The Importance of Being Patriotic:

Enregistered Connections in Croatian Minority Activism

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Drawing on ethnographic fieldwork conducted in a school in a village in Vojvodina, Serbia, where teaching in Croatian has been introduced, this article analyses relationships maintained between Croatian minority activists, the teaching staff at the school, and representatives from Croatian state institutions who visited. This minority context is especially sensitive as, following the wars that accompanied the break-up of the Socialist Yugoslav state into primarily nationally defined states, Serbo-Croatian split into two mutually intelligible standards, Serbian and Croatian. The article examines the contexts of such visits, with a focus on what was at stake in the encounters and how different participants in minority politics manage various connections (*veze*) with Croatian state institutions. In particular, it describes how a hegemonic register consisting of tropes, or ideologemes, relating to *domoljublje* (patriotism) and caring for/preserving Croatian national identity featured in these interactions. This article makes the ethnographic argument that some activists primarily used this patriotic register non-referentially, its use indexing the pursuit of connections with Croatian state institutions, whilst other activists used the patriotic register referentially. Nevertheless, it is argued that when disputes occurred, “pro-national” activists used the enregistered tropes referentially, in so doing disrupting the networks of activists who used them in a primarily non-referential sense. Finally, the consequences and wider implications of this are explored.

Keywords: Croatia; Serbia; post-Socialism; nationalism; minority activism

Introduction: A State(ly) Visit

In late March 2015, a special mass was organised in the Catholic Church located in the centre of a village, *Ravnina*,¹ in the north of Serbia, where I was completing fieldwork at the time in the village primary school. The day was a special occasion: it was the Saint Day of St. Josip, referred to as the protector of the Croatian people (*zaštitnik hrvatskog naroda*) and chosen by the Croatian National Council in Serbia to be a bank holiday for the Croatian minority there. Representatives from the State Office for Croats Abroad² attended the service, parking in a shiny black Mercedes car. The village priest conducted the service and, in honour of the special guests,

gave a short speech, in which he described the people gathered there as “the Croatian state and people all together.”³ In his speech, he also talked disparagingly of the ideologisation of everyday life in the area, before making some strong anti-communist comments.⁴ After the church service, we went to a venue opposite the school which sometimes functioned as an “ethno-restaurant.” In the outside area, candles had been lit and placed in the centre of the wooden tables and a group of folk musicians (*tamburaši*)⁵ played before the representatives gave political speeches and a buffet was served. In her speech, the main representative stressed the importance of preserving Croatian traditions, describing how proud she was of Croats living in places such as Vojvodina where life is relatively difficult⁶ and where Croats are a minority. She also emphasised that everyone should contribute to the life of the state in which they live as well, implicitly stressing the importance of political citizenship in addition to cultural belonging. After her speech, the *tamburaši* played again and everybody tucked into the food, had a few drinks, and danced before leaving.

Throughout her visit, the representative was clearly positioned as a special and important visitor, as evidenced by the comments made by the priest in the Church and her speech at the evening event. Her expensive car with a Zagreb number plate positioned her as someone important, from somewhere else and economically “from above,” given the relatively low average wages in Ravenna, the church being the only building that stood out as opulent. Such visits from various state officials occurred on a fairly regular basis over the course of my fieldwork. As average wages were significantly higher in Croatia relative to Serbia, some of these visits brought possibilities of receiving funding, of participating in regional and/or EU projects alongside schools in Croatia and of receiving gifts—such as books and information technologies from publishers. They also enabled the kindling and maintaining of relationships with people based in Croatia. In maintaining such relationships, the various participants in Croatian minority institutions cultivated different kinds of connections (hereon *veze*) with various Croatian schools, cultural organisations, religious organisations, and government ministries.

In her speech, the state official also mobilised a discourse of “preserving Croatian traditions and national identity.” The focus of this paper is therefore on exploring the relationship, in this minority context, between pursuing *veze* and using certain patriotic tropes, placed in a linguistic register which I call the patriotic register (in Croatian: *domoljubni registar*). *Domoljublje* is a noun that literally translates as “love for the homeland,” and the register consists of tropes relating to preserving and caring for Croatia. Alongside the pursuit of *veze*, I contend that this register underpins social practices associated with Croatian minority activism. I opt for the linguistic anthropological concept of register rather than other concepts such as “discourse” for two reasons. First, I find the linguistic focus of register more precisely captures this article’s focus, which aims to link the use of particular linguistic forms to the indexing of national collectivities and/or ways of relating (*veze*), with the aim of understanding transformations to the linguistic and social order alongside one

another. Second, the thematising and hierarchising aspects of *enregisterment* correlate both with the thematic ascription of subjects as Croatian by minority activists, and with the gatekeeping state hierarchy surrounding the negotiation of *veze* respectively.⁷ My approach, following Brubaker, is to understand the quality of “groupness” associated with national categories (i.e., the existence of a “Croatian” national collective) not as a pre-existing, taken-for-granted assumption, but rather to view it as a project undertaken by certain actors in this minority context and therefore as something to be explained.⁸ In this view, the use of the patriotic register does not referentially index a collective whole that always already exists prior to the use of such tropes, but is rather a strategy employed sometimes, by some people, to promote such groupness, and also to facilitate the pursuit of *veze*. The broader aim of this article is to analyse the networks, actors, and connections that make teaching in Croatian in Serbia possible, and to reflect on the wider implications of the patriotic register being hegemonic when negotiating *veze* with Croatian state institutions. First, however, I introduce the context of the teaching and the institutions involved.

Teaching in Croatian in Serbia: Context, Funding and Institutions

Serbian and Croatian were officially regarded as a unified language during the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (hereon SFRY), nevertheless being defined as different “standard language idioms” from 1974. Complete mutual intelligibility exists between standard Croatian and Serbian language varieties and the differences are comparable to those between American and British English, one significant difference between the standards being the use of *ije/je* in standard Croatian, where there is sometimes an *e* in standard Serbian, referred to as ekavian (Serbian) and ijekavian (Croatian). Croatian exclusively uses the Latin Script at present, while in Serbia both the Latin and Cyrillic scripts are used, with a one-to-one correspondence between Cyrillic and Latin symbols. Cyrillic script is frequently used by state institutions in Serbia, whilst many adverts—particularly those drawing on associations with the “West”—use Latin script. While both scripts were in use in Croatia during the SFRY, young people do not typically learn Cyrillic script at school, and a significant number have difficulties reading Cyrillic script. Because of this linguistic proximity, teaching in Croatian in Serbia typically stresses the symbolic rather than communicative dimensions involved in the acquisition of the Croatian standard, and Cyrillic script is taught to pupils in Serbian as a foreign language.⁹

