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Serbia's Road towards the EU: History, Mentality and Philosophy

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Imagined History and The Philosophy of the Province

There must not be transformation, there must not be activity, passivity is needed, abandonment to what exists.¹

Radomir Konstantinović, philosopher

Transition towards democracy, although almost as a rule seen from the point of view of the strictly political, is far from being such. It is an all-encompassing social, cultural, economical, and even philosophical issue. This paper concentrates on several cultural instances that are crucial for understanding contemporary Serbia, especially in its modernization, EU integration and democratization.

* * *

Several cultural instances need to be scrutinized; the mentality of the people being the first and foremost. It is a question of what lies in the *collective unconscious* of the people. The Belgrade philosopher Radomir Konstantinović has, it seems, delved rather deep into the mentality that I am discussing here. Moreover, he did that even in 1969, some thirty years ago, in his book 'Philosophy of the province'. The book, written in the metaphoric language of philosophy, describes the mentality that led to all the problems I have named so far. He calls it 'provincial'. The original name of the book is *Filosofija palanke*, and it is oft praised as the pinnacle of Serbian philosophy. An important note should be made about the translation of the title, though: the word '*palanka*' does not have a translational equivalent in English, so a correspondent was used, with an important explanation – *palanka* is a small city, a provincial city, cut out from the major goings-on of the capitol, severed from modernity and not looking into the future. It is a word with a strong negative connotative moment in it; the reader has to be aware of the overtone.

Konstantinović explains how the deep layer of the Serb mentality hosts a profound fascination with history, and is thus posed towards the past instead of the present or the future. There is an underlying layer of 'tragedy' and 'fatality' in the typical mindset. Let us go directly into the Serbian fascination with history and the 'tragic fate' and let Konstantinović explain in his own words:

[t]he small-town spirit is a spirit between that of the tribe, as an ideally unique spirit, and the spirit of the world, as an ideally open spirit. When such a spirit starts talking like this about its tragic fate, it talks about its separation from history. Still, even when it accuses this separation as a curse, it still desires this separation from history. The basic premise of the small-town spirit can be described as: the spirit which, forgotten by history, is trying to make its fate into its privilege.²

Konstantinović goes right to the point: the spirit he speaks of is *forgotten* by history, as Serbia has been but a part of the vast Ottoman Empire for half a millennium, a minor factor in the development of Europe, thus cleanly severed from European development; therefore it needs to *invent* history in a Hobsbawmian sense – which is precisely what has been happening. There is a staggering multitude of historical facts in Serbia nowadays disfigured and twisted beyond recognition; I will name only some of them, which I consider to be the most important:

- a) The conviction that the Battle of the Kosovo Field in 1389 was a brave success³. It was far off from that, as historical sources tell us it was only a minor battle and that the majority of the Serb forces were defeated by the Turks on the battle of the Marica river, some years before. The very battle of 1389 was, furthermore, a total disaster for the Serb forces, yet glorified by today's historical concepts in Serbia. The very concept of the Battle of Kosovo Field is used by nationalists to boost the nation-driven sentiments in the population. Its concept serves as a rally-point for various other nationalistic claims and actions, most notably, the opposition to the Albanian majority population of Kosovo.
- b) The idea that the *knež*⁴ Lazar (one of the Serb nobles that led the battle of Kosovo) was, in fact, a king or a tzar. In the first half of 2007, the 'Guard of the Holy Tzar Lazar' was formed, a paramilitary volunteer organization dedicated to fight by all means necessary for not letting Kosovo get independence. In November 2007, they publicly invited Serbia to go to war for Kosovo, adding even that their military commander is one of the Hague inductees.⁵ The importance of *knež* Lazar and his family line has been embellished to the extreme.
- c) The twisting of modern history: conviction that the four wars led by Milošević have been won⁶ and that the capitulation of Milošević's politics in Dayton was in fact a victory of his. Milošević was an expert in presenting a defeat as a victory, especially presenting himself as the 'protector of Serbs' after the situation on Kosovo started to heat up.⁷

All of the above (which shall be carefully explained on the following pages) serves as powerful means of implanting nationalistic and xenophobic irrational thought upon the citizens of Serbia, used mostly by the Radical Party and the Democratic Party of Serbia, but by Milošević's Socialist Party as well, during the nineties. Nenad Dimitrijević is aware of the situation, stressing that the relationship towards history has ended up being distorted:

The fact that the relation toward the past has never been explicitly politically thematized, but has instead implicitly been showing itself in perverted shapes, among which the most prominent are the fight in defense of national honor and legalism, has had a decisive influence upon the confusion of values and policies in the post-October Serbia.⁸

The relationship of Serbia with its (invented) history is a strong one. Yet the problem we are facing here is the problem of an *imagined* history. The modern world of today has changed drastically even when compared to the factual world of history, not even to mention the comparison to the imagined Serbian history. That is why pace cannot be kept with modernity:

The 'wide world' is the world that, with the multitude of possibilities (of styles) destroys this uniqueness of style, its unique identity. The small-town spirit is the spirit of the uniqueness of style, first of all, the spirit of the ready-made solutions, of templates, strict forms. When an inhabitant of a small town takes care of the small town, and respects it as the supreme will, as his superego, he takes care, first of all, this uniqueness of style and, because of that, when he is afraid of the world, of going into the world, he is afraid of his going into the world without style.⁹

The preservation of the existing is of utmost importance. Change must not 'infiltrate' the community; it may and in most cases will be seen as entirely negative. Everything foreign is, accordingly, also designated as harmful. 'They are dirty; the inhabitant of a small town is clean'.¹⁰ Thus, Europe and Europeans – *They*, with European values, can be often seen as destroyers of that peace, of that non-changing order of everyday life. If Europe is let in, it will change the harmony and tranquility that are so highly appreciated in the *palanka*. Therefore, there must be no change, no transformation. Because of the fact that the change does not happen,¹¹ the 'small town inhabitant' tries to justify his standpoint and invents history. 'Each transformation represents certain death, as it implies some decay which means it is certainly unclean. An apology of permanency is an apology of cleanliness'.¹²

The victim mentality.

