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**IVAN ČOLOVIĆ**

**WHEN I SAY  
NEWSPAPER**

**Second, Revised Edition**

**Translated by  
Goran Dimitrijević**

**Medijska knjižara Krug  
Belgrade, 2004**

Ivan Čolović  
*When I Say Newspaper*

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## Preface to the Second Edition

The second edition of this booklet is my modest contribution to the hundredth anniversary of the *Politika* newspaper. The book pertains only to a fragment of the history of "the oldest newspaper in the Balkans" or, to be precise, its writing in the summer of 1999. I wrote the first three chapters while NATO was waging its brief war against Serbia and the rest was written immediately after, during the time when the great Serbian victory was being celebrated and medals being doled out. I have always found inspiration in the pages of *Politika*, but that particular summer I found much more than inspiration – I found the truth itself! It was right there, within reach, on every page, in almost every article. It offered itself to the seeker of truth almost openly, disguised as a thin and transparent lie.

I hastened to reveal my discovery (through Radio B92 and daily *Danas* and, later, in the form of a book). Because the truth I found on the pages of *Politika* was intended for all of us in Serbia, I simply didn't have the heart to keep it to myself. However my view that the entire truth about Serbia could be found, on a daily basis, in *Politika* was received with disbelief. I consoled myself with the thought that this has been the case with all great discoveries, those which have questioned generally held views. My shout of "eureka" contradicted the widely held belief that *Politika* was the last place for a serious person to seek the truth. This is why so many people have never sought it, saying that they didn't want to read the loads of lies published ruthlessly by the Milošević regime in this paper. Thus it was, at the time when the truth in *Politika* was concealed only within instantly recognisable, unconvincing, transparent lies, that nobody wanted to read the paper. This is a great pity!

These days it's no longer the same newspaper. *Politika* is no longer "When I say Newspaper ... ". It no longer uses this promotional slogan which was once the mark of its identity. One of *Politika*'s journalists explained why: "The promotional slogan 'When I say newspaper I mean Politika' acquired a derisive meaning in the 1990s, in the late twentieth century, when the reputation of the paper was pushed to the brink of disaster."<sup>8</sup> Sometimes the reward for one's efforts comes in this vague kind of way. In any case, I accept it with gratitude.

It is true that *Politika* sometimes publishes unconvincing, transparent lies even to this day, but the truth is no longer found only with an unsuccessful lie. Now the truth appears not only behind the lie, it also comes beside it, simultaneously, mixed with the lie. So the process of finding the truth about Serbia in *Politika* is now longer and more arduous. To get at the truth it is no longer enough to remove the thin web of lies which hide it, it is also necessary to make a more complex distinction between treacherous and truth-seeking pieces of evidence on the same page of the newspaper, sometimes even with in the same article.

*Politika* is still occasionally reminiscent of the old days, mostly in the pages devoted to things cultural, particularly literature. On these pages, the allegedly poetic pondering of the Serbian ethnic lineage and language still lives on. From the time Milošević came to power right up to the present day, more and more representatives of folklore shamanism in Serbian literature have used this pondering to recommend themselves to the new masters in Serbia, on a wave of nationalist euphoria. The same journalists and writers are giving the same performances of political magic that they have stuck by for the past fifteen years. They want to tell

their sponsors in politics, the clergy, the military and business that those with shamanic powers know far better the course Serbia should take than do those blessed with common sense.

Unless we understand the nature of political magic which can bring the dead back to life and the living to their death for political ends, we will not understand the following story published in *Politika* on December 26, 2003. "The Montenegrin Metropolitan of the Serbian Orthodox Church, His Excellence Amfilohije, yesterday renewed his membership of the Serbian Literary Association. His membership card, lodged by Academician Matija Bećković, reads only 'Montenegrin Metropolitan' and, because this applies to all Montenegrin metropolitans, including St Peter Petrović Njegoš I, the date and place inscribed on the card were Orašac, 1894."

Three days later, *Politika* published an article revealing that the magic ritual of membership of the Montenegrin metropolitans in the Serbian Literary Association datelined at the First Serbian Uprising relies on faith in the miraculous power of the tribal blood. This article<sup>9</sup> described the Montenegrin origins of Karadorđe's rebels and was based on information given by Metropolitan Amfilohije at a press conference in the Serbian Literary Association after the ceremony of conferring membership. If this information is to be believed, almost anything of any value in Serbia during the First Uprising was Montenegrin and of tribal origin. However, the most interesting argument presented by the Montenegrin Metropolitan to the media was that "only immigrants from the tribes of Rovac and Nikšićka Župa were living in Orašac at the time of the uprising, that is to say the tribal kin of Amfilohije and Bećković. Thus Amfilohije tells us that he

<sup>8</sup> Milorad Cirilović "From Telegraph To Computer", *Politika* supplement, "We and Our Partners Are By Your Side", December 16, 2003.

<sup>9</sup> D. Stevanović, "Outstanding Figures in the First Serbian Uprising", *Politika*, December 29, 2003.

and Bećković, along with Slavenko Terzić, the chairman of the Serbian Literary Association, and Dragan Lakićević, the senior editor, may easily be transported to the Orašac of 1804. They can return just as fast to the journalists at the press conference because in their veins flows the blood of the Montenegrin tribes which played the crucial role in the First Serbian Uprising. Tribal blood – our shamans argue – is stronger than time and this blood gives its bearers the ability to be simultaneously their own ancestors and their own descendants.

It is for this and other examples that I recommend today's *Politika* to all readers who seek the truth, just as I recommended the paper of Milošević's day with my booklet "When I Say Newspaper...".

I can't claim that the odds are the same this time around, but I can guarantee that the effort will be rewarded. In any case, I hope that the experience I gained several years ago will be of use to readers seeking the truth in today's *Politika*.

December, 2003

## Preface to the First Edition

When I say *When I Say Newspaper...*\* I mean *Politika*. Today's *Politika*, in the service of the Milošević regime. This newspaper differs greatly from that which was once published under the same name. During its long history, *Politika* has mostly taken the government's side, but never has it been so intertwined with the regime as it is now. This newspaper has never been a champion of honesty and love of the truth, but never before have there been so many people who are ashamed to write for *Politika*, even ashamed to read it. So when I say *When I Say Newspaper...* I mean the newspaper that is not quite *Politika*.

In the following essays I offer examples from reading *When I Say Newspaper...* which, I hope, bear witness that this need not be, as is often believed, only a useless and somewhat repulsive rummage through loads of lies. With a little investigative curiosity, reading *When I Say Newspaper...* becomes instructive and entertaining. I even believe this should be required reading for anyone wanting reliable knowledge about who rules Serbia today and how.