The Croatian Republic seceded from the SFRY in 1991, and what is commonly referred to in Croatia as the Homeland War (*Domovinski rat*) followed. This resulted in mass forced population movements, including of Serbian-identified citizens out of the newly “liberated” Croatian state territory, and also of Croatian-identified citizens out of what became identified as Serbian (previously “Yugoslav”) territory. Large

areas of land that are now present-day Croatia were under the rule of the Republic of Serbian Krajina, and during the early nineties, Croat-identified individuals were forcibly moved out of these areas in large numbers, before the territory was later claimed by Croatian nationalist forces in two operations, Operation Flash and Operation Storm, which both took place in 1995 with the backing of the US government. In Vojvodina, the situation was tense in certain areas, such as Srijem, whilst in and around Subotica the situation remained relatively calm and no military combat took place there.¹⁰ This aspect of the field context is a crucial detail when comparing with similar studies in other post-Yugoslav regions, such as Hromadžić's study of a school in Mostar, Herzegovina.¹¹ Several interlocutors stated that the relative calm was helped by the Hungarian minority controlling local government at that time, as opposed, for example, to Serbian nationalist politicians.¹²

A second crucial distinction when comparing with the Bosnian and Herzegovinian context is that the pupils in the Croatian stream followed the Serbian syllabus in almost all subjects (Croatian as a school subject was an exception).¹³ The Serbian textbooks had (mostly) been translated into Croatian, although this meant that there was a limited selection of books, given that several textbooks from different publishers existed for most subjects, yet only one book was chosen for translation. Consequently, in my experience, the teachers sometimes used Serbian materials, including in Cyrillic script, in class when they viewed the Croatian books on offer to be of a poorer quality in teaching a particular topic.

The highest concentration of schools in Serbia offering teaching in Croatian are situated in and around Subotica, where the Croatian National Council (Hrvatsko nacionalno vijeće, hereon HNV¹⁴), founded in 2002, resides. As the SFRY was considered a South Slavic Federation, Croat-identified individuals were not recognised as a minority in Vojvodina at that time. Key minority institutions include The Institute for Culture of Croats of Vojvodina¹⁵ and a minority press producing a weekly magazine named *The Croatian Word* (*Hrvatska riječ*), a magazine for young adults (*Kužiš?*) and a magazine for children (*Hrčko*). The magazines, as well as the national council and cultural institute, were part funded by the Serbian state budget and part funded by competitions announced by Croatian ministries including those by the State Office for Croats Abroad and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Teaching has taken place in Croatian from the academic year 2002–2003, following the recognition of Croats as a national minority in Serbia in 2002. Those teaching the classes are mostly from and have trained in Serbia, with the exception of three teachers and one coordinator funded and sent by the Croatian Ministry for Science, Education and Sport (Ministarstvo Znanosti, Obrazovanja i Sporta, hereon MZOS),¹⁶ whom they regularly report back to.¹⁷ Teaching in Croatian is funded by the Serbian government, except for the textbooks and some of the teaching for Croatian classes, which the MZOS teachers conduct. The Croatian National Council pays transport costs and a small stipend to each family when they enrol their child in the Croatian stream. They also help, as do some of the other Croatian minority institutions, with costs towards

Figure 1
Some Key Institutions in the Croatian Minority Activist Network

some school excursions. A diagram illustrating the connections between the various minority institutions involved and the main Croatian ministry and office involved is presented in Figure 1, with arrows indicating funding. To better understand the relationships between certain actors, I will now expand theoretically on the concept of *veze* and discuss some methodological issues that came up.

Studying *Veze* in the European Semi-periphery

Having connections, often referred to in Serbia and Croatia as *veze*, are frequently crucial for social reproduction and for survival. They refer to an economy of personalised favours as discussed in other contexts where similar practices exist, such as Ledeneva's discussion of *blat* in Russia, or Smart's discussion of *guanxi* in China.¹⁸ Whilst *veze* and clientelist relations, which rely on "knowing someone who knows someone else,"¹⁹ are not specific to post-socialist contexts, the extent to which they pervade everyday life for a large number of people in post-socialist Serbia and Croatia—including finding work in institutions such as schools—is significant. Both personalised "helping" and practices such as purchasing exams have been implicated in a large number of exam scandals which are periodically reported on at universities and schools in Serbia and Croatia. For example, the children (mostly around nine years old) in the class with which I conducted fieldwork spoke negatively about certain actions they had already come across and thought about, in relation to *veze*. These

included certain people attending folklore concerts at the school for free, and poetry/literature recitation competitions being “fixed” (*namješteno*).

Veze are crucial in both securing “formal” employment, including in state institutions, and in “informal” activities, such as maintaining networks in the grey economy. For instance, whilst completing this fieldwork in Ravnina, I stayed with a family in nearby Subotica who were involved in the small-scale grey market import (*švercanje*) and sale of grocery items and cars brought in from Germany. Such an enterprise, common practice in a border town such as Subotica, required *veze* with Hungarian and Serbian border guards willing to turn a blind eye to a van full of untaxed groceries, with car dealers willing to change the number plates, and with certain police officers in Subotica who were also willing to turn a blind eye to such operations.²⁰ Such favours were typically repaid with gifts in kind (of groceries). In contrast, the *veze* which teachers and minority Croatian cultural institutions cultivated took place almost exclusively amongst Croatian-identified individuals employed in Serbian or Croatian state institutions, a key difference with the grey market activities described above. Maintaining such *veze* in this minority context (and arguably, frequently in Croatian state institutions in general) was specific in relying on mobilising certain *domoljublje* tropes—a fact which is unsurprising, given that nationally defined citizenship had become *the* organising principle of the recently formed Croatian state.

Whilst *veze* were an important feature of daily life in the SFRY, Jansen (2015, 210) suggested that the key difference in post-socialist Bosnia is that “the threshold of clientelism had been shifted downwards: if in the SFRY, it was recalled, declining front door invitations and ignoring open backdoors would hinder the realisation of ambitious life projects beyond ‘normal lives,’ today this could block even the most modest reproduction (‘surviving’).”²¹ My experience is that this holds true for Serbia and Croatia as well, although the extent to which the living standard has dropped varies across regions and towns. In the case of the school in Ravnina, *veze* could provide anything from the “icing on the cake” (*šećer na kraju*) in the form of free entrance to museums or similar attractions on school trips, to “modest survival,” including access to funds for very basic costs which they sometimes had trouble covering, such as heating the school during the winter.

Humphrey argued that the “veering” way of doing things through *veze* perpetuate and are often preferred to “official” or “anonymous” bureaucratic procedures because they help constitute a particular kind of personhood and sense of self-worth, as a skilled individual who can manoeuvre and navigate institutions through the strength of one’s connections.²² This view suggests that *veze* often constitute a **choice** people make in the face of several possible choices. However, the extent to which pursuing *veze* constitutes a choice likely varies across situations. As regards institutions which had gained some “momentum”—including hierarchical state institutions—breaking out of this way of doing things is, I contend, extremely difficult. Brković, on the basis of her work conducted with families with disabled children seeking to raise funds for

necessary operations—rather argued that *veze* in South-Eastern Europe constitute a specific way in which people “do” personhood, which persist not through choice but “because they are implicated in power relations and the reproduction of senses of self.”²³ The level of perceived or actual choice present varies across contexts—the grey market dealer could have chosen a low-paid job in a supermarket, or pursued a job in the state administration for example, thus pursuing different kinds of *veze*, whilst in other situations, such as negotiating access to state services, there is likely little choice but to search for a particular *veze*. Many people with whom I spoke, and myself, expressed a strong desire, or even a yearning,²⁴ for state institutions in particular to depend less on *veze*.

