

Decolonizing Literary Studies: Unveiling Postcolonial Narratives in Post-Yugoslav Academic Curricula*

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Summary. This paper explores the presence and integration of postcolonial studies in literature education within the faculties of philology in the capitals of the former Yugoslav countries. Focusing on the emerging field of critical curriculum studies, the research delves into the nuanced landscape of literature education, particularly at higher levels, specifically emphasizing literary students' specialized education. The study contextualizes postcolonial studies as a hybrid space for theoretical discourse, tracing its roots to anticolonial critique and contemporary Western theories. Drawing on the anticolonial heritage of socialist Yugoslavia and its involvement in the Non-Aligned Movement, the paper navigates the complexities of (post)colonial dynamics in the Balkans. This paper investigates the presence, or absence, of postcolonial theory in literature curricula within humanities faculties in the former Yugoslav countries' capital cities. This research is based on the close interconnection of literature and postcolonial theory, whose origins lie within the literary representation of colonization relations. The primary objective is to discern the extent to which postcolonial studies are integrated into literary education and what implications this holds within the national context. Through an examination of course programs and content at various academic levels, the research aims to illuminate the role of postcolonial theory in shaping the narrative of literature education in the context of the former Yugoslavia.

Keywords: postcolonial theory, curriculum, literary education, former Yugoslavia, higher education

Dekolonizuojančios literatūros studijos: postkolonijinių naratyvų atskleidimas buvusios Jugoslavijos šalių sostinių universitetų humanitarinių mokslų fakultetų literatūros mokymo programose

Santrauka. Straipsnyje nagrinėjamas postkolonijinių studijų paplitimas ir integravimas į literatūros programas buvusios Jugoslavijos sostinių universitetų filologijos fakultetuose. Dėmesys sutelkiamas į besiformuojantį kritinių studijų programų lauką, tyrime gilinamasi į niuansuotą literatūros mokymo, ypač aukštesnėse studijų pakopose, situaciją bei į specializuotą literatūros programų studentų ugdymą. Postkolonijinės studijos tyrime kontekstualizuo-

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jamų kaip hibridinė teorinio diskurso erdvė, atsekant jų šaknis antikolonijinėje kritikoje ir šiuolaikinėse Vakarų teorijose. Straipsnyje analizuojama sudėtinga (post)kolonijinė dinamika Balkanuose remiantis antikolonijiniu socialistinės Jugoslavijos paveldu ir jos dalyvavimu Neprisijungimo judėjime, taip pat nagrinėjamas postkolonijinės teorijos aktualumas buvusios Jugoslavijos šalių sostinių universitetų humanitarinių mokslų fakultetų literatūros studijų programose. Tyrimas grindžiamas glaudžiu ryšiu tarp literatūros ir postkolonijinės teorijos, kurios ištakos – literatūrinis kolonizacijos santykių vaizdavimas. Pagrindinis tikslas – išsiaiškinti, kokių mastu postkolonijinės studijos yra integruotos į literatūros programas ir kokią reikšmę tai turi nacionaliniame kontekste. Apibendrinant reikia pabrėžti, kad tyrimu siekiama nušviesti postkolonijinės teorijos vaidmenį formuojant literatūros ugdymo naratyvą buvusios Jugoslavijos kontekste nagrinėjant studijų dalykų aprašus ir turinį įvairių studijų pakopų lygmeniu.

Pagrindiniai žodžiai: postkolonijinė teorija, ugdymo programa, literatūrinis ugdymas, buvusi Jugoslavija, aukštasis mokslas.

Introduction

In the genesis of the 18th-century paradigm that championed a rationalist outlook on the world, a profound shift occurred in the trajectory of European societal development. This paradigm, evolving over time, solidified into the prevailing notion that education stands as a pivotal force in nurturing the intellect, particularly among the younger generation. Consequently, as the 19th century unfolded and the 20th century dawned, the institution of schools assumed a pronounced role in disseminating not only knowledge but also societal norms and behavioral paradigms deemed desirable. It is noteworthy that with the establishment of compulsory education, orchestrated by the state, pervasive dissemination of specific conceptual frameworks ensued, constituting a form of mass propagation and the imposition of predetermined cognitive constructs. The critical examination of the ostensibly neutral facade of the educational system has been a focal point for various philosophers. Notable among them is Louis Althusser, whose elucidation of an educational ideological apparatus posits it as a replacement for the erstwhile ecclesiastical dominance within the state system (Fofano & Rech, 2021). Michel Foucault, too, contributes to this discourse by characterizing schools as moral orthopedics (Deacon, 2006), as well as advancing the notion of an archaeology of knowledge (Foucault, 1972). The proposition that those who shape the conceptual frameworks within which we navigate also wield influence over our perception of the world, underscores a fundamental tenet. Hence, it becomes imperative to anchor the investigation of educational content and its underlying, perhaps obscured, meanings in the critical analyses afforded by curriculum studies.

Critical curriculum studies¹ are a relatively new field, marked by a distinct interdisciplinary orientation, which combines sociology, critical studies, cultural studies,

¹ While the roots of critical curriculum studies can be traced back to the foundational works of John Dewey and Émile Durkheim, the formalization of this discipline took shape in the post-World War II era. Key scholarly contributions during this period have significantly shaped the trajectory of critical curriculum studies. Noteworthy among these seminal works are Schubert's *Curriculum: Perspective, Paradigm, and Possibility* (1986), which provides essential insights into various perspectives and paradigms within curriculum studies. Another influential work is Pinar's *Understanding Curriculum: An Introduction to the Study of Historical and Contemporary Curriculum Discourses* (1995), offering a comprehensive exploration of historical and contemporary discourses in curriculum studies. Additionally, Michael Apple's *Ideology and Curriculum* (1979) stands as a pivotal text, delving into the intricate relationship between ideology and curriculum. These foundational works have played a crucial role in shaping the critical discourse and theoretical frameworks within curriculum studies.

pedagogy and education sciences, philosophy, especially ethics, and, last but not least, knowledge related to a particular discipline, school subject or educational methodology that they research. Curriculum theory functions as a discipline aimed at elucidating the implicit cultural narratives, constructs, and worldviews subtly conveyed to students within educational institutions. These constructs represent abstract dimensions ingrained in the social fabric of learning and teaching. In essence, curriculum theory does not merely seek to interpret but endeavors to reassess, reconfigure, and craft an alternative educational architecture (Ingersoll et al. 2019, p. 1). Consequently, curriculum studies emerge as a critical discourse, offering reflections on the instructional content while simultaneously advocating for more desirable and less problematic approaches to curriculum design. Recognizing the pivotal role of literature lessons in fostering critical thinking, as corroborated by numerous studies (Koek et al., 2019), this investigation zeroes in on the domain of literature education. However, our emphasis shifts from early education to higher levels, specifically delving into the specialized education of literary students. This exploration unfolds within both national and comparative contexts, scrutinizing the extent of their acquaintance with postcolonial theory in the terrain of the former Yugoslavia.