There is a limit to the truth-seeking reading of *When I Say Newspaper...* which I am demonstrating here and persuading other people to undertake. This is the limit of intentions, ideas, lies and deceptions, the limit of following, recognising and interpreting the sense of what is published in this newspaper. The daily torrents of hundreds of thousands of words running in the paper's columns, recurring, colliding, bursting out and piling up around a name, or a codeword for power and authority, can confuse and mesmerise readers and can bring on the kind of vertigo which accompanies see-

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\* When I say newspaper I mean *Politika* is a slogan from a long-running advertising campaign for *Politika*. [Ed.]

ing some spectacular and terrifying natural phenomenon. It can be ascertained that this newspaper plays its role as the bulletin of the regime not only by adding or subtracting a politically appropriate shape whenever it writes about anything, but also by dispensing such appropriate interpretations in an excessive, undigestible quantity which paralyses the mind of the reader.

The pieces in this slim volume would not have been written had Jelena Subotić not asked me to do so. By that request she was asking me to collaborate with Radio B92 which had been forced out of its own premises in Belgrade and off the air in Yugoslavia (March 1999) and had found its haven in cyberspace at <<http://www.freeb92.net>>. These stories first appeared on that Web site, between May 22 and August 4, 1999, in both Serbian and English, signed "a regular press reader". Then the Belgrade daily *Danas* picked up the essays (in four issues from July 17 to August 8, 1999) and published them under the author's name. The publication of these pieces in book form has enabled me to add a number of footnotes. Apart from a few stylistic interventions, nothing else has been changed from the original versions.

September 25, 1999

## Return to Lepenski Vir\*

I believe that newspapers, like other media, tell the truth. This is also the case with newspapers in Serbia under Milošević and, for the past two months, under bombs. Neither one nor the other has forced the truth from our newspapers. The old slogan "*When I Say Newspaper...*" still survives at our oldest and most influential newspaper. No matter how frequent the power cuts and the bread and water shortages these days, what vexes me most is the thought that I could be left without my copy of *When I Say Newspaper...* which would mean being left without the only precious source of truth about our current life.

This is not an ironic assertion just for the sake of paradox. My purpose is not to subvert the deeply rooted belief that newspapers lie and that *When I Say Newspaper...* is the front runner in this. They lie indeed!

The truth has a way of surfacing, however, even in the greatest of liars among our newspapers, to a degree that cannot even be imagined by their editors and journalists. The truth exists separately from their intentions, and in spite of them. It emerges as an unsought but unavoidable surplus of information or, as we might put it these days, a collateral effect of lying.

Nevertheless, it's not enough for a newspaper to really tell the truth. When the truth slips between its fingers, getting caught between the lines, when it leaks out, it takes someone who can recognise it, hold it and care for it. Unfortunately, many people are fond of newspapers precisely because they lie: such readers resentfully circumvent even the

\* Lepenski Vir, archaeological site of a pre-historic settlement on the banks of the Danube near the town of Donji Milanovac in Eastern Serbia.

greatest truths they might run into there. Others, who do not like being lied to, have given up newspapers and other media. They believe that the truth, if there is any at all, lies somewhere else. They are astonished when they see me reading *When I Say Newspaper...* persistently and with meticulous attention, as though it were a kind of prophetic legacy. They don't believe I'm looking for the truth, even less that I might frequently find it. Perhaps such suspicion should encourage me one day to write a proposal for researching truth in the lying press. For the moment I can only cite examples of the dividends gained from the investment of my efforts. Sometimes in large multiples. Occasionally my efforts are rewarded by a real revelation.

I can boast of a stroke of luck while reading *When I Say Newspaper...* yesterday (May 22, 1999). My reward was an epiphany of shining truth. There was no power, so I was reading the newspaper by candlelight, molten wax dripping onto the pages while the echoes of distant explosions boomed through the pitch black surrounding the house, along with a sound like howling. It was on page 31 that I read an article in which I suddenly recognised myself, complete with candle, in a dark and fearful Serbia. The article told, in all seriousness, of "the possibility of a new economic breakthrough in our country based on the foundations of civilisation in Lepenski Vir".\* Now tell me that newspapers lie!

May 23, 1999

\* Ljubiša Petrov *Savremeni varvari protiv iskonske civilizacije* (Modern Barbarians Against a Primaeval Civilisation)

## Our Enemy, Satan

Since the war began, most people have been walking with heads bowed. They're worrying about what they have to eat and whether there's any water to wash themselves. But there are others who have found in this war a chance to rise to the greatest heights and to look down on the misery and bitterness of everyday wartime, to soar and skim over political topics, only to alight on the most essential questions of human destiny. And why shouldn't they? Who am I to object to a philosophical, theological, anthropological or any other metaphysical view of the war? My suspicion of this metaphysics and my, admittedly minor, interest has been provoked by the abundance of it to be found almost every day in the pages of *When I Say Newspaper...*

Take, for example, the article whose author got away with the headline *The Empty Sky Above Us*, published in *When I Say Newspaper...* on May 27. This featured the opinion of one of our respected philosophers that the real historical and philosophical reason for the bombing of Yugoslavia was that "something has happened to the structure of the human mind," that "the world has become obtuse". This philosopher explains away the fact that we are *hic et nunc* paying the price for this structural disorder and obtuseness as destiny. We are led to believe that this destiny is not blind, but has been doled out to us by Providence for some mysterious reason not revealed to us. We should, therefore, refer to this destiny, as does our respected philosopher, as the Serbian Curse and the Serbian Mission. "This nation," he says, "has a mission. From a more bitter perspective, this mission could be called a curse. For the fourth time this century we are persisting with something which cannot be changed".\*

\* Mihailo Đurić, quoted by Mirjana Ognjanović in *Filosofski odgovor na rat* (A Philosophical Reply to War)

Along with the philosophers, *When I Say Newspaper...* brings us (on May 28) the opinion of a journalist and man of letters. He sees the Serbian curse-mission as having lasted since 1389.\* He describes it as the Serbian Calvary on which the Serbs have been continually been martyred because they have "faith in the higher justice of God, which is above human justice." Serbia's enemies, however, are no ordinary people. They are the "forces of darkness", united in a two-headed "infernal alliance" consisting of "Satan, in the form of the NATO beast and the God-Monster in the form of the USA".\*\*

This Satanic, infernal and monstrous nature of our enemies is referred to in articles and interviews by many other proponents of the metaphysical explanations for the war which have been published in *When I Say Newspaper...*. The enemies of Serbia, one poet-politician tells us, "carry evil in the core of their being... they belong to Hell itself". (May 23).\*\*\* Another author, a historian by trade, startles us with the idea that, if these enemies win, "only the Antichrist will remain on earth". (May 26)\*\*\*\*. One anthropologist believes that there is a slight chance of the world not falling under Satan's dominion if the Serbs, defending their humanity with "human shields", with the target as a symbol of martyrdom, manage to reach the throne of humanity through the servants of Satan and thus "repulse and transform the Beast within their enemies". (May 29).\*\*\*\*\*

The devil is an American. This fact was discovered, and revealed in a lecture, by one of our "renowned philosophers and essayists" as *When I Say Newspaper...* described him in a lengthy report on his lecture. (May 28). "Satan," he says, "has obviously planted his power in America with deep roots and his ambition now is to rule the entire world." The tragic fall of Europe and Western European civilisation is nigh. Only the Serbs are somehow still coping and this renowned philosopher and essayist appeals to fallen Europe and the world gone astray: "We are more than Europe, we are the world, the better part of the world, the light of the world".\*

It's not difficult to understand why *When I Say Newspaper...* devotes space and attention to these musings with their metaphysical and theological pretensions. They are ostensibly non-political and inspired by pure patriotism and thus are useful propaganda for the regime. Once these articles have declared that everything, the destruction of war, death, disgrace, and shame, are merely our destiny, it becomes inappropriate, foolish and petty to enquire whether perhaps there are more tangible culprits much closer to home. And of course such metaphysical-theological contemplation renders any question of our enemies being responsible for the war meaningless. If they're under the control of Satan and overwhelmed by their unstoppable decline and fall, what's the point of talking about them being responsible? They are merely fulfilling their destiny, as we are ours.