One other important moment in Serbian fatalistic mentality is the conviction that the whole world stands united against Serbia.¹³ There are numerous factors in play that have made that possible. First of all, the land was under Turkish rule for a half a century. After the release from the Ottoman Empire, the twentieth century came with the Balkan wars and the two World Wars. Even the very World War I has begun by Austria-Hungary attacking Serbia, after the murder of Franz Ferdinand in Bosnia, by a radical group of Serbs calling themselves *Mlada Bosna* (Young Bosnia). World War II had brought even larger atrocities. This time, Serbia was quite literally surrounded by enemies. Hungary, Croatia, Romania, Bulgaria and Albania have all joined the Axis. We might suppose that was the time when the seeds of the anti-European sentiment were planted. The memory of World War II still lives on in modern-day Serbia and the enmity with Croatia during the 1990s' wars was fuelled by that memory.

That is why the Serb tries to represent himself as the victim, as somebody who has suffered, refusing to accept the actual state of facts, the very world itself,

(...) and this refusal to accept the world is a method all of unto itself of exteriorization, a unique way of avoiding facing of this spirit with itself, but also a way of objectification of the subject (...), to present itself as the object of someone else's will, as a victim, in its characteristic manner.¹⁴

Miroslav Mojžita, having lived in Belgrade and having gotten to know the mentality, described the Serbian 'heroic fatalism' in a manner rather close to that of Konstantinović:

The Serbs are a tough people, they repeat that often and base everything else on that. The same heroic fatalism is connected to that as well, which reflects well in the known and often repeated expression: 'Nobody can hurt us, we are stronger than fate'.¹⁵

The Serbs, ever so often, consider themselves to be victims; 'Serbs were not the main sinners, but the main victims¹⁶,' notices Mojžita. The extreme versions of such a state of mind is found in the ideology of the Democratic Party of Serbia, the Serbian Radical Party, the party which not only used to denounce the massacre of Muslims in Srebrenica conducted by Serb forces¹⁷, but actually tries to represent the Serbs as *victims*, as well as the plethora of new Righth-Wing parties and organization centered around the locus of the *Dveri* movement. What is even a bigger problem, there is an increasing number of daily newspapers in Belgrade (such as '*Kurir*', '*Pravda*', '*Press*', '*Pečat*', '*Geopolitika*' and others) that openly propagate such illusionary revisionist ideas.

At this point, I would like to remind the reader on the affair with the mentally handicapped, in which the official stance of the minister of health is a complete denying of responsibility and the Prime Minister's view that Serbia is again a victim of international conspiracies. The children spending their lives tied to their beds were thus forgotten, and the public interest went back to the 'victimized' Serbs.

On 14 November 2007, the B92 television from Belgrade reported news that can only be considered as deplorable and appalling. The reports of the Mental Disability Rights International (MDRI) has found that in Serbian facilities for the care of the metally handicapped, a huge number of patients are often tied to their beds (arms, legs and waist), where they spend days, months, and some of them even years. Some of the children are mostly half-naked, eating and defecating in their bed. A seven year old girl with a brain disease is left without therapy, as she is 'going to die anyway'¹⁸. Eric Rosenthal, the director of the Organization, stated that tying a child to the bed is the worst thing he has witnessed in his 14 year long career as an attorney for the mentally handicapped¹⁹. The official website of the MDRI states:

'Torment not Treatment: Serbia's Segregation and Abuse of Children and Adults with Disabilities' describes children and adults tied to beds or never allowed to leave their cribs - some for years at a time. In addition, filthy conditions, contagious diseases, lack of medical care, rehabilitation and judicial oversight renders placement in a Serbian institution life threatening for both children and adults. 'These are Serbia's most vulnerable citizens. Thousands confined to institutions are subjected to inhuman and degrading treatment and abuse. Children and adults tied down and restrained over a lifetime is dangerous and painful treatment tantamount to torture - clear violations of the European Convention on Human Rights,' said Attorney Eric Rosenthal, Executive Director of MDRI and an expert on human rights law. 'We call on the government of Serbia to stop these abuses immediately and to respect the human rights of all people with disabilities,' concluded Rosenthal²⁰.

The official report goes into more detail and, having in mind the seriousness of the situation, deserves to be shown:

From July 2003 to August 2007, MDRI has documented a broad array of human rights violations against people with disabilities, segregated from society and forced to live out their lives in institutions (all observations in this report are from December 2006 through August 2007 except as noted). Filthy conditions, contagious diseases, lack of medical care and rehabilitation, and a failure to provide oversight renders placement in a Serbian institution lifethreatening. MDRI investigators found children and adults with disabilities tied to beds or never allowed to leave a crib – some for *years* at a time. Inhumane and degrading treatment in Serbian institutions – in violation of article 3 of the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) – is widespread. Children and adults with disabilities tied down and

restrained over a lifetime are being subjected to extremely dangerous and painful ‘treatment’ that is tantamount to torture. Serbia lacks adequate laws to protect people with disabilities from arbitrary detention in psychiatric hospitals or social care facilities. Despite an improved new guardianship law, people with mental disabilities can still have all their rights stripped away without adequate due process of law or right to counsel. As a practical matter, many people in institutions are detained for life with no legal process or judicial oversight. For more than 11,000 people detained in Serbia’s institutions under the Ministry of Labor and Social Policy (MLS), and for more than 6,200 in psychiatric institutions under the Ministry of Health, these practices violate the right to ‘liberty and security of person’ under article 5 of the ECHR²¹.

What may come as sociologically and anthropologically fascinating are the reactions of Serb officials, most notably the minister of health, Tomica Milosavljević, and the minister for work and social issues, Rasim Ljajić (see: The problem of disbelieving). Milosavljević has stated, officially, that he ‘has not seen the report of the international organization’, adding that ‘sadly, the most vulnerable groups suffer in transition’. One has to ask how it is possible, if not how it is simply *allowed* for the minister of health not to see the report and keep his post. He added as well that the institutions in which the human rights violations have occurred are not in the jurisdiction of the ministry of health. Once again – is it possible that the medical facilities for treating the mentally disabled are *not* under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Health? Then he furthermore accused the MDRI of ‘not receiving permission for their research’²². The official stance of Rasim Ljajić is not far away – he went so far as to say that ‘those people [accused of violating the rights of the mentally handicapped], should be given a medal for the conditions in which they work,’ adding an explanation about his own frustration by the fact that there is ‘somebody from Washington telling all those things’.²³ This, seen as a culturological instance in its entirety, completely corresponds to the ‘victim mentality’, as described later in this work. The Prime Minister, Vojislav Koštunica, continued in the same, rather expected manner, explaining:

‘We are witnessing systematic propaganda saying Serbia is full of fascism,’ he said in a statement. ‘Now we have camps for helpless children.’ Kostunica said the timing of the report, which comes as Serbia battles with the West to prevent the independence of its breakaway province of Kosovo and advance its bid to join the European Union, was ‘not accidental’. He vowed to fight back to clear his country’s name but also said his government would establish a commission immediately to investigate the situation in long-term mental institutions²⁴.