One issue relatively little discussed by anthropologists is that of the relationship between pursuing certain kinds of *veze* and nationalism. An exception is Verdery’s discussion in which she argues that under conditions of highly centralised governments with shortages (as was present in socialist Romania), “any device that increased one’s chance of obtaining what one needed had a functional role to play. Shortage-alleviating devices included the ever-present use of personal ties and “bribery.”²⁵ In such a view, she suggests that ethnic boundaries could be invoked to tighten the network and expel competitors from a network. Such categories are used to make distinctions and discriminations, in so doing “gatekeeping” the network. In this view, ethno-national exclusivity is possibly an unintended side effect resulting from a need to make discriminations in a context of shortages. My experience staying with a family involved in grey market activities was that in Subotica, *veze* connected with the grey-market importation of items for commercial sale necessarily criss-crossed all kinds of identifications and the use of different language varieties, and national identifications were not used to my knowledge as a gatekeeping mechanism, whilst in Croatian minority activism, it was assumed by many that almost all participants in minority activism identified as Croatian. Now let me give some ethnographic examples of how *veze* were managed with Croatian state institutions.

Veze in the Minority Context

One anecdote the headmistress told me on two occasions illustrated the importance of a personalisation of relations characteristic of *veze* and of the qualities she looked for, and the fact she told me the anecdote twice suggests it was an important example for her. She described how some local government officials from one area of Croatia came to visit. She related how someone who works for the ministry had “sent” an official from a town near Rijeka here, and that after a little time spent together, he asked her what she thought of this state official with whom he had travelled and whom the headmistress had met on a previous occasion. She openly said, “I think he’s an idiot,” and then they both laughed. The visitor then related how this minister had told him “today you’re going to spend some time in the middle of

nowhere” (*u vukojebini*). He had taken a dislike to this minister’s arrogant attitude, and in Ravnina, had had a pleasant and relaxed time, which he compared to the relative formality and “stiffness” of many official events. The headmistress then made some points. She said—when I commented negatively on the possibility of a right-wing nationalist government (ruled by the HDZ²⁶) coming into power in Croatia—that often what is most important as regards a relationship with the school, is “what kind of a person” the official is, and whether they are prepared to collaborate and help, in other words, the extent to which they authentically show an interest in the school. She contrasted this with other people always complaining about how bad the situation was here, stating that the act of complaining could not help to improve the situation. Her approach therefore placed finding *veze* which would confer an advantage to the school, and also to herself and her social standing as headmistress. “Advantage” here was understood in a broad sense of enriching the life of the school and experiences of the pupils, as was regularly pointed out to me. When I finished my project, for example, she emphasised how the pupils had come to like me and how my presence had been a good experience for them, and that any benefits go in both directions. In building *veze*, she would often draw on cultural representations associated with Ravnina. For instance, she translated my name at our first meeting into a Bunjevac²⁷ equivalent, *Andrija*, and often emphatically used vocabulary from the local Bunjevac language variety, actions that emphasised and cultivated a feeling of connection with the school and the village, describing the school as a collective (*kolektiv*) into which I had been welcomed.²⁸ She also often presented gifts to individuals with whom *veze* were maintained, which were similarly specific to Ravnina. For example, there was a village craft centre which made pictures specific to the village, and these pictures were often presented to guests, along with copies of the school magazine, local produce (including *rakija*, a fruit brandy), and small crafts that the children had made. The pictures were often personalised with a message as well, and the headmistress would be flexible in her choices. To give one example, on one occasion we visited the head of a publishing house in Zagreb, waiting in a conference space for him to arrive. He arrived late and then gave a short speech, first discussing how he had only visited Vojvodina once, telling us about the wine cellar he had visited when he was there. He then gave a short presentation about the publishing house. When discussing the history books, he talked about the homeland war (*domovinski rat*), emphasising that if he were to write about such events, he would do so in a biased manner. He therefore stated that he was proud that the publishing house worked with professional historians who wrote the “objective truth” about such events, highlighting that their work was the fruits of scientific truth (*plodovi znanstvene istine*). The headmistress was polite and thoughtful, choosing a gift of a picture of a religious icon, an angel. Recognising the different “political habituses” of state officials was a valuable skill in developing effective *veze*. In promoting culturally specific “identity markers” associated with the school and village context through unique gifts relating to Ravnina, she promoted other individuals’ identification with Ravnina. Such skills were necessary for the school to, if not survive, then flourish.

Such markers thus served a pragmatic as well as referential function and it is to this topic that we now turn, taking a short theoretical detour.

Register, Indexicals, and Shifters

The concept of register was traditionally used by linguists to refer to level of formality²⁹ in any given interaction, but has been expanded to include “a linguistic repertoire that is associated, culture internally, with particular social practices and with persons who engage in such practices.”³⁰ The expanded definition can include a thematic component or specialist use of words. We may speak of an “expert” register encompassing lexical items or tropes used by a surgeon (e.g., ICU—intensive care unit) or a peer reviewer (e.g., this topic “deserves scholarly attention”). However, I prefer “within a discursive setting/space” to Agha’s “culture internally.” If we use the definition of “culture internally” as applied to the patriotic register, this might suggest that “Croats in Vojvodina,” or Croats generally, possess their own distinct culture and associated registers automatically, rather than such “groupness,” following Brubaker, being an outcome of certain actions.³¹ I view the patriotic register as first inscribing and then promoting a “cultural space” rather than being prior to it: when achieved through standard language, this involves the *enregisterment* of particular linguistic forms as “Croatian” and the identification of a specific population of language users who share a national language-culture.

Indexicals are linguistic forms that “encode little or no description of their referents.”³² Rather, their meaning is specified partly or wholly by the context of their usage. As Hanks (*ibid.*) commented, “To say that any linguistic form is ‘indexical’ is to say that it stands for its object neither by resemblance to it, nor by sheer convention, but by contiguity with it.” Commonly referred to indexicals include pronouns, whose referent is frequently made clear from the context. They can be divided into referential and non-referential indexes. A phrase such as “our culture” (*naša kultura*) may be considered a referential index, or shifter, as its referent depends on who is speaking and the context in which they say it.³³ When some people use the term, a clearly bounded referent (e.g., Croatian culture, defined in an “essentialist” manner) is assumed, typically through making referential distinctions between objects which belong to that culture, or do not. Others may use such a term in an ambiguous sense to move between different referents, for example, a “Croatian” and “South-Slavic” culture.

In certain situations, the referential function of a linguistic form may be overridden, or completely ignored, so as to serve another purpose, whilst some linguistic forms only have non-referential indexes. For example, Silverstein discusses a study of a language in Northern Queensland, Australia, where “there is an everyday set of lexical items and a ‘mother-in-law’ set, which had to be used by a speaker only in the presence of his classificatory mother-in-law or equivalent affine.”³⁴ Here, the use of different linguistic forms does not code the items but reveals particular social (kinship) relations, and is therefore an example of a non-referential index.