May 30, 1999

\* The year of the Battle of Kosovo, the celebrated defeat of the Serbs by the Turks which led to 500 years of occupation by the Ottoman Empire. [Ed.]

\*\* Ratimir Damjanović, *Američki kiklop* (The American Cyclops)

\*\*\* Milisav Milenković, quoted by Muharim Đurić in *Nebesko Čudo* (Heavenly Miracle)

\*\*\*\* Nikola B. Popović, *Greh Evrope* (The Sin of Europe)

\*\*\*\*\* Bojan Jovanović, *Prkosna meta* (The Defiant Target)

\* Dragan Nedeljković, quoted by B. Radivojša in *Opet se javila veličanstvena energija našeg naroda* (Our Nation's Magnificent Energy Emerges Again).

## **Rockefeller and the Seven Baldies**

Who really rules the world? America? NATO? The multinationals? No. None of them. Readers of *When I Say Newspaper...* could find the answer to this question in a series of recent articles dealing with the masters of the world. These masters are none of those above, nor is our planet ruled by any visible power. Our masters are of another kind! Our oldest newspaper tells us that all of mankind, every one of us, is ruled by an invisible, secret, world government which pulls our strings and works on consolidating its rule and sealing our fate. This government is led by a group of the most wealthy and powerful conspirators, ever-eager to gain even more wealth and power. They conspire against legitimate governments and the recognised churches, against man and God.

Tales of world-wide conspiracies have their sources in folklore, theology and politics. The protagonists may be Jesuits or Freemasons, anarchists or Communists, fundamentalists or Satanists, but most commonly they are Jews. The age-old myth of the Jewish conspiracy, which has been revived in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, was picked up by the Nazis as a justification for the extermination of Jews. According to the myth, as Norman Kohn, an expert on the subject, wrote, "There is a secret Jewish government which, in the guise of various agencies and international organisations scattered throughout the world, controls political leaders and parties, newspapers and public opinion, banks and economic development". Its goal was "to secure Jewish domination over the entire world". By the late 1960s, according to Kohn, the whole tale had almost fallen into oblivion.\*

\* Norman Cohn, *Warrant for Genocide. The Myth of the Jewish World-Conspiracy and the "Protocols of the Elders of Zion"*. Penguin Books, London, 1970.

Today, it seems, it has been rescued from that oblivion. The story, unfortunately, is also woven into the conspiracy theory which is frequently and exhaustively covered by *Did I Say Newspaper?* Assumptions and speculations about the existence of a secret government and its subordinate services and organisations are presented as serious only because they are taken as such by some reputable and officially respected local figures. Thus, in the issue of May 30, we read that one of our respected philosophers and a member of the National Academy, a former ideologue of the ruling party, remarks that there is a measure of truth in conspiracy theories "because the greater part of the world is ruled by secret organisations". These include the Foreign Affairs Council, the Bilderburg Group and the Trilateral Commission and they make up a "secret world government".\*

In all fairness, these articles do not specifically mention Jews. Rather, they focus on the conspirators who have usurped power on the planet and established the "self-proclaimed world supergovernment". They are described only as financial magnates, the world's most powerful bankers, the owners of multinational companies, internationally recognised scientists and political leaders (as in an article entitled *The Infernal Plans of the Bilderburg Group* on May 30, 1999) or in a more picturesque manner, though still without national specification as "men with the mark of the Beast", "Messiahs of the New Age religion", "the Seven Bald Heads" or "the Fallen Angels" (in a series of three articles whose titles are worth mention: *An Invisible Hand Ruling the Planet, A Who's Who of the Antichrist Conspiracy and Men With the Mark of the Beast* (June 4-6, 1999).

\* Mihailo Marković, quoted by B. Radivojša in *Četvrti pokušaj osvajanja sveta* (The Fourth Attempt to Conquer the World)

The number 666, the Mark of the Beast, has been widely discussed in local quasi-scientific and quasi-political literature (for example in *Nostradamus* magazine and books written by the renowned inventor of the "formula of light"), but I cannot recall it ever having been written about in *When I Say Newspaper...* before. It seemed that our senior newspaper had not lost its level head when it came to this kind of lunacy. Now, however, its readers may learn that the three sixes are the symbol of the Antichrist and that his minions display this symbol wherever they have an opportunity: in European passports, in bar codes on consumer goods, in the Louvre pyramid (which allegedly has 666 elements). This last was made by the Antichrist, Francois Mitterand, and was erected during his period in power as "a symbolic tomb for the Kingdom of Christ". Mitterand's rule, so *When I Say...* tells us, was predicted by none other than Nostradamus, as the rule of the first of seven bald-headed masters of the world. It appears that they secretly rule most industrialised nations, because our newspaper's source has discovered that the letter "G" in "G7" is not the initial letter of "Group" but of "Greghors" who were actually the fallen angels who rebelled against God.

These pieces in *Did I Say Newspaper?* subtly and discreetly lead readers to conclude that an anti-Christian conspiracy which had been plotted to secure the take-over of both earthly and celestial kingdoms (including, worst of all, our freedom-loving country) was actually a Jewish plot. The role of the principal, the most powerful and, needless to say, the wealthiest conspirator, the unrecognised ruler of the world, was here assigned to a man named David Rockefeller. As well as having his own companies, Rockefeller is head of many other notorious clandestine organisations, societies and associations about which the *cognoscenti* have a lot to say to newspaper readers. Rockefeller is the most important member of the Foreign Affairs Council of the United

States. He is head of the Bilderburg Group and founder of the Trilateral Commission. His most significant role, though, is as president of Committee 300, also known in this kind of conspiracy literature as the Olympians. Our newspaper explains that this group is "a gigantic, oligarchic, transnational octopus, superior to all the national governments in the world," and at its head is David Rockefeller, bearing the title of The Emperor from the Age of David.

The sporadic revival of conspiracy theories, especially the oldest and most dangerous of all, the myth of the Jewish conspiracy, even in the incomplete, indirect form presented on the pages of *Did I Say Newspaper?* is always a warning that the environment in which such stories breed is in chaos. This is demonstrated by the fact that the reasons for chaos are not being sought where they might logically be found but, in the manner of the centuries-old tradition of anti-Semitism, they are sought, desperately, somewhere else, in the wrong place, a place which is then struck by waves of hate and crime.