Postcolonial studies manifest as a hybrid amalgamation, serving as a dynamic space for the convergence and dialogue of diverse theoretical concepts. Rooted in the traditions of anticolonial critique – a notably hybrid phenomenon intricately linked to diasporas and engaged in dialogues with contemporary European theories, notably Marxism and psychoanalysis – and concurrently influenced by Western currents, particularly poststructuralism (which embodies anti-Western critiques within the Western context) (Zakrajšek 2007, p. 21), this interdisciplinary domain emerges as an exceptionally fertile ground for both theoretical discourse and practical engagement. It should be borne in mind that the prefix post- does not have chronological significance but carries a more epistemological character² (Gibson 2006, p. 445), authors such as Memmi and Said believe that the official end of colonialism does not bring an end to the actual colonialism, for this critical reflection stems from a desire to mitigate the disappointments and failures arising from the postcolonial myth of radical separation from Europe (Gandhi 2019, p. 7). In essence, postcolonial theory strives to dismantle mental binaries such as “master and slave” and “center and periphery,” rejecting notions of linear development and essentialism. Its core objective is to problematize the act of representing the “other” or subaltern within Western discourse. This critical perspective is embodied in the works

² In the context of postcolonial criticism, a fundamental shift occurs in the epistemological landscape, marked by a crucial reversal in the perspectives of sociological and anthropological views. This transformation is characterized by a reevaluation of the colonizer’s gaze on those who have been colonized, challenging and subverting traditional power dynamics. Postcolonial criticism amplifies the voices of the colonized, disrupting the conventional subject–object relationship that has been shaped by the colonizers. Salman Rushdie’s evocative title, *The Empire Writes Back with a Vengeance* (1982), serves as a symptomatic illustration of this transformative process. Furthermore, the seminal work *The Empire Writes Back: Theory and Practice in Post-Colonial Literatures*, edited by Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths, and Helen Tiffin in 1989, contributes significantly to the theoretical discourse on postcolonialism, emphasizing the imperative of decolonization. This shift underscores the agency of formerly colonized voices in reclaiming narratives and challenging the dominant discourses imposed by the colonizers.

of influential theorists like Franz Fanon, Edward Said, Homi K. Bhabha, and Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, among others (Gibson, 2006). The profound impact of postcolonial theory on literary studies is unsurprising, considering Edward Said's conceptualization of Orientalism as a discourse – a project involving the representation, invention, translation, limitation, and management of the enigmatic “Orient” through textual codes and conventions (Gandhi 2019, p. 141–142). Given the cognitive and aesthetic nature of literature, it is anticipated that canons and, consequently, curricula would adapt to the insights provided by postcolonial theory. This adaptation involves the inclusion of a broader array of literary works and theoretical texts originating from (post)colonial contexts.³ This transformation in official curricula is observable not only in former colonial powers such as France, England, and the USA but also warrants examination in the context of the countries that constituted the former Yugoslavia. This article delves into the nuanced ways in which these changes have manifested in the academic landscapes of the former Yugoslav nations.

The selection of this topic is substantiated by two crucial perspectives. Firstly, it draws from the historical reality of both actual and discursive colonialism that targeted the territories and peoples of the former Yugoslavia. Secondly, it derives from the distinctive anticolonialist stance deeply embedded in the historical trajectory of Yugoslavia within the realm of international relations. To elaborate further, the centuries-long experience of integration into imperial states – specifically the Habsburg or Austro-Hungarian Empire on one hand, and the Ottoman Empire on the other – left an indelible mark on the cultural and identity development of the Yugoslav peoples. The intricate historical tapestry woven by these imperial affiliations shaped the collective consciousness of the Yugoslav nations. Navigating the (post)colonial dynamics of the Balkans requires methodological caution. Scholars often sidestep the question of whether the Balkans can be definitively perceived as a colonized territory. In textual discourse, the Balkans are characterized as a nexus of cultural unity, syncretism, and disharmony – attributes emblematic of the postcolonial condition (Lazarević Radak 2013, p. 24). While acknowledging that the colonization situation in the Balkans differs markedly from the more documented instances in Africa (with a cautious note about the comparability of various colonization situations), historical parallels underscore the historical inferiority and de facto colonized status of the Balkan and Yugoslav peoples.

On a parallel note, it is essential to acknowledge the discursive dimensions of colonization, a facet underscored in the works of scholars like Vesna Goldsworthy and Sanja Lazarević Radak. Their analyses delve into the representation of the Balkans in British literature and travelogues, shedding light on how these discourses accentuated the “ori-

³ As a notable example, we mention the renowned monograph *What Is a Classic? Postcolonial Rewriting and Invention of the Canon* (2014) by Ankhi Mukherjee, seeks to determine the changes that the emergence of postcolonial literature has brought to the canon and whether these changes are radical or merely apparent. A more pessimistic view of changes in the canonical field is evident in Damrosch's perspective. He argues that, despite postcolonial theorists advocating for the loosening and destruction of the old canon, we have not yet reached that point. According to Damrosch, only selected (postcolonial hyper-canonical) authors, such as Rushdie and Achebe, are part of the contemporary canon, while others remain on the periphery (2009, p. 510–512).

entality” of Balkan spaces. This exploration delves into the nuanced ways in which colonial perspectives have influenced perceptions of the Balkans. Moreover, Tanja Petrović’s (2009) examination of colonialist, orientalist, and imperialist discourses regarding the Western Balkans, particularly from the standpoint of EU countries, yields significant findings. Her conclusions highlight the explicit nature of the processes by which the Western Balkans are delineated as an area outside Europe. Furthermore, the utilization of well-known mechanisms of control and colonization has become more overt and unreflective, readily accessible to all within the EU. Petrović underscores that those entities most frequently engaged in these mechanisms, specifically EU Member States on its southeastern periphery, stand to gain tangible economic benefits from the symbolic and discursive colonization of the Balkans. The discourse of colonization, in this context, not only serves economic interests but also facilitates the perpetuation of a complacent image of Europe as a community. This image-building is achieved by strategically framing anything that could pose a threat, be disregarded, or be attributed to those deemed outside the constructed boundaries of Europe (2009, p. 75).

