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Komšiluk

Komšiluk (neighborhood, neighborliness) has established itself as a notion instrumental in explaining ethnic strife linked with the breakup of Yugoslavia or other Balkan settings. In current social sciences, it largely refers to the relations among ethnoreligious communities, conceived as a legacy of the Ottoman millet system. In anthropology, which studies the komšiluk in a more detailed way than most of other social sciences, the debate on the 'capability' or the 'nature' of the komšiluk has developed: Can the komšiluk oppose an efficient barrier against the projects of ethnic cleansing? Can it be efficient as a means of revitalizing the social fabric in multiethnic settings, etc.? This debate is motivated by wider theoretical issues as well as by entirely practical concerns regarding the management of the postconflict society. This article aims at contributing to the current debate with analyzing the background of the uses of the komšiluk notion in Yugoslav ethnology and its neighboring disciplines, and with articulating these "domestic" usages with those of foreign anthropologists and political scientists.

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[1] <https://www.etno-muzej.si/>

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