June 7, 1999

## **Be a Hero and Keep Your Mouth Shut**

The day after the bombing of Yugoslavia finished, the front page of *When I Say Newspaper...* (June 11) carried the bold headline "The Nation As Hero". Thus the editors tagged Milošević's address to the nation at the end of the war. It didn't take much to come up with the headline, as this was exactly the sentiment of the author, our president, and was suggested by him as a way of putting the outcome of the war in a nutshell: "The nation is a hero; this is perhaps the most concise summary of this war". However, uncertain as to whether we, the people, would accept ourselves in the role of hero, he added a rider to his neat summing up, calling on us to accept our heroism as both a task and an obligation, no matter how we felt about it. "The people are heroes and so they must feel heroic and act heroically, that is to say with dignity, in a noble and responsible manner." It also means that the people should have contempt for cowards. The president will guide us in discovering who and where they are and he comforts us with the thought that they are few in number and are outside the country. "Never in our history," he says, "have we had a smaller number of cowards who have fled the country to take refuge and wait for the war to end". It remains to be seen what the heroic people must and will decide should be their fate: will they ban them from returning to the country, or allow them back only to spit on them.

The glad tidings about the people, now that they know about them, have been rapidly spread by various interpreters and mouthpieces of Milošević's policy. The people are becoming convinced that they really are heroes through the announcements of the leadership and statements from the representatives of the ruling party and its associates (published in *When I Say Newspaper...* on June 11 and 12). They speak about "the heroism of the entire nation", of the "heroic and patriotic genius of the people", of "the heroic resistance of the people". There are certain variations only in the interpretation of the term

"the people". But Milošević was clear. Strikingly clear, even. He obviously thought it important to remove any suspicion that only Serbs were close to his heart. "When I say 'our people', " he explained, "I mean all citizens and all nationalities in Yugoslavia." Sticking to this line, the Yugoslav communists are also talking about "the heroism of the Yugoslav people". However the political commentator of *Did I Mention Newspapers?* (June 12) ignores this and clearly attributes the people's heroism only to Serbs, explaining that this has been "a dominant idea among Serbs, remarked on decades ago by Jovan Cvijić". In this context, "our people" means the Serbian people and their collective tradition is the essence of their identity. "If we, in this war," says the commentator, "in fighting for the preservation of Kosovo, are actually fighting for our national identity, then we must bear in mind that the central element of the Serbian collective has always been, in addition to truth and justice, our identity".<sup>\*</sup> Should we interpret such writing in our paper as a sign of disagreement with Milošević's policy, a Serbian nationalist interpretation of his message to all the citizens of Yugoslavia? The question, of course, is rhetorical.

In his address to the nation, Milošević mentions "the heroes who laid down their lives to defend the Fatherland," and promises that "their names will be given in public". The articles and statements related to his address, however, also attribute heroism to our army and police. It is notable that there are no heroic individuals mentioned in this speech of Milošević's about heroes. Nor have heroic individuals come to light in speeches from any other Serbian politicians during these recent weeks of war. There has been no Dragan, Arkan, Giška, Major Tepić<sup>†</sup>, nor anyone like them. The out-

\* Jovan Cvijić, celebrated Serbian geographer of the early twentieth century.

\*\* Radijovje Petrović, *Moralni svjetionik osramocenog sveta* (The Moral Lighthouse of the Disgraced World)

<sup>†</sup> "Captain Dragan" was the nom de guerre of a military instructor of Serbian paramilitary troops at the beginning of the war in Croatia (1992); "Arkan" is the

come of this war is described in the newspapers as Milošević's own triumph, a result of his "courageous and wise policy" as the Serbian Association of Pensioners put it. The Yugoslav Patriotic Alliance has found a sharp pen among their ranks to put together a message to Milošević saying that the heroism of the people and Milošević's own heroism are one and the same thing: "Your deeds and efforts are a symbol of the unity and heroism of our people". (June 12).

It's difficult to believe that our president doesn't enjoy these compliments. However we get the impression, if we are to believe him and his people, that he doesn't want to take all the credit and glory for the substantially victorious outcome of the war and even less does he want only for himself the credit for the bright future of the country which such an outcome promises. Milošević would prefer to hand the laurels to the people. For himself he will keep only the modest role of a leader who, in going to war with the whole world and exposing the country to weeks of destructive bombing, was merely indulging the irresistibly heroic instincts of his people. He would like us to believe that anyone in his position would be compelled to do the same.

"Unhappy is the nation which needs heroes," Hegel once said. The German philosopher could not have foreseen the era of totalitarian regimes and populism in which even unhappier nations would emerge, nations which would find it necessary to be heroes themselves.

June 14, 1999

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nickname of Željko Ražnatović, the founder of the Serbian Voluntary Guard, which took part in the wars in Croatia and Bosnia (1992-1995); "Giška" is the nickname of Đorđe Božović, the commander of the Serbian Guard which took part in the war in Bosnia, where Božović was killed (1991). Major Tepić was a former officer of the Yugoslav People's Army who was killed during the war in Croatia. He was posthumously awarded the Order of National Hero, the highest decoration in the former Yugoslavia.

## Harvest and Before

Some things are conspicuous only by their absence. This is the case with this year's celebration of St Vitus' Day. After ten years of celebrating this, the anniversary of the 1389 Battle of Kosovo, as the greatest national and state holiday, Serbia's authorities have suddenly almost entirely dumped it. In other years, in the days immediately before and after St Vitus' Day, the regime's *When I Say Newspaper...* has been packed with reports on St Vitus' Day celebrations, events, performances, exhibitions, competitions, funerals and other happenings in celebration of June 28. Every year there have been detailed descriptions of the St Vitus' Day celebrations throughout the country, patriotic sentiments from political, religious and literary notables, waxing lyrical about the Sacred Serbian Land which Serbs must defend with their own lives, bound as they are by the historic Kosovo vow.\* This year – nothing! The regime this year has abstained from St Vitus' Day, throwing it all the more into prominence as this was the tenth anniversary of the mammoth celebration on June 28, 1989, at Gazimestan\*\* in Kosovo, at which Slobodan Milošević more or less, ascended the throne. This jubilee was passed over as though it didn't exist; no politician and, therefore, no one from *When I Say...* even recalled the historic speech of our new leader that day, when he told his people that it was a time of struggle and struggle lay ahead, that, although they had not yet taken up arms, armed struggle for Kosovo was by no means out of the question.

Ten years ago the headlines in *Did I Mention Newspapers?* announcing St Vitus' Day were in larger type than

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\* Kosovo vow. The patriotic obligation of Serbs to follow the example of the heroes who fell in the Battle of Kosovo (1389).

\*\* The site in Kosovo on which a monument to the heroes of the battle in Kosovo was built in 1953.

those used by the international press to inform the public of the start of World War II.\*

This year we saw only a few minor pieces, as though the paper's editorial board was merely meeting the needs of particular readers: history lovers and the Orthodox Christian faithful. Before the day itself, only one article had been published, on June 27. It was in the column *Our History*. There was another article (the only one on the day of the holiday itself) in the column *For Orthodox Christians*.