In Silverstein's example, the non-referential index codes particular kinship relations. Like kinship, *veze* constitute a particular mode of relating to others, and in the Croatian minority context, I will argue that the earlier mentioned patriotic register frequently functions for participants in minority politics as a non-referential index used to pursue *veze* with state officials. Understanding the mechanisms through which these enregistered linguistic forms shift between referential and non-referential functions takes us beyond assertions that some people use terms in culturally essentialist ways (or not), as it allows us to examine in detail features of the context and the social situations when such terms are used. Silverstein also argues that, contrary to the Herderian view of "language-as-culture," that is, a tight relationship between language and culture—such a pragmatic analysis of speech "allows us to describe the real linkage of language to culture, and perhaps the most important aspect of the 'meaning' of speech."³⁵ In this view, the patriotic register is a code used (i) as a linguistic technology used to attempt to construct and/or maintain Croatian "groupness,"³⁶ and (ii) to gain access to state resources, in so doing maintaining a hierarchical system of *veze* through which privileges could be obtained alongside the performance of a particular kind of sociality. Now I will make some methodological points, and describe in what way this register was hegemonic in the field context.

Self-Positioning and the Patriotic Register as Hegemonic in the Field Context

In the post-Yugoslav context, nationalism and national categories are a sensitive issue because of the recent wars. For instance, approaches to nationalism sometimes constitute an "orientalist divide" between Western commentators chastising nationalism in the European periphery, and those working in the region often downplaying the importance of nationalism or involvement of intellectuals in developing national ideas, with a particular stigma also attached to the use of the term *nationalism*, even by those who implicitly advocate moderate nationalist ideas.³⁷ I will argue that the reasons for this relate to one's positioning and mobilising networks of *veze* in state institutions. The fact that I was based at an institute in Zagreb, spoke a language variety closer to standard Croatian than standard Serbian, and that my project was funded by Croatian taxpayers and EU funds made access to the field site much easier, and a rapport was established through my connections with and to Zagreb, where I had enjoyed living for several years. As such, I was also directly implicated in the networks I seek to describe in this article. I was also, as we shall see, positioned as having greater distance from the situation in which minority activists found themselves, as I am a UK citizen with no familial connections in the post-Yugoslav region. Having spent many years in Croatia and Serbia, I also actively pursued *veze*, choosing to work with activists whose views were closest to my own and socialising with others—such as the family I stayed with—who were outside of the networks of

Table 1
Translations into the Patriotic Register

Comment	Enregistered Comment
Prvo sam učio sprski, što mi je puno pomogao kad sam došao učiti hrvatski u Zagrebu jer sam onda razumio puno riječi koji ljudi govore na ulici. (First I learned Serbian, which helped me a lot when I came to Zagreb to learn Croatian, as I understood a lot of words which people speak on the street).	Prvo sam učio sprski, onda sam učio hrvatski književni jezik. (First I learned Serbian, then the Croatian literary language)
Sviđa mi se ovdje ići u goste, ljudi su gostoljubivi. (I like being a guest here, people are hospitable)	Sviđa mi se <i>gostoljubivost oba dva naroda</i> (I like the hospitality of these two peoples)

minority political organising, but who followed and had strong views on this network and their activities.

Given that in my experience only a relatively small number of people in the minority and village context actively promoted nationalist-based political options (what some of my interlocutors referred to as “pro-national” politics), the issue of how different people relate to and engage with the national framing of the context in terms of a minority discourse is revealing. Whilst I found the village context to be more conservative, I did not come across more people with “nationalist” views than in the urban contexts of Zagreb and Belgrade with which I was more intimately familiar.³⁸ My experience was that Croatian national categories often functioned as a link, creating a network across the region (mostly the territory of Croatia, but also other areas) in which certain people chose to participate. Use of the enregistered patriotic discourse linked the village to numerous other villages, cities, and a national collective known by many people the world over, thus having a clear pragmatic function.

The specific use of enregistered patriotic tropes (i.e., of “caring/preserving Croatian culture and/or identity” (njegovanje/(o)čuvanje hrvatske culture i/ili hrvatskog identiteta) entails in this context—because of the importance of language in Croatian nationalist narratives—both a meta-pragmatic commentary on how language should be used and a naturalisation of a nationalist language ideology, which links the use of certain linguistic forms to Croatian cultural belonging. The patriotic register is accompanied by a banal nationalist³⁹ enregisterment of language which implicitly promotes “groupness” through defining social reality in and through presupposed groups.⁴⁰ I found that when I conducted an interview about my project for the minority press, several of my comments were translated into this register, citing words and phrases I had definitely not used (see table above). When discussing my project with an official working in a cultural organisation, upon explaining the project focus as being about teaching in Croatian in Serbia, he replied “you are interested in the education of Croats in Serbia?” therein placing my project focus in this register as well.

On a meta-pragmatic level, the promotion of this register features throughout the current Croatian strategy for science and education, which emphasises, for instance, how

Upbringing and education contribute to the construction of individual, cultural and national identity of an individual. Today, in the age of globalisation—in which a powerful mixing of different cultures, worldviews and religions is taking place—people ought to become citizens of the world, whilst preserving one's national identity, culture, cultural landscape, social, moral and spiritual heritage. *It is particularly worth doing so whilst preserving and developing the Croatian language and taking care to use it correctly.*⁴¹ (my emphasis)

This strategy slides between language and culture, echoing Gal's discussion of nationalist language ideologies in Europe⁴² and promoting, in the Croatian context, what Urla refers to as the heritage view of language.⁴³ In Urla's study of Basque language activists, however, a different understanding was promoted, whereby acquiring Basque was understood as a process and "existentialised" as "becoming Basque," rather than language being understood as something to be preserved and cared for.⁴⁴ As I have discussed elsewhere, pupils did acquire standard language ideology in the classroom setting, while they did not consistently use Croatian standard forms either in more formal or less formal classroom settings, and in contrast to Charalambous, Zembylas, and Charalambous's study participants, they had no qualms using lexical features which were indexed, for instance, as Serbian.⁴⁵ Amongst minority activists promoting Croatian language and culture in Vojvodina, the patriotic register was hegemonic in the sense that its use was almost always drawn on in formal meetings and public discussions in the minority/majority media. However, through ethnography, I will now argue that the ways in which participants enregistered them and their indexical and/or referential use resulted in different effects and the formation of different kinds of relationships.

The Ambiguities of *Domoljublje*: A Meeting with the Ministry

Just before the end of the school year, a meeting was organised in Ravnina at which coordinators for teaching in Croatian in a large number of different states gathered, along with representatives from various Croatian minority activist circles and institutions. A journalist from the Croatian minority media publication *Hrvatska riječ* was also present, as were the coordinators for teaching in Croatian in Serbia. Those involved in managing the coordinators, who as earlier mentioned worked for MZOS in Zagreb, also came. Julija, a colleague and one of four coordinators sent by the ministry to organise the classes, personally introduced me to her boss, who suggested we organise some kind of event where we discuss the teaching and my findings, a comment which suggested she had significant resources at her disposal.