Once again, the prime point of interest is Kosovo – from mentally disabled children being treated inhumanely, the official stance of the

government managed to involve the problem of Kosovo and completely shift the focus of the topic, making the perpetrator – a *victim*.

Going back to the very topic of this work, the conclusion of MDRI's report even mentions Serbia's integration into the European Union, which can only be badly damaged by the occurrence:

The new Constitution of the Republic of Serbia identifies integration into Europe as one of the main goals of the nation. This Constitution also guarantees the protection of human rights and bans discrimination on the basis of mental and physical disability. These are all worthy goals. It is to Serbia's credit that the country's mental health and social policies call for a transformation of its social service and mental health systems to integrate people with mental disabilities into the community. Model community-based programs have been created, providing valuable information about how these new policies can be implemented throughout Serbia (see Appendix A for examples of these programs). Serbia's new policies of community integration are consistent with the requirements of international human rights law. With the recent adoption of the new Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities, the United Nations and the international community recognizes that the unnecessary segregation of people with disabilities from society constitutes unlawful discrimination and violates their fundamental human rights. Established international human rights conventions, such as the European Convention on Human Rights, the Convention on the Rights of the Child, and the UN Convention Against Torture, provide essential protections to some of the most vulnerable people in any society: institutionalized children and adults with disabilities. While Serbia's constitutional commitment to human rights protection is laudable, the policies and programs that the government of Serbia has put in place do not begin to address the serious human rights problems that exist for some 18,000 people detained in the country's psychiatric facilities and social care institutions. These individuals are arbitrarily detained in violation of article 5 of the ECHR. Within these facilities, inhuman and degrading treatment in violation of ECHR article 3 is widespread. Some children and adults with disabilities literally never leave their beds or cribs, and some are tied²⁵

More emanations of the victim mentality and the tendency to evade responsibility, as well as to effectively twist the focus of the topic is seen in the book 'NATO aggression on Yugoslavia' (*Agresija NATO na Jugoslaviju*), published after a conference held in Belgrade by the Forum for the World of Equals. In the eyes of the contributors to the book, it seems that the whole world stands united against Serbia. There is talk of 'de-Serbization' (*rasrbljavanje*), of a potential union with Russia and Belarus, of the 'evil West' and so on. The Hague tribunal is in the book, as expected, seen and described as the ultimate evil, while Russia is an ally and a friend in need.

Strong instances of the victim mentality are especially noticeable within the Kosovo problem. In the eyes of a nationalist, the world has nothing else to

do but 'keep taking Serbia's heart out' and 'disassembling' the country, piece by piece. As already noted, Serbia opposes any idea of Kosovo gaining independence. Yet, as the Prime Minister said, even some type of neutrality is seen as negative, as it is 'a trick, and it is a different word that serves to hide the fact that Kosovo and Serbia should be separate states'.²⁶

Antinationalism, Balkan orientalism and culture as a tool.

The mentality described has been fully fledged by the beginning of the seventies and in its most active form during the nineties; it is now mostly the middle-aged and the older people who still belong to the described group. Most of the pro-European oriented are younger rather than older and better educated, which is a fact that needs to be emphasized, as it leads to a potential abandoning of the province mentality in the future, if the majority of the young do not accept it and carry it on. Stef Jansen, an anthropologist from the University of Manchester, has done an intensive theoretical and practical research on the *opposition to nationalism* and the provincial mentality in the countries of the former Yugoslavia, especially Serbia and Croatia. He has noticed that there is a large difference between the *urban* and the *rural* in Serbia, where the rural is that which serves as the main support for the provincial mentality, as it is mostly people either from the rural areas or people with a rural background who supported Milošević a decade ago and who support the Radical Party nowadays. *Culture*, noticed Jansen, is the prime tool of the opposition to such a mentality:

One of the strategies of antinationalistic resistance was the articulating of culture as a criterion that would serve as the main alternative to national belonging. (...) [it is] the pointing to rural primitivism as the main cause for nationalist wars.²⁷

In such a situation, it is *culture* that served as a separating factor from the anti-European sentiments – I have already stressed the extremely important (maybe *the* most important) moment in EU joining – *education*. Another important moment in Jansen's analysis is the use of Edward Said's concept of *orientalism*, but from a local, *Balkan* point of view. He notices that, similar to the European need to form *the Other* in order to form its own identity, so does the urban community, forming the Other in the *rural*. It is a dichotomy between the 'cultural', that is, 'urban' and the 'rural', that sees the 'wide world' (the European, the urban, the cultural) as the world that, 'with the multitude of possibilities (of styles) destroys this uniqueness of style [of the rural]'. This idea of Balkan-type orientalism leaves much to be discussed and I shall not delve more deeply into it as it could well be a topic of a completely new essay. I shall

only add that it is a fact (and Jansen is aware of that) that it *is* the rural community from which, as Konstantinović had noticed, the mentality of the *palanka* stems from.

Mythologization and the Kingdom of Heaven

This myth-making creates a balance between the necessary and still unacceptable principle of destruction and the fear of it.²⁸

Radomir Konstantinović,
philosopher

Similar to the re-mythologization that took place within and after the Romantic Movement from the nineteenth century onwards,²⁹ Serbia is facing its own problems of extreme mythologization even nowadays, though with much deeper roots. Being decidedly connected to the false history described in the previous chapter, the mythologization present in Serbia's current day mentality is mostly connected to the fall of the small country of Serbia under Turkish rule in the fourteenth century. The history taught in Serbia is that of a glorious battle that took place on the Field of Kosovo on June 1389. It is taught intensively in high-schools throughout Serbia.³⁰ According to this tale, Serbia was facing a huge and malevolent adversary on that critical day – the Ottoman Empire; Serbia fought bravely, but lost due to the sheer immensity of the Ottoman forces. The tale continues by describing a minor noble, a certain *knež* Lazar Hrebeljanović, as a great warrior who chose not to succumb to the Ottomans, but gave his life willingly in defiance, choosing the 'Kingdom of Heaven' instead of 'This World' (more on this in detail later). *Knež* Lazar, nowadays by many Serbs thought to have been a tsar, remained the key figure in the mythologization process that took place afterwards. Through literature and song, the mythical character of Lazar and the connection of the battle of Kosovo with extreme spirituality, the mythologization could take place. Sreten Petrović, a well known Serbian culturologist, describes that

[t]he Battle of Kosovo and Lazar's choice of the 'Kingdom of Heaven' made the founding stones of a new cult and legend, which was taken and skillfully used by the poetic imagination of the people, thus making powerful collective conceptions in the consciousness of the Serbian people (...) The symbol of Kosovo became the basis of a new morality (...)³¹

Lazar Hrebeljanović became a figure of entirely mythical proportions after the Battle of Kosovo, as he and his son, Stefan Lazarević, were contributed with magical powers and celebrated as *zmajevi*,³² powerful mythological creatures from old pagan religions. Interestingly yet not unexpectedly, the author even considers that to be a positive moment, as I shall show later.

