs and values allowing for the emergence of new cultural forms linked to contemporary experience. Bearing on mind this, we will not idealize the concept of interculturalism as a definite solution for conflicts, misunderstandings and undoubted presumption of peace and perfect relations, but we will talk about it affirmatively as much as we conclude it contributes to better understanding and exchange among representatives of different cultures and opposes to ethnic distance in this case.

We will primarily treat these phenomena having on mind the context of post-isolation period in Serbia, and ethnically homogenous community like Kosjerić is. Thus, we will try to explore the issue of intercultural learning and understanding in this community, after it had been introduced with one international project with intercultural dialogue component, i. e. *Art Camp*. Specifically, we will try to conclude on the eventual improvement of intercultural understanding when it comes to people, both Kosjerić citizens and foreign participants, after their interaction through direct contacts. At the same time, we will try to see the influence of the project as such on the perception and self-perception with respect to cultural identity, and especially on the image of the community. We will also tackle this issue with regards to cultural policies in Serbia having on mind the concept of interculturalism developed in international institutions.

## 2.4. Key notions of the research

Glossary with the main theoretical concepts, terms and phenomena described according to the way we understand and use them in this work is given below.

**Social distance:** The notion is used for the first time by R. Park at the beginning of XX century (1902). It is mostly being related to Bogardus (1925) because he made specific scale for measuring social distance in twenties of last century. Under social distance he considered *the level of understanding and psychological closeness (i.e. distance) in relation to different individuals and groups*. It is being researched as a readiness to establish relations with different level of closeness and it can be applied to different groups such as: political, marginalized, racial, ethnic etc. It can be treated as conative or behavioral component of attitude, but it does not absolutely represent its behavioral component, especially not attitude as a whole. It is phenomenon for itself. However it is important indicator of current affection (Kuzmanović 1994: 226). In this paper we will investigate presence of social distance among citizens of Kosjerić, and its differences and eventual changes due to the influences of *Art Camp*, focusing primarily on ethnic distance.

**Ethnic distance:** is social distance towards different nations and/or ethnic groups. It is in strong correlation with national awareness and nationalism. Here, we will try to conclude on the presence of ethnic distance among citizens of Kosjerić and the influences of the *Camp* with that respect, primarily through assessing the level of nationalism, traditionalism, authoritarianism and the existence of ethnic stereotypes in the community.

**Xenophobia:** is a fear or contempt of that which is foreign or unknown, especially of strangers or foreign people. It comes from the Greek words ξένος (*xenos*), meaning "foreigner," "stranger," and φόβος (*phobos*), meaning "fear." The term is typically used to describe a fear or dislike of foreigner or of people significantly different from oneself. In this work, we will try to identify the presence of xenophobia in Kosjerić community through assessing the attitudes of its residents towards different nations/cultures.

**Social attitudes:** are continual systems of positive or negative valuations, affections and tendency to undertake action pro or contra, in relation to other objects or situations. They present mental readiness for specific way of reacting, but do not inevitably cause adequate action. They could be personal and social. The main characteristics of attitudes are that they are dispositive, gained, persistent, continual, directive, influence behaviour and complex. They have three components integrating three main mental functions: cognitive, emotional (affective) and conative. They are subject of social psychology discipline. Related phenomena to attitudes are: beliefs, common sense, interests, motives, habits, sentiments, values. Groups of certain attitudes could make syndroms or ideologies. Depending to one group/ nation is one of key factors in attitudes formation when they are especially widespread and persistent. In this research, we will try to conclude on the attitudes of Kosjerić citizens towards different cultures through measuring nationalistic values complex, tolerance towards different cultures and stereotyped perception of others.

**Prejudices:** are the most widespread type of attitudes, gained through learning by model. They are logically causeless and sttely persistent attitudes towards different objects followed by strong emotions. Developed without knowing or checking the facts, reflecting or having arguments, they could be positive or negative. Prejudices are caused by socio-economic and cultural factors, and psychological factors related to personality. Ethnic prejudices reach they full expression in ideologies or value systems related to nationalism, ethnocentric or chauvinistic nationalism. This work tackles the issue of prejudices against different cultures, although not directly measuring them. They are considered through the analysis of the attitudes related to nationalism and tolerance, as well as through the analysis of stereotypes formed previously to getting in contact with representatives of other culture, both on the part of Kosjerić citizens and foreign participants.

**Stereotypes:** Stereotypes are often described as cognitive component of prejudices which includes processes of categorization and assimilation. Since Lipman's definition (*Public Opinion* 1922), they are generally treat as 'pictures in our heads' that are constructed without enough information about reality, helping us to simplify it. So they are mostly incorrect, inflexible, based on illogical judgment, continual and widespread. They could be positive, negative or ambivalent. Stereotyped way of thinking is natural psychological process and its function is

dubble: to facilitate the understanding of complex reality on one hand, and to legitimate aggressiveness and rationalize prejudices on the other. Stereotyping has two components: cognitive-motivational (subject of psychology) and ideological - functional (subject of sociology). Stereotypes of Kosjerić citizens about different cultures and those of foreigners about Serbia will be explored in this paper. We will try to discover the factors of their formation, their directiveness, as well as possibilities of *Art Camp* project to influence their construction/deconstruction.

**Ethnic stereotypes:** National or ethnic stereotypes are the most frequent type of stereotypes. They mean cognitive component of relation towards other ethnic group, which are characteristic for its rigidity, strong affection and dispersion (Rot 1994: 400). As one group forms them primarily to determine its own group, and then to define the other, they can refer to oneself group (autostereotypes), and to some other group (heterostereotypes). Usually, they imply positive valuation of oneself group comparing to others and could cause ethnic narcissism. National stereotypes pertain to culturological stereotypes whereas there are also physiological and psychological ones. As we deal in this work with relations among different cultures/nations, the stereotypes we mention will be mostly ethnic stereotypes. Apart from heterostereotypes, autostereotypes will be explored, mostly those of Serbian people from Kosjerić, but foreign participants at the *Camp* as well.

**Nationalism:** One type of theories equalize nationalism with national awareness in general, support to one's national state, either the existing one or desirable one, advocating for unity, independence and common interests of people that feel as members of the same community. This is usually described as soft nationalism which can imply tolerance towards other nations together with nationalistic values. The others explain nationalism as a state of consciousness which considers one's loyalty to state superior from all the other loyalties, characterized by extreme pride of one's nation and belief in its exceptionality, special universal mission with tendency to expand the influence of one's nation. When expression of these values reaches extreme level, implying belief that worth of one nation is superior than any other and the only authentic, we have ethnocentric nationalism or nationalistic chauvinism. Nationalistic concept always implies perception of „ourselves“ and „themselves“ in stereotypes as well as thinking in ethnic

prejudices. In this research, we will measure the level of nationalism among citizens of Kosjerić and take it as one of the indicators in order to conclude on the openness towards different cultures. There will be two kinds of nationalism considered: ethnic nationalism and soft nationalism.

**Interculturalism:** Interculturalism aims at equal rights and dialogue opportunities for all cultural groups in touch including autochtones, immigrants, majority or minority, or those defined by gender, sexual orientation etc. It appeared as a critic to multiculturalism trying to overcome cultural relativism. In this work, we will try to explore the opportunities for introducing the concept of interculturalism through *Art Camp* project in one ethnically homogeneous and remote community like Koshered is.

**International project with intercultural dialogue component:** are those projects which build their concept on direct interaction among representatives of different cultures and/ or promote intercultural dialogue taking it as a focus of their activities/ programs. Here, we deal with one such cultural project - *Art Camp*, which puts intercultural dialogue component as one of its primary aims.

**Intercultural dialogue:** is a process that comprises an open and respectful exchange between individuals, groups and organizations with different cultural backgrounds or world views. Among its aims are: to develop a deeper understanding of different perspectives and practices; to increase participation (or the freedom to make choices); to ensure equality; and to enhance creative processes (*Cultural policies and trends in Europe*<sup>15</sup>). In this work, we will focus on the interaction of foreign *Camp* participants and Kosjerić citizens, and its possibility to raise the intercultural dialogue and understanding among them.

**Art colony** is a form which provides a place where creative practitioners live, create artworks and interact with one another. It allows artists time to work without distractions away from the usual workaday world, there is no public interaction, and it can also imply a competitive component. Artists are usually selected through a formal process, for a residency from a few weeks to over a year. This form initially emerged as village movements in the early 19th century

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<sup>15</sup> Available at: <http://www.culturalpolicies.net/web/intercultural-dialogue.php>, accessed July 2008.

and was developed in different directions afterwards. As we find some similarities between the concept of art colony and *Art Camp*, we will try to stress those aspects of the *Camp* which make significant difference in terms of developing intercultural understanding through art project, in comparison to art colonies.

**Art residency** allows visiting artists to stay and work offering conditions that are conducive to creativity in one or more fields of arts (visual arts, literature, music, performing arts, architecture, design, dance etc.). Many residential art centers lay down the terms guest artists have to comply with, such as an exhibition at the end of the period or a project, achieved by collaboration with other artists or cooperation with the public. Working periods are usually a week or two, but they can also differ enormously: from two weeks to six months or sometimes even a year. Sometimes these kinds of programs are not competitive and require no work samples or elaborate applications. Many centers offer unconditional hospitality: the artist is free to use the residency for his or her own purposes, without any obligation towards the host. When studying the case in question, we will take it as one kind of art residency having on mind its specific characteristics. Comparing it to usual art residencies, we will try to conclude on its advantages and disadvantages for intercultural dialogue development.

**Voluntary work camp (Workcamp)** is a specific form of international short term voluntary program. They are coordinated by voluntary services in 85 countries all over the world and usually last two or three weeks providing the opportunity to volunteers (usually young people) to stay in foreign environment together with their peers from different countries. The aim of the camps is to contribute in problem solving in the host community, as well as learning about other cultures, exchange of experiences, gaining new skills etc. The issues of workcamps are different: mostly ecology, reconstruction and festival logistics, but social and animal protection, archeology and arts as well. We will treat the *Art Camp* as one type of workcamp which has culture and arts in its focus, but we will also have on mind all specificities of this project in comparison to “typical” workcamp. Based on the analysis of this case, we will try to give recommendations for better appliance of intercultural dialogue component in workcamp organization.

**Community mobilization:** implies different types of organized actions which actively involve members of one community in its development. In this case, we will investigate the level and

the way of citizens' involvement in the *Camp* and its activities, and try to conclude on the importance of this aspect of the project for its effectiveness in terms of raising intercultural understanding.

### **III Current Serbian socio-cultural context with review of relevant researches and policy measures**

#### ***3.1. Rise of nationalistic values in the last two decades in Serbia***

When choosing and analyzing the case in question of this work –*Art Camp* project and its effects on raising intercultural understanding, we primarily had on our mind the wider context in which it appeared, i.e. socio-political situation in Serbia and Balkans and its influence on predominant values and social attitudes. Many researches show that still there is a significant level of xenophobia and nationalism in Serbia which is primarily caused by recent crises and wars.

However, before the last political crises, for a longer period of time researchers in Serbia registered relatively low level of nationalism and social distance among population, even lower than in many other more developed countries until eighties.<sup>16</sup> Moreover, public demonstration of social distance in former Yugoslavia was often socially approbated, sometimes even punished under the frame of criminal law. Eighties in Serbia are assessed by many analysts as the years of economic, political moral and general crises followed by increment of nationalism and ethnic distance, but relatively slowly on the level of awareness in average. This was notable when particular strong nationalistic movements were appearing (Albanians from 60s', Croatian in late 60s', Serbian at the end of 80s') and then spreading all over former Yugoslavia. Then, the strong turning point happened in 90s' with the beginning of ethnic conflicts and wars which are already proved as a strong factor and fast generator of prejudices and stereotypes. There are a lots of examples in which it is obvious that the appearance of stereotypes and prejudices follow the conflicts between two sides.<sup>17</sup> That is why the picture of neighbors is often more negative than this about remote nations. Olivera Milosavljević (1999: 20) differentiates three groups of stereotypes spread among Serbian population: towards “inferior ones” (Albanians); war enemies and political competitors (neighbors) and those towards West including also auto stereotypes.

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<sup>16</sup> Lazic and Kuzmanovic (1994) give examples of many surveys such as those done by Fiamengo in 1960, Supek in 1963, Rot and Havelka in 1973, etc.

<sup>17</sup> Through observing ethnographic and historiography publications in pre-war periods during the last century in Serbia/ Yugoslavia, Milosavljević (1999: 12) finds that stereotypes about others are intentionally developed in all concrete political circumstances.

This rise of nationalism happened simultaneously with the breakdown of socialist order in Eastern Europe while the new ruling regime in Serbia built its legitimization on nationalistic program.<sup>18</sup> Conversion of communist elites into national ones, and breakdown of SFRY, brought new values in society (Opačić and Vujadinović, n.d: 118). Thus nationalism became political phenomenon which was well planned and intentionally and publicly speeded by governance in different ways promoting smaller or larger differences among certain nations and producing pseudo argumentations and excuses for participation in wars. Apart from it, the influence of media and church<sup>19</sup> was important, in addition to increased academic interest for nation, nationalism, stereotypes and xenophobia. Belonging to a certain ethnic group became the main criterion of one's worth, and ethnic distance reached its maximum including emphasis on national identity, tradition, history, and ethnic stereotypes with open pejorative verbal expressions being announced in public, media, by politicians, celebrities and even official school books which is still case to some extent (Milosavljević 1999: 8). Recent researches in Serbia show persistence of significant level of ethnic discrimination, xenophobia, anti-Semitism in Serbian society, although in a slight decrement.<sup>20</sup>

Hence, we could say that ethnic distance in Serbia was very low in the period from 1960 until 1980, started to suddenly increase at the end of 80s and during 90s reaching its maximum in 2000. Later, it started to decrease with different oscillations.

Kuzmanovic's research brought the unexpected findings that after wars, people were more ready to accept personal/ private relations with representatives of other nations than those that are official and institutionalized. This was one more proof that the influence of public governance policy was great in raising ethnic distance. So, we could conclude that the strongest factor in this case was social environment which was developed through political conflicts and wars in former Yugoslavia. These social factors were more influential on social distance than those universal ones which were related to hard social and socio-psychological indicators like age and education, or soft indicators like authoritarianism, collectivism, traditionalism. All these political and ethnic conflicts, breakdown of Yugoslavia, civil war resulted in social environment characterized by fear and distrust among

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<sup>18</sup> *After more than a decade of experience with post-socialist systems, there is no doubt about close linkage between post-socialism and xenophobia.* (Pajnik 2002: 7)

<sup>19</sup> Adorno pointed out to the influence of religious and sacral organizations for attitudes construction (Rot 1994).

<sup>20</sup> According to data of Strategic Marketing Agency from 2004, 44% of citizens thinks that national minorities shouldn't have the opportunity to attend the school and publish books in their mother tongue, 45% of them wouldn't accept Albanian as a chief while one third wouldn't accept neither Muslim, Roma or Croat; Belgrade center for Human Rights published research findings in 2004 that show significant level of xenophobia, anti-Semitism and intolerance towards different nations.

representatives of different nations which is then spread and applied to all ethnic groups including those that were not in conflict with oneself's nation. This generalization of negative experience, which applies the feeling of danger towards all that are different from "us", is exactly the mechanism of spreading xenophobia, ethnocentrism and psychological closeness of a group (Kuzmanović 1994: 240). Additionally, as a consequence of long period of isolation and low socio - economic standard, possibilities for Serbian resident to travel and meet with other, especially remote nations were disabled, which surely contributed to xenophobic attitudes.

Although the factors that caused this situation are being changed (established peace, official relations among countries that were in conflict), the process of social distance decrement is slow and hard. One of the reasons we could find in the fact that Serbia experienced NATO bombing in 1999 and still suffers from unsolved nation - state status and Kosovo problem which make possible mass mobilization of population on the basis of ethnic appeals and also influence slower acceptance of liberal values. With regards to this, it is interesting to mention conclusions (Lazić and Cvejić 2005), made after comparing findings of different researches done in Serbia which show permanent decrement of traditional (and authoritarian) value orientation in parallel with upswing of nationalistic orientations from 80s, although they are expected to be mutually dependant being both factors of social distance. This incongruity, as well as various acceptance and rejection of liberal values by majority of population registered in surveys done in last twenty years, is explained as a consequence of continual structural change<sup>21</sup> on one hand, but prevailing of nationalistic attitudes even among "higher" classes due to unsolved nation and state situation. The other reason for survival of ethnic distance in Serbia is universal, due to the fact that stereotypes and prejudices are persistent even when factors that generate them disappear.<sup>22</sup>

Although there were a lots of public discussions about reconciliation, some actions undertaken by officials, and many campaigns and activities organized by non-governmental organization promoting tolerance and understanding in Serbia, we still believe that some more organized actions need to be done stressing more direct contact of population. That is why we chose to analyze one of these actions and conclude on its effectiveness.