One more piece appeared the next day, June 29. To be fair, St Vitus' Day is mentioned in this as a holiday of great national importance, but this time there was a new twist. There was no mention of battles or heroes, no glorious deaths for the Fatherland, no Lazar's vow. Instead it was treated as a festival of peace, love and fertility. This new image put St Vitus' Day on the front page in an article headed *Mowing Begins on St Vitus Day*. Unlike those of earlier years, the article did not speak of the mowing down of heroes, but of the meadows of Serbia and spoke glowingly about this year's harvest and our future welfare. A report on St Vitus' Day celebrations in the heartland was published on page 16, in the smallest possible type, with the headline *A Future Without War*. In it we learned that St Vitus' Day had been marked in Kruševac by the unveiling of a monument by the painter Milić od Mače named *Mother Greece, Mother Serbia*. The two mothers, the article explains, cling to each other on a large obelisk, a symbol of friendship between the two nations, sending a message of peace, love and justice. In order to emphasise the peaceful nature of the event, the writer tells us, the monument was unveiled by children from Kruševac's kindergartens. We are also in-

formed that St Vitus' Day was peacefully and cheerfully celebrated in the Belgrade suburb of Borča and that the holiday was marked by a football tournament and a fish soup boil-off.

The article is accompanied by a photo: a fisherman stands beside a cauldron; below it a caption asks "Whose soup will be the tastiest?" A weighty question indeed!

The authorities took their usual dog-in-the-manger attitude to other celebrations of St Vitus' Day. Their most important newspaper devoted about ten lines on page 15 to services conducted by the Serbian Patriarch in the monastery at Gračanica and at Gazimestan. The Serbian Renewal Movement\*, of which St Vitus is the patron saint, had the same amount of coverage, even more deeply buried, for its celebrations. The worst treatment of all, however, was reserved for Crown Prince Aleksandar Karadorđević and his Crown Council who celebrated St Vitus' Day at the Poslastva Monastery in Grblje. The few words mentioning this were lumped in among other village celebrations.

This year, instead of battle, Milošević has offered Serbs the harvest. What else could he do? These days you can reach Gazimestan only under KFOR escort, an option not open to our president. The only head of state who has been in Kosovo recently is Vaclav Havel: his only audience was German troops. Let it be now, says Milošević, let's see about the harvest. It's harvest time and harvests lie ahead. I'm afraid, however, that such a move can only cause panic: when the people hear Milošević waxing enthusiastic about the harvest, only famine can lie ahead. And with Milošević, armed harvests are by no means out of the question.

June 30, 1999

\* Aleksandar Nenadović, "Politika" u nacionalistickoj oluji ("Politika" in a Nationalist Tempest), in *Srpska strana rata* (The Serbian Side of the War) edited by Nebojša Popov, Belgrade 1996, p. 603.

## **Surprising Spiritual Wealth**

The word "spiritual" has been gaining currency in public communication in Serbia for years. It first emerged to replace the discredited "class" and "ideological" as the new catch cry of political correctness. Four years ago, when I first wrote about this, it seemed to me that the word had reached the peak of its popularity. I was mistaken. In those days, it was possible to appear in public without making a foray into "the spiritual" but, since then, the high tide of this apparently frail and harmless word has grown into a tidal wave. Worse still, there is no ebb tide in sight. It appears, in fact, that "the spiritual" still has a lot of mileage in it for public speech in Serbia. The results of my occasional survey, which consists of records of the frequency of "the spiritual" on the pages of *When I Say Newspaper...* this year, the index has risen from 2.5 instances per day in February, 1996, to 4.3.

By way of example, in the week ending June 4 alone, readers were flooded by "the spiritual" in the following expressions: "spiritual state of the nation", "spiritual dimension", "spiritual function", "spiritual violence", "spiritual radiation", "spiritual fair", "spiritual adventure", "spiritual strength", "spiritual space", "spiritual gymnastics", "spiritual institution", "spirituality of man", "spiritually never weaker", "spiritual rank", "spiritual communication", "spiritual roots", "spiritual reminder", "spiritual trauma", "spiritual destruction", "spiritual resistance", "spiritual possibilities", "spiritual foundations", "spiritual rhythm", "spiritual centre", "spiritual messages" and "spiritual energy".

The spiritualisation of public speech first took hold in the centres of political power as an identification signal, that is to say as one of the figures of speech used by all important officials, particularly those from "the cultural sphere". The president of the Serbian Academy of Science and Art re-

cently suggested that Serbs accept "spiritual homogenisation" and "spiritual rigidity" (*When I Say...*, June 25).<sup>6</sup> In recent weeks the Serbian minister for culture has spoken frequently of the "spiritual defence" of the Serb people against NATO aggression and thus earned a compliment from one reader of our newspaper who referred to him as the "ever more spiritual minister" (June 9).<sup>7</sup> As it continues its expansion into public speech the "spiritual" wave is today flooding even the margins. This wave first conquered important speeches, major issues and solemn occasions: it has now reached everyday language, where its front line is again in matters cultural. Thus the selling of books in Belgrade's Knez Mihailova Street has become a "spiritual jumble sale" and a "spiritual adventure" (May 30). A book of collected interviews is "a collection of spiritual mementoes" (June 2), a play staged by a group of amateur actors is "spiritual gymnastics" (June 1) and an exhibition by a young painter is referred to as a "spiritual machine" (June 24).

Victims of the "spiritual wave" include terms from the basic vocabulary of the state and society, such as "political", "social", "legal", and "democratic". These terms are sinking as, for the "spiritualists", they are impossibly pernickety, banal and crude when it comes to essence, being, spirit and national identity. The same goes for "intellectual", "ethical" and "rational", all of which have drowned in metaphysical "spirituality". The first, and principal, victim of the breakthrough of "the spiritual", however, is the term "material". Not that this has been entirely eradicated: it has remained so that scenes of defeat, misery and rubble may bear witness to the nothingness of matter and the omnipotence of the spirit. In the philosophy of our "spiritualists", a philosophy largely

<sup>6</sup> From an article by "A. C.", *Godisnja skupstina SANU. Traganje za istinom* (Annual Assembly of the Serbian Academy. Search for the Truth)

<sup>7</sup> Branko Kosić, *Strani napisи u našim autobusima* (Foreign Inscriptions in Our Buses)

accepted and embraced by the Serbian regime, the feeling of "spiritual" superiority which now pervades the ruling Serb elite justifies the loss of worldly joys and wealth, the loss of which the Serbian people are today enduring, apparently willingly and with dignity. One influential representative of the "spiritual" movement in Serbian culture and politics has written about this recently in a magazine called *The Army Volunteers Tribune*, which would have escaped my attention had not Tanjug news agency and *When I Say Newspaper...* been alert enough to publish it. I am grateful to them for this because it gave me the opportunity to read the following edifying lines about the NATO attack on Yugoslavia: "Anyone concerned about the effects of the consumer society may breathe more easily. We may have become poorer in material terms but we have grown surprisingly in spiritual wealth."

