

Thursday, June 21st 2007 16.30-17.15h

## **Ethnic Minorities and Migrants in Austria: Between Assimilation and Integration**

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Ethnic minorities have always been a “conflict-ridden” issue in Austrian politics and media. When it comes to the ethnic groups officially recognised in Austria since 1955 – Croats in Burgenland, Slovenes, Hungarians, Czechs, Slovaks, and Roma – the key issue has always been, and still is, the implementation of Article 7 of the Austrian State Treaty. It assigns the right to topographic designations and (road-)signs as well as the use of the native language in public institutions as well as the right to educational opportunities in the respective mother tongue. The controversy surrounding the question of whether or not to put up bilingual road signs (in Slovenian and German) in Carinthia („Ortstafelkonflikt“) have clearly illustrated to what extent emotions and opinions are expressed in the political public and transported in the media. Thus again, the allochthonous minorities, who make up 12,5 per cent of the Austrian population, find themselves at the centre of media attention and public debate.

There had been few migrants in Austria until the late 1960s, when the so-called “Gastarbeiter” (“guest workers”) – mostly from the former Yugoslavia and Turkey – began to come to the country. This led to negative reactions on the part of the general public and the media so that the then government started an awareness campaign to increase the acceptance of migrants. The number of people coming to Austria from the neighbouring countries and the more distant (South-)Eastern European countries increased again in the wake of the political upheavals in Europe in 1989, as did immigration from Turkey and other countries. Xenophobia became a major issue in the media, fomented by the right-wing Freedom Party and taken up by the “Neue Kronen Zeitung”, a tabloid that has the highest circulation of all newspapers in Austria. Surveys show that until today there remain somewhat diffuse attitudes towards “foreigners” among the Austrian public and that migrants are primarily perceived “as a problem”.

## **Mag. Dr. Petra Herczeg**

**Born:** 1966 in Güssing/Burgenland – Austria.

Born and raised in German/Croatian („Burgenland-Croatian“)

**Studies:** Communication Science, German language and literature studies

1992 – 1998: working as a radio and TV-journalist in the editorial staff of the minorities department of Austrian Broadcasting Company (ORF) Burgenland

1998 – 2000: scientific assistant at the Danube University Krems: Department European Journalism Academy

1998: project management: „Radio za dicu. Radio for children in bilingual regions at the example of the Burgenland-Croatian ethnic minority“. A scientific project to support the linguistic competence and identification with the language of the ethnic group

Since 1998: Chairwoman of the Research Society Burgenland

2000 – 2001: employee in a financial communication company

Since 2001: assistant at the Department of Communication Science, University of Vienna

2001: scientific conception and production of a bilingual CD for children „Klepi – the little stork with the great puss“. Since 2002: freelance Radio-journalist for the cultural programme OE 1 of the Austrian Broadcasting Company (ORF) And scientific project management of children's radio „Rudi – the quick radio-dog“.

### **Research interests:**

- Multilingualism in the communication society
- Childhood in the communication society
- Ethnic minorities and media
- Journalism

### **Publications:**

Book: Petra Herczeg: Sprache als Erbe. Aufwachsen in mehreren Sprachen, Klagenfurt, Wieser Verlag 2006 (language as a heritage. To grow up multilingual)

Scientific articles: Petra Herczeg, Rainer Rosenberg: Welpen aller Rassen und Kreuzungen. Von der Radiofee, dem Bastelonkel, dem Traummannlein, dem Weißen Elefanten und einem Hund

namens Rudi – eine kurze Reise durch die Welt des Kinderradios, in, Godler, Haimo, Jochum, Manfred, Schlögl, Reinhard, Treiber, Alfred (Hg.), Vom Dampfradio zur Klangtapete. Beiträge zu 80 Jahren Hörfunk in Österreich, Wien, Köln, Weimar, Böhlau Verlag 2004

Edition of the book: Hans-Jürgen Jakobs, Wolfgang R. Langenbacher (Hg.), Das Gewissen ihrer Zeit. Fünfzig Vorbilder des Journalismus, Wien, Picus Verlag 2004

Petra Herczeg: Joseph Roth: „Ich zeichne das Gesicht der Zeit“. Der Schriftsteller als Journalist, in, Das Lexikon für Österreich in 20 Bänden mit ausgewählten Beiträgen aus den ORF-Redaktionen. Duden, Brockhaus AG Mannheim 2006

Petra Herczeg: "Welche Philosophie und welches Menschenbild wird im Kinderfernsehen transportiert und welche Implikationen ergeben sich aus den ‚Gut-Böse‘-Schemadarstellungen auf das Weltbild von Kindern?" In: Camhy, D. G.(Hrsg.): Philosophical Foundations of Innovative Learning - Philosophische Grundlagen innovativen Lernens. Proceedings of the International Conference on Philosophy for Children in Graz, Austria. Kongressband des internationalen Kongresses für Kinderphilosophie. Academia Verlag St. Augustin 2007.

**Awards:** 2003 Andreas – Reischek-radio prize