The (certain) countries of the former Yugoslavia find themselves positioned in an intermediary realm, navigating between colonization as an (uncertain) historical reality and the pervasive nature of discursive colonization as an undeniable contemporary phenomenon. This intricate positioning inhibits the complete assertion of their own postcolonial tradition. Sanja Lazarević Radak, reflecting on the delayed translation and insufficient critical reception of Said’s *Orientalism* in Serbia – a circumstance that could arguably extend to other post-Yugoslav republics – concludes that postcolonialism has encountered resistance. Its application to domestic circumstances is perceived as an inadequately justified accusation against technologically stronger masters. Simultaneously, it testifies to a subaltern retreat into the premises of the inferior subject, inadvertently contributing to the production of colonial discourse (2016, p. 112). The reluctance to embrace postcolonial perspectives in the Balkans arises from the formidable challenge of confronting one’s own (colonial, Balkan, oriental) peripherality. Unlike other colonized spaces, there is neither scientific nor cultural consensus in the Balkans about the origins of their perceived peripherality. This absence of a shared understanding complicates the process of addressing and reconciling with the region’s historical and cultural positioning within the broader discourse of postcolonial theory. The potential confrontation with the complex layers of peripherality in the Balkans represents a monumental task, distinct from other colonized spaces where there may exist a more coherent understanding of the origins of peripherality.

On the other hand, socialist Yugoslavia, with its strong anticolonial stance, played a leading role in creating and enforcing the Non-Aligned Movement (cf. Rubenstein 1970; Bogetić & Bogetić 1981; Stojković 1983). The Yugoslav quest for a new foreign political direction, as delineated in the resolution of the Information Bureau, culminated in a significant shift as Yugoslavia opened up to the newly established nations of the “Third World,” freshly emancipated from their colonial rulers. While the diplomatic engagement of Yugoslav foreign policy with African and Asian nations gained momentum in

the 1950s, a pivotal moment transpired in September 1961 – the Belgrade Conference. This event marked the formal establishment of the Non-Aligned Movement. Notably, it demonstrated Yugoslavia's commitment to integrating decolonization into its political endeavors, both in times of conflict and within the economic realm (Bogetić & Dimić, 2013). Since not a single post-Yugoslav state maintained active membership in the Non-Aligned Movement after the dissolution of Yugoslavia,⁴ it seems justified to investigate what remains of the anticolonial heritage in the successor states of the Socialist Yugoslavia and whether this heritage is visible based on university curricula in the field of literary studies. In other words, it is an empirical study of the integration of postcolonial theory into the educational field of literary studies in the countries of the former Yugoslavia.

The integration of postcolonial curricula and the infusion of postcolonial content into literary studies' curricula pose urgent challenges that reverberate through the very foundations of literary studies within the education system. In a seminal study, J. John Guillory highlights the school curriculum as an influential canonical platform. Guillory contends that the literary canon, throughout its history, primarily functions as a conduit for acquiring linguistic and cultural superiority through the educational system (cf. Dović 2003, p. 33). Notably, a significant portion of academic disciplines remains deeply rooted in the European classical tradition, a fact that has faced limited criticism. For instance, philosophy departments predominantly focus on European philosophy, despite the existence of multiple philosophical traditions, exemplifying a form of mispronunciation (Morris 2016, p. 214). Educational institutions, through their means and tools, empower instructors in positions of authority to contribute to the construction of specific worldviews that are inherently exclusive. The evolution of the curriculum and its adaptation becomes a logical juncture once educators, from their authoritative positions, attain a comprehensive understanding of the nature of postcolonial literature (Dewi 2009, p. 206). This, in turn, underscores the imperative of continuous improvement for literature teachers. The ongoing professional development of these educators becomes crucial to navigating the complexities of integrating postcolonial perspectives into literary studies and fostering a more inclusive educational landscape.

The introduction of postcolonial content into literary science curricula is occasionally met with resistance, as it is perceived as formulaic and reductive. Critics argue that postcolonial studies often emphasize politics and historical context more than the literary aspects of the works themselves (Abdul-Jabbar 2015, p. 222). This line of reasoning reflects an essentialist and aesthetic view of literature within literary studies – an outlook that positions literature as a self-sufficient aesthetic system capable of existing independently from its contextual underpinnings, subject only to certain literary aesthetic criteria. In such a paradigm, the incorporation of postcolonial content is viewed as a significant challenge to maintaining a prescribed order. The perceived “subversiveness” of postcolonial texts poses a potential threat by unraveling numerous ideological constructs for students, especially within the framework of national, and ultimately global,

⁴ Croatia, Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina now have observer status.

literature. This resistance underscores the tension between those who advocate for a broader, contextual understanding of literature and those who adhere to a more traditional, self-contained aesthetic perception within literary studies.

Methodology

In the concluding segment of this introductory section, it is imperative to delineate the methodology employed for data collection, a crucial component that will be meticulously analyzed in the central part of this paper. The research is strategically designed to abstract data indicative of the presence of postcolonial criticism content. This encompasses not only the exploration of literary works covered within the curriculum but also an examination of professional literature employed for the interpretation of these works. To ensure a focused investigation, the sample of faculties under scrutiny has been deliberately narrowed down to those affiliated with the humanities. This selection ensures a targeted examination within the realms of literary studies and literary theories. In the broader context, the chosen universities are situated in the capitals of the former Yugoslav countries,⁵ namely the Faculty of Philology in Skopje, the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences⁶ in Zagreb, the Faculty of Philology in Belgrade, the Faculty of Arts in Ljubljana and the Faculty of Philosophy in Sarajevo. Given that each of these faculties consists of several different departments,⁷ for the research scope, departments specifically focusing on the study of national literature and general (world) literature were deliberately chosen. The primary mode of data collection centered on faculty programs, readily accessible online through the official websites of each faculty. It is crucial to underscore that, to ensure the relevance of the findings and draw accurate conclusions about the present state of affairs, the analysis focuses on the student programs valid for the academic year 2022/23.⁸ The methodology employed for researching student programs involved a meticulous examination of each course within the program at three distinct levels – spanning first, second, and third cycle studies. The analysis focused on programs available online for each course, offering comprehensive insights into content, objectives, outcomes, and a listing of mandatory and recommended literature. Through

⁵ The main objective of the research was initially to compile data from literature study programs across all faculties in cities throughout the former Yugoslav countries. However, upon conducting the research, it became evident that the sample size was excessively extensive and would be more fitting for a broader study. Consequently, the decision was made to narrow down the sample to include only literature programs in universities located in the capital cities of the former Yugoslav countries.