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<sup>21</sup> Constant decrement of agricultural and rural population and population with lower education which are characteristic for their traditionalism

<sup>22</sup> *Even when ethnic conflicts get solved and factors that during the conflict influenced, intentionally or not, stereotypes and prejudices stop influencing, stereotypes and prejudices will not disappear by themselves, but their changing would need to be the subject of organized social action.* (Popadić and Biro 1999: 107)

### 3.2. *Stereotyped perceptions of Balkans*

Recent political crises and wars on Balkans revived not only high ethnic distance, stereotypes, prejudices and even autostereotypes among Serbian population, but supported stereotyped perception of Balkans on the part of others as well.<sup>23</sup>

However, stereotypes about Balkans are not caused only by the last wars and still actual political crisis, but they origin from older concepts of Balkan as a place where Orient and West intersect, as well as from more recent or more distant event. Through researching the stereotypes about the Serbs in Western countries publics, Jovo Bakić shows the historical background, motives and functions of their formation and concludes that Western public cultivates negative stereotypes about whole Balkans as well as about Orient, „orthodox civilization“ and the Slavs at least in last two centuries.<sup>24</sup> He points out that they are mostly based on stereotypes about Balkans as uncivilized, barbarian area with many conspiracies, assassinations, murders, Russia oriented, the place which caused numerous conflicts among leading political forces. Similar stereotypes are highlighted by Maria Todorova: Balkans as a synonym for something that is tribal, regressive, primitive, barbarian, irrationally fanatic, aggressive. Slobodan Naumović (1999: 57) decomposed myths and misconceptions of Yugoslav crisis founding that their basis is again made of characteristics such as conservatism, aggressiveness, traditionalism, ethnonationalism, provincial and mythological mentality, fanaticism, which only confirms previous stereotypes. Furthermore, he assesses that breakdown of Yugoslavia created bad reputation as one of the most tragic phases in new history of this part of the world. Milena Dragičević Šešić noticed that after this breakdown, even the word “balkanization” started to get extremely negative connotation amongst international public.<sup>25</sup>

Still, communication between the Balkans and Europe, as well as, communication amongst the Balkan countries, States and peoples, is complex not only because of internal

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<sup>23</sup> This is understandable since ethnic stereotypes grow from and expand in the situations of social conflicts (political or religious) with participation of different groups, especially in wars, as well as in the situations when representatives of one ethnic group have superior social-stratific position which is followed by relative social closeness towards representatives of other social group. (Bakić 1999: 32)

<sup>24</sup> *Stereotyped way of thinking about Balkans has been generating gradually during two centuries and turned into specific register during Balkan wars and First World War. In next decades, this register got new characteristics, but they mostly only brought new details, not the essence.* (Bakić 1999: 30)

<sup>25</sup> *The word “balkanization” became synonym for fragmentation, disintegration, tendency for conflict and termination of communication or co-operation. It is used in contemporary international relations for any area in the world where processes of disintegration appear.* (Dragičević Šešić and Dragojević 2004: 8)

differences but, due to many unsolved problems as well. Since “other” and “different” are often seen as a threat or an obstacle, the Balkans are as a consequence characterized by a “heterogeneity handicap”, which is deeply in contrast with contemporary European integrative tendencies. In this sense, the Balkan identity gains a negative connotation from a burdening heritage (Todorova), is stigmatized and gradually becomes a limiting factor for development in regional and continental proportions (Dragičević Šešić and Dragojević, 2004: 8). Trials of Balkans integration into Europe still remained unsuccessful.

At the same time, due to all these factors and current expansion of Balkan issue amongs worldwide public the interest and curiosity of foreigners for Balkans is rised to a great extend. It became a popular topic, research subject and favoured place to visit. This implies not only negative, but positive stereotypes as well, which put the stress on Balkan as an excotic place, with unique people and culture, specific way of life, warmth, hospitality, chedonism etc. After the conflict is settled, many foreigners started to visit Serbia and Balkans, expecting the unusual experience, either tending to face with dangeour on Kosovo, do researches or to enjoy Serbian music, way of life and atmosphere mostly coming on two festivals with antipode images - *Exit* and *Guča*.

Through this work, we would like to explore to what extend stereotypes about Balkans were widespread among *Camp* participants, whether it was part of their motivation to visit Serbia, and to conclude on the possible changes of their perspective after experiencing the *Camp*.

### ***3.3. The application of the concept of interculturalism within international and Serbian policies and practice***

Before the raise of modern totalitarian states, certain interpreters, of the social scene, maintaining that nationalism had failed, heralded the advent of internationalism. Global changes like war, migrations, agricultural and industrial development, population dispersal and the shifting of borders have left the globe with diverse pattern of settlement. Instead of the notion of cultural “purity”, cultural diversity and tolerance became prevalent value promoted on international policy scene, especially opposed to racism and answers to many ethnic/ national conflicts. Since the formation of European Union, member countries put lots of effort to

protection of human rights and freedom which is defined through many documents<sup>26</sup>, practice and institutions. European policy agreements, including Maastricht, have recognized the necessity of respecting cultural differences and commonalities within the process of pursuing common political and economic interests. Council of Europe also brought series of similar documents which are to be respected by all its member countries.

Moreover, international organizations and unions recognized the importance of the role of culture in the process of promoting intercultural dialogue and integrated it into their official policies and documents.<sup>27</sup> For example, UNESCO broth *Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity* in 2001 and 12 EU countries ratified this convention. Also, it broth *Convention on Protection and Promotion of Different Cultural Expressions* in 2005. Further to the adoption of this Declaration the General Assembly of the United Nations proclaimed 21 May as World Day for Cultural Diversity for Dialogue and Development. UNESCO especially emphasizes the role of culture in conflict and post-conflict situations with its special programs such as Routes of Dialogue that should serve as a vehicle for reconciliation through cultural heritage and as common spaces for exchange.

In 2006, the Committee of Ministers of Council of Europe launched the preparations of a *White Paper on Intercultural Dialogue*<sup>28</sup>. European Union also promotes intercultural dialogue including the cooperation among member states through its cultural programs. In 2007, European Commission adopted an important strategy document on culture in the form of Communication – *Agenda for culture in a globalizing world*.<sup>29</sup> Furthermore, EU proclaimed 2008 to be the *Year of Intercultural Dialogue* providing support for the projects of this kind.

In addition to this, many other discussions are raised around the issue of intercultural dialogue, as well as different programs, activities and campaigns targeting particularly young people. Thus, jointly with civic organizations Directorate of Youth and Sport of Council of

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<sup>26</sup> Starting with the *European Convention on Human Rights* signed in Rome in 1950.

<sup>27</sup> *If culture can be a locus of conflict, it can equally promote understanding, tolerance and dialogue, and contribute to the fabric of civil society. It must be the first goal of national cultural policy to promote the value of cultural diversity, safeguarding, the rights and interests of minorities without disaffecting established communities of interest.* (Malarasso and Landry 1999: 35)

<sup>28</sup> The Paper defines intercultural dialogue as: *an open and respectful exchange of views between individuals and groups belonging to different cultures that leads to a deeper understanding of the other's world perception.*

<sup>29</sup> One of the objectives of this strategy is to promote cultural diversity and intercultural dialogue in Europe. Apart from that it also considers EU's external relations so as to build bridges with other parts of the world. On the occasion of this strategy adoption, President of the European Commission claimed: *Culture and creativity are important drivers for personal development, social cohesion and economic growth. Today's strategy promoting intercultural understanding confirms culture's place at the heart of our policies.*

Europe and the Directorate-General for Education and Culture participated in creation of *White Paper* and recommended education of youth in intercultural learning. There was a special campaign organized named *All different - all equal* under Youth programs of Council of Europe. Council of Europe's project *Culture, Creativity and the Young* engaged with cultural diversity aiming at maintaining cultural identity and social cohesion through series of studies. These studies concluded that education should have a great role in preparing young people to engage with cultural diversity and emphasized on the importance of intercultural understanding and of mutual tolerance of different cultural traditions. There are also examples of Intercultural studies at universities like for example that in Central Europe<sup>30</sup> which attend to answer to the current processes of change meaning growth of European Union, integration of immigrants, global economy. For example, on the occasion of an international seminar on Xenophobia and Post-socialism, organized by Peace Institute in Ljubljana, following recommendations are given: to provide campaigns for educating citizens; to involve local communities in intercultural events, solidarity actions and humanitarian projects; organize public events to promote diversity.

At the same time, Balkan countries are still suffering from unsolved ethnic conflicts, in some cases even trying to form their new states based on the concept of ethnicity. However, the orientation of South East European countries (including Balkans) towards EU gives priority to cooperation with Council of Europe and European institutions, so all above mentioned principles are being accepted and applied, though slowly, occasionally and not yet systematically. In Serbia it is manifested, for example, through treatment of ethnic minorities and efforts to develop stable multicultural and multiethnic society. Multiculturalism as one of the key characteristics of Serbian society and culture is put as one of priorities of cultural policy in 2001, although never officially approved in the Serbian Parliament.

Vojvodina as a multiethnic region is leader in this respect. For example, a public information system, including electronic media, is performed in eight languages, and recently, following EU programs, Fund for development of civil sector of Vojvodina region announced call for proposal for financing projects of civil society organizations having *Intercultural dialogue* for its topic. Nevertheless, promotion of values such as tolerance, intercultural understanding and similar, are still occasional on the part of public sector and they are not part of public policy. Intercultural dialogue has not been a specific issue or a priority of cultural or other

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<sup>30</sup> Danube University Krems

policies in Serbia. However, in October 2007, two working groups were created within the Ministry of Culture: the Commission for Intercultural Dialogue and the Commission for Politics of Memory and Remembrance (*Cultural policies and trends in Europe*<sup>31</sup>).

There are no government programs to support trans-national intercultural dialogue, nor any specific government support for the trans-national activities of young people, promoting language or cross-cultural training. Yet, joint action of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Culture is focused on internationalization as a strategy for cultural development as well as promotion of Serbian culture in the world. “Branding Serbia” is also part of the government’s activity which created a committee for active work on the re-creation of the Serbian image, away from the negative stereotype, towards a more positive imagine. The Ministry of Culture is prioritizing participation of Serbian artists in international events, as well as accentuating the international component of domestic manifestations.

Intercultural education is not a part of regular school curricula in Serbia, except the possibility to learn the “language of the community”<sup>32</sup> and study world cultures, religions and traditions as a part of particular school subjects like history, geography, literary, music, visual arts. Since 2003, Ministry of Education introduced together religious education and civic education which enables teachers to use arts and culture in teaching about human rights, understanding of different cultures, etc.

Young people in Serbia are particularly affected with this respect, considering their low activism, mobility and lack of relevant programs. Actual data, given in the National Strategy for Youth of the Ministry of Youth and Sports of the Republic of Serbia (2008), show that majority of young people are interested (70%) and able (76%) to be active in problems solving, but only 32% of them took a part in some actions in their community. Most of them (around 90%) do not belong to any political party, civic or other organization. Although 80% of youth would like to travel, only 15% of them leave the country regularly (once a year), and 49% of them never travelled abroad, which is considered to be one of factors for speeded xenophobia among youth in Serbia. Also, only 3-4% of youth population in Serbia participate in cultural consumption including visits to theatre, galleries, museums, classical or jazz concerts, and only 2.5% are creative in the field of culture. The most practiced way of cultural consumption on the part of

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<sup>31</sup> Available at: <http://www.culturalpolicies.net/web/serbia.php?aid=423>, accessed July 2008.

<sup>32</sup> Languages of ethnic minorities

Serbian youth is through media (95% of youth spend 2-3 hours a day watching TV) which very often serve programs which promote and deepen stereotyped images. It is recent that newly formed Ministry of Youth and Sports started to put some more efforts to improve this situation. Through widely participative process which included many young people and youth civic organizations and professionals, it created a National Youth Strategy which is adopted in Serbian Parliament in 2008 and at once started to be implemented. With this Strategy, apart from regular programs for students and talents, new programs are presented for funding projects of civic organizations through open calls. One of principles of this Strategy is interculturalism<sup>33</sup>, while there are eleven issues affecting young population in Serbia which were recognized as priorities:

1. active participation;
2. decision making;
3. informing;
4. equal opportunities for marginalized youth;
5. free time;
6. talents;
7. education;
8. employment;
9. safety;
10. health;
11. sustainable development and environment.

Cultural activities are considered under free time issue and there are following specific aims and measures mentioned with that respect:

- support to self – organized activities of youth<sup>34</sup>;
- active participation of youth in creation and implementation of cultural policies on all levels<sup>35</sup>;

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<sup>33</sup> Interculturalism is described as follows: *It enables respect of differences in all fields of life, tolerance as well as affirmation of arts and creative approaches directed to maintenance and development of intercultural dialogue in among young people. Dialogue as a process in which young people foster their readiness, understanding and acceptance of differences, as well as maintenance of common values, are to be respected.*

<sup>34</sup> Specific measures would be: *providing institutional framework for support to informal and sub cultural groups; encouragement of voluntary work; cooperation of youth in local community, within country and abroad.*

<sup>35</sup> Specific measures are: *stipulation of projects dealing with cultural policies in small and undeveloped communities; voluntary work in cultural institutions.*

- increased accessibility of cultural programs to youth, particularly to those in small and indigent communities<sup>36</sup>.

Nonetheless, civic organizations gave the largest contribution with regards to intercultural dialogue in Serbia. The main actors addressing the issue of intercultural dialogue in Serbia are associations, public institutions supported by international donors from the third sector and, to a smaller extent, culture industries. In parallel to civil wars and the atmosphere of intolerance and nationalism in last two decades, there was the expansion of researches and projects of civic organizations dealing with other values such as reconciliation, tolerance, multiculturalism etc.<sup>37</sup> Specifically, in terms of multiculturalism, particular multiethnic regions were targeted such as Sandzak and South - East Serbia, as well as regional cross-border projects. As for youth mobility, there were different exchanges organized by European Movement, students unions and associations, Civic Initiatives, Young Researchers of Serbia. In terms of education in this field, there was special program of Bridge Group called Peace studies, and there is MA program in Cultural policy and Management of the University of Arts in Belgrade with intercultural concept, in addition to its summer schools and conferences. Some organizations gave particular role to culture and arts using them as a tool for promotion of the values, like Center for cultural decontamination, Dah Theatre, Cultural Center Rex etc.

Here, we are dealing with one similar project which has though specific context, being realized in small, ethnically homogenous and closed community. It is also important to clarify that the *Camp* doesn't pertain neither to those international projects that serve for representation of the country (e.g. sending our talents abroad for promotion of Sebina culture) nor it is a competitive festival, but it has intercultural dialogue for its main purpose.

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<sup>36</sup> Specific measures are: *increase quantity and improve quality of youth production; subsidies for visits of cultural programs; subsidies for cultural programs in languages of minorities; standardize subsidies and benefits for better accessibility of cultural programs to youth; establish funds on local level, and allocation of public funds to promotion of cultural programs in small and indigent communities.*

<sup>37</sup> For example, activities of Center for Antiwar Action, Belgrade Center for Human Rights, Ethnicity Research Center and many others.

## IV Art Camp: presentation of the case

### 4.1. Local problem addressed

Before discussing research findings related to the case in question of this work, we need to present it and explain its close context. The first aspect that is important when discussing the issue in question, is that the *Camp* is organized in this very environment. Kosjerić is a



municipality with 14000 residents in Western Serbia with youth population of about 2000 between the ages of 15 and 24. Over 33% of the residents are older than 40. Like the rest of the country, this area has suffered significantly in recent years due to wars and Serbia's isolation. People, and especially youth, are leaving the area due to lack of educational and work opportunities as well as creative and socializing activities. A 2005 survey created by Civic Initiatives and realized by K-Town Group<sup>38</sup> in Kosjerić, indicated that more than half of the young people in the area intend to move away at the first opportunity (88% of them).