The actual historical facts tell a different story. After the death of a rather successful Serbian ruler in the middle of the fourteenth century, Dušan the Great,³³ who had conquered today's Macedonia, Albania, a portion of Bulgaria and a vast part of Greece (and had given himself the title of the *tzar of Serbs and Greeks* in Skopje in 1346), the land was torn to pieces, as Dušan's son, Uroš the Weakling,³⁴ was not able to hold the country that has never before been so large together, thus deserving his name. Split into provinces with nobles fighting amongst themselves for power, Serbia was extremely weak and ill-prepared for the Ottoman invasion that was about to take place. The nobles were unable to find a common ground and join forces for the battle of Marica in 1371 in order to repulse the oncoming invasion, and so the biggest part of the Serbian defense forces were already annihilated on that day alongside with some of the most powerful nobles killed (the Mrnjavčević brothers, whose provinces were first in line to be attacked from the East), leaving Serbia even weaker. Another battle occurred on the Kosovo field in 1389, where other parts of the already depleted Serb forces were defeated. Several other battles have also been fought during the decades after the Marica Battle (such as the Battle of Niš), but most of them were won by the invading Ottoman Empire, and Serbia was defeated rather easily.

I shall at this moment remind the reader that the Kosovo problem is one of the major problems for Serbia's joining of the European Union. The mentality that is trying to keep Kosovo a part of Serbia is fuelled by this invented, mythology-based history. Such notions are deeply rooted in the Jungian 'collective unconscious', emanating through the products of the mind, such as literature and music first of all:

After the defeats on Marica and Kosovo (1371 and 1389), Serbian literature develops by leaning onto the Byzantine-Orthodox tradition, but with significant actualization of the newest events. To be more precise, this literature grows with the cult of Kosovo as its foundation, with knez Lazar as the centre figure. He gets the character of a martyr, a victim of this world, sacrificing himself for heavenly salvation. That develops preconditions for the literary imagination to embark upon global, epochal and existential themes that shake the collective consciousness of the people, converting a spiritual orientation through the literary (...).³⁵

Kosovo is nowadays seen in Serbia as the heart of the country,³⁶ even though it was but a game of chance that the Serb forces went through a defeat on Kosovo (they met many a defeat in many a location), as the country was becoming enveloped by the invading Ottoman Empire – numerous other battles have been lost, and some even won. Thus, a minor battle, an unsuccessful battle in which Serbia has proven to be incapable of defending itself, a battle in which losses were immense, is nowadays celebrated as a grand event (sic!), in a ridiculous twisting of history. Petrović explains that '[the saga

of Kosovo] became a basis for the folk poetry and wisdom, (...) the basis on which, after five hundred years of slavery, the same people emerge on the stage of European history as the Phoenix.³⁷ In this quote, we see how powerful a force mythologization is, as the author of the lines himself gets taken up in emotions, wishing that the people of Serbia would 'arise' like 'the Phoenix' from the ashes (sic!). According to Nikola Samardžić, a historian from Belgrade, '[t]he myth of Kosovo has (...) bound the policy of democracy and poisoned public discourse'.³⁸ The problem of extreme mythologization is reminiscent of the similar conduct of the German National-Socialist Party during the reign of Adolph Hitler, where mythology was used in order to boost the 'national sentiment' amongst the people and help support the *Reich*.

Konstantinović is far from being the only one to have understood the mythologization and imagined history problem. The famous Serbian geographer and anthropologist Jovan Cvijić had even written similar explanations at the beginning of the twentieth century, which shows us how deeply rooted the mentality is (though he described not only Serbia, but the whole region of the Balkans). The journalist Predrag Matvejević, in his article 'Of us on the Balkans' (*O nama na Balkanu*), agrees, and quotes Cvijić, who compares the Balkans to a *spider*:

The hybrids of the past and historical time often grow or even merge together. They create obstacles to new processes or approaches yet to come. The memory that the descendants try to keep is conflicted with the memory one should try to avoid. The legacy that we intended to save contains elements of the legacy from which we need to be saved. The danger that is created in such instances was brought to attention one of the greatest connoisseurs of the Balkans, [Jovan Cvijić], by use of the metaphor of a 'spider', in his study 'The Balkan Peninsula', written at the beginning of the twentieth century in French and Serbian: 'Like a spider, the people weave a web around themselves, a web of historical prejudices, of national vanity, of disfigured ways of life, and it can isolate them spiritually from the rest of the world and make them archaic...The instincts of the people from earlier periods of history, even those deepest and most primitive, which have until then been asleep, start to awake...'³⁹

Cvijić's representation of the mentality of the Balkan people is extremely grim – the people he describes live 'distorted lives', immersed in their 'national vanity', succumbing to 'most primitive instincts'. What is extremely important is to realize that he wrote this *a century ago*, meaning that the mentality the people of Serbia possess today is not much different from the one that existed a hundred years ago. They are living the same 'distorted lives' *even now*. What is crucial in Europe's relation with and towards Serbia is to at least realize that such a mentality exists, if not to try to *understand* it.