⁶ The Faculty of Croatian Studies, as a constituent unit of the University of Zagreb, has been omitted from the analysis due to the distinctive nature of its Croatology study programs. While these programs do include certain courses related to (Croatian) literature and literary theory, they also encompass a broad spectrum of other disciplines such as Croatian history, philosophy, ethnology, and politics. Therefore, including the Faculty of Croatian Studies in the analysis would introduce a level of complexity that could potentially obscure the specific focus on literature and literary theory pursued in this study.

⁷ For example, the Department of Language and Linguistics, National Literature, General Literature, Comparative Literature, Foreign Languages and Cultures, and so on.

⁸ The study programs chosen for analysis pertain to the current academic year 2022/23. It is important to note that, in some faculties, a program audit was conducted, resulting in renovations and modifications for the current academic year. Conversely, at other faculties, certain study programs have remained unchanged for several years.

this approach, information on the content of postcolonial studies within literature-related subjects could be extracted during a thorough review. It is crucial to note that, within the selected faculties, departments for the study of literature, language, and didactics were frequently integrated. Consequently, linguistic courses (such as phonology, morphology, syntax, dialectology, etc.) and didactic-pedagogical courses (including teaching methods and the didactics of teaching literature) fall outside the purview of this paper's interpretation. The focus remains specifically on the courses directly related to the study of literature within the selected departments.

It should be emphasized that research, the medium of which is the Internet as a source and means of information, has its advantages, as well as limitations. First, a large amount of information is easily accessible and systematically organized on a single website or within a single document. On the other hand, during our research, we noticed that some descriptions of courses are often given scarcely and with incomplete information, which is certainly one of the shortcomings of this way of researching. In addition, it should be borne in mind that the curricula of courses available on the Internet are the basis for teaching the course in practice and that during the implementation of the course itself, there may be changes in a predetermined student program (as a result of the teacher's agreement with students, when adapting the curriculum to the current circumstances, as a result of the professor's decision, etc.). However, given that the curricula that have been the subject of research under this paper exist on websites and form a horizon of expectations as to what will be covered by the course, we believe that this type of research is important in the context of curriculum study. It is important to note at the end that the research question that preceded the research itself, is as follows: What is the share of postcolonial content and postcolonial theoretical approaches in the study and teaching of literature at the faculties of humanities in the capitals of the countries of the former Yugoslavia concerning the (anti)colonial past of the Balkan Peninsula, and especially of Yugoslavia, which is described in the introduction? To come to valid conclusions and answer the problem question of the survey, it is necessary to indicate in the central part of the paper the data obtained by researching student programs available on the Internet.

Results and discussion

In the central section of the paper, the data acquired through the research will be presented comprehensively. This presentation will meticulously outline data related to the content of various courses in the field of postcolonial studies, obtained empirically through a thorough examination of academic programs available online. To enhance transparency, this section of the paper will be organized into three structural parts. The first part will focus on data from the first cycle of study across all faculties,⁹ then from the second cycle,

⁹ An important aspect to highlight is the potential limitations of the research, particularly in the context of utilizing the internet as the primary medium for data collection. Notably, no available data were found for faculties in Montenegro (Podgorica) where literature is taught. Additionally, beyond the course names, no further information regarding course descriptions, content, or recommended literature was identified. Consequently, the Faculty of Philology in Podgorica, where literary studies are conducted, was excluded from the research corpus. This decision was made to prevent drawing conclusions based on assumptions stemming from the lack of available data.

and finally from the third.¹⁰ The choice of the exhaustive method in this section of the paper serves two primary purposes. Firstly, it ensures a systematic presentation of data, facilitating a clear and structured delivery of information. Secondly, it contributes to the efficiency of the work, as a detailed analysis of all data at this juncture would potentially exceed the scope required for this research. Any potential limitations associated with this method will be addressed in the final part of the paper, where comprehensive conclusions from the research and an analysis of the initial research hypothesis will be presented, compensating for potential shortcomings.

The First Cycle

Regarding courses in the first cycle, our examination commences with the faculty in Skopje, North Macedonia, where the study of literature is undertaken. Specifically, at the Faculty of Philology in Skopje, affiliated with The Ss. Cyril and Methodius University, two departments are pivotal in the context of this paper's research. The Department of Macedonian Literature and Culture includes, as a mandatory course, Contemporary South Slavic Literatures 2.¹¹ This course delves into the interpretation of South Slavic national literature from various perspectives, including the corpus of postcolonial studies. It's noteworthy that the course's topic and issues highlight the perception of Balkan literature in the post-Yugoslav context, employing elements of postcolonial studies to interpret mutual relations on the Balkan Peninsula. In addition, postcolonial studies are mentioned as a starting point for the interpretation of literature in the course Introduction to Imagology and are listed as one of the possible ways of thinking in an imagological context. The list of literature in this course includes Edward Said's *Orientalism* as a bibliographic unit of supplementary literature. Within many binary oppositions (oppressors/oppressed, masters/slaves, etc.) the elective course Aspects of Difference also mentions binary opposition, colonizers/colonized.¹²

In the third year, in the Department of General and Comparative Literature we find the course Theory of Identity, in which subaltern, translational, and hybrid identity are mentioned as part of the reflection on different types of identity determinants, while in

¹⁰ It should be noted that different levels of study at different faculties are called differently. However, they all correspond to the three Bologna levels. To achieve a systematic and uniform presentation of data, we chose the naming method for this article: first, second, and third cycle.

¹¹ The titles of all courses are presented in the article in the translation of the authors of this article from Macedonian, Croatian, Serbian, Bosnian and Slovenian into English.