Picture no. 1 – Position of Kosjerić on the geographical map of Serbia

We found that there are numerous reasons why we could treat this very community as characteristic for its xenophobia and national prejudices:

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<sup>38</sup> Research aiming at defining the positions and needs of young people in Serbia in order to better plan future activities dedicated to them as well as general policy for youth, realized by Civic initiatives in 2005, supported by IRD/USAID

- due to the national context and crisis of the whole country in 90s, and being situated in the province, this place remained very isolated and closed;
- the above mentioned population structure which comprises majority of elderly, could indicate closeness towards other cultures;
- the fact that Kosjerić is a rural area with still preserved traditional values could also support more nationalistic orientation;
- Kosjerić has almost 100 % ethnically homogenous population whose majority never travelled abroad.

Relying upon different researches and theories, we emphasize the ethnic structure as one of crucial factors for social distance in this community.<sup>39</sup> According to the results of the above mentioned research on youth status, young person from Kosjerić travels abroad once in ten years in average. As besides the *Camp*, there had not been other international cultural programs organized in Kosjerić, the chance of meeting people from other countries for Kosjerić residents were touristy visits which used to be regular before 90s due to well developed rural tourism in this



*Picture no. 2 – Kosjerić site*

area which is now being recovered slowly.

On the other hand, it is interesting to observe this community from the perspective of Balkan representations in terms of stereotyped images. Being situated in the Western Serbia, with majority of rural population, still preserved conservative and traditional attributes and well developed amateur scene, Kosjerić could serve as a good example with respect to typical stereotypes about Balkans as well as autostereotypes of Serbian people. South - Eastern Serbia,

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<sup>39</sup> For example, Vojvodina is a place where ethnic distance is not present in a great extent, and appears rarely. It was similar with Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croatia before the wars, when the distance was less than in Serbia without provinces. (Opačić and Vujadinović, n.d: 119)

in which Kosjerić is situated, is usually equalized in national-symbolic geography with Balkans and „authentic national being“, for the difference from „higher European“ Serbia on the north of the country (Živković 1997). *Guča* trumpet festival is also settled in this region, which is famous for its folk spirit, rural ambience, and images of „Balkan exotic“, and it represents the place of national self-identification which reflects „primitive Serbia“ being often connected to typical representations of Serbia in general.

Furthermore, there is no explicitly defined or implicitly recognizable local cultural policy in Kosjerić. The only public cultural institution – local Cultural center, founded and 100% financed by local authorities, covers library services, cinema, theatre, concerts and gallery programs. Its most active part is library while other programs are occasional without any strategy, or specific programs for youth and children. The only programs directed to children and youth are delivered by schools and two ethno associations staying in classical, i.e. traditional manner. All cultural programs mostly promote local culture without contacts or communication with others, rare visits or exchanges with programs outside the community, and no international programs at all. The only project which promotes intercultural dialogue is *Art Camp*, while there are no mentioning of intercultural dialogue in any local policies, documents or programs/projects. Having this on mind, we could say that the institutional framework in this community does not introduce interculturalism as a concept at all.

So, *Art Camp* is an international cultural project which neither brings the intercultural aspect, through cross-border art activities nor it deals with the inclusion of minorities within Serbian society as it is usually the case, but it has specific context.



Picture no. 3 - artifacts from visual art workshop

Furthermore, although focusing on arts, it doesn't necessarily focus its activities on narrowly professional domain, but it enables participation of wider public, especially youth whose mobility is encouraged in this way.

Thus, we could say that this project is contextualized and designed as an organized cultural action intentionally oriented to changing of values and attitudes in the community, though without pursuable methods such as campaigns or propaganda, but spontaneously, through art programs, direct contact of representatives of different cultures and their joint work.

And yet, through data analysis after structure interviewing with representatives of the organizer, partners and donors of the *Camp*, and analysis of documents, we recognized some aspects of the *Camp* that could be supportive in cultural animation, decreasing ethnic distance in the community, and reducing prejudices and stereotypes amongst its participants.

#### ***4.2. History and profile of the project***



*Picture no. 4 - Art Camp logo*

After successful realization of the first project, the group decided to register as K-Town Group which kept organizing the *Camp* every year, in addition to many other activities dedicated mostly to youth and culture.<sup>40</sup> *Art Camp* is also being financially supported by Kosjerić Municipality every year and thus it became officially accepted as a regular annual local cultural event.

*The international Art Camp – Kosjerić* is a regular annual cultural project/ event organized by a local non-profit organization from Kosjerić named K-Town Group. With the aim to make summer life in Kosjerić more culturally and socially attractive for youth, a group of students initiated and organized this international cultural event in 2002 aided by the Center for Antiwar Action from Belgrade at that time.



*Picture no. 5 - Art Camp baner*

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<sup>40</sup> More information about profile and activities of *K-Town Group* can be found on: [www.ktowngroup.org.yu](http://www.ktowngroup.org.yu)

Additionally, every year *Camp* has financial support of international donors<sup>41</sup> and in 2008 it is supported by Ministry for Youth and Sports through its regular open call for civic organizations.

*Camp* concept complies gathering of around 50 youngsters from different countries<sup>42</sup> together with youth from Serbia around various art workshops such as music, performing arts, film, literature, visual arts. Participants are not necessarily professional artists nor students of art, though that is sometimes a case, but they are all volunteers interested in practicing and performing different forms of arts, being selected through international network of voluntary services of each participating country. The project inherited the concept of voluntary work camps which are spreaded in majority of countries<sup>43</sup> and coordinated by networks of voluntary services operating in each particular country.<sup>44</sup>



Picture no. 6 - *Camp* participants during the workshops and public programs

The main aim of these type of camps is to gather young people<sup>45</sup> from different countries around some useful voluntary work in the local community, mostly being environment activities, reconstructions, festivals logistics, work with vulnerable groups. On one hand, voluntary camps have educational character providing the opportunity for intercultural learning within the group of foreign volunteers and getting to know about local culture, and on the other they bring concrete benefit to the community. However, *Art Camp* in Kosjerić has specific profile in comparison to a

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<sup>41</sup> Balkan Community Initiatives Fund, USAID, European Commission and European Cultural Foundation through regional partnering project

<sup>42</sup> In average, there are around 15 participating countries per year, mostly European ones (France, Italy, UK, Spain, Belgium, Finland, Greece etc.), but also Columbia, USA, Canada, Russia, Japan, Korea, Baltic countries, Africa, and neighboring Balkan countries

<sup>43</sup> There are more than 2000 work camps organized in the world every year. (*Young Researchers of Serbia*)

<sup>44</sup> Civic organization *Young Researchers of Serbia* serves as voluntary service for Serbia

<sup>45</sup> Although there is no age limit in selection of participants, camps are mostly attended by youngsters. Also, there are no specific selection criteria but the will to participate, basic data and motivation later.

“typical” voluntary work camp. It is one of rare work camps which put cultural animation of the community as the working task for its volunteers, and arranges accomodation in domicil houtholds which is not usual practice.<sup>46</sup> The aim is not to only introduce local culture to foreigners, but also to provide the opportunity for intercultural learning to local population. In this way, there is a strong integration and interaction with the community initiated.

At the same time, with its art programs being in the focus of the project, the *Camp* is close to the concept of acrt colony, i.e. art residency. Although community animation and mobilization were one of the primar ideas from the very begining of this project, first year program of the *Camp* was much closer to the form of art colony meaning that only foreign participants created art works working in closed workshops.



*Picture no. 7 - Mural painted during the Camp on Kosjerić high school walls; street spectacle; artifact from art workshops*

Thus they mainly stayed within the framework of classical concept of colony, including socializing and cosmopolitan flavor though, but producing mostly paintings on canvases, music, poems which were presented to public only once at the end of the program with no interaction. Afterwards, the program has been improving in terms of its effectiveness on the community, interaction with the public and multimedia approach in artworks, and it became closer to the form of art residency for its obligatory collaboration amongst artists as well as with public. However, the concept is still specific and it differs from both these forms.

Firstly, participants do not need to be neither professional artist nor students of art, but they can be amateurs, i.e. volunteers with willingness and affinity to get involved in this project.

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<sup>46</sup> Usually, volunteers are accomodates in one common space, sometimes isolated, in order to provide strong integration within the group.

Besides foreigners, art workshops are open for any interested local people who can join and participate. Due to this type of selection of participants, project provides educational component by engaging professionals in certain disciplines as workshop leaders, who deliver trainings if necessary, but primarily facilitate the process in which all individuals are creative around common work. Thus, participants work together, creating both individual and more often joint artworks and programs, which considers not only work within one workshop, but interaction among different workshops as well.



*Picture no. 8 - Camp participants gathering around the informal activities*

There is neither competitiveness nor promotion of individuals, while instead, their primary aim is to contribute to local community voluntarily, without any compensation – moreover, all participants pay their own travel expenses and modest participation fee, and only their accommodation and food is covered. All products of workshops are directed to animation of local population through art programs which now take place almost on daily bases, and mostly in outside spaces or functional places like cafes or stores, in order to attract as many citizens. Art programs tend to be interactive, opening possibility for audience not only to watch performances, but provoking them to react. In addition to art programs, there are other interactive activities being organized less formally, like international evenings, sport events, carnivals, parties, aiming at citizens' participation in the project and raising intercultural dialogue. Children and youth are particularly targeted through special programs such as children workshop<sup>47</sup> and amusing programs, while wider population is also involved through hosting foreigners in their households.

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<sup>47</sup> It used to be closed workshop for creation of children theatre, but now it also includes interactive component by connecting children with other workshop participants around different activities and programs.

As a priority of the project, organizers put its intercultural dialogue component developed both through thematised intercultural learning within the frame of art programs<sup>48</sup> but through direct contact of people belonging to different cultures as well. This is especially being achieved in a way that foreign participants are hosted by Kosjeirc citizens in their households during all the event which lasts around two weeks, as well as through serries of interactive informal activities which are directed to cultural exchange like international evenings (with preparing and serving traditional food from all participating countries, presenting typical music, dances, customs etc.), parties, excursions etc.

### ***4.3. Capacity for micro-social change***



*Picture no. 9 - Camp participants on the excursion in Sirogojno, Zlatibor*

The already created specific atmosphere around the *Camp* that lasts for two weeks intensively and every year is encouraging for making deeper contacts among different cultures.<sup>49</sup> Involvement into new group, which happens here, is one of factors for changing attitudes, while specific factors are atmosphere and status in the group, values of its membership, mass situations.<sup>50</sup>

The inclusion in the *Camp* and in the group formed around it is on voluntary basis, based on common interests (arts) without competitiveness, and equal status (when it comes to young people), which annuls factors that usually cause the distance. Furthermore, intensive direct contact among representatives of different cultures is often presented as one of ways in facing

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<sup>48</sup> Mostly through hybrid artistic forms

<sup>49</sup> There is the whole theory named *situation theory* or *theory of atmosphere* which emphasize current situation as a factor in formation of prejudices. (Rot 1994: 409-410)

<sup>50</sup> *As it could represent the important factor in resistance to changing attitudes, group can also be an important agent that influences their changes.* (Ibid: 350)

prejudices.<sup>51</sup> Joint work, activities, programs with interactive approach and accommodation of foreigners at the houses of local population could be productive in this sense enabling specific personal experiences which reduce the chance for stereotyped perception.<sup>52</sup> Community engagement reached through hosting foreign participants and interaction in programs, enables taking the same side of foreigners and locals around *Camp* activities, instead of possible situation “we” and “them”.

Even so, not any kind of contact is enough and efficient. There is a need for certain conditions to be provided. Here we highlight art programs and informal activities which encompass thematization of identity and intercultural dialogue, but they are not explicit and do not consider any discussion about it, giving the opportunity for changes to happen on individual



level.<sup>53</sup> For example, there is the informal program organized every year named *International evening*, which gathers all foreign participants and Kosjerić citizens in one space where they present the culture of each participating country to each other through food, music, dances, pictures etc. This program is the most popular and the most visited of all *Camp* programs.

Picture no. 10 - *Camp* participants on the excursion in Mokra Gora

And yet, analysis of data confirms the influence of the *Camp* to social changes, at least when it comes to narrow group of individuals gathered around the organization of the *Camp*, as well as foreign participants. We could say that the effects of the *Camp* in this respect are triple: it enabled very close long term relations among some youngsters belonging to different cultures; it provided better youth exchange and opportunities for mobility of some young people from

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<sup>51</sup> *The less information we have about the individual, the stronger will be our tendency to apply group characteristics to him/her. (Psihologija međugrupnih odnosa - Predrasude i stereotipi, n.d: 213)*

<sup>52</sup> *As much as the influence of prejudices disappears and their rigidity decrease, stereotypes are closer to emotionally neutral and assessments of national characteristics. (Rot 1994: 406)*

<sup>53</sup> *Personal, direct contact is more efficient when it comes to changing attitudes than mass communication tools. (Rot 1994: 369)*

Kosjerić; it inspired some foreign youngsters to expand their knowledge about Serbia and explore its culture.

Thus, for example, there are two marriages and one engagement emerged between local people and foreigners (British, Turkish and French), one of which moved abroad and other two stayed to live in Serbia. Thanks to their voluntary contribution in *Camp* organization, two youngsters from Kosjerić were invited by Voluntary Service of Serbia to participate in voluntary programs abroad – as long term volunteers and camp leaders in France, Spain and Italy. Also, it happens that Kosjerić residents who were hosting foreigners or participating at *Camp* activities visit their friends in other countries (Japan, Italy, Spain, Malta, Macedonia, Turkey, UK) as well as foreign participants get back to Serbia making private visits to their friends from the *Camp*. Some of them decided to come to Serbia for the reason of studying Serbian language, doing their internship, exploring Serbian culture, or even living in Serbia for some time.

However, we can not conclude on eventual significant social changes caused by *Camp* before analyzing findings of quantitative research which implies measuring of ethnic distance of local residents, and qualitative research which explores stereotypes of foreign participants.

## V Research findings: Openness of Kosjerić citizens towards different cultures

### 5.1. Research presentation

The research that represents the basis of this paper is done as field survey and took place in the period August 1<sup>st</sup> - 15<sup>th</sup> 2008 in Kosjerić during the implementation of the project in question - *The Seventh International Art Camp - Kosjerić*. The research included 200 adult respondents - citizens of Kosjerić, who were divided into two groups - samples. The first - experimental sample included 100 citizens who have connection with the *Camp*, and it is formed intentionally from official organizers' list balancing the level and the way of participation.<sup>54</sup> The other group - control sample, consisted of other 100 Kosjerić citizens chosen according to probability sampling technique. Respondents in this group were contacted in their households, choosing every third household, and the only eliminatory criterion in this case was the fact that they participated in the *Camp*.<sup>55</sup>

The total sample (200 respondents) consisted of 50% of male and 50% of female respondents who declared themselves Serbian citizens in 97% (the rest was Montenegrin and uncommitted), and orthodox practitioners in 95.5% (the rest were those who were indifferent). Among those 200 respondents 33.5% were young people (from 18 to 30), 33.0% middle aged (from 31 to 50) and 33.5% elderly (over 50). The level of education of the total sample is as follows: 9.5% are those who completed or partially attended primary school, 52% completed secondary school and 38.5% enrolled or completed the university education.

The idea of the research designed in this way was to compare these two sub-samples in terms of attitudes towards different nations. Also, the intention was to assess the impact of different levels and ways of participation in the *Camp* on the attitudes of representatives within the experimental sample. The unique questionnaire was used for both sub-samples consisting of different sets of questions. One part of the questionnaire contained questions related to the *Camp*, citizens' familiarity with it, ways and level of their participation, contacts with foreign participants, and assessment of certain activities at the *Camp*. The second part contained questions related to citizens' experience with representatives of different nations, traveling

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<sup>54</sup> We will use the term "camp" group or sub-sample further in this work.

