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“Balkan Boy Stinks”: Traditional vs Transitional Identity in the Songs of Rambo Amadeus

Abstract: The article focuses on the cultural representation of the Balkan man in three songs by a Montenegrin-born and Belgrade-based rock musician Rambo Amadeus from 1989, 1993, 1997. and 2012. The songs are selected as illustrative of the transformation of the cultural self-representation of the Balkans and its relations with the West at the time of the dissolution of the former Yugoslavia, a period characterised by civil wars, Western intervention and the struggles of the Western Balkans to join (or be admitted to) the European Union. It is argued that, while all the songs are generally framed in common prejudices and stereotypes about the Balkans, the more recent ones show an apparent reinterpretation of the earlier content and testify to the author’s inability to keep previous culturally typical identity representations and to reproduce positive stereotypes about the Balkan man under the new economic and political circumstances.

Key words: *Rambo Amadeus, Balkan, West, Cultural Representation, Balkanism*

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