The meeting began with short introductions, before Julija, who was from Vojvodina but studied in Zagreb, gave an overview of the teaching in Vojvodina. At the start of the presentation, she pointed me out and mentioned my research, and that such research was important, positioning me as an academic expert who could conduct an audit of the effectiveness of the teaching, that is, as someone relatively “unbiased” with expert knowledge. The presentation began with a slide of several blindfolded people touching different parts of an elephant and trying to guess what it was they were touching, comparing this to the situation regarding teaching in Croatian in Serbia. Skilfully aware of the diversity of perspectives at the meeting, she first asked what the main aim of the teaching should be,⁴⁶ before discussing the context of the teaching in Vojvodina. She distinguished between Croatian as an optional class, as organised by the HNV (Croatian National Council), and teaching conducted in Croatian, which MZOS coordinated, before heavily criticising the inaction of the HNV on several levels.⁴⁷

In criticising the teaching which the HNV organised, she raised a number of issues, including the teachers often being unaware of the curriculum, not being familiar with “Croatian culture,” not attending seminars offered, not knowing “technical” points concerning the teaching (whether they have to give marks or not), and that the teaching often simply involves playing in the schoolyard. She then placed an emphasis on the importance of young people, saying that it is essential they stay *if our community is to survive*, and that they are generally leaving and not returning. She stated that the quality of schooling and associated opportunities play an important role here, before criticising the inaction of the HNV in reducing the number of opportunities available through discontinuing student grants to study in Croatia, accommodation for students going to study for the end of school exam (*matura*), and discontinuing funding the heating of a space in which students were given extra preparation for the end of school exam. Her comments should be examined critically in light of the economic crisis which had resulted more generally in fewer opportunities for pupils and students. Julija’s position was strongly influenced by her connections with the political opposition to those currently working in the HNV and their “pro-national” politics which she and others had criticised, especially when—in her view—nationalist references were made to cover up the faults of their inaction. She also criticised what she perceived as an overfocus on small linguistic differences by some pro-national activists. She referred to the difference between Serbian and Croatian as that between ekavian and ijekavian, questioning how important this was and implicitly speaking to politically nationalist language activists who often drew tight connections between identity and language, with whom she disagreed. She argued that such a focus was alienating many pupils, who understood the use of standard Croatian as “foreign” and were not inculcating a self-understanding as Croatian. Her boss then gave a presentation.

Julija’s boss, based in Zagreb and working in the Ministry (MZOS), stated that the main aim of the teaching should be to care for Croatian identity and culture

(*njegovanje hrvatskog identiteta i kulture*). If applied to teaching in Croatian, this can be considered a metapragmatic commentary on how the teaching ought to be structured, reinforcing nationalist tendencies in language use such as purism and prescriptivism, alongside the promotion of other activities which might reinforce the production of a “Croatian” linguistic habitus in pupils.⁴⁸

After her presentation, we had a short break and I drank coffee outside with one of the coordinators, Mirna. Mirna strongly disagreed with her boss, saying she viewed such a focus as closed minded (*zadržt*) and that her aim is good-quality teaching, irrespective of whether pupils viewed themselves as Croatian or not. She also said that this was why she did not like politics, as it often construed things in a closed-minded fashion. She described a concrete example of political “closed-mindedness” associated with the use of such tropes. The example she gave was of a literary evening (*književna večer*) organised with a well-known writer from Croatia, which Croatian-stream pupils from another village attended. There was a Roma pupil in the class (identifiable as Roma because of his darker-coloured skin) and he sat in the front row on one side. When photos of the event became publically available via online media, the Roma student was deliberately cut out of this photograph, an action she strongly disagreed with, as it wasn’t inclusive in terms of all those participating in the event. On this occasion, national categories were used referentially to create a division between (non-)Croats, therein thematising humans as being constituted of multiple, distinct varieties. Following the break, the next session gave an overview of Croatian teaching in various countries, with presenters who coordinated or taught in each of these countries giving presentations, and then we had lunch.

Julija’s deep criticism of the HNV at this meeting, as being unprofessional and repeating ideological slogans as a smokescreen (*paravan*) for doing little work, was viewed as brave by several people present at the meeting. She was about to reach the end of her work mandate, and so was not in danger of losing her job. Over coffee a couple of days later, we discussed the meeting. She expressed a fear that the HNV would speak to the media and make statements such as her working against the interests of the Croatian community, suggesting that if she had more public exposure discussing these views, she would be derided as “working against the community” (*biti/raditi protiv zajednice*). She also said she had heard that the HNV, who had connections high up in the Croatian state administration, principally through the *Ured za Hrvate van Hrvatske* (the Office for Croats outside of Croatia) had already contacted her bosses’ boss, complaining about her actions. What Julija wanted from them and others involved in minority activism was some kind of professionalism, by which I understood she meant transparency (that those assigned tasks would do what they committed themselves to doing) and mutual respect, and what she criticised was their use of patriotic tropes and abuse of ideological conflicts as a means of disguising their lack of work.

The Patriotic Register: Consequences, Hegemony, Complicity

Those who most actively promoted the patriotic register, such as the guest from MZOS at the meeting, often argued for what some of my interlocutors called “pro-national” politics, by which they referred to official politics based primarily on nationalist principles. As we have seen, such actors often used the concepts referentially, in making real world distinctions between people, such as cutting the Roma pupil off the photograph, or questioning the “ethnic origins” of particular individuals. Pro-nationalist activists often enregistered their comments by linking their voice in a privileged way to that of a national collective, as Julija’s worries that they will argue that she “is against the community” (*biti protiv zajednice*) convey. These enregistered tropes were hierarchising and thematising and those who could claim a privileged position in a hierarchy of Croatianness—as Čapo-Žmegac described, especially during the nineties a moral discourse of “good” and “bad” Croats existed—could claim to speak more authentically and in the name of the “community.”⁴⁹ Crucially, such claims of an authentic voice representing Croats was, in her view, and in my experience, reinforced through privileged connections to officials higher up in the state hierarchy, going up to the very top when the nationalist party, the HDZ, were in power. Thus, the thematising and hierarchising effects of the referential use of the register mapped onto the state hierarchy and an “identity” effect, to use Trouillot’s terminology.⁵⁰ Whilst a detailed discussion of hegemony is beyond the scope of this article, I implicitly draw on Gramsci’s point that “though hegemony is ethical-political, it must also be economic, must necessarily be based on the decisive nucleus of economic activity.”⁵¹ It therefore encompasses both the attempted production of a shared framework—here through the promotion of *domoljublje*—while also having significant control over and gatekeeping access to resources, largely through the system of *veze*. As Bellamy described, during the nineties, the fact “that the HDZ chose to sell off state industries to its own members is unsurprising if we recall that the HDZ believed that it was at one with the Croatian nation.”⁵² From an anthropological perspective, whether a significant portion of the HDZ membership believed this or not is impossible to gauge, but we can recognise that the membership at least understood the relationship between using the patriotic register and maintaining a privileged position in a hierarchy of *veze* in state institutions.