¹² Literary works featured in the course that are relevant to the paper's topic include *Waiting for the Barbarians* by South African writer John M. Coetzee. The novel delves into colonization and the dynamics between ethnic communities, where one side holds a subordinate position while the other asserts superiority. Toni Morrison's *Beloved* is another significant work, portraying the narrative of a previously enslaved black family. Additionally, the dramatic work *Balkan is Not Dead* by Dejan Dukovski deserves special mention. It explores the liberation of the Balkans from the rule of the Ottoman Empire and, when examined in the context of an object discussing differences and post-colonialism, serves as evidence that the term aptly describes the colonial history of the Balkan Peninsula.

compulsory literature as a single bibliographic unit there is a book that is important in the context of the topic of this paper – *The Location of Culture*¹³ by Homi K. Bhabha. In addition, there is also the obligatory course Theory and Methodology of Literature: Cultural Methods, in which postcolonial criticism is mentioned as one of the possible ways and methods in the study of literature. The basic concepts mentioned in the description of the course are the relationship between East and West, symbolic geography, imagology, orientalism and balkanism, and migration. It is important to note that Edward Said's *Orientalism* and Maria Todorova's *Imagining the Balkans* are on the list of compulsory literature, while the book *The Post-Colonial Critic* by Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak is on the list of additional literature. In addition to this book, it is important to mention two more that are on the list of recommended literature and are important for thinking about postcolonial discourse. *The Jew, the Arab: A History of the Enemy* by Gil Anidjar fundamentally relies on a conceptual framework that reflects Europe's negatively shaded perspective towards the East. Within this narrative, the West identifies the ideal enemy in the East, shaping a historical and cultural dichotomy that influences perceptions and relationships between these regions. Anidjar explores the intricate layers of this constructed enmity, offering insights into the historical roots and contemporary implications of the East–West dynamic.¹⁴ The second book is *Creolizing Europe: Legacies and Transformations*.¹⁵ The compulsory course in the fourth year – Comparative Poetics: 20th and 21st Century Novel – includes the novel *Waiting for Barbarians* by the South African writer John M. Coetzee, but nowhere is it stated that he will be interpreted in the light of postcolonial studies.

In Zagreb, literature is studied and taught at the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Zagreb, through two departments: the Department of Comparative Literature and the Department of Croatian Studies. Within the first cycle of study at the Department of Comparative Literature, known for its interdisciplinary approach and the integration of literature with film, anthropology, drama, and more, several courses relevant to this paper hold significance. The elective course, Literary Theory: Contem-

¹³ In his 1994 study, Bhabha explores various topics pertinent to the realm of postcolonial studies. These include cultural issues, Fanon's stance on postcolonial studies, the dynamics of stereotypes, discrimination, and colonial discourse. Bhabha delves into the ambivalence inherent in colonial discourse, examining cultural differences and challenging the very nature of colonialism, which he provocatively characterizes as "colonial nonsense." The study engages with these multifaceted aspects to provide a nuanced understanding of the complexities within postcolonial discourse.

¹⁴ The connection between the East and West mirrors the fundamental concept of Edward Said's *Orientalism*. Said elucidates orientalism as a construct, a crafted portrayal of the East by the West. It explores how the West perceives the East, intertwining negatively shaded elements with a simultaneous fascination for the exotic. This dual perspective sheds light on the complex dynamics shaping the relationship between these two geopolitical and cultural entities.

¹⁵ The anthology, edited by Encarnación Gutiérrez Rodríguez and Shirley Anne Tate, brings together diverse works by influential authors in various fields of postcolonial studies, including Stuart Hall, Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, Françoise Vergès, H. Adlai Murdoch, Encarnación Gutiérrez Rodríguez, and Shirley Anne Tate. The collection critically challenges the concept of creation as a decolonial mode of thinking essential for understanding cultural and social transformations resulting from trans/national dislocations. Notably interdisciplinary, the journal explores the significance of creolization in (post)colonial discourse from multiple perspectives.

porary Literary Theories, highlights postcolonial critique as one of the theories, with readings focusing on units related to literary theory. Additionally, the elective course in the Department of Philosophy, Philosophy of Culture, incorporates colonialism, imperialism, and postcolonialism into its content, placing them in the context of the development arc of the concept of culture. The literature references include Edward Said's *Orientalism*, Antonio Gramsci's selected works, and, in the supplementary literature list, Maria Todorova's *Imagining the Balkans*. It's worth noting the elective course Indian Literature 6 from the Department of Indology and Far Eastern Studies, covering both Indo-English and Anglo-Indian literature, with Salman Rushdie's *The Vintage Book of Indian Writing* included in the bibliographic units.¹⁶

Additionally, in the elective course Indian Subcontinent in Historical Perspective 2 (also from the Department of Indology and Far Eastern Studies), the period of British colonial rule, the liberation of India, and the present state are partially covered as elements of modern Indian history. The literature list does not include essential works in the context of postcolonial studies, but highlighting this course is crucial as it demonstrates how an interdisciplinary approach, combining history and literature, can enhance the interpretation of literary works and deepen understanding within their historical context. It's noteworthy that the research revealed a substantial number of courses at the Department of Comparative Literature of the Faculty of Philology in Zagreb that contribute to an interdisciplinary approach, yet the representation of postcolonial studies is limited. At the Department of Croatian Studies within the same faculty, the research indicated an even smaller number of courses relevant to this paper. The department is predominantly focused on language courses, including those related to the Croatian language and its linguistic peculiarities, as well as foreign languages. The only course mentioning postcolonial criticism is the compulsory course Introduction to Literary Theory. Postcolonial studies are introduced as one of the interpretative approaches to literature, and the list of required readings includes books such as *Archaeology of Knowledge* by Michel Foucault, *The Analysis of Culture* by Raymond Williams, and *Orientalism* by Edward Said.

Concerning the University of Belgrade, literature at the Faculty of Philology is taught within two departments: Serbian Literature with South Slavic Literatures and General Literature with Literary Theory. Through the research, it was discovered that in the first cycle of study, at the Department of Serbian Literature with South Slavic Literatures, there are no relevant courses related to the topic of this paper. In this department, no courses were found in which the description or literature mentioned postcolonial studies in the context of literary interpretation. Compulsory courses mostly focus on Serbian folk literature, as well as literature from specific periods (such as Serbian medieval, Baroque, or 19th-century literature). Elective courses delve into specific literary concepts

¹⁶ It is important to note that this book is a kind of collection and collage of works by modern Indian writers and was published on the anniversary of Indian independence. In this sense, we can say that it is a kind of homage to the original Indian voices and writers who write about life in India and Indian culture from the point of view of the "native" and the one who lives in this environment, and that it symbolically contradicts the words of those who enslave, colonize, and construct the other's narrative.

(e.g., irony and grotesque in literature, the lyrical subject, etc.). The only mention of postcolonial studies was found in the obligatory course Introduction to Literary Theory. However, no literature related to postcolonial studies was specified.