<sup>55</sup> We will use the term "citizens" group of sub-sample further in this work.

abroad and their feeling of being attached to different localities (starting from their own community to Europe). The third part consisted of statements expressing different values such as nationalism, traditionalism, authoritarianism, tolerance towards different cultures which were measured by Lickert's scale. The fourth part of the questionnaire consisted of one open ended question asking the respondents to describe characteristics of different nations: Roma, Croats, Bosniacs, Russians, Greeks, Germans, Americans, Japanese, Australians and Brazilians, in order to conclude on the ethnic stereotypes. Finally, the fifth part consisted of basic socio-demographic data related to the place of origin and residence, nationality, religion, education and employment status.<sup>56</sup>

## ***5.2 Discussion and interpretation of the results***

### *5.2.a. Openness towards different cultures according to the connection with the Camp – comparison of the two sub-samples*

Before comparison of data, it is important to mention the difference between the two sub-samples in terms of social structure. Both groups had the same gender balance (50% of male and 50% of female) while the age, education and occupation were not completely equally balanced. Due to the fact that Kosjerić is inhabited mostly by elderly population as well as the usage of probability sample, in the “citizens” group we have 38 % of elderly, 30% of middle aged and 32% of young respondents. On the other hand, as the *Camp* is primarily devoted to young population some of whom now belong to middle aged group, it happened that the “camp” group consisted of 35% of youngsters, 36% of middle aged and 29% of elderly. Thus, the average age in the “camp” group is 38.7 while in the “citizens” group is 43.5 years. Similarly, the level of education is higher in the “camp” group than in the “citizens” group (55% versus 22% of those who have education higher than secondary school level) due to the fact that those who are more educated have greater affinity for these kind of activities and rather approach and participate in it. Likewise, the analysis of occupation showed similar relation between the two groups. Based on this, we can say that the samples are representative for respective population.

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<sup>56</sup> The questionnaire form is submitted in the appendix of this paper.

In order to conclude on the openness towards different cultures, nationalistic values complex and tolerance towards different cultures are measured through 26 items using Lickert's scale for expressing agreement or disagreement with a certain statement.<sup>57</sup> These statements were classified into five groups, each consisted of 5 or 6 indicators, which express certain value: 1) ethnic nationalism; 2) traditionalism; 3) authoritarianism; 4) tolerance towards different cultures; 5) soft nationalism. Apart from this, as one of possible factors for the openness towards different cultures we also measured citizens' feelings of being attached to their local community, again expressed through five statements and using the same scale. Additionally, expressions of stereotypes about different nations were taken in consideration with this respect.

Yet, comparisons of two samples in terms of expressed values showed that there is a significant difference between two groups regarding all values except of tolerance towards different cultures. "Camp" group showed significantly lower feeling of being attached to local community<sup>58</sup>, less nationalistic orientation (both in case of ethnic and soft nationalism)<sup>59</sup>, less traditionalism<sup>60</sup> and authoritarianism<sup>61</sup> whereas there is no relevant difference between the groups when expressing tolerance towards different cultures. However, the strongest positive correlation of those who had no contact with *Camp* stands for both types of nationalism and for authoritarianism. The comparison of expressed values between the two groups is presented in the tables that follow, given in percentage. Due to relatively small sub-samples, as well as for the reason of the easier and clearer presentation and interpretation of the results, we recoded the original scales used in the research and the analysis, and made three grades scale for presenting the expression of certain values: agreement; indecision; disagreement.<sup>62</sup>

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<sup>57</sup> The scale is as follows: 5-Complitley agree, 4 - Agree, 3 - Neither agree nor disagree, 2 - Disagree, 1 - Completely disagree.

<sup>58</sup> Correlation coefficient is 0.173

<sup>59</sup> Correlation coefficient for ethnic nationalism is 0.404, and for soft nationalism 0.474

<sup>60</sup> Correlation coefficient is 0.267

<sup>61</sup> Correlation coefficient is 0.409

<sup>62</sup> Firstly, we recoded the scales for each value measuring, from those consisted of 20 or 24 grades (based on adding each of 5 or 6 indicators' values which varied from 1 to 5) into shorter ones with only 5 grades, i.e. we made Lickert's scale again. Then, we recoded those scales into three grade scales, presented in the tables. However, all the analysis including correlations is done according to the first type of scales in order to get more precise data, while the last type of scales is used only here, for the purposes of more simple and clear data interpretation.

Table no. 1 - *Feeling of being attached to local community in relation to the connection with the Camp, given in percentage*

Sub-sample	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Total
“camp”	17	27	56	100
“citizens”	24	36.5	39.5	100
Total	20.4	31.6	48	100

We can see from the table that “camp” group respondents feel less attached to local community. More than half of them expressed disagreement with statements which refer to feeling of being attached to local community in comparison to only 17% of those who feel attached. However, the difference between the groups is not extreme when it comes to expressing positive or negative relation, as both of groups tended to give answers concentrated around the center with approximately one third of the respondents. Generally, we could say that respondents didn’t show extreme feeling of being attached to local community.

Table no. 2 - *Ethnic nationalism in relation to the connection with the Camp, given in percentage*

Sub-sample	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Total
“camp”	10	25	65	100
“citizens”	34.3	34.3	31.3	100
Total	22.2	29.6	48.2	100

It is interesting to notice the important difference between the two groups when expressing agreement and disagreement: only 10% of “camp” respondents agree with ethnic nationalism statements versus 34.3% of “citizens” who declare the same, whereas they rather disagree with them in comparison to “citizens”. Such, majority of “camp” sample respondents (65%) expresses disagreement, while, on the contrary, approximately the same percentage of “citizens” (68.6 %) either agrees or is indecisive.

Table no. 3 - *Traditionalism in relation to the connection with the Camp, given in percentage*

Sub-sample	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Total
“camp”	4	23	73	100
“citizens”	17	36	47	100
Total	10.5	29.5	60	100

Here we don't have such extreme differences between the samples like it was in case of nationalism. We see that both groups showed tendency to disagree with traditional values statements, except that majority of “camp” group gave negative answers which is not the case with “citizens”, who gave positive answers in 17% while the rest were either in the middle or disagreed.

Table no. 4 - *Authoritarianism in relation to the connection with the Camp, given in percentage*

Sub-sample	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Total
“camp”	12	37	51	100
“citizens”	45	37	18	100
Total	28.5	37	34.5	100

We see that “citizens” expressed far more authoritarianism comparing to “camp” group respondents. As we have the same percentage of those who are in the middle in both groups, it is easy to notice remarkable difference when analyzing positive, i.e. negative answers. While “camp” group mostly tended to disagree (in 51%), “citizens” agreed with authoritarian statements in 45%.

Table no. 5 - *Tolerance towards different cultures in relation to the connection with the Camp, given in percentage*

Sub-sample	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Total
“camp”	95	4	1	100
“citizens”	89.7	8.2	2.1	100
Total	92.4	6.1	1.5	100

Although, as we already mentioned, there is no significant difference between the two groups, it is very interesting to see the results with this respect. We can see that only 1.5% of all respondents disagree with tolerant statements towards other nations. Additionally, which is not obvious from this table, analysis on the five grades scale showed that none of respondents neither from “camp” nor from “citizens” group completely disagrees. At the same time, great majority of all respondents answered positively to tolerant statements (95% of “camp” and 89.7% of “citizens”), which indicates that the whole sample showed quite tolerance towards other cultures.

Table no. 6 - *Soft nationalism in relation to the connection with the Camp, given in percentage*

Sub-sample	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Total
“camp”	58	37	5	100
“citizens”	91.8	8.2	0	100
Total	74.6	22.8	2.5	100

It is remarkable that this table shows the greatest tendency towards positive answers in general which means that all respondents at the sample expressed quite some agreement with soft nationalistic statements (58% of “camp” and 91.8% of “citizens” respondents). However, again, like in case of ethnic nationalism, here we see that “citizens” group is much more nationalistic oriented. None of them disagreed with soft nationalism attitudes in comparison to 5% of “camp” respondents, and only 8.2% of them are indecisive versus 37% of those from “camp” group.

As expected, age and education also showed significant correlation with nationalistic values complex (nationalism, traditionalism, authoritarianism), but not with feeling of being attached to the community or with tolerance towards different cultures. Although previous contacts with different nations showed significant positive correlation with connection with the *Camp* (i.e. those who are connected to the *Camp* had more contacts with different nations excluding the experience from the *Camp*), neither this factor nor traveling abroad show significant correlation with the openness towards different cultures within the total sample. Thus, we would rather bring these results in a relation to the higher social status, i.e. education and occupation of “camp” group, then to direct connection with their values and attitudes. Also, we should have on mind that these contacts and travels were rather occasional then regular, which do not make them relevant for significant influence to the values and attitudes.

Stereotypes are measured through expressions in a way that each respondent at the survey was given the opportunity to characterize “typical” representative of above mentioned ten nations through one positive and one negative characteristic by using short phrase consisted of one or two words constructed by him/her self. In the analysis, given expressions are treated only after positive and negative characteristics for each nation are grouped according to their similarity. This way of asking open question was more complicated for the analysis, but it gave us a chance to consider not only quality of expressions, but also the tendency of respondents to give these kinds of expressions at all. Thus, we also considered the answers like “don’t know”, “do not have any (positive/ negative characteristic)”, “do not want to characterize”, “positive/ negative attitude in general”.

What we could noticed at first sight was the fact that “citizens” group had far more tendency to give “don’t know” answer, as well as to express general attitude towards certain nation without specifying when it came to positive characteristics (this was not a case with negative characteristics). The percentage of giving “don’t know” answer for each nation vary from 22% to 80% in case of “citizens”, being the most frequent around 30-40 % in average. On the other hand, it happened that “camp” group respondents more often didn’t want to characterize the nations in this way when comparing to “citizens” group (this percentage fluctuated around 10% in case of “camp” group). And, what is more important is the explanation that followed this kind of answer. In case of “camp” group the reason for refusing to answer was always that they were aware of stereotyped way of thinking (whether being able to formulate it as stereotype or

not). Otherwise, in case of “citizens” it was much more that they refused to give negative characteristics because they felt uncomfortable with that, or especially when it was about both positive and negative characteristics of neighbors (Croat, Bosniac, Roma) in order to avoid commenting on “politically sensitive issues”.<sup>63</sup>

Generally, there are no many differences between the two groups in giving concrete characterizations of each particular nation, especially in case of those nations who are the least politically connected to Serbia and the most neutral in the context of common sense in Serbia. All respondents at the survey expressed usual stereotypes about those nations. For example, Roma is mostly characterized as “cheerful, relaxed, bohemian, talented for music” and similar in 40.5%, and at the same time as “dirty, untidy, negligent” in 27.5%, “lazy, indolent, pauper” in 18.5% and “uneducated, illiterate, uncivilized” in 9%. Russian is positively described as “orthodox, Slavic, close to Serbian, patriot, with collective spirit” in 19.5%, and negatively as “alcoholic, libidinous” in 12%, while also as “selfish, self-interest oriented” in 11% (39.5% said “don’t know” for negative characteristic). Greek is positively characterized as “cheerful, hedonistic, talented for music” in 14%, “hospitable, open, benevolent” in 13.5%, “similar to Serb, brother” in 12.5%, and negatively as “selfish, skimpy, self-interest oriented” in 12.5% (52.5% answered “don’t know”). Japanese is positively described as “busy, precise, disciplined, committed” in 39% whereas concrete negative characteristics are not given in significant percent (“camp” respondents said “fanatic, too self-controlled, alienated” in 14% whereas even 94% of “citizens” didn’t give any concrete characteristic<sup>64</sup>). Australian is positively described as “hard working, successful, persistent” in 6% by all survey respondents, and as “friendly, tolerant, cosmopolite” in 8% by “camp” group, whereas 85.5% of total sample didn’t give any concrete positive characterization (in case of negative characteristics even 93% of all respondents didn’t give any concrete characteristic, and only 1% of “citizens” answered concretely). Brazilian is positively described as “cheerful, talented for music” in 15.5%, “passionate, tempered” in 8.5%, “sportsman” in 8.5% and “generous, open” in 5.5%, and negatively as “uneducated, poor, lazy” in 13% but only by “camp” group whereas “citizens” didn’t give any concrete characteristic in 94.9%.

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<sup>63</sup> We are aware that the frequency of expressing stereotypes on total sample could also depend on the interviewer’s ability and effort to make a participant formulate it, as well as the fact that questions related to stereotypes could be suggestive, but still we see these tendencies as significant for our interpretation.

<sup>64</sup> Which means that they either answered “don’t know”, “there is no”, “do not want to characterize” or expressed negative attitude in general

However, we could notice some differences in case of neighboring nations and those who are closely related to Serbian context in political sense. Thus, 15% of “citizens” said that Croat doesn’t have any positive characteristic in comparison to 6% of “camp” group. They also tended to avoid the answer (in 55%) or gave general attitude (in 9%) rather than specific attributes whereas “camp” group described Croat as “patriot, united” in 13%, “educated, cultured, progressive” also in 13%, and “reliable, proud, persistent” in 9%. For the difference of “citizens” group, 5% of “camp” group see Croat as someone who is similar and close to Serbian in a positive sense. There are no important differences in case of negative characteristics except that “citizens’ group again remained indifferent (in 54%) while the most frequent negative characteristics in both groups were “oriented against Serbs” in 14.5%, “nationalist” in 18% and “envious, selfish, hypocrite” in 9%.

Bosniac is positively described by total sample as “witty, generous, relaxed” in 16%, “religious, traditional” in 8.5% and as “reliable, honest” in 7.5% (40% answered “don’t know”), as well as “religious fanatic, chauvinist, nationalist” in 22.5% (45% gave “don’t know” answer and 10.5% refused to characterize). The only important difference was that 11% of “citizens” said that Bosniac doesn’t have any positive characteristic whereas 7% of “camp” group said that he doesn’t have negative characteristic versus 3% of “citizens”.

In case of American, “camp” respondents gave much more positive characteristics whereas 23% of “citizens” said that there is no any. “Citizens” either gave general positive attitude (9%) or attributes related to socio-economic issues such as “progressive, rich, high standard, well organized” (in 12%) while “camp” group, apart from giving these same characteristics (in 15%), rather used personal attitudes such as “tolerate, cosmopolite, democrat” (in 10%) or “spontaneous, casual, free, relaxed” (in 11%). When it came to negative characteristics 20% of “citizens” group described American as “powerful, judging, cruel, malevolent, sadist” in comparison to 15% of “camp” group who said the same. Again, more “camp” group respondents gave concrete personal attitudes such as “uneducated, uninformed, superficial, narrow-minded” (in 17% versus 6% of “citizens”), or “materialist, selfish” (in 10% versus 7% of “citizens”). Additionally, 9% of “citizens” expressed general negative attitude versus 4% of “camp” respondents, and also gave specific expressions describing American’s relation towards Serbian “oriented against Serbs, made bad things to us” in 10% while only 2% of “camp” group did the same.

In case of Russian, “citizens” were more general (in 13%) and in larger percent (22%) they used attributes alluding to connection with Serbia like “Slaves, close to Serbian, orthodox, patriot, united”. They also in 18% claimed that Russian doesn’t have any negative characteristic.

When describing German, there were no much differences except that “citizens” were less precise and in case of negative characteristics they tended to emphasize political attributes connected to historical relations with Serbia such as “enemy, fascistic, conqueror” (in 16%) while “camp” group was closer to personal characteristics like “cold, rigid, closed” (in 27%) or “selfish, cunning, conceited” (in 11%).<sup>65</sup>

How could we then explain the fact that nationalistic values complex significantly varies according to connection with the *Camp*, age and education, but tolerance and stereotypes do not? Total sample, including both groups, showed that all residents are quite tolerant towards different cultures. Here, we could think of characteristics of the community in general which could be the factors of influencing these similar attitudes especially having on mind the fact that 83.5 % of total sample was born in Kosjerić or near village and spend their all life there except short temporary stays in other places. As we already mentioned, Kosjerić is ethnically homogeneous environment<sup>66</sup> whose residents do not have experience of co-living with representatives of other cultures in their own environment. As frequency of travels abroad and contacts with different cultures (excluding *Camp* experience) in this survey didn’t show significant correlation with any values measured on the total sample, we could conclude that these short and temporary kinds of contacts were not enough to significantly influence value orientation of residents who don’t have intensive contact with other cultures in terms of their openness towards others. (To add to this argument, there will later be explained the correlation of values and stereotypes with the level of participation at the *Camp* and type and intensity of contacts made during the *Camp* within “camp” sub-sample). On the other hand, Kosjerić residents didn’t have much involvement in the recent Balkan conflicts - there were no direct consequences of the wars to this community except of general socio-economic crises and values promoted through national media, whereas very few Kosjerić residents participated in the war and there almost were no refugees inhabiting this community.

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<sup>65</sup> Here, we should again have on mind the age difference between the two groups, i.e. the fact that there were more elderly in “citizens” group who remember Second World War.