Well, as for me, I wasn't so surprised.

July 6, 1999

## The Lethal Rays of Irony

Those who initiated the war for Kosovo are giving Serbs what they deserve: decorations. The harvest has been exceptionally good this season. There has been a bumper crop of all sorts of medals, wreaths, badges and other decorations, some of them inherited from the old state and some established last December. This bountiful harvest has brought the market price down, brought decorations closer to the reach of the common man, which is appropriate as they have been awarded for the wartime achievements of everyone. The head of the state has already doled out several thousand decorations. The partial list of decorated policemen, groups and individuals, stretches across two pages of today's edition of *When I Say Newspaper...* (July 11).

The decorations have been awarded, says the explanation published alongside the text of the president's decree, "for special contributions to and outstanding results in the defence of the country against aggression". When you take a closer look at the list of those decorated, a great many cultural institutions stand out as having made such a contribution – theatres, galleries, orchestras, cultural centres, publishing houses, museums and artists' associations. Among them are some of the most important cultural institutions in Serbia: the Belgrade Philharmonic Orchestra, the National Museum, the National Theatre, the publisher Prosveta and two of the largest arts associations, the Association of Serbian Writers and the Association of Serbian Visual Artists. All of these received from the president the Order of Vuk Karadžić (established last year) for achievements in culture. This is the first time these awards have been presented. But they have been given in acknowledgement of war effort.

Obviously Milošević is keen to demonstrate that he has not only had the police and army on his side in this most

recent war, but also what is perhaps the most symbolically significant sector in Serbia, culture. Both before and during the latest war episode, "national culture workers", whether on the Milošević payroll or volunteers, have invested all their efforts in portraying the Serbian regime's dispute with the rest of the world over Kosovo as a struggle of spiritually superior Serbian culture against a technically advanced but culturally inferior enemy. Thus the outcome of the war is now presented as a triumph in some sort of Olympic Games in which Serbia was the best competitor or, as Serbian President Milan Milutinović put it recently, "surpassed a far stronger aggressor in knowledge and skill" (*When I Say Newspaper...*). The Serbs allegedly emerged victorious over their barbaric enemies by civilised means; they responded fiercely to rockets and bombs with the dignity of tradition, to the destruction of cities and the slaughter of civilians they replied with a book and a song. According to one deputy federal prime minister, Jovan Zebić, by waging war in this way not only did they defend themselves and their country, they won a victory of universal significance by saving the dignity of world civilisation. "In this way," said Zebić, "our people have struck a blow at the very essence of aggression and war. Pure evil has been nipped in the bud and this, I hope, will be a great contribution to the human and international progress needed for the creation and foundation of world peace" (*When I Say...*, July 8).

One original contribution to the idea of the victorious triumph of Serbian culture in its clash with modern barbarism in the recent war came from Željko Simić, the Serbian minister for culture. In this war, said Simić, Serbs had a powerful weapon, unfamiliar to the enemy - spiritual radiation. "The radiation of the Serb spirit," said the minister, and the paper published it, "has proved stronger than the radiation from the aggressor's bombs". We learned from him that this lethally radioactive Serbian spirit is actually a spirit of irony. "History has never before recorded that, in a time of

aggression, a nation was able to focus all its intellectual force and creative power and repulse the enemy with irony; the chroniclers have never recorded this because there has been no tradition of it" (*When I Say...*, July 7). Thus said Minister Simić at a formal session of the Serbian Association for Culture and Education at which the Association's gold badges were presented to "deserving cultural workers". The first name on the list of the worthy was that of General Nebojša Pavković of the Yugoslav Army. Does this indicate that the weapon of irony is no mere metaphor? That this sophisticated new technique is already part of our army's arsenal? Or is it, and this seems closer to the truth, that presenting awards for cultural achievements to generals after a lost war, while actors, poets, musicians and other artists receive awards for achievements in the defence effort is an example of the so-called irony of history.

Irony is awkward and unpredictable. It cannot easily be directed and controlled. Many recent examples confirm this. For instance, was Serbian President Milan Milutinović aware of the powerful, lethal radiation of irony in his words when he visited Kuršumlija recently? "We have saved Kosovo, and the fact that it is now under the protection of the United Nations is to the credit of the people, because that is what we have been fighting for." Were his hosts in Nis, the managers of the tobacco industry and the municipal administration, conscious of that irony when, after showing Milutinović areas of the city ruined in the war, they presented him with an album of photographs of the demolished buildings and an icon depicting the Crucifixion? And was the journalist from *When I Say...* (July 1) deliberately employing the lethal rays of irony when he wrote that the president had accepted these gifts "as a token of gratitude for all he had done for the progress of the factory and the region"?

July 14, 1999

## Giving up the Ghost

We have always had a high regard for authorities on the national soul. Although the national class-awareness championships no longer exist, the reputation of experts in the field has never been seriously jeopardised. Today, those familiar with the secrets of the soul are again in the lime-light. It's a seller's market and business is booming. Every day on the pages of *When I Say Newspaper...* there's a pronouncement from one or another of them. Politicians and soldiers recite their experience and knowledge of the national soul; priests, poets, psychiatrists and other scientists are speaking as authorities. All agree that a real sense of what's going on in Serbia today can be discovered only through an insight into the soul of the people. In a mish-mash of diverse and chaotic war, political and other events, the soul is the only signpost to the truth, say these experts. Only a thorough knowledge of the Serbian soul, (its spirit, character, essence, genotype, archetype and identity, as the national soul is variously described these days) enables us to see that the Serbian government is exactly what it should be, to see that Serbs have the government their soul desires. What our leader does when he makes decisions of war and peace, on life and death may seem to be solely a matter of his own choice and responsibility but it is in fact an inevitable, obligatory manifestation of instructions from deep within the national soul.

He who knows what is at the bottom of the nation's soul also has the answers to all the big questions. Why is Serbia today poorer than ever before? Because its soul shuns wealth. On this theme, Slavko Vejinović, the deputy minister for the Serb Diaspora, cites a late nineteenth century opinion that "Serbs are generous in all directions and follow their hearts, not their minds," (July 1).

It is futile for the West to bore Serbs with offers of material assistance, says Deputy Prime Minister Milovan Bojić, "because our people know very well that money isn't everything," (*When I Say...* July 7). Why were the Serbs forced to move *en masse* out of Croatia and Bosnia and why are they now leaving Kosovo? Because "migration has become the destiny of the Serbs," (July 1). Why are the Serbs waging war today? Because it's in their nature; they always wage war. "As long as the wheel of Serbian history is turning," one psychiatrist explains to the newspaper, "men go to the front and women stay home and grieve for them". Thus "The Serbian woman, as in the past, must be a pillar of support for the soldier and must be prepared for anything," (June 14). A supplement to this psychiatric opinion is provided by a geographer, the president of the Serbian Geographic Society, who quotes Jovan Cvijić as claiming that the nation and the army in Serbia had always "coexisted in a joint community and mutual love," and that love is "not something scholarly, literary or academic; it derives from the consolidated national soul which has always united our people," (July 20).