Other activists, who did not advocate “pro-national” politics, nevertheless used enregistered patriotic tropes in interactions with Croatian state officials. For example, Julija mentioned “the survival of our community” and in public statements the headmistress mentioned the preservation of Croatian identity and traditions, whilst in other contexts, such as individual interviews I conducted and meeting with parents at the end of term, they stressed that the primary teaching focus should be on providing high-quality teaching in the Croatian stream. This goal differs from promoting the patriotic register in not supposing anything about the national origins of the pupils

involved. It also stresses professionalism: a discourse on *doing* rather than *being*. I contend that this move was made after my “political habitus” was identified by the headmistress and coordinator, as when I first arrived at the school, efforts were made to emphasise how strictly and precisely the Croatian language was taught, presumably drawing on interactions from previous visits by academics based in Croatia who work on language. Individuals’ positioning could be read through one’s stance—that is, how through their speech acts they position themselves with respect to social relations or a situation, for example, assuming an affective stance through using terms in a sentimental fashion—when using the patriotic register, a focus beyond the scope of this article.⁵³ This was also implied in Julija’s comment about my relative distance and consequent objectivity, which may be compared with the way in which Julija’s boss emphasised the importance of caring for national identity. Elissa Helms’s discussion of strategic essentialisms makes for a useful contrast here.⁵⁴ Helms described how certain women’s associations in Bosnia, following the nineties wars, often drew on positive stereotypes of women as peacemakers and agents of ethnic reconciliation, which she termed “affirmative essentialisms.” They then made strategic use of these essentialisms in framing their work as humanitarian, thus undertaking the “quiet circumvention of dominant (public) political channels.” The activists I describe here, who were also mostly women, pursued a different strategy. If Helms’s activists focused on the strategic **referential** use of gender tropes *outside* of dominant political channels, some of the activists I describe here focused on the strategic **non-referential** use of patriotic tropes *inside* dominant political channels.

While certain activists disliked pro-national politics, other individuals such as Mirna found politics distasteful more generally. This resonates with Greenberg’s analysis of individuals’ choosing to not participate in political processes in Serbia.⁵⁵ Such an approach may be contrasted with Zenker’s descriptions of Irish language and culture activists in Belfast.⁵⁶ Zenker described a social club in which there was an insistence on speaking in Irish, including the use of some linguistically purist and archaic forms. However, in this context at the club, there was an agreement not to discuss politics and that the focus would be on promoting Irish language as “Irish cultural heritage” irrespective of unionist or separatist affiliations. Whilst in the Irish context, language use at this social club was heavily culturalised, in being viewed as symbolic cultural heritage rather than “just” a communicative skill, the use of certain linguistic forms was not associated with a single political perspective. In contrast, in Croatia, pro-national activists combine the “heritage view” of language with linguistic purist and prescriptive practices, alongside a strong politicisation of language use, even in everyday (relatively “informal”) contexts. Pro-national Croatian minority activists in Serbia are caught in a double bind, as their speech and, by extension, their cultural practices are sometimes “orientalised” as Serbian by pro-national politicians based over the border in Croatia.

Julija specifically criticised the use of the patriotic register by some officials working at the HNV, suggesting that it was used by pro-nationalist activists as a

means of avoiding doing work—her criticism did not problematize the use of the register in general however. She described their use of the register as both a smoke-screen (*paravan*) and as ideologised, but ultimately empty, signifiers. On her view, the motives of these individuals were considered to be opportunistic. They realised that the tropes were useful in gaining access to political power and resources and were happy to use them. Had they been around thirty years ago, however, they would have utilised tropes connected with socialism, making use of the dominant political discourse available in order to secure access to power and resources. Julija's perspective suggests that politics primarily depends on discourses divorced from the material world designed to gain power in particular circumstances, but it draws attention away from the specific identity work undertaken by the patriotic register, as opposed to a socialist discourse, which, whilst also hierarchising (dividing people into "good" and "bad" worker-citizens depending on their commitments, sense of duty, and production), it does not thematise varieties of human being.

In emphasising the non-referential use of the register, I do not therefore want to suggest, as Wagner does in his article questioning the existence of social groups in Melanesia, that many people did not understand themselves as part of nationally defined groups, or, equally class positions, a point Martin makes in contesting Wagner's interpretation of the Melanesian context.⁵⁷ Rather, for many in this context, the referential and non-referential uses of the register sat alongside one another, just as different understandings of personhood, primarily individual, collective, and relational, may coexist alongside one another, coming to the fore in particular situations and under different historical conditions. Importantly, outside of "official" political meetings, for instance with state officials and when promoting minority politics in public media, many activists of various persuasions implicitly understood themselves as belonging to one or more national categories, implying some kind of residual reference. Nevertheless, they refused in political discourses affecting educational policy to promote political divisions based on national categories. To say that the patriotic register was hegemonic suggests that reference "trumped" non-referential indexing, which raises questions of complicity with political violence that occurred during the recent wars in direct relation to the linking of a patriotic register to a moral story and claims over a territory. Were those activists who used the patriotic register non-referentially complicit in the reproduction of a discourse which was hegemonically used in a culturally essentialist, referential manner? Complicity, as discussed in critical race theory and debates over the relationship between the social sciences and empire, "can be made to signal, as Steinmetz maintains, a fairly neutral sense of 'entanglement,' for most people it cannot fail to carry an unmistakably negative connotation."⁵⁸ An extended discussion of hegemony and complicity in Croatian minority activism is beyond the scope of this article, and deserving of further consideration. I therefore only assert that entanglement does not necessarily entail implication, and that paying attention to what kinds of alternative politics and help they were building in and through their other activities is also important.

The approach taken here also relates to Scott's famous argument regarding "hidden transcripts."⁵⁹ In his view, whilst people might appear to be complicit in power relations and established hegemonies, they in fact often perform "hidden transcripts" in which they contest those hegemonies whilst in public paying "lip service" to them, an approach which focuses on a kind of deviant, rational actor. Scott's approach has been extensively criticised by Gal on numerous grounds, including presupposing the universalism of a (deviant) rational individualism.⁶⁰ In this context, I have sought to emphasise how different understandings of and kinds of personhood in the post-socialist period (national categories, and relational *veze* based forms of sociality, in addition to neoliberal individualism) have been promoted and emerge in different contexts.⁶¹ In his discussion of enregisterment, Agha argues that "we cannot understand macro-level changes in registers without attending to micro-level processes of register use in interaction."⁶² Such a focus on micro-level changes to the linguistic order, alongside a detailed political-economic analysis of the changing social order, would help generate partial answers to some of these important questions, complementing the attempt made in this article to contextualise and understand the various uses of the patriotic register and its effects: both in and through official political meetings and on everyday life.

Conclusions and Wider Implications

Depending on the perspective through which we look at the efforts of activists, we can alternatively see "from a distance" a large number of minority activists and state officials making affective pleas for the importance of caring for and preserving Croatian identity, or we can zoom in and see patriotic tropes as a register in which they were sometimes used referentially, whilst on other occasions, and for other people, they performed an indexical function facilitating the pursuit of particular kinds of *veze*, primarily with people working in state institutions in Croatia. Such *veze* had differing relationships—sometimes ambivalent, whilst sometimes open or covert forms of resistance—to the hegemonic register and the real-life effects of reference in creating divisions and hierarchies between persons. On this view, national categories might be considered hegemonic, but the pursuit of *veze* common to the vast majority of those using the register, with pro-national activists in the minority. Rather, a network of actors building *veze* emerges, with multiple aims, ranging from seeking to secure economic resources for themselves or institutions, seeking to increase their social status, and/or seeking to challenge the current hegemonies established, whilst nevertheless appearing—from outside the network—complicit.