As for the Department of General Literature and Literary Theory, two courses mention postcolonial studies. One compulsory course is Literary Canon in Teaching, covering topics such as the biblical canon, Western canon, traditions of education, decanonization, and feminist and postcolonial critiques of the literary canon.¹⁷ Additionally, within the course Contemporary Literary Theory 2, postcolonial studies are mentioned as one of the possible directions for interpreting literature and literary theories.¹⁸

At the University of Ljubljana, two departments are pertinent to this research: the Department of Slovene Studies and the Department of Comparative Literature. For the Department of Slovene Studies, we did not find information on first-cycle courses that incorporate elements of postcolonial studies. Concerning the Department of Comparative Literature, the compulsory course in the first year of study, the Review of World Literature, covers works from Latin American, African, Asian, and Caribbean literature within the framework of world literature, with a theoretical focus on the specificities of postcolonial literature. Additionally, the compulsory course History of the Novel includes some postcolonial novels in the corpus of novels studied: *Anthills of the Savannah* by the Nigerian writer Chinua Achebe,¹⁹ *The Interpreters* by the Nigerian writer Wole Soyinka,²⁰ *Midnight's Children* by the Anglo-Indian writer Salman Rushdie,²¹ *The Hungry Tide* by the Anglo-Indian writer Amitav Ghosh²² and *So Long a Letter* by Senegalese author Mariam Bâ.²³

Regarding the University of Sarajevo,²⁴ there are two departments at the Faculty of Philosophy: the Department of Comparative Literature and Library and the Department

¹⁷ Among the units in literature related to feminist and postcolonial criticism of the literary canon, two books are listed: *Treason Our Text: Feminist Challenges to the Literary Canon* by Lillian S. Robinson and *Orientalism* by Edward Said.

¹⁸ There are four bibliographic units relevant to the subject matter of this paper: Edward Said's *Culture and Imperialism*, *Jewels Brought from Bondage: Black Music and the Politics of Authenticity* by Paul Gilroy, *The Analysis of Culture* by Raymond Williams and *Cultural Studies and its Theoretical Legacies* by Stuart Hall.

¹⁹ The novel's plot unfolds in the postcolonial era within the fictional African state of Kangan. On an ideological level, the novel delves into the challenges faced by modern Africa, strongly influenced by its colonial history.

²⁰ The novel is set in the sixties in the 20th century, in the postliberation period of Nigeria, and addresses the problems of life in Nigeria after liberation from colonial rule.

²¹ This novel stands as one of the most renowned works in postcolonial literature, centering its plot around a child born at midnight on the day of India's liberation.

²² A novel that describes the lives of small people in modern India and that thematizes both the difficulties of life in the past and the challenges of modern society.

²³ This novel, structured as a series of letters exchanged between two women, narrates the challenges and hardships faced by women in a patriarchal West African society. It is frequently regarded as representative of the plight of women in postcolonial Africa.

²⁴ As for the University of East Sarajevo, there are also two departments – Serbian Language and Literature, and General Literature and Theatre Studies – no subject within the first department was identified that incorporated postcolonial studies into its curriculum. In the second department, at the first level, there is an elective subject titled Postmodern World Literature, which includes the interpretation of the novel *Midnight's Children* by the Anglo-Indian writer Salman Rushdie. However, it's important to note that there is no mention of the postcolonial determinant in this course, nor that the novel will be interpreted in this specific context.

of Literatures of the Peoples of Bosnia and Herzegovina. In the first department, the research revealed that only one compulsory course in the second year, Literary Theory 2, mentions postcolonial criticism among other literary theories. However, there are no publications in the field of postcolonial literature listed in the bibliography. At the Department of Literatures of the Peoples of Bosnia and Herzegovina, in the first year, the compulsory course Introduction to Literary Theories partially deals with postcolonial criticism in terms of exploring the way we perceive differences and foreign countries. Moreover, in the compulsory course Intercultural Study of South Slavic Literatures, several determinants important for postcolonial study are mentioned in the literature list, specifically works by E. Said and M. Todorova. It is interesting to note that although this course never directly mentions postcolonial studies, the course objectives state that the poetics of traditional literature will be refreshed from the perspective of reactions to the cultural situation under the Ottoman and Austro-Hungarian authorities. Thus, it can be inferred that this is an analysis of the colonial state of South Slavic literature, representing a thematic section around postcolonial theory.

The Second Cycle

In second-cycle studies at the University of Skopje, where literature is studied through programs such as Macedonian Literature, and Literary Studies and Cultural Studies, postcolonial studies are addressed in various ways. In the program focused on Macedonian literature, the course Methodology of Research and Techniques of Scientific Work includes discussions about postcolonial studies in the context of modern methods for studying literature and possible approaches when writing a scientific paper. This information is noteworthy because it suggests that postcolonial studies are seen as a scientific perspective that extends beyond the specific context of postcolonialism, providing a valuable interpretative tool for works suitable for this hermeneutical approach. Within the Cultural Studies program, which integrates literary science and cultural studies, there is one course, Identity, Difference, Literature, and Culture, where the term “postcolonial” is not explicitly mentioned. However, essential concepts of postcolonial critique, such as translation, subaltern, creole, and borderline identity, are present in the course’s description. The description also references writing in the name of the Other as a form of discursive colonization. This indicates an engagement with postcolonial ideas within the broader context of literary and cultural analysis.

At the second level of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences in Zagreb, specifically within the Department of Comparative Literature, there is a course titled Theory of Literature: Michel Foucault – Skeptical Introduction. While the term “postcolonial” is not explicitly used in the course description, the focus is on the interpretation of the work of Michel Foucault. This suggests that the course likely explores Foucault’s theories, and it may indirectly touch upon or provide a foundation for discussions related to postcolonialism, especially given Foucault’s influence on various critical theories, as well as acquaintance with works containing opposite points of view concerning the Foucault’s.

In addition, at the Department of History, where courses can also be selected, there is a course titled History of the Movement of the Non-Aligned. Although specific data about the course, including its description, content, and literature, couldn't be found on the internet, the mere existence of such a topic is noteworthy within the context of this article. This course likely covers the history of the Non-Aligned Movement, which could be relevant to discussions around postcolonialism. At the second level of the Croatian Studies Department, there are three distinct modules: linguistic, literary, and pedagogical. For the purpose of this research within the scope of the paper's topic, the focus was on the literary and pedagogical modules. However, no courses were found in either module that explicitly included postcolonial studies in their content.