The journalist Ivan Čolović compares Kosovo to Jerusalem, meaning that it has the same 'value' in the eyes of Serbia as Jerusalem has to the Jews. He

notices that Kosovo has reached the status of a *cult*. It can easily be said that nowadays, in Serbia, an active *cult of Kosovo* exists, combined with the ‘religion of the nation,’ supported by various nationalist forces, but most notably, the government, that is using it to keep power:

It is often said that Kosovo is sacred to the Serbs, that Kosovo, for them, is the same as Jerusalem for the Jews. That is correct, at least when speaking about Serbian rulers and regimes and ‘national workers’ gathered around them. For two centuries now, the Serbian political elite has been using a various historical, literary and folklore material about the medieval Serbian state on Kosovo in order to build national holy cows, that is, political myths and cults. The history of those myths and cults is an integral part of the cultural and political history of Serbia, but it is a part that remained mostly undeveloped, uninvestigated. That may be one of the reasons that even in today’s Serbia, national holy cows, national symbols, rituals cults and myths, especially those in connection with Kosovo, represent one of the elementary levers of government, reducing the government to the skill of steering the holy elements of the nation....Kosovo is first of all something untouchable, mystical, inviolable, the holy land of Serbian medieval glory and power, the land of the fatal battle from June 28th 1389, that Serbs never forgot, where, as the myth says, because of betrayal and lack of cooperation, the Serbian stardom fell under the yoke of the Turks. As the Serbian poet Matija Bećković, one of the biggest priests of the Serbian religion of nation, expressed himself in 1989, Kosovo is the ‘most dear of all Serbian words’. [It could not be bought without blood,’ emphasized he, thinking of the blood of the Serbian warriors spilled on Kosovo, and added (...) that ‘without blood, it cannot be sold’.⁴⁰

The poet whom Čolović quotes, Matija Bećković, is one of the leading public figures that have been cloaking Kosovo in the veil of mythological and metaphysical misperceptions, hence him being dubbed by Čolović a ‘priest of the religion of nation’. Bećković sometimes goes as far as to wonder why the whole country of Serbia has not been named ‘Kosovo’ (*sic!*).

The scholar Branimir Anzulović, in his book ‘Heavenly Serbia: from Myth to Genocide’, explains Serb mentality (especially the reasons for the genocide in Bosnia) almost entirely with the power of the myth of Kosovo. In a lengthy interview that deserves to be quoted lengthily, he explained how

[t]he myth of heavenly Serbia arose shortly after the Battle of Kosovo in 1389. Most Serbs perceive that battle as the event that brought a sudden end to the powerful medieval Serbian state and made Serbs a stateless nation submerged in the Ottoman Empire for over four centuries. Actually, the Turkish conquest of Serbia took nearly ninety years -- from the Battle of Chernomen in 1371 to the fall of Smederevo in 1459. One of the reasons Serbian national mythology gave such extraordinary importance to the Battle of Kosovo consists in the date on which the battle was fought. It was June 28, the day of the summer solstice. The solar cycle provided an apt symbolism for the demise of the Serbian state and the promise of its future

resurrection. The day was dedicated to Vid, the pre-Christian Slavic sun-and-war god. In the nineteenth century, modern Serbian nationalism made Vid's Day the most important Serbian national holiday. The concept of Heavenly Serbia emerged as an explanation for the Serbian defeat by the Turks. According to the myth, Serbs lost the battle because they opted for the heavenly kingdom over an earthly one. (...) The story is that St. Elias appeared to Lazar on the eve of the battle and brought him a message from the Virgin Mary, bidding him to choose between military victory and moral salvation. Prince Lazar chose the latter, and was defeated. Such explanation of their defeat made it easier for Serbs to bear the centuries-long Turkish domination. Thus originally the myth performed a positive role. However, when the Serbian state reemerged in the nineteenth century, the feeling of moral superiority over their adversaries, which is an established component of the Serbian national consciousness, provided moral legitimacy to the drive for a Greater Serbia. Let me note here that the myth of heavenly Serbia was not invented by folk singers. They took it from texts written by Serbian Orthodox dignitaries in the decades following the Battle of Kosovo. The concept of a heavenly kingdom manifests a close connection between church and nation, which is also revealed in another facet of the Kosovo legend -- that of the prince's supper on the eve of the battle. That supper, attended by Prince Lazar and 12 knights, one of whom was a traitor, is clearly patterned after the Last Supper.⁴¹

What is important here is an explanation that connects the myth of Kosovo with the summer solstice, and the simple coincidence that one of the many battles that have been fought during the struggle between the Ottoman Empire and Serbia took place at that day. The mythology-based mentality formed from that day on led to the chaos that erupted during the 1990s:

Alleged moral or cultural superiority has always provided justification for brutal military campaigns. But serial wars undertaken by Serbia in the 1990s have been justified with historical distortions as well. Serbian claims to Kosovo, for example, are routinely supported by statements that Kosovo is the cradle of the Serbian state and church. *Neither is true.* [my italics, N.I.E.] The Monastery of Zica in Serbia was the seat of the Serbian Orthodox Church until the late thirteenth century. The town of Ras in Serbia -- the medieval Serbian state was called Rascia after it -- and Skopje in present-day Macedonia, were more important Serbian political centers than Kosovo. With the Turkish advance, Serbian political, cultural, and demographic centers began to shift northwards.

Peculiar cultural instances

According to many, following the line from Cvijić to Konstantinović, there is a serious problem with the very system of values in Serbia. Ivan Medenica notices a rather interesting cultural instance, which he contributes to the general societal 'lack of care for civilization', as he puts it:

Here is a fascinating piece of information, a metaphor of this society's serious lack of care for civilization. A friend of mine told me how she had gone to a beauty parlor a couple of days ago and how the cosmetician had told her that it was an in-thing in Belgrade for twelve-year old girls to go for a tanning treatment in a solarium. What kind of a value system is that? Who are those parents? Such a thing is only possible in the worst misery and poverty, where children can make an impression on their peers only with such pathetic things, and not by being sent by their parents to skiing during the winter or by buying an Inter-rail ticket and touring Europe by train with a backpack on their shoulders.⁴²

The historian Dubravka Stojanović notices some peculiar cultural instances as well. She had analyzed the behavior of the Serbian football representation on the recent world championship. In two games, two players have been using hands in the penalty area, thus the whole team being punished by a penalty shot twice in two different matches; it was not by random chance, e.g. it had not happened that the ball just struck their hands – they jumped up, high in the air, catching the ball with their hands, in a manner highly reminiscing on volleyball. Though this peculiar instance might seem irrelevant, Stojanović explains about

(...) [the Serbian] national football team, and I am not talking about the 6:0, that is not so important, but I am talking about the fact that in the last two matches, our national team allowed itself to get two red cards and to have two penalty kicks. I mean, in the World Championship, that is, of course, unacceptable, and we must ask ourselves how that is possible. I think that such behavior speaks also about autism, about this alienation from the world, for how can it be possible for a national team to allow itself to lose two players in two matches because of the red cards and two penalty kicks because the players were playing with their hands. That means that they do not know the rules, that they do not know that the use of hands in football is prohibited. Therefore, since they, naturally, know those rules and since they are playing in European clubs, that means that when they find themselves in that national team, they start behaving differently. (...) Their behavior shows that they simply do not belong to that world.⁴³