In this Croatian minority context, I have ethnographically argued that we see both the exaggerated use of European nationalist ideologies alongside the extensive

pursuit of *veze*, thus seeing the circulation of two different kinds of personhood. I do not want to culturalise the meanings of such indexical use as relating to a specific kind of Balkan sociality, but see it, following Brković, as a response to the socialist legacy under neoliberal conditions, wherein there has been a shift in discourses allied with building *veze* from socialist to nationalist, alongside with certain *veze* becoming increasingly important for many for survival, thus increasing the urgency of their pursuit.⁶³

I have also discussed how these insights open up questions of “complicity” and responsibility for political violence among those active and participating in nationalist parties. In a “majority” situation where one political party completely dominates state politics, pursuing a non-referential indexical strategy regarding the use of promoted discourses may permit progressive political interventions that in a system with two or more competing parties might be obtained through involvement in another party, or in social movements. What are the implications of certain portions of such a party’s membership only using patriotic tropes in a non-referential manner? Could this, on certain occasions, be considered subversive, or is the use of the tropes themselves—alongside their hegemonic referential use—ultimately always damaging? How can these insights be reconciled with a broader understanding of the changing political context and the slippage of the political centre further to the right, especially in times of economic crisis? Such questions, and such links between transforming linguistic and political orders, certainly deserve further study, and minority contexts may offer important insights in rendering certain inequalities and hegemonies more visible than in majority contexts, where they may go unquestioned by many.

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Notes

1. I have changed the names for the purposes of anonymity.
2. Translation: *Državni ured za Hrvate izvan Republike Hrvatske*. All translations into English are my own.
3. Translation: *hrvatska država i hrvatski narod sve skupa*.
4. The trope of the “ideologisation of everyday life” echoes comments which frequently appear in media discourses in Croatia, citing that Croatian society has become both strongly ideologically polarised, and overly focused on past movements, namely, the legacies of the Fascist Ustaše and the Communist Partisans (see Vjeran Pavlaković, “Red Stars, Black Shirts: Symbols of Commemoration and the Conflicts of World War Two History in Croatia,” in *Pamćenje i nostalgija neki prostori, oblici, lica i naličja* (Beograd: Institut za filozofiju i društvenu teoriju, Filip Višnjić, 2009). The Ustaše, operating as part of a Nazi puppet state, ruled an area encompassing much of present day Croatia, Vojvodina, and Herzegovina promoting Nazism and Croatian national ideology, whilst the Communist Partisans, after growing through anti-fascist resistance movements during the Second World War, came to rule the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia from 1945 to 1991.
5. Tamburaši are a form of folk orchestra popular in Vojvodina, Croatia, and Hungary. See Catherine Baker, “It’s All the Same, Only He’s Not Here’?: Popular Music and Political Change in Post-Tudman Croatia,” *Europe-Asia Studies* 62, no. 10 (2010): 1741–59; Ruža Bonifačić, “The Role of Patriotic Songs and Tamburica Music in Croatia at the Beginning of the 1990’s: The Case of the Neotraditional group ‘Zlatni Dukati’ (Golden Ducats),” *Arti Musices: Hrvatski muzikoloski zbornik* 24, no. 2 (1993): 185–222; Ruža Bonifačić, “Regional and National Aspects of Tamburica Tradition: The Case of the Zlatni Dukati Neotraditional Ensemble,” in *Music, Politics, and War: Views from Croatia* (Zagreb: Institute of Ethnology and Folklore Research, 1998).
6. In Zagreb, the capital of Croatia where I live, when discussing Vojvodina I was sometimes told “tamo se ljudi ne žive, nego se preživljavaju” (there people don’t live, they get by).
7. Asif Agha, “Voice, Footing, Enregisterment,” *Journal of Linguistic Anthropology* 15, no. 1 (2005): 38–59.
8. R. Brubaker, “Neither Individualism nor ‘Groupism,’” *Ethnicities* 3, no. 4 (2003): 553–57.
9. John Edwards, *Language, Society, and Identity* (Oxford: B. Blackwell, 1985).
10. Jasna Čapo Zmegac, *Strangers Either Way: The Lives of Croatian Refugees in Their New Home* (New York: Berghahn, 2007).
11. Azra Hromadžić, “Dissatisfied Citizens: Ethnonational Governance, Teachers’ Strike and Professional Solidarity in Mostar, Bosnia–Herzegovina,” *European Politics and Society* 16, no. 3 (2015): 429–46.
12. For a discussion, see Vassilis Petsinis, “Serbs and Ethnic Hungarians in Vojvodina: Ethnic Conflict Placed within a Framework beyond Groupism,” *Slovak Sociological Review (Sociologia)* 40, no. 3 (2008): 258–77.
13. See Hromadžić, “Dissatisfied Citizens.”; S. Madacki and M. Karamelić, “Dvije Škole Pod Istim Krovom: Studija O Segregaciji U Obrazovanju” (Centar za ljudska prava Univerziteta u Sarajevu Asocijacija Alumni Centra za interdisciplinarne postdiplomske studije [ACIPS], 2012).
14. See <http://www.hnv.org.rs/> (accessed 30 June 2016).
15. *Zavod za kulturu vojvodanskih hrvata*. See <http://www.zkvh.org.rs/> (accessed 30 June 2016).
16. Following the election of a new government in September 2016, this ministry has been renamed the Ministry of Science and Education (Ministarstvo znanosti i obrazovanja).
17. See <http://public.mzos.hr/Default.aspx> (accessed 30 June 2016).
18. Alena Ledeneva, “Open Secrets and Knowing Smiles,” *East European Politics and Societies* 25, no. 4 (2011): 720–36; Alan Smart, Gifts, Bribes, and Guanxi: A Reconsideration of Bourdieu’s Social Capital,” *Cultural Anthropology* 8, no. 3 (1993): 388–408.
19. Čarna Brković, “Scaling Humanitarianism: Humanitarian Actions in a Bosnian Town,” *Ethnos* 81, no. 1 (2016): 99–124.

20. See Rory Archer and Krisztina Rác, "Šverc and the Šinobus: Small-Scale Smuggling in Vojvodina," in *Subverting Borders*, ed. Bettina Bruns and Judith Miggelbrink (Wiesbaden: VS Verlag für Sozialwissenschaften / Springer Fachmedien Wiesbaden, 2012), 59–83.

21. Stef Jansen, *Yearnings in the Meantime: "Normal Lives" and the State in a Sarajevo Apartment Complex*, vol. 15 (New York: Berghahn, 2015), 210.

22. Caroline Humphrey, "Favors and 'Normal Heroes': The Case of Postsocialist Higher Education," *HAU: Journal of Ethnographic Theory* 2, no. 2 (2012): 22–41.