<sup>66</sup> This is also confirmed by our total sample (97% Serbians).

Analysis of each separate statement within the group of statements expressing tolerance towards different nation could also possibly help us in answering this question. Tolerance is measured through six statements/ indicators: 1) I would not mind if people of other nationalities move to our town; 2) I wish I could have more contacts with people of other nationalities; 3) It is good having the opportunity to consume foreign movies, music and literature in our environment; 4) Serbia should strengthen its relationship and cooperation with other countries; 5) Serbia would advance at a higher pace if it followed world trends; 6) It seems to me sometimes that we are to blame for our bad image in the world.

It is interesting that there is significant correlation of connection with the *Camp* and value orientation in case of the first three statements, whereas in case of second three statements there is no significant difference between the two groups.<sup>67</sup> We can notice that last three statements refer to Serbia and its economic status and political relations on international level, whereas first three are related to personal experience with other cultures be that people or artifacts. Thus, “camp” group showed greater wish to get in contact with other cultures than “citizens” group whereas there is no big difference when expressing attitudes towards the issues related to Serbia. Probably, the usage of Bogardus’ scale for measuring ethnic distance through expressions of readiness to establish relations with different level of closeness with other cultures would give us clearer picture about Kosjerić citizens with this respect.

The findings we raised about the expression of stereotypes are also indicative with this respect. The lack of stereotyped expressions by “citizens” we see as a consequence of their disability to give characteristics due to lack of contacts with different cultures, interest for them and lack of ability to articulate their thinking due to their lower level of education and age factor. This conclusion could be supported by the fact that all respondents in the survey, especially those from “citizens” group, had extreme tendency to give “don’t know” answer when it came to them most remote cultures in terms of contacts and familiarity such as Japanese, Brazilian, and especially Australian. (For example, in case of Australian’s negative characteristics 80% of “citizens” gave “don’t know” answer). Also, they all gave more positive than negative characteristics in these cases, but rarely specifying some personal characteristics, but rather generalizing their attitudes and giving socio-political allusions. Furthermore, some less tolerant attitudes by “citizens” group were expressed in case of neighboring nations and those who are

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<sup>67</sup> Correlation coefficients are: -0.170 for the first statement, -0.209 for the second, and -0.231 for the third one.

politically connected to Serbian context, like stronger nationalistic expressions are showed through characterization of Russian and Greek. In these cases it happened that they do not describe the nation, but its relation towards “us” (Serbian).

Having on mind all these factors and findings, we could say that tolerant expressions could rather be understood as ignorance, disinterest and lack of experiences with other cultures, both positive and negative ones, then the real readiness to get in contact with them and exchange cultures. Thus we would give the priority to nationalistic values orientation when judging on the attitudes towards different cultures, taking into consideration, at the same time, that there is no significant xenophobia among Kosjerić citizens in spite of nationalistic orientation expressed in “citizens” group. Nevertheless, we can take this as an argument for potentials of this community and chance for further development of intercultural dialogue through *Camp* project among its citizens. Moreover, nationalistic orientation in parallel to this ignorance towards other cultures tells us about the necessity to do so in order to change this situation.

#### *5.2.b. Openness towards different cultures in relation to particular aspects of the Camp – Analysis within the sub-samples*

Aiming at getting more precise findings with regards to the influences of the *Camp* on the openness of its participants towards different nations, we will purposely concentrate here on the analysis of the experimental (“camp”) sub-sample of our survey. In this way we intend to conclude on the most important elements of the *Camp* as a cultural project with intercultural dialogue component and its effectiveness in this sense. Attitudes towards different cultures are measured through the same indicators like it is previously explained, which are in this case crossed with variables which determinate the level of engagement at the *Camp* and the intensity of interaction with foreign *Camp* participants.<sup>68</sup> Additionally, expressions about the atmosphere and activities at the *Camp* as well as education, age and other socio-demographic factors were taken in consideration.

According to the level of the engagement we formed two groups out of those who were more, i.e. less engaged. Those who were engaged in at least one of three ways: 1) organization, 2)

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<sup>68</sup> Frequency of participation at the *Camp* was also measured (scaled as: one year, several years, every year), but as it didn't show significant correlation with expression of values, we concentrated on the level and way of participation.

participation in art workshops, 3) hosting foreign participants, were treated as “more engaged”. Those who participated in one or more of following ways: performing on public programs; audience on public programs; family member was involved in the organization/ workshop/ hosting foreigners, were treated as “less engaged”. According to the intensity of interaction with foreigner participants, sub-sample is split into two groups - “less intensive interaction” and “more intensive interaction”. Those who had one of following ways of contacts with foreigners: 1) intensive contact during *Camp* activities, 2) joint work in art workshops, 3) having everyday contact as host, were gathered in “more intensive interaction” group. Those who had one or more of following experiences: making contacts with foreigners during public programs; watching their performances; meeting them in the town; occasionally talking to them informally, were gather in “more intensive interaction” group.

Using the same principle like in comparing “citizens” and “camp” group, we came to the conclusion that those who were more engaged and had more intensive interaction with foreign participants showed larger openness towards different nations. The results showed that the level of engagement in the *Camp* significantly correlates with nationalistic values complex (including all particular values, i.e. nationalism, traditionalism, authoritarianism)<sup>69</sup> as well as with tolerance towards different cultures<sup>70</sup>, while there is no significant correlation with feeling of being attached to local community. Similarly to the findings we had in comparison of two sub-samples, it is again notable here that correlation is the least for tolerance towards different nation, and the most in case of nationalism. Interaction with foreign participants significantly correlates with ethnic nationalism<sup>71</sup>, authoritarianism<sup>72</sup> and soft nationalism<sup>73</sup> whereas there is no significant correlation with traditionalism, tolerance towards different nations and feeling of being attached to local community.

Analysis of stereotyped expressions also brought us similar results like in case of comparing sub-samples. There are no significant differences in terms of their specific characteristics expressions between the two groups that we formed according to the level of participation and the intensity of interaction with foreigners. The differences that we noticed in

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<sup>69</sup> Correlation coefficients are: ethnic nationalism -0.392; traditionalism -0.250; authoritarianism -0.280; soft nationalism -0.312

<sup>70</sup> Correlation coefficient is 0.226

<sup>71</sup> Correlation coefficient is -0.284

<sup>72</sup> Correlation coefficient is -0.214

<sup>73</sup> Correlation coefficient is -0.268

both cases were that those who were less engaged/had less intensive interaction gave more “don’t know” answers while the others had more precise descriptions. Also, it happens that those who were more engaged/had more intensive interaction more often refused to characterize nations in stereotypes.

Furthermore, frequency of the level of engagement showed that there were 44% less engaged and 56% more engaged respondents which can tell us that those who get in contact with the *Camp* generally tend to be intensively and closely engaged in its activities. The same conclusion comes from measuring frequency of participation at the *Camp* which showed that there were 46% of those who were active every year, 46% of those who were engaged several years, and only 8% of those who were active for only one year (including those who have approached to the *Camp* this year for the first time). This comparison also showed that mostly young people are strongly attracted by *Camp* activities, especially management, workshops and hosting participants, whereas elderly are usually getting involved through visiting programs as audience or being hosts to foreigners either directly or through the involvement of their children.

Table no. 7 - *Level of engagement in the Camp in relation to participants’ age, given in percentage*

Participant’s age	“Less engaged”	“More engaged”	Total
The young	22.86	77.14	100
Middle aged	58.33	41.67	100
Elderly	37.93	62.07	100
Total	44	56	100

We see that almost all young people who got in touch with the *Camp* (77.14%) became more engaged in its activities, middle aged are rather less engaged and elderly are almost equally balanced in terms of the level of engagement. As for middle aged we should have on mind that there are lots of parents among them whose children participate in children workshop while they themselves are not directly involved but rather stay as an audience.

Likewise, “camp” group also showed tendency for strong interaction with foreigner participants - 68% had more and 32% less intensive interaction with foreigners. Again, youngsters had more intensive contacts with foreigners then the rest of the group.

Table no. 8 - *Interaction with foreign participants in relation to participant’s age, given in percentage*

Participant’s age	“Less intensive interaction”	“More intensive interaction”	Total
The young	17.14	82.86	100
Middle aged	41.66	58.34	100
Elderly	37.93	62.07	100
Total	32	68	100

Similarly, almost all youngsters who got in touch with the *Camp* had more interaction with foreigners (82.86%), as majority of middle aged and elderly interacted more intensively.

When commenting on the interest for participation at the *Camp* according to the age, in both cases we should have on mind language barrier that makes the obstacle in communication as very rarely happen that elderly or middle aged speak English. The most probably, these facts also caused very few contacts with foreigners made during the public programs although they tended to be interactive (those who only participated as the audience at the programs very rarely came in contact with foreigners). And again, analyzing social structure of the two groups we came to conclusion that more educated people rather get involved in the *Camp* activities, while there is no significant correlation in case of making closer contacts with foreigners.<sup>74</sup> We find that all these facts open possibility for stronger community mobilization with involvement of more people in the *Camp* with respect to its intercultural dialogue aspect, no matter of their education and age. This could primarily be achieved through intensification of interaction during public programs as 97% of all people involved in the *Camp* visit those programs.

All “camp” group respondents at the survey were also given the opportunity to assess specific activities/aspects of the *Camp* in terms of their attraction for them. There were four types

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<sup>74</sup> Correlation coefficient between the level of engagement and education is 0.258

of activities offered: 1) art programs; 2) interactive public programs/performances; 3) entertaining activities; 4) spending time with foreigners, and for each category there was a grading scale from 1 to 10. There was no much difference between the grades that respondents gave to each particular activity - mostly they evaluated all the activities with high marks in terms of attraction (for each category, 10 was chosen by more than 50% of those who answered). However, not all respondents assessed each activity because it happened that they were not involved (not attending) in some of them. Thus, 97% of “camp” group respondents were attending art programs, 95% of them visited interactive public programs, whereas 64% joined entertaining programs and 70% was spending time with foreigners. And again, all youngsters participated in all types of activities, whereas elderly and middle aged rarely experienced last two types of activities due to their affinities and also language barrier. When comparing the way of participation, we see that 47% of all “camp” group hosted foreign participants and 97% visited public programs. It is interesting to mention that although not all “camp” respondents experienced “spending time with foreigners” (70% of them), this aspect of the Camp is assessed with the highest marks (64% of 10s, 8.5% of 9s and 8.5% of 8s) which tells us that once they get in closer contact with foreigners, they become very attracted by this aspect of the *Camp*.

Apart from the analysis of “camp” group respondents with respect to their relation and assessment of *Camp* and its activities, it is interesting to see what were the impressions of those “citizens” who had only heard of the *Camp*. Firstly, the fact that 87% of Kosjerić citizens who were respondents in the non-probability sample have heard of the *Camp* is already important for us. Additionally, it happened that during the field survey 13 people (13% of sub-sample) chosen in a non-probability technique were connected to the *Camp* and felled under “camp” group. Also, the same thing happened few more times, but the interviewers skipped those cases. This tells us that the *Camp* is well known in the community and it succeeded in reaching large number of its residents. We offered “citizens” to assess the atmosphere around the *Camp* according to their general impressions. There were 10 answers offered, 5 of which describing the atmosphere in a positive and 5 in a negative way. Every respondent could have given more than one answer. It happened that 4 of those 87 who heard of the *Camp* couldn’t given their opinion due to insufficient information they had. Other 83 citizens gave mostly positive answers (in 93%), whereas only 7% gave negative comments: 1.2% boring (which is only 1 person), 1.2% aggressive (1 person) and strange/weird (4.6%). Usually they gave more than one of positive

answers: exiting (32.5%); interesting (55.4%); friendly (41%); joyful (33.7%); unusual/extraordinary (21.7%). Hence, the most of “citizens” expressed their impression that *Camp* spreads interesting and friendly atmosphere which we think is a good basis for further animation of Kosjerić citizens to get closely involved in its activities and programs. Expectably, “camp” group positively assessed the atmosphere in most cases; describing it as interesting (62%), unusual (51%), and mainly they characterized it as friendly (in 63%).

The way citizens find out about the *Camp* could also be relevant. The following table shows the channels through which respondents found out about the *Camp*:

Table no. 9 - *Channels for being informed in relation to the connection with the Camp, given in percentage*

Sub-sample	Through media	From family member	From friends	Directly from the organizer	Total
“camp”	7	11	20	62	100
“citizens”	23.3	19.8	50	7	100
Total	14.4	15.1	33.9	36.6	100

As we can see, the most of “camp” respondents were informed directly by organizers (62% of them), 20% of them heard about it from friends, 11% from family member and only 7% from media. On the other hand, 50% of “citizens” who heard about the *Camp* from their friends, 19.8% from family member, 23.3% from local media and only 7% directly from the organizers. This also tells us that animation is the best way to attract participants and mobilize local community either directly or indirectly through people that are already involved in the *Camp* activities.

### 5.3. Key findings and conclusions

Finally, referring to our hypothesis, we can not conclude surely on the level of contribution of *Art Camp* to the changing of attitudes towards different cultures and decrement of xenophobia in the community. As we here implemented correlative research in natural conditions, which could only indirectly indicate potential causers, but can not aver which influential factors are crucial or important, we can not claim decidedly that the *Camp* significantly influenced opening of Kosjerić community towards other cultures. We need to have on mind other factors such as socio-demographic, but also improvement of situation in Serbia in last years in terms of nationalism and xenophobia.

However, what we can deduce from this research is that Kosjerić citizens who are familiar with the *Camp* have more opened attitudes towards different cultures than those who were not in contact with it. Additionally, the openness towards different cultures increases along with one's involvement in the *Camp* and interaction with its foreign participants. This at least means that those with open attitudes have affinity to participate at the *Camp* and interact with foreigners, which also confirms that the *Camp* promotes intercultural understanding. i.e. the intercultural component of the project is effective in this sense. This is even more important when we have on mind that the community (total sample) showed quite remarkable level of soft nationalism, and at the same time quite some tolerance towards other cultures, but also ignorance in case of those who were not involved in the *Camp*. Hence, we primarily recognize the potential of the projects for intercultural learning and rising intercultural understanding. Instead of changing the attitudes and values, we would rather emphasize here the capacity of the *Camp* to raise awareness of other cultures and understanding of differences in this ethnically homogeneous community. The results which indicated that the *Camp* is well known among all Kosjerić citizens, as well as their positive comments about its atmosphere which is in most cases described as interesting and friendly, are in favor of this potential.

Furthermore, we see that the *Camp* specifically affected young and more educated people. Once they got in touch with the *Camp*, they found themselves deeply involved, especially through direct engagement in the organization, participation in workshops and/or hosting foreign participants. Usually, young people participated at/ attended all the activities of the *Camp*. Still,

there is a question how to engage middle aged and elderly more intensively, and how to attract less educated and new citizens.

As we concluded that intercultural approach, i. e. interaction with foreigners was quite popular within the “camp” group, while spending time with foreigners is assessed as the most attractive component, we believe that the focus of the project and all *Camp* programs should be on this component. Following the situation that almost all people connected to the *Camp* follow art and other public programs, and not many of them communicate with *Camp* participants on those occasions, we think that programs should be more interactive in terms of provoking contacts between foreigners and local population. This is especially facilitated by the fact that the age appeared to be less significant factor when it came to contacts with foreigners in comparison to the engagement in the *Camp* activities. So, there should be some extra efforts put in elderly and middle aged audience animation as well as their engagement in *Camp* activities. This is especially important due to the fact that the level of engagement showed somewhat larger correlation with the openness towards different cultures than the interaction with foreign participants. Accordingly, some special programs/ workshops for middle aged and elderly could be introduced.

We see that audience animation and community mobilization around the *Camp* was the most successful in direct way, when organizers themselves informed and attracted people to participate at/ attend the programs. Although promotion of the *Camp* is well done as the most of people in the community heard about it, there should be more animation done on the part of organizers and those who are already engaged, especially directed to elderly, middle aged and less educated people.

Therefore, we could say that the *Camp* raises friendly atmosphere in the community, develops intercultural dialogue among people involved, and has potentials to be developed in a way that it significantly contributes in developing intercultural understanding among Kosjerić citizens.

