

PRESENTS

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*Multiculturalism, Choreography, War: Exploring the Past of
Choreographed Folk Dance in Yugoslavia*

Wednesday, 11 January, 11:00 a.m. Nádor 15, Room 103



The seminar will explore the politics of choreographed folk dance in former Yugoslavia. Broadly following the cultural models in the Soviet Union, Yugoslav policies forged cultural activities in general and folk dancing in particular as primary tools in the social management of multiculturalism. To this end, “traditional” dances were abstracted from their quotidian existence in “ordinary” performance, transformed and then recontextualized for the stage. These transformed dances were seen as reflective of the state’s ideological goals and as such were seen as too “corrupted”, “slick” or “theatrical” to warrant scientific consideration. Informed by methodology of performance ethnography, this lecture will open up several questions thus left unexplored; By critically looking at the notion of choreography of folk dance and by going back to the practice of folk dancing in the Partisan units during World War II, the lecture will utilize Andrew Hewitt’s (2005) notion of “social choreography” to show how folk dance served both as an aesthetic ideal and as a matrix for the new social order that was being forged during the war.

Dunja Njaradi is dance anthropologist interested in traditional and folk dances, social dances and religious performances. She is book editor of the *Journal of Dance, Movement and Spiritualities*. She published *Backstage Economies: Labour and Masculinities in Contemporary European Dance* with Chester University Press in 2014. She is currently teaching ethnology, anthropology and ethnochoreology at the Department for Ethnomusicology at the Faculty of Music, University of Arts in Belgrade.