An informed reader may see the love of weapons and the army as a sign of an authoritarian nature. One journalist proves him right when (in *When I Say Newspaper...* on July 9) she makes a very critical analysis of her compatriots' tendency to an authoritarian attitude. She makes no bones about asserting "The Serbs are extremely authoritarian people" and continues "This has been demonstrated in a number of research projects conducted recently. Research on values and social changes among the young reveal that there are an increasing number of authoritarian young people. Serbian youth have greater trust in an authoritarian leader than in laws. The findings quoted explain the vitality of the Socialist Government. An authoritarian leader and a nation which loves an iron fist are in deep accord. Dictator Milošević would be the right leader for the authoritarian Serbs, had his

government been less blatant thieves. The giant backwards step towards authoritarian values taken by Serbs in the past ten years has been a result of persistent indoctrination and brainwashing through the media and any other means available. By favouring traditional institutions and not the new civil movements, Serbia has opened a gap between itself and Western countries. This kind of chaos, in which the desire for social justice is mixed with the longing for a strong government comes in handy for all kinds of scenarios."

You don't believe that something like this could be published in *As Soon As I Say Newspaper...*? You're right: it could not. It is possible to write about authoritarian Serbs in this paper, but only by referring to the idea as lies concocted by the fifth column in Serbia. Because everyone knows who is authoritarian: our enemies. "This war has shown," says a social scientist from the Faculty of Philosophy in Belgrade, "that our nation loves freedom while the masses in the aggressor countries are servile. This," he adds "contradicts the view of the Soros types who emphasise the authoritarian in our make-up," (July 19).\*

Nevertheless I did not invent this article on the authoritarian nation. It really was published in our paper, transcribed from Radio Free Europe. Its author was Jelena Lovrić. The article, however, is talking not about Serbs but about Croats.

In every quote only the names have been changed. For Croatia, Croats, Tuđman and the HDZ I have substituted Serbia, Serbs, Milošević and the Socialists. Perhaps even that was unnecessary because the possibility of a different reading is obvious even without my little intervention. It is the possibility of noticing that something ostensibly specific

to Croats (and such is the intention of *When I Say Newspaper...* and Jelena Lovrić's article was entitled *What Are the Croats Like?*) also applies to Serbs in every respect and certainly as well to a number of other nations and their circumstances. At the same time it is an opportunity for the supposedly patriotic gibberish about the fatal Serbian love for the army and death to serve the purpose of sustaining and justifying irresponsibility and wilfulness and particularly of justifying an irresponsible and violent government. The real response to flowery stories about the soul of the nation can be provided only by a serious analysis of the ideology and practices of a government which sucks the blood from the people's veins and which has been sucking it so long and so successfully that the nation is barely managing to breathe. This nation, as they say, is close to giving up the ghost.

July 21, 1999

\* Miodrag Ranković, quoted by B. Radivojša in *Veliki zete podeljeni Balkan* (The Great Powers Want to Divide the Balkans)

## The Miracle of Francuska Street

Certain Serbian poets believe that only a miracle can save them. One such, Matija Bećković, has turned to the Serbian Orthodox Church, the appropriate institution for miraculous salvation, for help. The church responded to his plea by deciding to place the pleader and other Serbian poets under the protection of the Hilandar<sup>\*</sup> icon known as the Three-Handed Virgin, renowned for its miraculous powers. According to the latest report in *When I Say Newspaper...* the Three-Handed Virgin was chosen as "the glory and protector of Serbian poets" on the basis of Bećković's view that her third hand was in fact "the hand of the poets who created all Serbian poetry". The miraculous icon was given the task of protecting other Serbian authors as well, since all of them must have originated from the world of poetry. The ritual bestowing of this miraculous protection was carried out at the headquarters of the Association of Serbian Writers in Francuska Street, referred to as "the home of Serbian writers". The premises of the association were first properly sanctified with burning incense. A ritual cake was cut and the prophylactic icon hung on the wall of the premises. In addition to this protection of the writers as a group, they were all advised to place themselves individually in the care of the miraculous icon. The association as a whole is protected by a large icon on the wall and its individual members by small desk icons. Our newspaper carried the recommendation given to his colleagues by Bećković, who had lined things up with the Church's authorised representatives: "Every Serbian poet," said Matija Bećković, "will have the miraculous Hilandar icon on his desk," (*When I Say...*, July 24).<sup>\*\*</sup>

\* Hilandar: a mediaeval Serbian monastery on Mt Athos, the Sacred Mountain in Greece. [Ed.]

\*\* Mirjana Kuburović, *Trojeručica zaslužnica srpskih pesnika* (The Three-Handed Virgin as the Protector of Serbian Poets)

What are the Serbian poets of Francuska Street afraid of? Who presents a danger to them? What is so hazardous and mortally threatening to our poets and other literary artists, members of the Association of Serbian Writers, that the Church had to come to their rescue and take such a radical measure for their safety and protection, in a move described by Bećković as "a great moment in the history of our Church, our culture and our poetry"?

It's not easy to answer these questions. What we know of the position of poets and writers in Serbia today, especially those gathered around Bećković and Rakitić, the past and present presidents of the Association, is not of any help in determining what could have prompted them to seek such a spectacular measure of protection from the Church. On the contrary, everything points to the fact that poets and other authors in Serbia have not only been secure and protected in the last ten years or so, but have also been held in high esteem and, moreover, are in high demand. This is so much the case that it would be difficult to name a country where writers fare as well as they do here. They are at the highest levels of several important national institutions, they pull some of the main strings of power, they head a number of the most influential political parties. The most prominent members of the Socialist Party of Serbia and senior clerics of the Serbian Orthodox Church lavish equal praise on Bećković's poems. They sing his verses, accompanied by the *gusle*, at folklore presentations and recite them at military parades. Several weeks before the Three-Handed Virgin found her way to the Association, its members had received recognition from the authorities: Milošević decorated the Association itself with the Vuk Karadžić Medal for bravery during the latest round of war. The protective power of that medal can't be denied, either.

No doubt the thoughtful concern shown by *When I Say Newspaper...*, which reports anything the Francuska Street literati are able to come up with, imbues them with a

sense of security and protection. The Three-Handed Virgin incident is a good example of this. No one described the entire process of placing the Serbian writers under the protection of "the miraculous icon from Hilandar" as elaborately and comprehensively as did this unofficial organ of the Serbian Socialist Party and the Yugoslav Left. Thus there is nothing surprising in the fact that in Serbia today ambitious people in various professions (clergymen, army officers, businessmen, politicians, journalists and doctors) who seek prestigious positions are working hard to compose and publish, at their own expense, at least a booklet of poems or stories and thus obtain membership, if possible, in the Association of Serbian Writers.