All of the above, from the magical power of the Kosovo cult, over thirteen-year olds going to solariums to the inexplicable behavior of the national football team and the ‘alienating from the world’, has in its essence the Serbian fascination with the metaphysical and their connection to the *irrational* and *non-existent*, from an entirely imagined history to a dreamed-up present, constructed on that history. *Knež Lazar*’s choice of the ‘Kingdom of Heaven’ serves as a symbol for the choices that the Serbian people are making even today – between this world, the *real world* and the *Kingdom of Heaven*, the real world looses. Between history as it was and history as nationalists want it to be, the latter wins. Between reason and logic on one side and irrationality and

metaphysical musings on the other, metaphysics keeps on winning. Branimir Anzulović explains:

Misrepresentation of reality is the ultimate reason why so many Serbs have supported Milosevic in his murderous campaign. And his monopoly over the media has helped him stay in power after he has led Serbs to misery instead of glory, by successfully depicting Western democracies as plotting the destruction of Serbia. Therefore a demythologization of the Serbs' view of themselves and their history is the indispensable condition for their entry into the community of free nations.⁴⁴

Such choices are rooted deep within the collective unconscious of the Serbian people, and those are the primary reasons because of which Serbia is failing to reach European standards and values. Europe needs to realize that for the sake of its relation with Serbia, not even to mention the sake of Serbia itself.

REFERENCES

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- 1 'Ne sme da bude preobražaja, dakle ne sme da bude rada, potrebna je pasivnost, prepuštanje onome što jeste.' In: Konstantinović, Radomir: *Filosofija palanke, Otkrovenje*, Belgrade, 2006.
- 2 'Duh njegov (sveta palanke), međutim, jeste duh između plemenskog, kao idealno-jedinsvenog, i svetskog duha, kao idealno-otvorenog. Kada ovaj duh ovako govori o svojoj zloj sudbini, on govori o svojoj izuzetosti iz istorije. Ali, i kada je oglašava za prokletstvo, on hoće tu izuzetost. Osnovna pretpostavka duha palanke negde je u tome: da je to duh koji, zaboravljen od istorije, pokušava sada ovaj udes da preobrazi i svoju privilegiju.' *Ibid.*
- 3 Finding a decent, reliable and non-nationalist source about Serbia's history has proven to be one of the most excruciating tasks I encountered while writing this work. Finally, I stumbled upon a 'History of Serbia', written by a Czech historian, Konstantin Jireček: Jireček, Konsantin: *Istorija Srba*, Pi Press. The book was written in the beginning of the XX century. The newest edition was translated and revised by Jovan Radonić.
- 4 A minor noble title, similar to a baron or count.
- 5 <http://www.b92.net/>.
- 6 The other popular stance among the lay population is that even though the wars have been officially lost, it was a 'moral victory' for Serbia.
- 7 See: *The Death of Yugoslavia*, BBC video.
- 8 'Okolnost da odnos prema prošlosti nikada nije eksplicitno politički tematizovan, već se stalno iznova implicitno iskazuje u pervertiranim oblicima, među kojima su najistaknutija zalaganja za odbranu nacionalne časti i za legalizam, odlučujuće je doprinela vrednosnoj i političkoj konfuziji u posleoktobarskoj Srbiji.' In: Lukić, Svetlana and Vuković, Svetlana, ed: *Peščanik FM*, book 1-7, Elvod print, Belgrade.
- 9 'Veliki 'svet' je svet koji, množinom mogućnosti (stilova), razara ovu jedinstvenost stila, njegovu jedno-obraznost. Palanački duh je duh jedno-obraznosti, pre svega, duh gotovog rešenja, obrasca, veoma određene forme. Kada palanački pojedinac čuva palanku, kao vrhovnu volju, kao svoje nad-ja, on čuva pre svega ovaj stil jedno-obraznosti, i, zbog toga, kada se on boji sveta, izlaska u svet, on se boji ovog izlaska u svet bez stila.' In: Konstantinović, Radomir: *Filosofija palanke, Otkrovenje*, Belgrade, 2006.
- 10 'Oni su prljavi, palanačani su čisti.' *Ibid.*
- 11 A lot more can be said about the mentality of the lack of change. For instance, the American psychologist Martin Seligman wrote about the psychological phenomenon called 'learned helplessness', a state of mind in which the subject perceives everything as helpless and that he cannot influence happenings in his own life. This state of mind emanates from the collective, a collective that has been living in such a manner for a long period of time, so that the helplessness comes natural to the subject, thus forbidding him to even contemplate a change.
- 12 'Svaki preobražaj predstavlja izvesnu smrt, jer pretpostavlja neko propadanje, pa je u tom smislu nužno nečist. Apologija trajnosti je apologija čistote.' *Ibid.*
- 13 This ended up etched in the people's collective unconscious – it was a common thing to say that 'Yugoslavia was surrounded by trouble', in Serbo-Croatian: *Jugoslavija je okružena brigama*. 'Brigama' is trouble, worry in instrumental plural, and represents an acronym, where the letters of the word correspond to the first letters of the countries bordering with former Yugoslavia: *Bugarska, Rumunija, Italija, Grčka, Austrija, Mađarska and Albanija*.

14 ‘...i ovo osporavanje sveta opet (je) svojevrsna metoda njegove eksteriorizacije, jedinstven način za izbegavanje suočavanja ovoga duha sa samim sobom, ali i način da se subjekt objektivira (...), da se prikaže kao objekt tuđe volje, kao žrtva, na njemu izvanredno svojstven način.’ In: Konstantinović, Radomir: *Filosofija palanke, Otkrovenje*, Beograd, 2006.

15 ‘Srbi sú vzdorovitý národ, dost’ často to opakujú a zakladajú si na tom. Je s tým spojený aj istý druh heroického fatalizmu, ktorý sa dobre odráža v známom a často opakovanom vyjadrení: ‘Nemôže nám nikto nič, silnejší sme ako osud.’ In: Mojžita, Miroslav, Belehrad, *Poznamky 1995-2001, Dilema*, 2003 The song mentioned above can be found at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IAROsHL6rVo&feature=related>, where a Serb nationalist integrated it into a video slide show with slogans such as ‘slaughter the Albanian’ and similar, beginning with the idea that Albanians should be ‘drowned in the Adriatic sea as kittens’; as well with the relatively standard picture of the ‘Serbian heroes’ put up.

