



## OSSERVATORIO BALCANI E CAUCASO

Online news provider and research centre  
on the Balkans, Turkey and the Caucasus

*Osservatorio Balcani e Caucaso* (OBC) is an online news provider and research centre devoted to social and political change in South-East Europe, Turkey and the Caucasus. The OBC team, based in Rovereto (Italy), cooperates with a network of over 40 correspondents and local contributors to deliver online articles and in-depth analyses on these areas on a daily basis.

The OBC website links information, research and international cooperation. Every month, over 100,000 readers visit the website: scholars and researchers; journalists; students; diplomats; local, regional and national government officials; policy makers; practitioners of development cooperation; business people; members of the diaspora from South-East Europe and the Caucasus; tourists and travellers; people generally interested in these areas.

Besides publishing online news, OBC produces documentary films and audiovisual material, and carries out research and training activities. The OBC team participates in university workshops and public events. All OBC products, the footage and papers of events can be found in the [Multimedia](#), [Our Products](#), [Specials](#) and [OBC Events](#) sections of the OBC website.

*Osservatorio Balcani e Caucaso* is engaged in the main social networks on the net, distributes all of its content with a copyleft license and employs open source technologies.

### Background

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*Osservatorio sui Balcani* was established in the year 2000 in response to the need for knowledge and debate by civil society and institutions that had been working for years for peaceful cohabitation in South-East Europe. In 2006, it expanded its activities to the Caucasus and, in 2009, it changed its name to *Osservatorio Balcani e Caucaso* (OBC).

# Themes

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## **Grassroots political Europe**

From political enlargement to the integration of European societies

## **War and Peace**

Collective memory; conflict transformation; individual and collective security

## **Post-communist transitions**

Social and political change; welfare re-establishment and human-rights protection

## **Transcultural dialogue**

Civil society and cross cultural contamination

## **International development cooperation**

Decentralised cooperation among regions, cities and local communities in SEE, the Caucasus and Italy

## **Justice**

The International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia; local courts; war crimes in terms of memory, truth and justice

## **Geopolitics**

International relations; strategic and economic interests in the Mediterranean and Black Sea regions

## **Freedom of the press**

Independent voices from the Balkans, the Caucasus and Turkey

## **Local development**

Administrative decentralisation; sustainable and local development; 'responsible' tourism; social reconstruction

## **Migrant communities from South-East Europe, Turkey and the Caucasus in Italy**

Migrations and the development nexus

## The website

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*"Italy's top website for, as its name suggests, Balkan and Caucasus affairs [...] The Osservatorio site is fascinating"* - TIM JUDAH, THE ECONOMIST, 2010

*"The best news portal on South-East Europe"* - PAOLO RUMIZ, LA REPUBBLICA, 2005

In 2010, *Osservatorio* was awarded with the "Journalism Prize on War Reporting Antonio Russo 2010 - Internet section":

*"For over ten years the online news publisher Osservatorio Balcani Caucaso has been providing Italian and European readers with the most comprehensive news bulletin on a region that, since the late Eighties, has seen the return of war in Europe. By dealing with this area, Osservatorio has filled a gap in information often left uncovered due to lack of interest and many distractions typical of our media in the past. Today this website covers at least twenty countries with over fifty correspondents and about one-hundred readers a month, and its stories are published by many Italian daily and periodical news papers and providers. Recently the prestigious magazine 'The Economist' defined Osservatorio as "Italy's top website for Balkan and Caucasus affairs."*

## Documentaries and publications

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**The Lion and the Gazelle** - DVD (ITA, 2010, 30')

Nor Sunnies nor Shiites, heterodox Muslims of nomadic origins and mystical traditions: Turkish Alevis are estimated around 10-15 millions against a total population of 70 millions. Enthusiastic supporters of Atatürk laicism, they were always seen with suspicion by the central authorities and the majority of the population. "The Lion and the Gazelle", a documentary film by OBC

**Lips, eyes, ears. A journey in the Albanian Alps** - DVD (ITA, 2009, 29')

Michael is on the tracks of the Indo-European language, Gianni is an Arbëresh and teaches Albanian at the University of Calabria, Monica was the first researcher in Italy to obtain a PhD in Albanology. A group of linguists travelling into the majestic beauty of Albanian mountains in a quest for lost words and languages. "Lips, eyes, ears" traces a portrait of an unusual job, introducing a special perspective on today's Albania, its culture, and its landscape.

**Circle of memory** - DVD (ITA, 2007,59')

The unique experience of a group of architects and sculptors in 1960s and 1970s Yugoslavia, introducing new ways to remember World War II and the victory upon Nazism and Fascism. The curse of history at the beginning of the 90s, with the nationalist forces using those same memories to manipulate the different national communities and lead the country into war. A journey into European memory of the 20th century, the century that started and ended in Sarajevo.

**After Srebrenica. Past and present** - DVD (ITA, 2005, 33')

Ten years after the massacre of July 1995, this is the story of the town that has become a symbol of ethnic cleansing and racist violence in Europe. The documentary brings the viewer from Tuzla - where women fight for the investigation of their loved ones' disappearance, through Potočari - former headquarter of international peace forces, and all the way to Srebrenica. Going back and forth between present times, history, and memory, parallel narratives unfold, surrounded by a sense of alienation, in the heart of a town where the conflict does not yet seem to have found an end. "After Srebrenica" was filmed thanks to the support of the Autonomous Province of Trento.

**Zastava Planet** - Online video feature (ITA, 2005, 27')

It was called Crvena Zastava, Red Star, and it was the biggest car producer in the Balkans. Following the fall of Yugoslavia, it entered a devastating crisis, reaching its peak during the Nato bombings of 1999. While the factory lost its workers, the city of Kragujevac became one of the main destination for Kosovo refugees. A story on the violent transition from socialism to the market economy. Zastava Planet has been produced thanks to funding from the Autonomous Province of Trento.

**Bad memories. Sites, symbols and narrations of wars in the Balkans** - Book

A collection of papers presented at the conference "Bad memories. Sites, symbols and narrations of wars in the Balkans", organised by Osservatorio Balcani in Rovereto, Trento, on 9 November 2007. The conference was part of a project devoted to Second World War memorial sites in former Yugoslavia, co-sponsored by the European Union and the Autonomous Province of Trento.

## Patrons and Donors

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*Osservatorio Balcani e Caucaso* is a project of the Fondazione Opera Campana dei Caduti (Peace Bell Foundation). It is promoted by the Forum Trentino per la Pace e i Diritti Umani and sponsored by the Department for International Solidarity of the Autonomous Province of Trento and the Municipality of Rovereto, in Italy. In addition, it implements projects funded by the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the European Union, several foundations, state and private organisations.

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