

The Art of Resilience in the Case of Skopje

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Abstract : Social movements have become common in the Post Yugoslav cities. Consequently, the wave of activism has been considerably present in Skopje. Starting from 2009 the activist wave in Skopje emerged with the notion of the city. Diversity of initiatives appeared in the city in order to defend places that have been contested by the urban development project SK2014. The activist wave diffused into many different initiatives and diversity of issues. The result was unification in one massive movement in 2016, called 'The Colourful Revolution'. The paper explores the scope of activism in Skopje, with taking into consideration the influence of the spatial transformation, the project SK2014. Moreover, it examines the processes of spatiality into shaping the contention in Skopje, focusing on interdisciplinary and comprehensive approaches. Except the diversity of theoretical framework mainly founded on contentious politics theory and space elaboration from different perspectives, the study is founded on field work based on conducted interviews. Using an interdisciplinary approach and focusing on three main dimensions, the research contributes to understand the dynamics of the activist wave and importance of spatial processes in the creation of the contention in Skopje. Moreover, it elaborates the characteristics, possible effects, and reflections of the cycles of protests in Skopje. The main results of the research showed that dynamics of space is important in the creation of the activist wave in Skopje, moreover space context can give explanation about how opportunities diffuse and transformative power is created. The study contributed into deeper understanding of the importance of spatiality in contentious politics, it showed that in general contentions politics can benefit from deeper analyses of place specificity. Finally, the thesis opposes the traditional linear understanding of social movements, and proposes more dynamic, comprehensive, and sensitive elaboration.

Keywords : contentious politics, place, Skopje, SK2014, social movements, space

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