16 ‘Srbi by už neboli hlavní vinníci, ale hlavní obete.’ In: Mojžita, Miroslav, Belehrad, *Poznamky 1995-2001, Dilema*, 2003.

17 An article from the Serbian Radical Party’s magazine *Velika Srbija*, entitled ‘There was no genocide’ can be found at http://www.gendercide.org/case_srebrenica.html.

18 ‘Izveštaj Međunarodne organizacije za zaštitu prava osoba ometenih u razvoju pominje 21-godišnjeg mladića s Daunovim sindromom koji je već 11 godina vezan za krevet, polugolu decu koja obeduju i vrše i nuždu u krevetima i 7-godišnju devojčicu sa oboljenjem mozga ostavljenu bez terapije ‘jer će ionako umreti’, ali i mnoge druge slučajeve. U izveštaju, koji treba da bude objavljen sutra, navodi se da pomenuta tri primera nisu jedini slučajevi maltretiranja i zanemarivanja u ustanovama za mentalno obolele i za brigu o hendikepiranima u Srbiji. Izveštaj je nastao posle četiri godine istraživanja u pomenutim institucijama, u kojima je, kako navodi list, oko 17.200 dece i odraslih.’ From: B92 online at

http://www.b92.net/info/vesti/index.php?yyyy=2007&mm=11&dd=14&nav_id=272163

19 ‘Erik Rozental, direktor Organizacije za zaštitu prava osoba ometenih u razvoju, kaže da je vezivanje deteta za krevet nešto nastrašnije što je video u svojoj karijeri advokata osoba sa invaliditetom dugoj 14 godina.’ *Ibid.*

20 The Mental Disability Rights International at <http://www.mdri.org/>.

21 Torment not treatment: Serbia’s Segregation and Abuse of Children and Adults with Disabilities, at: <http://www.mdri.org/projects/serbia/serbia%20ex%20summ.pdf>.

22 ‘Ministar zdravlja Tomica Milosavljević kaže da nije video izveštaj te međunarodne organizacije, ali dodaje da, nažalost, u tranziciji stradaju najosetljivije grupe. Gostujući u emisiji Kažiprst Radija B92, Milosavljević je rekao i da nisu sve pomenute institucije pod nadležnošću Ministarstva zdravlja. Na pitanje da li će otići na lice mesta da sam, kao lekar i ministar, proveriti navode međunarodne organizacije, Milosavljević kaže da je već bio stotinu puta i da to nije način da reaguje na jedan tekst. U međuvremenu se ponovo oglasio i ministar zdravlja Tomica Milosavljević, koji je rekao da nikada nije imao nikakav kontakt sa Međunarodnom organizacijom za zaštitu prava osoba ometenih u razvoju niti su oni u Ministarstvu zdravlja Srbije dobili saglasnost za bilo kakvo istraživanje.’ *Ibid.*

23 ‘Tim ljudima treba skinuti kapu u kakvim uslovima rade, a dođe neko iz Vašingtona i tako govori’, rekao je Ljajić.’ From: B92 online at

http://www.b92.net/info/vesti/index.php?yyyy=2007&mm=11&dd=14&nav_id=272163.

24 Alertnet at <http://www.alertnet.org/thenews/newsdesk/L15452366.htm>.

25 ‘Torment not treatment: Serbia’s Segregation and Abuse of Children and Adults with Disabilities’, at: <http://www.mdri.org/projects/serbia/serbia%20ex%20summ.pdf>.

26 Danas 21 November 2007, at <http://www.danas.co.yu> ‘Koštunica je naglasio da je „neutralan” status „trik” i „druga reč da se sakrije činjenica da bi po tom predlogu Kosovo i Srbija trebalo da budu odvojene države.’

27 'Jedna od strategija antinacionalističkog otpora bila je i artikulisanje kulture kao kriterijuma koji će činiti glavnu alternativu nacionalnoj pripadnosti. (...) ukazivanje na ruralni primitivizam kao glavni uzrok za nacionalističke ratove', from: Jansen, Stef, *Antinacionalizam*, Belgrade, 2005.

28 'Ovim mitologisanjem izmiruje se nužno a neprihvatljivo načelo propasti sa strahom od njega (...)' In: Konstantinović, Radomir: *Filosofija palanke, Otkrovenje*, Belgrade, 2006

29 See: Geary, Patrick, *The Myth of Nations*.

30 One of the most well-known nationalistic-oriented historians in Belgrade, Radoš Ljušić, on the matter of introducing the Bologna convention *modus operandi* into university education in Serbia, has stated that it should not be done, and what is more, that students of history should study five years, instead of four. Note that the main way of teaching history in Serbia is still the centuries old way of providing the pupils with countless names of rulers and regents, the time in which they ruled, the wars that have been fought, the battles won and lost, with the obligatory huge list of monasteries and churches that they have built.

31 'Косовска битка и Лазарев избор 'царства небеског' постали су основ новог култа и легенде, коју је песничка имагинација народа већто искористила, створивши моћне колективне представе у свести српског народа (...) Симбол Косова постао је осномом новог морала (...)' in: Петровић, Среген: *Културологија*, Belgrade, 2000.

32 The mythological creature in singular is called *zmaj*. This word is most commonly used to, fallaciously, translate the word 'dragon' into Serbian. Have in mind that it is not so, as the *zmaj* is a being related to such creatures as *tenac*, *vedogonja* or *zduhac*, essentially a man who, when he goes to sleep, leaves the body and goes off to fight evil forces at night. For more on this, see: Kulišić, Š. Et al: *Sprski mitološki rečnik*, Nolit, Belgrade, 1970.

33 Serbo-Croatian: Dušan Veliki.

34 Serbo-Croatian: Uroš Nežaki.

35 'После пораза на Марици и Косову (1371. и 1389.) српска књижевност развија се са ослоном на византијско-православну традицију, али значајно актуелизујући најновије догађаје. Тачније, ова књижевност израста на косовском култу, у чијем је средишту кнез Лазар. Он добија карактер мученика, овосветовне жртве ради виших циљева – небеског спасења. Тиме се већ стварају предуслови да се књижевна имагинација подухвати глобалних, епохалних и егзистенцијалних тема које потресају колективну свест народа, транспонујући кроз литерарни израз једну духовну оријентацију (...)' in: Петровић, Среген: *Културологија*, Belgrade, 2000.