At the second level of the Faculty of Philology in Belgrade, specifically within the Department of Serbian Literature with South Slavic Literature and the Department of General Literature with Theory of Literature, no courses were identified that explicitly included postcolonial studies in their content.²⁵

As far as the University of Ljubljana is concerned, there is no course at the Department of Slovene Studies within the second cycle that would enrich its program with knowledge and methods of postcolonial studies. The Department of Comparative Literature is the compulsory course Comparative Literature 3, which deals with the issues of contemporary comparative and world literature and the relationship between literature and other humanistic disciplines, including postcolonial theoretical perspectives. It is also important to mention the compulsory course Classical and Contemporary World Literature, which provides knowledge about the history of world literature, as well as contemporary literature outside the European continent (Latin, African, Asian, Caribbean), with special emphasis on postcolonial literature.

At the Faculty of Philosophy of the University of Sarajevo,²⁶ in the second study cycle of the Department of Comparative Literature, the course Introduction to Cultural Studies partly addresses postcolonial criticism, with the bibliography including Edward Said's book *Orientalism* and *The Post-Colonial Critic* by Gayatri Spivak. Postcolonial criticism is briefly mentioned as a possible starting point for the interpretation of literature in the compulsory course titled Art and Criticism. Additionally, the elective course Literature and the Narrative of Identity references the contributions of Edward Said and Homi Bhabha to narrative strategies for constructing cultural and political identities. Notably, in the last semester of the second cycle, there is a course titled Postcolonial Novel, which focuses on postmodernist and poststructuralist features in postcolonial novels, the

²⁵ At the Department of Serbian Literature with South Slavic Literatures, the subject Literary Imagology and Cultural Identity might suggest a connection to postcolonial studies based on its name, but upon examination, it was found that the course did not specifically address postcolonial studies. Similarly, the courses Teaching Literature and Interpretative Theory, and Literary Theory at the Department of General Literature and Literary Theory did not explicitly incorporate postcolonial studies in their content.

²⁶ At the University of East Sarajevo, at the second level, no significant data were found during the research. The subject Literature in Contemporary Theories at the Department of Serbian Language and Literature does not explicitly mention postcolonial studies. At the Department of General Literature and Theatre Studies, the obligatory subject Overview of Contemporary Literary Theories briefly mentions postcolonial criticism as one of the approaches to interpreting literature.

concept of autobiography in the context of postcolonial theory, and the aesthetics of the monstrous in novels addressing identities. However, the literature list primarily includes works by Edward Said and Maria Todorova, along with Robert Irwin's book on the Western reception of stories from the *Arabian Nights*. Within the Department of Literatures of the Peoples of Bosnia and Herzegovina at the second cycle, the elective course Literary History and Literary Critical Terminology incorporates postcolonial theory as one of the approaches to researching the history of literature. Additionally, in the compulsory course Intercultural History of South Slavic Literatures, Edward Said's *Orientalism* is listed in the bibliography.

The Third Cycle

In third-cycle studies at the Faculty of Philology in Skopje, at the Department of Macedonian Studies, there is a course entirely dedicated to the study of Macedonian literature and culture through the lens of postcolonial criticism, titled Postcolonial Discourse and Postcolonial Criticism in Macedonian Literature and Culture. The course aims to familiarize students with the importance and role of postcolonial discourse, emphasizing its use in the interpretation of specific national literature. The course covers various terms related to postcolonial criticism, suggesting an in-depth exploration of the discourse, including the conflict of civilizations, the orient and occident, the edge and center, exoticism and primitiveness, the concept of the border, migration, and exodus, cultural identity, subalternity, discourse as knowledge and knowledge as power, the distinction between Orientalism and Balkanism, and postcolonial criticism in the Macedonian cultural chronotope. Notably, the topic also delves into the relationship between the Balkans and the Orient. In third-cycle studies at the Faculty of Philology in Skopje, within the Department of Macedonian Studies, the course titled Macedonian Drama acknowledges postcolonial features of Macedonian plays as one element of the course. Additionally, in the course on Magical Realism in Macedonian Literature, besides the theoretical interpretation of magical realism, there is a mention of the possibility of understanding magical realism as a postcolonial discourse. At the Department of Literary Studies, which is further divided into several national literatures and comparative literature, postcolonial discourse is explicitly mentioned in two courses: Comparative and Contemporary Literary Trends, and Intercultural Poetics: East/West. The reading list for these courses includes important works such as *The Location of Culture* by Homi Bhabha, *A Critique of Postcolonial Reason: Toward a History of the Vanishing Present* by Gayatri Spivak, Edward Said's *Culture and Imperialism* and *Orientalism*, and Maria Todorova's *Imagining the Balkans*.

At the third cycle of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences in Zagreb, within the Department of Comparative Literature, the study of literature, performing arts, film, and culture is conducted. However, the official website only displays a study program from 2008, and there is no course identified that explicitly includes postcolonial studies in its content. On the other hand, there are two third-cycle modules at the Department of

Croatian Studies: the study of Croatian culture and the study of Croatian philology in an intercultural context. The study of Croatian culture mainly covers courses specifically related to a particular national culture, with postcolonial content being more noticeable in elective courses. In the course *Croatian Studies: Paradigms and Contexts*, various theoretical approaches are explored, including postcolonialism, cultural studies, and theories of modernization. The aim is to understand how such approaches are useful in the study of Croatian culture and literature. Additionally, the *Philosophy and Literature* course delves into the relationship between poststructuralist literary theories (feminism, deconstruction, historicism, postcolonial theory) and traditional philosophical issues. The course *Basic Concepts of Cultural Studies* allocates a significant part of its content to concepts crucial for postcolonial criticism.²⁷

It's noteworthy to mention another elective course, *Interculturalism and Education*, which, alongside postcolonial studies knowledge and methods, addresses concepts such as multiculturalism, prejudice and stereotypes, human rights, civic education, and minority education. In the second module of *Croatian Philology in a Multicultural Context*, Homi Bhabha and his concept of hybridization is mentioned as a significant theoretical framework in the elective course *Reading the Media*. However, none of Bhabha's books is explicitly listed in the assigned reading material. The elective course *From the Point of View of Cultural Science: Hybridization, Identity, Multiculturalism, Diaspora* engages extensively with literature related to postcolonial studies. The course description emphasizes the goal of reading contemporary prose and studying issues of hybridization and identity through the lens of postcolonial theory as a potential key to interpreting postmodern identity hybridizations.