23. Čarna Brković, "Brokering the Grey Zones: Pursuits of Favours in a Bosnian Town," in *Ethnographies of Grey Zones in Eastern Europe: Relations, Borders and Invisibilities* (London: Anthem Press, 2015), 68.

24. Jansen, *Yearnings in the Meantime*.

25. Katherine Verdery, "Nationalism and National Sentiment in Post-Socialist Romania," *Slavic Review* 52, no. 2 (1993): 179–203, 183.

26. The party is called the *Hrvatska demokratska zajednica* or in English: Croatian Democratic Union.

27. This name could equally be regarded as Croatian or Serbian—however, as other variants exist in Croatia and Serbia, e.g., Andro, Andrej, Andrija is presumably specifically commonly used in this part of Vojvodina.

28. When speaking to teachers in other schools in Zagreb, I found that "being for the (school) collective" (*biti za kolektiv*) was sometimes contrasted with focusing on one's career (*karijera*).

29. The concept of formality is unclear as an analytic tool in linguistic anthropology. See Irvine for a possible typology: Judith T. Irvine, "Formality and Informality in Communicative Events," *American Anthropologist* 81, no. 4 (1979): 773–90.

30. Asif Agha, "Register," *Journal of Linguistic Anthropology* 9, no. 1/2 (1999): 216–19, 216.

31. Brubaker, "Neither Individualism nor 'Groupism.'"

32. William F. Hanks, "Indexicality," *Journal of Linguistic Anthropology* 9, no. 1/2 (1999): 124–26, 124.

33. See Greenberg for a brief discussion of indexicals used by participants in student activism in Belgrade during the 2000s: Jessica Greenberg, *After the Revolution: Youth, Democracy, and the Politics of Disappointment in Serbia* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2014), 132.

34. Michael Silverstein, "Shifters, Linguistic Categories, and Cultural Description," *Meaning in Anthropology* 1 (1976): 1–55, 32.

35. *Ibid.*, 12.

36. For a discussion of language as technology, see Pia Lane, "Minority Language Standardisation and the Role of Users," *Language Policy* 14, no. 3 (2015): 263–83.

37. For a discussion of these orientalisms, see M. Bakić-Hayden, "Nesting Orientalisms: The Case of Former Yugoslavia," *Slavic Review* 54, no. 4 (1995): 917–31; and Maria Todorova, *Imagining the Balkans*, updated edition (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009).

38. This resonates with Ramet's discussion of rural dynamics: Sabrina Petra Ramet, "Nationalism and the 'Idiocy' of the Countryside: The Case of Serbia," *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 19, no. 1 (1996): 70–87.

39. For a discussion of the concept of banal nationalism, see Michael Billig, *Banal Nationalism* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 1995).

40. The relationship between these different levels and the macro-sociological context could be further developed using Silverstein's concept of "indexical orders." See Michael Silverstein, "Indexical Order and the Dialectics of Sociolinguistic Life," *Language & Communication* 23, no. 3 (2003): 193–229.

41. In Croatian: *Odgoj i obrazovanje pridonose izgradnji osobnoga, kulturnoga i nacionalnoga identiteta pojedinca*. Danas, u doba globalizacije – u kojemu je na djelu snažno miješanje različitih kultura, svjetonazora i religija – čovjek treba postati građaninom svijeta, a pritom sačuvati svoj nacionalni identitet, svoju kulturu, kulturne krajolike, društvenu, moralnu i duhovnu baštinu. Pritom osobito valja čuvati i razvijati hrvatski jezik te paziti na njegovu pravilnu primjenu.

42. S. Gal, "Contradictions of Standard Language in Europe: Implications for the Study of Practices and Publics," *Social Anthropology* 14, no. 2 (2006): 163–81.

43. Jacqueline Urla, *Reclaiming Basque: Language, Nation and Cultural Activism* (Reno: University of Nevada Press, 2012).

44. Ibid., 52.

45. Andrew Hodges, Amelia Abercrombie, Marina Balažev, James Costa, Mate Kapović, Jelena Marković, Tanja Petrović, Ivana Spasić Croatian Language Standardization and the Production of Nationalized Political Subjects through Language? *Perspectives from the Social Sciences and Humanities Etnološka tribina* no. 39 (2016): 3–91.

46. A detailed discussion of the teaching aims and their various implications is an important topic which is beyond the scope of this article.

47. See http://www.hnv.org.rs/obrazovanje_na_hrvatskom.php.

48. See Mate Kapović, “Jezik i konzervativizam,” in Tvrtko Vuković and Maša Kolanović, eds., *Komparativni postsocijalizam: slavenska iskustva* (Zagreb: Zagrebačka Slavistička Škola, 2013), 391–400; Mate Kapović, “Language, Ideology and Politics in Croatia,” *Slavia Centralis* 4, no. 2 (2011): 45–56.

49. Jasna Čapo Zmegac, *Strangers Either Way: The Lives of Croatian Refugees in Their New Home* (New York: Berghahn, 2007), 107.

50. See Michel-Rolph Trouillot, “The Anthropology of the State in the Age of Globalization: Close Encounters of the Deceptive Kind,” *Current Anthropology* 42, no. 1 (2001): 125–38.

51. A. Gramsci, “Hegemony, Intellectuals, and the State,” in *Cultural Theory and Popular Culture: A Reader*, ed. John Storey (New York: Pearson Education, 2006), 75–80.

52. Alex J. Bellamy, *The Formation of Croatian National Identity: A Centuries-Old Dream* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2003), 112.

53. See Alexandra Jaffe, ed., *Stance: Sociolinguistic Perspectives* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009).

54. Elissa Helms, *Innocence and Victimhood: Gender, Nation, and Women’s Activism in Postwar Bosnia-Herzegovina* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2013).

55. Jessica Greenberg, “‘There’s Nothing Anyone Can Do about It’: Participation, Apathy, and ‘Successful’ Democratic Transition in Postsocialist Serbia,” *Slavic Review* (2010): 41–64.

56. Olaf Zenker, *Irish/ness Is All around Us: Language Revivalism and the Culture of Ethnic Identity in Northern Ireland*, vol. 6 (New York: Berghahn, 2013).

57. Keir Martin, *The Death of the Big Men and the Rise of the Big Shots: Custom and Conflict in East New Britain*, vol. 3 (New York: Berghahn, 2013); Roy Wagner, *Are There Social Groups in the New Guinea Highlands?* (New York: Van Nostrand, 1974).

58. Gregor McLennan, “Complicity, Complexity, Historicism: Problems of Postcolonial Sociology,” *Postcolonial Studies* 17, no. 4 (2014): 451–64, 451.

59. James C. Scott, *Domination and the Arts of Resistance: Hidden Transcripts*, new edition (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1992).

60. Susan Gal, “Language and the ‘Arts of Resistance,’” *Cultural Anthropology* 10, no. 3 (1995): 407–24.

61. However, I am sympathetic to the view that some kind of individual personhood is existentially basic to being human, emerging through the existential experience of having a body and of memories etc. being imprinted in an individual brain. This also resonates with Brubaker’s arguments about groupness being a project rather than ontologically prior.

62. Agha, “Voice, Footing, Enregisterment,” 38.

63. Brković, “Scaling Humanitarianism.”

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