## **VI Research findings: Construction and deconstruction of stereotyped images of Serbia**

### ***6.1. Research presentation***

The second part of our research implied examination of stereotypes about Serbia/ Serbian culture on the part of foreigners. This is conducted through analysis of data which are collected through six in-depth interviews with foreign participants at the *Camp*. The interviewees were selected from the group of former *Camp* participants including different project years, who are all young people between 19 and 35. Aiming at discovering the perception of Serbian culture depending on the *Camp* experience, all the interviews covered following topics: origin, occupation, interests of participant in his/ her own country; motivation for applying and participating at the *Camp* including information about Serbia and the *Camp* before coming; participant's main role and activities at the *Camp*; general experience with the *Camp*, host families, community; general experience during the stay in Serbia including other visits/ activities; established relations with Serbian people, contacts with them afterwards; general opinion about Serbia before and after coming to the *Camp*.

Additionally, interviews with representatives of the organization, their comments, review of public programs, as well as project archive with saved participants' feedback and press clipping were taken in consideration. This helped us in certain assessments and especially in widening group of comprised people. However, in this way we can not bring general conclusions due to insufficient number of people involved. So, we would rather present and discuss the picture we met, pointing out the most significant aspects with respect to our issue. We are aware of the fact that there should be more detailed research done in order to bring general and reliable conclusions.

### ***6.2. Typical prejudices against Serbia and its culture***

At first, when thinking of foreigners' relations with Serbia we should have on mind that all participants approached the *Camp* voluntarily and had chosen this very destination among thousands of others offered in the world, which means that they at least didn't have negative

attitude towards Serbia. Nonetheless, having been created in indirect way, their perception of Serbian culture was based on both positive and negative stereotypes and prejudices.

Motivation for participation in the *Camp* was diverse. It happened that art concept of the *Camp* was in the focus, especially in case of neighboring countries (Croatia, Bosnia, Macedonia, Bulgaria, Slovenia), when participants were not attracted by possibility to discover new cultures, but tended to exchange their art skills and have a fun with their peers. For example, Igor Zelić from Croatia was interested in gaining knowledge and practicing his skills in film arts, and was quite hesitating about citizens' behavior he was going to face in Kosjerić. Due to the interactive concept of film workshop, which considered terrain work and exploration of the community, he was in intensive contact with citizens and finally had very positive experience. He was especially surprised by the fact that he was hosted by the refugee whose family suffered the war in Croatia. However, his positive comments refer mostly to the atmosphere raised around the *Camp*, mostly



that which is created by the narrow circle of organizers and participants. And this is a typical case when it comes to participants from neighboring countries - they are usually attracted by friendly and enthusiastic ambience around the *Camp* and chance to intensively spend the time with their peers, and that's why they often come more then once.

Picture no. 11 - *Camp* participants planting the 'Three of friendship' in the park

Otherwise, interaction with the community is much more important in case of representatives of other cultures, i.e. more distant countries. They usually found out about Serbia and raised the interest about it in two different ways. On the one hand, they dealt with Serbian culture in some way prior to coming to the *Camp*, either through their studies, activities, or through contacts with Serbian people abroad. On the other, they gained their image of Serbia through the representations from media, films and books. We could say that the picture they formed out of these experiences is twofold as it is their motivation to come. It contains both positive and negative prejudices, mostly related to traditional or exotic culture, and political crisis and nationalism. In both cases it happens that these pictures are hyperbolic or completely wrong.

They are either fascinated by the representations of Balkans from movies and *Guča* festival, and come with the idyllic pictures about it, or they believe they will experience the adventure and face the danger alive.

Thus, in 2002, group of young volunteers from the *Camp* expected that they would face in Kosjerić insecurity and direct consequences of the conflicts in Kosovo, but after they made sure of peaceful environment, they decided to visit Kosovo afterwards in order to experience the real danger. Likewise, Korean girl Guelang Choi who participated at this years *Camp* formed her picture about Serbia on Kusturica's movies and she was surprised when there was no Roma community in Kosjerić. She was hoping to discover Roma culture expecting that: *everything in Serbia is like in Kusturica's movie.*

The often case of breaking prejudices occur when participants bring the picture of Serbia as an extremely undeveloped, uncivilized, poor country with predomination of rural and traditional culture. After meeting people and the community, they become surprised with life standard and "contemporary" way of life. These prejudices sometimes imply hesitations with respect to Serbian aggressiveness and nationalistic fanaticism. In spite of their wish to discover Serbian culture, some participants expected to challenge unpleasant situation. For example, Sophie Berthod, a participant from France, admitted she had a negative view about Serbia before coming to the *Camp*, but afterwards she stated: *It is terrific to see the place with your own eyes and see how great it actually is.* Similarly, Sharlot Cassar, art teacher and director of high school in Malta, drastically changed his perception after coming to the *Camp* in 2003, which he expressed in the official letter sent to the organizer and all partners at the project including Kosjerić authorities: *When I decided to apply for this work camp, I admittedly had mixed feelings about coming to Serbia. I was looking forward to the experience but at the same time I was a little bit apprehensive about my venture, mainly due to the political unrest in the region, in the recent past. The Camp helped me to realize my misconceptions and provided me with a true picture of Serbia that is quite distinct from the one that has been portrayed in the media in the past. I cherish the time spent in Serbia to the extent that I have every intention of returning there for my next holiday. I also have no reservations whatsoever in recommending Serbia as a destination to my friends.* And truly, he returned back a few times privately, as well as professionally as a participant at the *Camp* and art colony in pottery in Zlakusa.

We can recognize two crucial aspects of the *Camp* with respect to changing and creating the image of Serbia on the part of foreign participants. Firstly, the concept which stimulates interaction with the community through public programs, but also informal ways such as entertaining activities and accommodation in local households, enables direct contact and exchange between foreign participants and local residents. Secondly, the concept of art programs which puts either local culture or intercultural dialogue as its topics, allows becoming aware of prejudices and stereotypes, and their critical observation.

### ***6.3. The role of the interaction with the community***

If we forget for a moment about art programs, and concentrate only on the aspect which brings foreigners in touch with Serbian culture, we could still notice the important fact that these people are in much different position than it would be a tourist in Serbia. Although tourism is assessed as one of vectors for intercultural exchange, it is, at the same time, the activity which can deepen stereotypes due to the imbalance in the encounter between rich visitors and poor local communities (Jelinčić 2001: 201). Though in this case, instead of usual relation between the disturbing and the disturbed which can cause the feeling of annoyance, we have contacts on voluntary bases without any interest. On the one hand, hosts voluntarily accept the guests in their houses without any compensation, and on the other, foreign participants aim at integrating and bringing benefit to the local community, and they do not act nor they are perceived as tourists, even on the part of those locals who are not directly involved in the *Camp*. So, speaking of direct contacts among people, we can say that this concept enables closer, informal relations, and experience of joint every day life in two weeks period. This, we find, is a reason of such a positive feelings and changes of views of foreigners.<sup>75</sup>

However, when individuals cross cultural boundaries through face-to-face encounters, they naturally tend to rely on stereotypical conceptions of each other to frame and structure the interactions (Idem: 200). Such, the presence of foreigners in the community, which is not usual, make local residents proud and stimulates the feeling of their self-awareness, self-confidence and solidarity, so it seems they internalized those auto-stereotypes which consider Serbian people

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<sup>75</sup> On the contrary, *any social relationship that is transitory, superficial and unequal forms stereotypes* (Jelinčić 2001: 200).

hospitable, kind, warm. Not only had those who hosted foreigners in the houses and project organizers, but all residents put their efforts to act like generous and entertaining hosts.<sup>76</sup> Thus, the most frequent impression that foreign participants took at the end was exactly fascination by hospitality, music, food, hedonism, and kindness of Serbian people. Their usual comments with respect to this were: *Kosjerić is the most hospitable place in the world*<sup>77</sup>; *I was shocked by nice welcome party, like we were stars! I immediately felt like home!*<sup>78</sup>; *We were made to feel at home immediately upon our arrival and everyone was extremely friendly and helpful throughout;*<sup>79</sup> *I love Serbian people! Serbia is my second home!*<sup>80</sup> In this way, positive stereotypes are even intensified. However, these kinds of impressions of foreign participants, as well as their returns to Serbia, could support touristy development which is already one of priorities in the plans for local strategic development. Dalibor Simeunović, from the Tourist Organization of Kosjerić, claims: *The Camp is the best possible advertisement for the town. Foreign participants encourage friends to come visit them and to attend the Camp in the future. Many participants return to Kosjerić again and again. Nevertheless, this aspect of the Camp with its potentials for touristy development could further be explored as a topic of some other research.*



Picture no. 12 - Foreign participants in the visit to village household

Also, upon the interest and insisting of foreign participants, some other activities are organized in a way to satisfy them through getting in touch with their own positive symbolic pictures about Serbia. Such, visits to typical rural household in vicinity, excursions to ethno museum in Sirogojno, *Guča* trumpet festival, are organized almost every year. However, all the activities are arranged so to prevent one-sided image, including the informal entertaining events which simply bring people together around everyday activities such as sports, parties etc.

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<sup>76</sup> For example, neighbors often brought refreshments to the participants while they were painting murals outside.

<sup>77</sup> Katarzyina Binda from Poland. Invited by her, twelve more Poles made touristy visit to Kosjerić during the *Camp*.

<sup>78</sup> Maylis de Castelo from Spain

<sup>79</sup> Sharlot Cassar from Malta

<sup>80</sup> Hiroyaki Masuoka from Japan

We assume that this is the most important difference in comparison to tourist experience, and it enables release from rigid and modeled pictures.

It is also interesting to analyze media representations about the *Camp* which put its intercultural component in the focus. Daily newspaper such as *Blic* or *Večernje novosti* tended to find sensations with respect to foreign presence in the remote community, trying to highlight the exclusiveness of the place and Serbian culture in general for visitors from abroad. Thus, for example, when giving the interview for *Blic* newspaper, Temina Moledina, UK citizen of Indian origin, was asked how came that she spoke Serbian. In fact, she only new few phrases which she learned from her Croatian colleague at the faculty in Edinburgh. Her witty answer: *I used to be a mushroom in Serbia in my ex life*; which was ironically related to foreigners' fascination of "Serbian exotics", was misunderstood and interpreted in the literal context with expression of proud. In this way, typical stereotype about Serbia as exotic place with mythological mentality was auto-ironically overcome in case of foreigner, but it still remained in Serbian public as the auto-stereotype about exclusivity of Serbian culture for others.

#### **6.4. The role of art and cultural programs**

Besides the exchange of cultures through direct contact of people in daily activities, cultural identity, cultural relations, similarities and differences, intercultural dialogue are often taken as motives of artworks and topics of public programs. They are not designed didactically, but the topic is implicitly included in art works and performances, without any discussion about it, still allowing the interaction with the audience.



Picture no. 13 - Camp participants performing music concert

For example, music workshop usually deals with ethno music of different cultures, yet not through simplified representations of each particular culture, but combining and mixing diverse elements in a contemporary manner. Some participants, like Maylis de Castelo from Spain,

expected to learn *authentic, traditional Serbian music*, and was surprised when the concept appeared to be modern. Instead of simply exchanging and learning each others compositions, working process included creation of new melodies with universal motives and contemplation about the complexity of cultural identity which is not based on the national or inheritance. The same perspective was also offered to the audience through music concert followed by theater performances in the same manner.



Picture no. 14 - Street Spectacle at the Camp

This kind of approach is chosen purposely, in order to disable presentation and perception of small, provincial community in Serbia as an exclusive source of traditional culture. Otherwise, the chance is given to its potentials to be perceived in a different way for its openness to new expressions, which we find important for both deconstruction of stereotypes and auto-stereotypes.

The community itself and local culture are often determined as a starting point for creation of artworks, either jointly or individually. Nevertheless, they do not aim at describing its characteristics, but focusing on the perception of local culture on the part of both foreigners and locals, and especially put the emphasis on the relations. Very often these works are developed through strong interaction with the community, including interviews with local population, their participation in movie making or performances. Thus, even stereotypes and auto-stereotypes are thematized through particular art works or programs.

We will try to explain in more details the mechanisms for uncovering, and facing stereotypes and auto-stereotypes on the example of one art program presented in 2005, which had Balkan identity for its topic presented in the form of group exhibition which included performances, installations and videos. All exhibited artworks had common topic, provoked by usual perception and self-perception of non-Western cultures in dichotomy relation *Orient - West*.

But, the authors, both locals and foreigners, didn't take these notions in their binary opposition, but they stressed their complexity criticizing all simplified interpretations which usually appear in the public. The fact that the exhibition was arranged in the rooms of old oriental monument -



Picture no. 15- One of performances of 'Welcome to avlija' program

*Han*, which used to function as Turkish tavern, can be metaphorically read as a meeting point of different cultures in compliance with typical Balkan metaphors „bridge” or „crossroad”. It is interesting to mention that this space is still functional and it serves as the office and place for rehearsals to local ethno association which promotes traditional culture, so this could also be remarkable in terms of audience perception of the program.

The name of the program *Welcome to avlija*<sup>81</sup>, already alluded to self-ironic discourse and playing with *self-Balkanization* phenomenon. It combines English which represents tendency for reaching „Western ideal“, and Turkish *avlija* which

symbolizes handicap and dependance on the inheritance, but it also points out the exclusivity of Balkan experience which is untranslatable and thus incomprehensible. And, this title again refers to widespread stereotype about Serbian hospitality signified with the phrase which includes *Welcome*.

Local artists elaborated usual stereotypes and auto-stereotypes about Serbia from the perspective of representatives of this very culture.



Picture no. 16 - Art installation on *Welcome to avlija* program

<sup>81</sup> *Avlija* is colloquialism for yard, Turkish etymology

Through performances and instalations they dealt with gender roles in patriarchal culture, and oriental inheritance in Serbian customs, habits, way of life, but in a critical way. Additionally, they depicted the idealistic vision of *western culture* from the perspective of locals, through idolatry towards popular movie stars, in this case Rocky Bilboa, given in the parody manner as a criticism to local misapprehension of global culture.<sup>82</sup> On the other hand, foreign participants were critical towards their own stereotypes about Serbia and Balkans. Thus, for example, Pablo Garcia Lopez from Spain, exhibited his own nudity covered in chocolate and fruit offering the visitor to taste it, in self-ironic way, alluding thus to the western perception of Balkan people as tribal, regressive, primitive, barbarian by putting himself in the position of others. Finally, all the works used universal motives such as meal ritual referring to pagan and mythological palimpsests in each culture which made any eventual divisions and classifications senseless. One of them dealt with this motive on a meta-level, as a video work which illustrated the atmosphere at the *Camp* during joint meals putting in this way both participants and the audience in the position of observing themselves and questioning in an objective, critical way about the situation they are put in - the *Camp* phenomenon.

This exhibition obviously affected both *Camp* participants and Kosjeirić citizens and had cathartic effect, which is proved by the statements of the visitors given to local radio, as well as some extreme reactions. Switched positions - foreigners as hosts who were presenting local culture and citizens as those who were welcomed in their own environment, made people face with their own stereotypes and stereotypes about themselves and complexity of their identity, consciously or not. They felt disintegrated from the group and more oriented to their individual being, which was necessary when asking about the identity and breaking stereotypes. This exhibition, in its context, was certainly very stimulative for consideration of the role which representatives of one culture have in creation of stereotypes about themselves, i.e. for making them aware of *self-Balkanization* phenomenon.

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<sup>82</sup> This also refers to recent phenomenon of installing monuments dedicated to Hollywood stars on Balkans, such as the one in Mostar devoted to Bruce Lee, or the one in Zitiste, devoted to Rocky Bilboa.

Some other public programs, which were not narrowly artistic, also gave a chance to the exchange of cultures and intercultural learning in more explicit way though. *The international*



Picture no. 17 - International evening on the main street in Kosjerić

*evening*, organized every year, brings together all foreign participants and all the interested Kosjerić citizens who are asked to present their culture to each other through serving typical food, drinks, performing music, dances, customs etc, in an unofficial and informal way. It is always arranged in the public space, and it is the most popular and most visited *Camp* program amongst Kosjerić audience.

This concept is designed so to impose stereotypical representations, and usually, representatives of all countries tend to present their culture using typical, widespread images, both positive and negative ones, but in a playful way. This program, with its friendly atmosphere, and presenting stereotypes as a natural, positive phenomenon, offers the possibility for overcoming uniform perceptions which is usually through strengthened through close contact of people after the program.