36 The propaganda led by the nationalists was even named so, as already mentioned – 'Kosovo is Serbia' and 'Kosovo is the heart of Serbia' were the main slogans. As a metaphor, though, the statement that claims that Kosovo is the heart of Serbia, seems rather poor and untrue. The heart is the main organ of the body – when the heart is removed, the organism dies, it stops functioning. Kosovo 'removed' itself (proclaimed independence), and still Serbia survived. Thus, Kosovo is far from being the heart of Serbia.

37 '[Косовско предање] је постало предлошком народне поезије и мудрости, (...) на основу којег се, након петстогодишњег ропства на историјску европску позорницу тај исти народ појављује као Феникс.' *Ibid*.

38 'Kosovski mit jos jednom je sputao demokratsku politiku i zatrovao javni diskurs', from: *Politika*, 7 August 2007, 'Izmišljena prošlost ruši budućnost'.

39 'Hibridi prošlog i historijskog vremena često izrastaju zajedno ili se pak umjetno spajaju. Stvaraju prepreke novim procesima ili naknadnim postupcima. Pamćenje koje naraštaji nastoje sačuvati suočava se s pamćenjem od čijih se posljedica valja čuvati. Nasleđe koje smo nastojali spasiti nosi u sebi i elemente nasleđa od kojeg se treba spasavati. Opasnost koja se javlja u takvim prilikama predočio je jedan od najboljih poznavalaca Balkana (već spomenuti Jovan Cvijić) metaforom 'pauka', u svojoj studiji 'Balkansko poluostrvo', pisanoj na početku

dvadesetog stoljeća na francuskom i srpskom jeziku: 'Kao pauk, ljudi pletu oko sebe mrežu od istorijskih predrasuda, od nacionalnih sujeta, od izvitoperenih načina života, i ona ih može duhovno izolovati od ostaloga sveta i učiniti da postanu arhaični... Narodni instinkti iz ranijih istorijskih perioda, i oni najdublji primitivni, koji su dotad bili uspavani, počnu se buditi...' from: Danas, 22 August 2007 at <http://www.danas.co.yu>.

40 'Često se kaže da je Kosovo za Srbe svetinja, da je Kosovo za njih ono što je za Jevreje Jerusalim. To je tačno, bar kad je reč o srpskim vladarima i režimima i oko njih okupljenim takozvanim 'nacionalnim radnicima'. Već dva veka srpska politička elita upotrebljava raznoliku istorijsku, književnu i folklornu građu o srednjovekovnoj srpskoj državi na Kosovu za izgradnju nacionalnih svetinja, to jest političkih mitova i kultura. Istorija tih mitova i kultura sastavni je deo kulturne i političke istorije Srbije, ali deo koji je ostao uglavnom neproučen, nenapisan. To je možda jedan od razloga što i u današnjoj Srbiji nacionalne svetinje, nacionalni simboli, rituali, kultovi i mitovi a, među njima, posebno oni u vezi s Kosovom, predstavljaju jednu od najvažnijih poluga vlasti, što se sama vlast uglavnom svodi na veštinu upravljanja svetim stvarima nacije...Kosovo je pre svega nešto nedodirljivo, mistično, neprikosnoveno, sveta zemlja srednjovekovne srpske moći i slave i poprište kobne i za Srbe nezaboravne bitke od 28. juna 1389, u kojoj je, kako kaže mit, zbog izdaje i nesloge, propalo srpsko carstvo i počelo robovanje pod Turcima. Kako se 1989. godine izrazio pesnik Matija Bečković, jedan od danas najviđenijih sveštenika srpske religije nacije, Kosovo je 'najskuplja srpska reč'. 'Bez krvi se nije mogla kupiti', naglasio je tada Bečković, misleći na krv srpskih ratnika, prolivenu na Kosovu, i dodao reči koje su u to vreme, posle dolaska Slobodana Miloševića na vlast, imale aktuelni politički smisao, isti koji imaju i danas: 'bez krvi se ne može ni prodati'. From: Danas, 25 August 2007 at <http://www.danas.rs>.

41 The Lapis Magazine online at <http://www.lapismagazine.org/archives/L09/anzulovic-interview.html>

42 'Evo jednog fascinantnog podatka, metafore ozbiljne civilizacijske zapuštenosti ovog društva. Jedna prijateljica mi je pričala kako je bila kod kozmetičara pre neki dan i kozmetičarka joj kaže kako je masovna pojava u Beogradu da devojčice od dvanaest godina idu na kvarcovanje. Kakav je to sistem vrednosti? Ko su ti roditelji? Takvo nešto je moguće samo u najcrnijoj bedi i siromaštvu, gde ta deca tako nekim bednim stvarima mogu među svojim vršnjacima da se izdvoje, a ne time da li ih roditelji pošalju preko zime na skijanje ili da li su kupili inter'rejl kartu, pa kruže vozovima po Evropi sa rancem na leđima.' In: Lukić, Svetlana and Vuković, Svetlana, ed: Peščanik FM, book 1-7, Elvod print.

43 '(...) naša fudbalska reprezentacija, pri čemu ne mislim na šest-nula, to nije toliko važno, nego mislim na činjenicu da je u poslednje dve utakmice naša fudbalska reprezentacija dozvolila da dobije dva crvena kartona i da ima dva penala. Mislim, na svetskom prvenstvu je to, naravno, nedopustivo, ali moramo da se zapitamo kako je to moguće. Ja mislim da upravo to ponašanje govori takođe o tom nekom autizmu i o toj nekoj odlepljenosti od sveta, jer kako je moguće da jedna reprezentacija sebi dozvoli da izgubi u dve utakmice dva igrača zbog crvenih kartona i da ima dva penala zbog toga što fudbaleri igraju rukom. To znači da oni ne znaju pravila, da ne znaju da se u fudbalu ne igra rukom. Prema tome, pošto oni, naravno, znaju ta pravila i pošto oni igraju u evropskim klubovima, onda to znači da oni kad se nađu u toj reprezentaciji, oni počnu drukčije da se ponašaju. (...) To kako se ponašaju pokazuje da oni jednostavno tom svetlu ne pripadaju.' In: Lukić, Svetlana and Vuković, Svetlana, ed: Peščanik FM, book 1-7, Elvod print.

44 The Lapis magazine online at <http://www.lapismagazine.org/archives/L09/anzulovic-interview.html>