Concerning the third cycle of study at the Faculty of Philology in Belgrade, one course at the Department of Language, Literature, and Culture is titled *Postcolonial Literature in English*, but there is no additional description available for the course. Similarly, the course *Contemporary Approaches to the Study of New Serbian Literature* mentions that approaches from poststructuralism to a broad spectrum of cultural studies will be represented, but the details are not defined. At the Department of General Literature and Literary Theory, postcolonial studies are only mentioned within the framework of the course *Theory of the Novel*. Edward Said, Homi Bhabha, and Gayatri Spivak are listed in the bibliography as selected theorists for this course.

Concerning third-cycle studies in the field of literary studies in Ljubljana, they occur within the interdisciplinary study program *Humanities and Social Sciences*. Two modules are relevant to our research, namely *Slovene Studies* and *Literary Studies*. Unfortunately, the official websites do not provide detailed curricula for basic courses, offering only brief descriptions that lack determinants of postcolonial studies.

²⁷ For example, in the description of the subject there are the following terms – the concept of culture: a general concept; traditional anthropological understandings; different types of culture (local culture, folk culture (Volkgeist), high culture); new concepts of culture: deterritorialization, translation, mestizos, transculturation, creolization, diaspora, hybridization; cultural relativism; assimilation: integration, melting path, cultural pluralism; race: approach to biological determinism, classification of races, eugenics, approach to social construction, ethnicity: ethnic or cultural nation (Kulturnation) vs. nation of the state (Staatsnation); Ethnocentrism: Eurocentrism.

Finally,²⁸ when we talk about the University of Sarajevo,²⁹ in the third-cycle studies there are two programs: the study of literature and the study of literature and culture. In the first program, the obligatory course Methodological Reflections on Contemporary Studies of Literature partially discusses the possibilities of using postcolonial criticism in the study of literature. The literature list includes Gayatri Spivak's *The Post-Colonial Critic* and *Colonialism/Postcolonialism* by Ania Loomba. Additionally, the obligatory course Novel at the Crossroads of Times focuses on novels in English, not recognized by the postmodernist canon. Although postcolonial determinants are not explicitly mentioned in the topic description, the bibliography suggests that novels will be interpreted from a postcolonial perspective, citing works like *The Empire Writes Back: Theory and Practice in Post-Colonial Literature* edited by Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths, and Helen Tiffin. In the second program, the obligatory course Comparative Literature: Concepts, Methods, Interpretations considers the center/margin relationship in the light of postcolonial approaches. Additionally, the course Cultural Studies and Imagology through Concepts of Postmodernism includes works like *The Post-Colonial Critic* by Gayatri Spivak and *Orientalism* by Edward Said in the bibliography, though the postcolonial approach is not explicitly detailed in the course description.

Conclusion

The data we have generated through this analysis allows for a clear delineation of the state of affairs within the field of literary studies and the incorporation of content related to postcolonial theory. Our examination of the data has not only confirmed certain anticipated facts but also challenged a preconception. Specifically, we have concluded that the presence of postcolonial theory is relatively limited and, in many instances, lacks contextualization. It is often situated within the broader framework of global literature, primarily British or French imperial narratives. This discovery indicates that contents related to postcolonial theory and literature are more prominently featured in departments specializing in comparative (world) literature, where such content is commonly encountered. Conversely, in departments of national philology focused on individual countries, such inclusions are more of an exception than the norm. This outcome aligns with our expectations, recognizing that postcolonial studies predominantly originated within the context of Anglophone world literature, which naturally holds a central position in the literary studies system.

The positioning and nature of courses within the curriculum convey significant insights into the importance accorded to postcolonial theory within the educational system for aspiring professionals in the field of literary studies. At the first (Bologna) level,

²⁸ Due to the still undetermined status of Kosovo in the field of international relations, we present our findings here. At the University of Pristina, literature studies are carried out at the Department of Albanian Language and Literature, where none of the three levels have seen content related to postcolonial studies.

²⁹ In the third-cycle study at the University of East Sarajevo, within the Department of Philology, there is only one subject titled Language, Literature, and Globalization that mentions postcolonialism. However, it is referred to as a postcolonial period rather than as a postcolonial theory or criticism.

postcolonial theory is predominantly mentioned alongside other poststructuralist and cultural methods within literary studies. It appears in compulsory courses that pertain to the introduction to literary theory, methodology of literary studies, and similar contexts. While this signifies commendable exposure to postcolonial theory for most students, it falls short of providing a foundation for a thorough education. In-depth content from postcolonial studies is typically encountered only at the second and third stages of study. Notably, most courses explicitly addressing postcolonial theory are elective rather than mandatory. Courses dealing with the works of theorists and theoreticians in the field of postcolonial studies, as well as literary works of postcolonial literature, are optional and do not constitute the obligatory minimum knowledge for graduates. An exception is found at the University of Sarajevo, where postcolonial studies' content is integrated into compulsory courses in the second cycle of literary studies. In these obligatory courses, postcolonial theory tends to be presented as one among several methodological approaches to the study of literary works. This observation leads to the inference that in the formulation of curricula, postcolonial theory is either considered less important or, at the very least, deemed irrelevant to this academic space and/or study. In other words, it may be perceived as either too intricate, modern, or distant from the domestic context.

Most of the courses on which postcolonial content appears focus on canonical authors of postcolonial theory (Said, Bhabha, Spivak) and postcolonial literature (Coetzee, Morrison, Rushdie), and few cross the boundaries of this canon. This speaks in favor of the fact that, within the post-Yugoslav higher education field, the concept of postcolonial theory is still not creatively and critically accepted by applying it to its own research, and still reflects the superficial reception of canon (anglophones) theory and literature. The exception is the University of Skopje, where it is possible to find objects that creatively adopt the ideas of postcolonial theory and apply them to genuine and domestic literary material, which represents an exceptional contribution to literary studies. We note that, in the context of literary studies in Skopje, the concept of postcolonial semantically imbued with the findings of Balkans studies, which is a contribution to the development of postcolonial studies and to its reception in the Balkans and the post-Yugoslav space.

The outcomes of the research have contradicted the hypothesis that the historical context of the colonial experience of Yugoslav peoples, coupled with the pronounced anticolonial stance of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, would lead to a relatively high presence of postcolonial study contents. In certain instances, the reasons for this discrepancy can be traced to the inertia within departments dedicated to literary studies, particularly in major centers such as Belgrade and Zagreb, which may not be as receptive to innovative perspectives within their discipline. It is essential to reiterate that this research offers only one perspective on reality – specifically, it provides insight into official curricula that may not fully reflect the actual situation within the departments. Nevertheless, these results serve as indicative glimpses into the state of postcolonial studies in the post-Yugoslav context within the realm of literature and literary studies.

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