### **6.5. Key findings**

Finally, we could say that the *Camp* with its concept responds to the uniform, stereotyped picture about Serbia. It has potential to influence consideration of both stereotypes and auto-stereotypes by bringing representatives of different cultures in contact with “others”. This is achieved through direct contact in daily activities and everyday life, but through connotation of public programs and its interactive component as well.

Even though the kind of relations between people which puts one in the position of host and another in the position of guest can sometimes cause even deepening of stereotyped images, we could say that they stay positive, and that at least those negative prejudices disappear in case

of foreign participants. We also recognized the potential of their extreme positive impressions for the contribution to local tourism development.

We assess that public programs have an important role in changing the perception of local community and its culture both on the part of foreigners and locals. They promote intercultural learning and raise understanding on the phenomenon of cultural identity, especially when it comes to people who participate in the workshops and art programs, particularly youth. There could also be exploration on the importance of mutual exchange and intercultural learning among participants of all represented cultures, whereas we only concentrated on the relations between Serbia and foreign countries in this work.

We are aware that this research is limited in terms of comprised sample, but we hope it could give directions for further possible researches, similar to our quantitative survey done on local population, which could even comprise majority, if not all *Camp* participants from previous seven years, in order to bring more details and more reliable conclusions on their picture about Serbia and *Camp* influences with that respect.

## VII Conclusions and recommendations

### 7.1. Main conclusions

Based on our research, and with respect to the initial hypothesis, we could say that this case study proved the capacity of international projects with intercultural dialogue component for development of intercultural understanding. We could also conclude on their capacity in bringing the intercultural atmosphere in small remote communities in Serbia. We see that local population which was involved in *The international Art Camp – Kosjerić* showed significantly higher openness towards different cultures in comparison to Kosjerić citizens who were not in touch with it. At the same time, it also reached great popularity in the community as the most of people heard about it and positively commented its atmosphere. Particularly, the project showed great capacity to attract young people and involve them in the activities which promote intercultural understanding. In parallel to this, foreign young people acquire positive image of Serbia after participating at the *Camp* through experiencing interaction with the community and creation of artworks.

However, referring to the contribution of such projects to decrement of xenophobia in small communities in Serbia, specifically the contribution of *Art Camp* to Kosjerić community opening towards other cultures, it is difficult to assess precisely the level of its influence. Due to the other factors such as socio-demographic or general changes in the Serbian society, it would be necessary to conduct more detailed research, including many relevant factors, or preferably the longitudinal research which would bring more precise conclusions on the influence of the very *Camp*. Similarly, we would suggest quantitative research to be realized with respect to the role of the *Camp* in braking prejudices and stereotypes of foreign participants.

Still, all the positive effects of these types of cultural projects are of special importance in the context of Serbian socio-cultural situation which is characterized by the consequences of recent political crisis, isolation and wars such as xenophobic and nationalistic values spread among Serbian citizens as well as negative image of Serbia in the international public.

## ***7.2. Recommendations with respect to project development***

In accordance with our research findings, we could say that the concept of *Art Camp* project is appropriate for the local context it appeared in. Being set up as the international project with intercultural dialogue component which encompasses gather work of representatives of different cultures as well as community mobilization, it appeared to be effective in the homogeneous environment which happens to be quite ignorant towards other cultures. With this respect, we could give following recommendations for future project development.

- In order to improve its intercultural dialogue component and its effectiveness with this respect, firstly we would recommend the *Camp* to further stimulate the engagement of young locals in its organization. On the one hand, this could bring more youngsters in contact with the component which showed the greatest effectiveness in terms of intercultural understanding, and on the other it could operationally provide human resources for future *Camp* organization. Also, animation of middle aged and elderly audience should be strengthened, as well as their involvement through introduction of new appropriate art programs and workshops. Generally, we would recommend the organizers to put some more efforts in the wider community mobilization through direct contacts and animation. Although lots of efforts have already been made in animation and involvement of the audience, *Camp* has to intensify and to find new solutions in work on audience development. Apart from starting completely neglected work on attracting non-audience, there should be some extra efforts put in maintenance and motivation for further participation of already attracted young audiences.
- As for programs and activities, we would stress the effectiveness of the interactive component of both art programs and informal activities, which consider the interaction between the community and foreign participants, and we especially point out to strengthening of the interaction during public programs. We would recommend the interactive component to be inducted in all *Camp* activities and programs. Relations among different cultures, cultural identity and similar topics should be the theme of art works and programs, including the exploration of local culture with the involvement of local people.

- Having community development as one of its aims, the *Art Camp* project should expand cooperation with all the relevant stakeholders on local level in order to improve its effectiveness. Although there is collaboration established with almost all local relevant institutions and authorities, it is neither systematic nor it implies active involvement of the partners. Thus, we would suggest strategic inter-sectorial linking in the community, foremost with local authorities, cultural institutions (Cultural center) and Tourist organization. If tending to answer the real needs of the community, the *Camp* would have to deepen cooperation with local partners by motivating them to actively participate in the project organization.
- Furthermore, through improved audience animation, PR and marketing strategy, it could attract more people from Serbia either to visit or to participate at the *Camp* in order to go beyond the local level. Cooperation with cultural institutions, organizations, informal groups, festivals, and similar cultural programs from West Serbia and the whole country would be needed. This could bring one more dimension to the *Camp* - possibility for cultural exchange and encouragement of youth mobility within the country, as well as internationally through linkage with the international programs.

In return, all this could support improvement of management and development of the project, enrichment of its programs, widening the range of activities, audiences and influences.

### ***7.3. Relevance for the local cultural policy***

Despite the lack of official explicit cultural policy, both on national level in Serbia and consistently on local level in Kosjerić, we see some implicit simulative measures that could be undertaken by local community concerning the inclusion of the *Camp* in local development.

Already implemented short term economical measures which consider allocation of municipal budget funds for the purposes of partial *Art Camp* financing, indicate the recognition of the importance of this manifestation by local government. This is especially important due to the fact that the project is run by civic organization which gained regular financial support from public sources, partial though. However, this still doesn't demonstrate strategic approach nor it proves inter-sectorial cooperation. Yet, as we see the *Camp* as a project which tackles three

important issues - culture, youth and tourism, there could be at least three different directions for its further development and utilization in local development.

- Firstly, having on mind that there is only one local cultural institution dealing with modern culture (Cultural Center), besides two ethno-associations and one ethno manifestation, the *Camp* should be treated as a part of local cultural sector and included in annual planning of cultural programs since it brings new expression. This primarily means strengthening cooperation with Cultural Center with introduction of variety of cultural programs through exchange of resources. For example, there could be new cultural program introduced for youth under Cultural Center, with investment of its infrastructural resources while the group of youngsters gathered around the *Camp* could provide programs thought-out the year, but not only during the manifestation.
- Secondly, we could relate this to the youth policy. Youth participation in creation of local cultural policy should be introduced due to the problem of young people migrations and lack of youth participation generally, but the potentials of *Art Camp* to be developed as specifically youth project as well. We have already noticed that the *Camp* is the most attractive for young people, locals as well as those from other parts of Serbia and abroad, and is organized by youngsters. The interest of youngsters from West Serbia region and other parts of Serbia to participate and visit the *Camp* could be strategically utilized by the authorities through strengthening the local youngsters to be permanently active during the year. Additionally, new youth projects could be introduced and supported as to create the new image of the town attracting thus local youngsters together with those from the region to spend their time in Kosjerić on different youth programs. Also, some extra programs on youth mobility and exchange on regional and international level could be introduced as well as specific budget line for youth programs.
- Finally, as we have noticed great interest of foreign youngsters to participate at the *Camp*, and made sure of the positive impressions they take with them, we recognize the touristic potential of this project which could be used by local Touristy organization and local authorities. This is especially relevant due to the fact that Kosjerić used to be famous for village tourism in the past, and following the degradation of 90s, in last years tourism has again been recognized as a great local potential and officially put as one of priorities of

local strategic development. The *Camp* could contribute to this not only for its connection with potential foreign tourists, but as one of cultural-touristic offers during the summer for people from Serbia. Therefore, following the creation of the strategy for activation *Camp* cultural potentials in touristic purposes, it should be put on the map of cultural tourism. As public sector is the one participating in the creation and implementation of local development strategies, we would recommend the authorities to link cultural and touristic sector and foster their mutual partnership in building capacity for more effective organization of local cultural manifestations. This would consider attraction of touristic audience in addition to cultural one, animation of audiences out of the town, and initiating cultural-touristic fluctuation in the local community. Thus, the town could meet the improved image and economical benefits, but after providing appropriate infrastructure (Đukić Dojčinović 2005).

As for financial background with respect to all the above mentioned suggestions, apart from local public budget and potential external financial sources such as Ministries or donors, we recommend strong linkage with local business sector, preferably Titan cement factory which already invests in the local community.

Generally, the *Camp* could be used for branding the town and introducing new local cultural identity since local cultural characteristics are enriched with the intercultural atmosphere. This could be especially be remarkable due to the fact that Kosjerić is situated in the region with predominantly Serbian population with no many international experiences, and Kosjerić itself being closed and remote community.

#### ***7.4. Relevance for national, regional and international cultural policy***

Being the intercultural project, *Art Camp* is still locally based. However, we find its relevance for the national cultural policy, primarily due to its appearance and location in the small community in province. Although never officially approved in the Serbian Parliament, one of priorities of cultural policy broth in 2001 is decentralization (*Cultural Policies and Trends in Europe*<sup>83</sup>). Decentralization is also often mentioned on the part of Serbian Government as a principal to be respected in all fields of work. We could say that the *Camp* answers this need,

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<sup>83</sup> Available at: <http://www.culturalpolicies.net/web/serbia.php?aid=41>, accessed September 2008.

particularly concerning decentralization of cultural programs, especially those with international character. It is also appropriate for decentralization of youth activities, and youth and civic participation in creation of local cultural policy.

In order to further support decentralization of culture, not only locally, but regionally as well, some extra efforts could be put in interregional cooperation. Here we would stress possible linking of similar programs, organizations and institution from West Serbia region, such as *Academica* and *Undergrad* from Užice, or *Forca* from Požega, with the aim to jointly develop regional cultural programs which could contribute to distinguishing regional cultural identity, through networking, exchange of current programs and creating new ones. As for connecting local - national level, we see the opportunity of *Camp* cooperation with big festivals, like BELEF or Exit for example, through exchange of programs, co-production etc.

Speaking of the intercultural aspect of the *Camp*, we can see that interculturalism has not been recognized yet as one of the issues, priorities or objectives of national cultural policy, which we think should be actualized in accordance to the needs and the international context, since 2008 is proclaimed by European Union as a *Year of Intercultural Dialogue*. At least, some specific instruments and actions could be introduced.

As for international programs, the Ministry of Culture is prioritizing participation of Serbian artists in international events, as well as accentuating the international component of domestic manifestations. Following the example of *Camp* project, apart from the international component which usually considers competition, or representation of Serbian culture, we would recommend these programs to include the intercultural component which would encompass intensive interaction among representatives of different cultures as well as community mobilization. Likewise, besides current open calls for proposals for projects dealing with cultural minorities, the Ministry of Culture and/or Ministry of Youth and Sports could open a funding line for projects with intercultural dialogue component, including for example active citizens' participation, cooperation among regions, youth participation in festivals, events, workshops, exchanges, but broadcasting and art creation industries as well. Intercultural dialogue should especially become an issue in local cultural policies. We believe that city and local cultural institutions should create and implement such projects which would in a great extend interact with local communities, involve representatives of different cultures in dialogue and open possibilities for their participation in cultural life. This is especially significant for multi-ethnic

regions and those on the border areas, for encouragement of cross border and regional cooperation. Ministry of Education could include intercultural learning as a part of general school curricula, and stimulate exchange of cultural programs of schools from different regions in Serbia and internationally. Strong inter-sector cooperation and coordinated action of all the responsible actors like for example Ministry of Culture, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Youth and Sports, Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Ministry for Religious Affairs, Provincial Secretariat for Education and Culture of Vojvodina, National Councils of Ethnic Minorities, City Councils, Municipalities, local cultural institutions and organizations, is needed with respect to successful promotion of intercultural dialogue.

In compliance with the current policies of UNESCO and EU which promote intercultural dialogue, there should be opened special government programs in Serbia to support trans-national intercultural dialogue, and especially specific government support for the trans-national activities of young people due to existing problem of youth mobility and participation. Some specific activities could be undertaken by different actors, like for example connecting with the international actors in culture around joint projects, as we could say that supportive environment for that already exists and could provide funding of such projects/programs. Besides the proclamation of the *Year of Intercultural Dialogue*, EU is particularly funding projects which foster regional cooperation. As it was financed in this way in 2007 under the regional project *Whose is this song?* with the funds of EU and ECF<sup>84</sup> including four Balkan countries and Cyprus, we would recommend the *Camp* to keep finding regional partners as to go beyond its frame and reach the international stage.

Regarding the concept of international voluntary camps which comprise capacity to promote the intercultural dialogue, we would suggest the inclusion of more interaction and mobilization of the community they are held in, rather than isolation of the group of foreign volunteers. Also, their turning to cultural and animation contents would be desirable, to be added to usual environmental or reconstructing activities, if tending to deeply include the intercultural dialogue in its mission.

One more important aspect is identified with respect to the *Camp*, and that is the relevance for “Branding Serbia” and contribution to the government’s activity on the re-creation of the Serbian image, away from the negative stereotype, towards a more positive imagine.

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<sup>84</sup> European Cultural Foundation

Finally, we could generally recommend the *Art Camp* project to serve as the example of good practice for the promotion of intercultural dialogue.

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1. Art Camp project proposals by K-Town Group
2. Narrative reports on the project by K-Town Group
3. Project archive materials: art works, documentary photos, promotional materials and press clipping

## **IX Apendices**

### **9.1. Questionnaire Form**

#### INTERNATIONAL ART CAMP IN KOSJERIC

#### A QUESTIONNAIRE

Organizer:

Tanja Bjelanović, student

Univeristy of Arts, Belgrade

29 Kosančićev venac, Belgrade 11000

Dear Sir or Madam,

This is a questionnaire about the International Art Camp, which is organized every summer in Kosjeric. It will complement a final study at Univeristy of Art in Belgrade. You have been chosen as a respondent in accordance with a random procedure, alongside 200 citizens of Kosjeric. Since opinions of all these people should be instrumental in getting a clear picture about the Camp, it is extremely important that you accept the conversation with the interviewer. All the data gathered will later be shown as a whole and they will be used only to scientific and research ends. There are no correct or incorrect answers in this survey. Each answer reflecting your own opinion is satisfactory. Therefore, answer the questions as sincerely and thoroughly as you can, please. This survey is anonymous. You may be absolutely sure about the privacy of everything you say.

**Thank you!**

Interviewer's signature \_\_\_\_\_

### **1. Gender**

- 1) Male
- 2) Female

### **2. Year of birth**

What is the year of your birth? \_\_\_\_\_

*Here we shall start with a few questions about the International art camp and your personal experience connected with it.*

### **3. Have you heard of the International Art Camp in Kosjeric?**

- 1) Yes
- 2) No

*(If 'No', go to question No. 12.)*

### **4. How have you heard of the Camp?**

- 1) Through media (Radio Kosjerić, newspapers, TV)
- 2) Through a family member (spouse, child, parent)
- 3) Through an acquaintance
- 4) Through organizers
- 5) Other \_\_\_\_\_

### **5. How would you describe the atmosphere in the Camp? *(More than one answer is possible.)***

- 1) Exciting
- 2) Interesting
- 3) Friendly
- 4) Joyful
- 5) Unusual/extraordinary
- 6) Boring
- 7) Aggressive
- 8) Upsetting
- 9) Strange/weird
- 10) Other \_\_\_\_\_

**6. Have you participated in the camp?** *(More than one answer is possible.)*

- 1) Yes, I have participated in the organization
- 2) Yes, I have been a participant in the workshops
- 3) Yes, I have been a host
- 4) Yes, I have taken part in public performances
- 5) Yes, I have been a spectator
- 6) Yes, my child/sibling has participated in the organization
- 7) Yes, my child/sibling has been a host to a guest from abroad
- 8) Yes, my child/sibling has participated in the workshops
- 9) No

*(The following series of questions should be asked only if the answer to the question No. 6 is Yes; if answer is No, go to question No. 11. Only those respondents who have answered to some of the first five questions should be asked Question No. 7)*

**7. How often have you participated in the Camp/watched programs?**

- 1) Every year
- 2) A few years
- 3) One year

**9. How much have the following activities drawn you into following the camp?**

- |  |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|----|
| 1) Art programs<br>(Workshops, exhibitions, concerts, plays) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| 2) Activities in public<br>(carnival, international evening) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| 3) Entertainment<br>(parties, sports events, excursions)     | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| 4) Spending time with foreign participants                   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |

**11. How often have you met the foreign participants in the camp?** *(More than one answer is possible.)*

- 1) I have not had the chance to meet them
- 2) I have met them in the streets
- 3) I have met them in the streets by chance and talked to them informally
- 4) I have seen them taking part in public programs
- 5) I have met and talked to a few of them on the occasions of various public programs
- 6) I have met them during the activities in the camp and spent time with them a lot
- 7) I have participated in the same workshop with them
- 8) I have been their host and spent time with them every day

And now for a few questions about your experience with people from abroad in general, as well as about your going abroad.

