

FULL NAME	TOMISLAV PLETENAC	FIELDS OF INTEREST, RESEARCH AREAS, FIELDWORK
YEAR OF BIRTH	1967	Theory of ethnology
POSITION, TITLE	Ph.D., assistant researcher	History of ethnology
DISCIPLINE	Ethnology	Visual anthropology
INSTITUTION OF EMPLOYMENT	Faculty of Philosophy, Zagreb	Fieldwork in Istria
		Fieldwork Međimurje



RECENT RESEARCH INTERESTS

In the past 8 years, I was concentrating on researching the history of ethnology. From 1995 till 2000, I was preparing my M.A. thesis on the discursive relation between ethnology and politics during the 1930s. This research interest was based on a polemic between Milovan Gavazzi, the founder of Croatian academic ethnology, and temporary head of the Ethnographic Museum in Zagreb, Ivo Franić. Their political and ideological attitudes heavily informed their representation and understanding of peasant culture. Gavazzi was a professed Croatian separatist, while Franić was a Yugoslav unitarist. Their theoretical tools of interpretation were also informed by the politic ideologies they adhered to. The Museum was at the time a place that played the role of an important public medium, as there were no modern electronic media or radio. In this situation, Gavazzi (and other intellectuals of that time in Croatia) was wary of a politically determined representation of peasant culture for the masses. The polemic between himself and Franić employed strictly scientific arguments and vocabulary; however, knowing of the political context, the readers were able to understand quite well the real instigations behind it. In this situation, ethnology and its vocabulary served as a cryptic code of the political discourse. A similar situation arose during the 1970s. The then "new" ethnography, influenced mainly by structuralism and symbolic anthropology, was accused of being un-patriotic, and as such proclaimed a foreign science. This led me to think about the rifts and dualisms in Croat ethnology as primarily a problem of national politics.

I attempted to establish whether there were even earlier dualisms inherent to Croatian ethnology which was, from the earliest times, seen and used as basically a political discourse. For that reason, I tried to research and analyse the early travel writings of Alberto Fortis, "Voyage to Dalmatia" (1774) which contains the earliest ethnographic descriptions of what is presently Croatia. Alberto Fortis travelled to Dalmatia in time when Venice was in a turbulent political situation. Fortis was an Enlightenment figure and a prominent intellectual of his time. His imagery of the "wild Dalmatia" with its "wild Morlacs" employed metaphors of domestication in the classificatory language of botany and geology. He can be said to have invented a virtual, textual Dalmatia, ready to use. Larry Wolff wrote that Voyage to Dalmatia was the first truly anthropological text in Europe (based on fieldwork and employing a scientific approach). But in the same time, a young intellectual named Ivan Lovrić, a student of medicine, felt deeply offended by such authoritative, if often inaccurate representation from an outside; he wrote a book in response to Fortis' work. This book can be seen as the first Croatian ethnology (as two-thirds of it are dedicated to life of Morlacs). Understandably, Fortis' impact remained unchallenged with the audiences throughout Europe, and Lovrić was all but forgotten. But Lovrić's text demonstrates his conviction accurate representation is possible only when the observer fully understands the language and customs of the researched people, but still has to remain an outsider. Lovrić's position can be said to have been one of detecting double Otherness – the foreign observer, and the observed, belonging to a native non-elite population - , a position of duality and a rift that seemed to have persisted at the very core of Croatian ethnology ever since as a symptom of transculturation of anthropological discourse.

This double Otherness I see as even further complicated in this time of transition in Eastern Europe. East is East; its ethnologists and anthropologists now have the space to speak out, Eastern Europe does not belong to either the East or the West. In this newly formed in-between-ness, we could ask ourselves: "Can an ethnologist speak?"

My research projects were:

- Home crafts in Croatia in 19th and 20th century (junior researcher)
- Devastated traditional heritage in western Slavonia (junior researcher)

COURSES TAUGHT		RECENT TEACHING EXPERIENCE, PRACTICE, METHODS
1.	Introduction in Cultural Anthropology	I started to teach the course <i>Introduction in cultural anthropology</i> in 1998. It is lecture type of teaching with presentations of case studies and the implementation of "brain storming" discussions.
2.	Methods and Techniques of Researching Culture	The course <i>Methods and Techniques</i> is mainly problem oriented teaching where fieldwork and text analysis are presented. Normally I use the workshop method.

MAJOR PUBLICATIONS IN LAST FIVE YEARS

1.	Politics and Ethnology. Background of Franić-Gavazzi Polemics, <i>Studia Ethnologica Croatica</i> , Vol. 7/8,83-93, Zagreb, 1995/1996.
2.	Female Identity in Orubica, <i>Studia Ethnologica Croatica</i> , Vol. 10/11, 235-240, Zagreb, 1998/1999.
3.	Slovenians and Croats: Parallels in Ethnological Discourse, Institut za migracije i narodnosti, Zagreb, 331-338.1997.

MEMBERSHIPS IN PROFESSIONAL ORGANISATIONS, FORUMS ETC.

1.	Croatian Ethnological Society
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