**12. Have you ever travelled abroad (leaving out the countries of former Federal Republic of Yugoslavia)?**

- 1) Yes, I have, once
- 2) Yes, I have, a few times
- 3) Yes, I have, more than ten times
- 4) I lived abroad
- 5) No, I haven't

**13. How often have you had a chance to talk to people from abroad?**

*(Your experience from the camp does not count here.)*

- 1) I have never had a chance to talk to them
- 2) I have had a chance to talk to them occasionally, but I have never spent much time with them
- 3) I have communicated with them on the internet
- 4) Some of my friends are foreigners and I keep in touch with them

**How much do you feel attached to the following places?** (*'I cannot decide' is an answer that should not be offered in advance; it should be included only if a respondent says so.*)

		I feel very bound	Bound	Not really bound	Not bound at all	I cannot decide
<b>14.</b>	Kosjerić	5	4	3	2	1
<b>15.</b>	Western Serbia	5	4	3	2	1
<b>16.</b>	Serbia	5	4	3	2	1
<b>17.</b>	South-East Europe (The Balkans)	5	4	3	2	1
<b>18.</b>	Europe	5	4	3	2	1

*(Now you shall be asked a few of questions about various subjects. The questions shall be answered the following way: first, I shall read a short statement to you; then, you should choose one of the following answers: I completely agree, I agree, I neither agree nor disagree, I do not agree, I completely do not agree. Please, think carefully about each statement even if it seems to you that some of them are very similar.)*

*(If a respondent does not want to answer a question, leave it unanswered.)*

*The first series of questions deals with the community you live in, as well as with whether people should stay or move out of it.*

		<b>I complet ely agree</b>	<b>I agree</b>	<b>I neither agree nor disagree</b>	<b>I do not agree</b>	<b>I complet ely disagree</b>
<b>19.</b>	I like the way of life in our town and I cannot even think about moving out of here.	5	4	3	2	1
<b>20.</b>	I would move out immediately if I knew there was a better life somewhere else.	5	4	3	2	1
<b>21.</b>	Social and cultural life is ample and interesting.	5	4	3	2	1
<b>22.</b>	Young people should stay in their town.	5	4	3	2	1
<b>23.</b>	I would advise young people to try to leave this place permanently and find a better life for themselves and their families. It's best for them.	5	4	3	2	1

*The following statements deal with your feelings about your nation, tradition and culture.*

<b>24.</b>	The main goal of each individual is survival of his/her nation.	5	4	3	2	1
<b>25.</b>	A man can feel truly safe only when living with the majority of people of his own nationality.	5	4	3	2	1
<b>26.</b>	Marriages between spouses of different nationalities must be more unstable than other ones.	5	4	3	2	1
<b>27.</b>	The world would be a better place if people from other countries were like Serbs.	5	4	3	2	1
<b>28.</b>	Serbia should follow its own interests, even if it means clashing with other nations.	5	4	3	2	1

		<b>I complet ely agree</b>	<b>I agree</b>	<b>I neither agree, nor disagree</b>	<b>I do not agree</b>	<b>I complet ely disagree</b>
<b>29.</b>	A nation not cherishing its own tradition will disintegrate.	5	4	3	2	1
<b>30.</b>	Growing influence of foreign movies, music and literature is harmful to our national and local culture.	5	4	3	2	1
<b>31.</b>	Men should earn money, women should take care of the house and family.	5	4	3	2	1
<b>32.</b>	Unmarried couples should not live together.	5	4	3	2	1
<b>33.</b>	A young woman should be ashamed if she gives birth to a baby without being married.	5	4	3	2	1
<b>34.</b>	What is most important for children is to teach them to obey their parents.	5	4	3	2	1
<b>35.</b>	No business can be successful without strict discipline and a powerful leader.	5	4	3	2	1
<b>36.</b>	Political parties wishing to abolish democracy should be banned.	5	4	3	2	1
<b>37.</b>	Homosexuals are not better than criminals and they should be most severely punished.	5	4	3	2	1
<b>38.</b>	Judiciary has to serve the government in the end.	5	4	3	2	1

*The following questions deal with your opinion about various cultures, as well as with your own nation.*

		<b>I complet ely agree</b>	<b>I agree</b>	<b>I neither agree nor disagree</b>	<b>I do not agree</b>	<b>I compl etely disagr ee</b>
<b>39.</b>	I would not mind if people of other nationalities move to our town.	5	4	3	2	1
<b>40.</b>	I wish I could have more contacts with people of other nationalities.	5	4	3	2	1
<b>41.</b>	It is good having the opportunity to consume foreign movies, music and literature in our environment	5	4	3	2	1
<b>42.</b>	Serbia should strengthen its relationship and cooperation with other countries.	5	4	3	2	1
<b>43.</b>	Serbia would advance at a higher pace if it followed world trends.	5	4	3	2	1
<b>44.</b>	It seems to me sometimes that we are to blame for our bad image in the world.	5	4	3	2	1
<b>45.</b>	Each man should know and respect the history of his own people.	5	4	3	2	1
<b>46.</b>	Children should be taught to be proud of their nationality.	5	4	3	2	1
<b>47.</b>	Common origin of our people is the cornerstone of our mutual trust.	5	4	3	2	1
<b>48.</b>	It is normal that everybody has the best opinion about their own nation.	5	4	3	2	1
<b>49.</b>	It would be the best if every nation had its own country.	5	4	3	2	1

**50. In your opinion, which positive or negative characteristic would describe the following nationalities the best:** *(To be answered in one or two words. Respondents should be allowed not to answer.)*

	Positive characteristic	Negative characteristic
Roma	_____	_____
Croat	_____	_____
Muslim/Bosniak	_____	_____
Russian	_____	_____
Greek	_____	_____
German	_____	_____
American	_____	_____
Japanese	_____	_____
Australian	_____	_____
Brazilian	_____	_____

*In the end, a few ordinary questions about your residence, education, employment, etc.*

**51. How long have you lived in Kosjeric?**

- 1) I was born in Kosjeric and I have lived there all my life.
- 2) I was born in a village in the vicinity, but now I live in Kosjeric.
- 3) I have moved in from another place (village)
- 4) I have moved in from another place (town)

**52. Besides living in Kosjeric, have you ever lived for a longer period of time in some other place (for reasons of having a job or family, getting educated, etc.)?**

- 1) Yes, I have, in a village
- 2) Yes, I have, in a place similar to Kosjeric
- 3) Yes, I have, in a bigger town
- 4) Yes, I have, in Belgrade
- 5) No, I haven't

**53. Nationality** (*Respondents should be allowed not to answer.*)

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**54. Religion (if any)** (*Respondents should be allowed not to answer.*)

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**55. Education**

- 1) I did not go to school
- 2) Primary school without graduation
- 3) Primary school
- 4) Secondary school
- 5) College without graduation
- 6) College
- 7) University
- 8) Postgraduate studies

**56. Occupation** (*If a respondent is unemployed or retired, his or her last occupation.*)

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**57. Your parents' occupation**

Mother's

Father's

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**58. How many of your family members do farming?**

- 1) All family members
- 2) Some family members
- 3) No one

That is all! Thank you for taking part in this study!

## 9.2. Interview guide form

### INTERNATIONAL ART CAMP IN KOSJERIC

#### INTERVIEW GUIDE

*This interview contains of six sets of questions covering six topics related to the stereotyped perceptions of Serbia on the part of foreign participants and the role of Art Camp with this regards. The first questions, written in italic, are opening questions with the role to open each topic. Following questions, given in the brackets, are suggested for reaching more detailed data. However, all these questions serve as reminders of what information do we need to gain through this interview rather than they are formulations that should be inevitably respected. It means that not all the questions have and need to be posed in this form, but they should be adjusted and formulated according to the situation and the interviewee. In some cases, some of the questions could be redundant. There could also be new follow-up or specifying questions posed during the conversation upon the rise of new issues/ information relevant for the research of stereotypes about Serbia.*

*It is important to lead this interview in a way that it reminds on everyday conversation, but not on filling in the questionnaire. The interviewee shouldn't be stopped by posing the questions, but encouraged to continue the speech, being the one who takes the time of the interview. Although it is desirable to cover all the issues, it is not necessary to respect their order given in this guide. It is more important to respect the interviewee's speech flow.*

**Introduction:** We would like to talk with you about *The international Art Camp* in Kosjeric. We ask you to evoke your experience with the *Camp* once you were participating in it. Your impressions on the workshops, programs, activities, organization, host families and local community will help us in the research which can serve for further development of this project. We would like to start with a short introduction to your personal background:

*Please, tell us about the place you live in, your occupation and your main interests.*

Now we are moving to more detailed questions in regards to this specific project:

**Issue 1:** Motivation for applying and participating at the *Camp*

Questions:

*How did you decide to apply for the Camp?*

(What made you choose this very *Camp* amongst all the others? What was your experience with this type of workcamps before coming to Kosjeric? Which aspect of the *Camp* seemed the most attractive to you before coming?)

**Issue 2:** Information about the *Camp* and Serbia previously to coming

Questions:

*What did you know about the Camp previously to coming?*

(How did you find about the *Art Camp* in Kosjeric? Have you heard of it before you decided to come? When, how? Do you know somebody who had already participated in it? Did somebody recommend you to come or you discovered it by yourself? Have you ever been in Serbia/Balkan before? When? Where? What did you do? What were your impressions?/ Have you ever think of visiting Serbia before coming to the *Camp*?)

**Issue 3:** Previous perception of Serbia

Questions:

*Could you say some more about your opinion about Serbia before coming to the Camp?*

(In your country, did you have contacts with people from Balkan? Did you follow Serbian political situation/ Serbian culture? How did your friends and family react to your decision to

visit Serbia? What did most of people around you think of Serbia? Was that the way you feel too?)

**Issue 4:** Main role and activities at the *Camp*

Questions:

*In what way did you participate at the Camp?*

(Did you participate once or more times? Which workshops did you participate in? How many contacts did you have with local population? In what way? Did the *Camp* allow you the chance to feel local ambience, nature and culture? In what way?)

**Issue 5:** General impressions about the project, host families, community

Questions:

*What are your strongest impressions about the Camp?*

(Generally, are you satisfied with your *Camp* experience? How about your stay in Kosjeric? What aspect of the *Camp* was the most important for you? Why? How did you find the programs? What was your experience with host family? And people in Kosjeric generally? Were there any unpleasant situation? Do you still follow the news about the *Camp*?)

**Issue 6:** General impressions about Serbia

Questions:

*What is your impression about Serbia now?*

(What would you say about how familiar are you with Serbian culture now? Have you discovered some things you didn't know before? What did you like the most? Why? Did you establish some relations with Serbian people on the *Camp*? Do you still maintain them? Would you like to come to Serbia again? Do you plan to do that? Are some of your friends interested to come too? Why? What attracts you/them?)

## 9.2. Example of press material



Društvo iz međunarodnog art kampa u Kosjeriću sa mladencima

(foto: B. Ostojić)

# Romansa Srbina i Turkinje krunisana brakom Došla u kamp umetnika a pronašla mladoženju

**D**a li ti, Bemal, uzimaš Ognjena za muža? - glasilo je pitanje matičarke prošlog vikenda na svadbenom veselju u hotelu „Skrapež“ u Kosjeriću. - Da - odgovorila je glasno, ushićenim glasom, prelepa Turkinja Bemal Dozgun iz Eshišera iz srednje Anadolije i bacila se u zagrljaj svog izabranika Ognjena Odobašića iz Kosjerića.

Dušan Jovanović

A otkud Bemal u Kosjeriću? Kako je upoznala Ognja? Kako se odlučila da živi u Srbiji? Sva ova pitanja bilo je nepristojno ili, bolje reći, prava grehota postavljati za vreme ludog svadbenog veselja s mladencima na čelu, do duboko u noć. Bili smo strpljivi i sačekali naredni dan da o svemu popričamo uz jutarnju „mladinu“ kafu (naravno, u ranim popodnevним satima).

- Pre dve godine sam na internetu pronašla obaveštenje o art kampu u Kosjeriću i odmah sam se prijavila jer su mi neki drugovi, koji su ranijih godina bili u kampu, ispričali bajke o Kosjeriću i o Srbiji uopšte. Htela sam da se lično uverim u to i imala sam sreće da budem pozvana. S obzirom na to da svi učesnici kampa stanuju kod domaćina, mene su organizatori rasporedili kod Ogijevih roditelja. I eto, ispostavilo se da je to bila sudbina, kojoj sam veoma zahvalna - priznaje Bemal, dok iznosi posluženu, kao prava srpska mlada.

Već treći dan, nakon početka kampa, mnogi u Kosjeriću, a pogo-



**Turkinja Bemal Dozgun i Ognjen Odobašić iz Kosjerića venčali su se prošlog vikenda. Upoznali su se u art kampu, nakon čega je mlada odlučila da zauvek ostane u Srbiji**

tovo oni koji su kamp pratili, videli su kako taj prst sudbine vodi dvoje mladih koji su šetali „sedmim nebom“, držeći se za ruke.

Vaš reporter, koji je novinarski pratio događanja u kampu, sada se pravi važan jer je već tada Ogiju

rekao: „Mali, ti si pečen!“

Ostala je Bemal u Srbiji još desetak dana iako se kamp završio, a Ogi je jedva dočekao da dođe novembar pa da otputuje kod nje u Tursku. Pa onda, Bemal u Srbiji, pa Ogi u Anadoliji i sve tako do decembra prošle godine. Bemal je tada došla u Srbiju, čvrsto odlučivši da tu zauvek i ostane.

- Verujte mi da je odluka da živimo u Srbiji isključivo njena. S obzirom na to da se oboje profesionalno bavimo internet prezentacijama, posao nam nije određivao mesto boravka i ja sam iskreno navijao za Tursku. Prvenstveno iz razloga što se tamo kvadrat stana može kupiti za samo 250 evra - priznaje Ogi.

- Vi ne možete da verujete koliko su naše kulture i mentalitet ljudi slični.

Za Božić, ove godine, moji roditelji su došli u posetu Ogijevim roditeljima i nakon njihovog oduševljenja Srbijom i ljudima u njoj, više nisam imala dilemu gde ćemo živeti - kaže Bemal, i dodaje:

- Trenutno imam više prijatelja u Srbiji nego u rodnom gradu. Čak i kuma na venčanju bila mi je najbolja drugarica - Srkinja.

Možda bismo ih pitali još štošta, ali pristojnost je nalogala da ostavimo vremena mladencima za pakovanje za odlazak u Eshišer. Naime, i roditelji prelepe Bemal žele da naprave svadbeno veselje za svoju rodbinu i prijatelje. Zatim sledi „medeni mesec“ - petnaestak dana letovanja u Turskoj, pa nazad u Srbiju, putem koji je prst sudbine izabrao.

## **X Biography of the author**

Tanja Bjelanović was born on September 25<sup>th</sup>, 1977 in Belgrade and lived in Kosjerić until her studies. She graduated from Serbian literature and language with general literature at Faculty of Philology in Belgrade, where she is currently doing her MA thesis in Serbian literature. Since 2000 she is active in civil sector working on different national and international projects in cooperation with Center for Antiwar Action, Young Researchers of Serbia and independently. Her special interests are culture and arts. She was one of the founders and three years leader of local civil organization K-Town Group from Kosjeric and one of initiators and establishers of *Art Camp* project. Currently, she works as Development and Communication Manager in the Balkan Community Initiatives Fund in Belgrade.