So what seems to be the problem? What is making the poets nervous? What is wrong with them? Neither those who asked for and received the miraculous protection (Bećković and Rakitić), nor Father Petar Luković, who is in charge of Belgrade's Saborna Church and represents the people who granted this protection, will tell you that. They don't know, and they are insistent that they have no actual knowledge of this. They don't know, and again they emphasise that they cannot tell either why protection was asked for or why it was granted. Not even who granted the request. Bećković knows only that "this is the time for it ... Nothing in the world happens by mere chance," *When I Say... , July 24*). Bećković doesn't deny that it was he who initiated the process of placing the poets under the protection of the miraculous icon, but he cannot tell us why he did it. Nor, and he demands that we acknowledge this, does he know who answered his plea. "This is a red-letter day," said Bećković in a statement for *When I Say Newspaper...* "and who knows who decided that it should be so?" Rakitic also deals with the Three-Handed Virgin affair as though it were something completely unexpected and unsought, some mysterious, joyous sign which came like a bolt from the blue, who knows how and who knows why, "like God's mercy and a token of bliss in these

gloomy times". Father Luković also says that the miraculous icon "has finally been placed where it belongs," but even he won't reveal on whose orders or by whose wishes this came about, because to know this would be to ignore the main character, in other words the whole affair is "the work of God," (*When I Say... , July 27*).<sup>\*</sup>

We may as well be understanding about the mysterious conduct of the participants in this affair of the Three-Handed Virgin in Francuska Street. In order for the miraculous prophylaxis to work, the procedure of obtaining and introducing the protective icon must be a miraculous event, incomprehensible to our feeble minds. Yet this is a special, cherished ignorance. Some sort of sapient ignorance. Knowledge of this ignorance, if we may say so, in other words the shrewd deployment of this specific ignorance, is essential if miracles are to occur. It is part of the ancient skill of dealing with sacred objects, obscure signs and formulae, prophecies and divination, sacred reliques and other mysteries. The power of religion, shamans and priests is based on this skill. It has always been the backbone of political power, especially when the other, less miraculous pillars of that power begin to disintegrate. The introduction of the miraculous icon from Hilandar as the protector of Serbian poets shows that, when the power of poetry begins to fade and wither, when its springs slowly dry up, the poet may as well seek support in the skilful manipulation of miracles. What the Serbian poets want, in fact, is for the miraculous Three-Handed Virgin to replace their lost and (to their chagrin) irreplaceable Muse.

July 28, 1999

\* M. Đorđević, *Radosni znamen* (Portent of Joy)

## **Turn it around, move it closer or bring it down to earth**

At the beginning of this series of articles I posited the opinion that the truth may be discovered even in those newspapers notorious for telling the truth only in the obituaries. I hope that this opinion of mine, now that I have given several examples of truth-seeking reading, may appear more reasonable, if not quite convincing. I have not lingered over examples of those forms of truth which are the easiest to reveal in these newspapers, by simply turning around what has been written, in other words by reading it from the perspective opposite to that defined by the newspaper. The skill of reverse reading has long been known here and many people read white for black, good for bad, and up for down as a matter of course. This habit is so deep-rooted that it would not surprise me to find *When I Say Newspaper...* starting to tell the truth only because it knows that its loyal readers habitually turn the meaning of everything into something quite opposite; they would treat the truth in the same way and thus swallow the lie so slyly served to them.

For the moment, there is no indication that such slyness has been employed. The truth still often appears in this newspaper as the reverse of the printed assertions. In today's issue of *When I Think...* (August 4), there a number of useful examples of such claims which, without much difficulty, turn into the truth as soon as you turn them around. I'll mention only some of the headlines: *Reforms begin in all fields, Production and salaries increase threefold thanks to government assistance, Railway modernisation to continue, 28.7% growth in production for June, No one to remain without a roof over their head, This leadership takes us in a positive direction, Socialist Party's policy in the interests of Serb and Yugoslav citizens, Socialists consistent with a policy serving state and citizens, Bishop Artemije has problems with people, Socialist Party's clear agenda for reconstruction of the country.*

It's relatively easy to access the truth in the paper, even when it's tucked away somewhere else, when it's presented in such a way that it applies to someone else, other countries, other people, but not to us here. By definition, these things are unpleasant, mentioned only with ostensible relief that such things, fortunately, do not exist here. If you don't find much enjoyment in the illusion that we here are living on an island of happiness surrounded by an ocean of misery and evil, it's enough that you delete the distance and transfer the picture of ugly reality to domestic ground. You will find that, in most cases, the image travels quite well. There is a good example of this in today's issue of *When I Say...* On the front page you will find the truth about servile journalism, about the journalism of loyalty, about hypocritical, one-sided and biased reporting on the crisis which is rocking the Balkans. This realistic description of such journalism, however, appears in an article entitled *Servile journalism in the West*.

Sometimes it happens in our newspaper that the truth suddenly shines when a particular issue is written about on a page where it doesn't usually belong. The sports page, for example, frequently offers content more pertinent to the understanding of Serbian politics than the content of political articles. Most important Serbian politicians think, although they would rarely say it openly these days, that the greatest value for them, something almost sacred, is a community of people of the same blood, and that the natural links among members of such a community are the basis of any healthy national policy. A sports writer, however, will say it without hesitation when he criticises a brawl caused by Red Star fans at a football match in Čačak. Because of this, as this writer put it, both fans and police ended up in hospital, despite being, alas what a sorrow, of the same kind. (*When I Think...*, August 2).<sup>\*</sup>

\* Dobrivoje Janković, *Hitav posao za fudbalski vrh* (An Urgent Job for Football Officials)

It is somewhat more difficult to discover the presence of the truth when it is presented within articles on culture, art, tradition, the soul, God and other sublime topics. This is the language of allegedly intelligent people who apparently have no political ambitions and of politicians who are apparently attempting to give politics an intellectual dimension. I have tried in these articles to bring such language, which is always newly-acquired, pretentious, flowery and ostensibly patriotic, down to earth and to show its connections with politics, the regime, power and money. I found that one of the main literary devices of this transcendental language is political fatalism, the discovery of supposedly profound historical, geographical, metaphysical, religious, mythological and other reasons for everything happening here at present. In such language, for example, Kosovo is not a matter of politics and political responsibility, it is Serbia's destiny. The Kosovo wound, says a review of a collection of patriotic poems by Milovan Vitezović, does not only form a central pillar of this nation but, in Vitezović's verses it has become incorporated into our bodies. It flows in our blood, it meanders through our thoughts and can never be healed... (*When I Think...*, July 31).<sup>\*</sup> If we put aside the difficulty of being presented with an image of a pillar-shaped wound incorporating itself with our bodies and meandering through our blood, the message of this turbid language about Kosovo is quite clear: in Kosovo, as in Serbia, there is no history, no choice, no responsibility, no guilt, no punishment and no change. Who's that talking about some Alliance for Change over there?

I stand by what I have said. The truth is out there on the news stands every day. All you have to do is say "Newspaper". But don't be impatient. Use at least one of these three techniques on what you find there: turn it around, move it closer or bring it down to earth. Then enjoy. I, if you don't mind, will take a break for a while.

August 4, 1999

\* Dragan Mraović, *O klanjanju i nadanju* (Veneration and Hope)

## Appendix

## **Foreign Mercenaries Still Among Us**

Reading *Politika* yesterday, I sat back in relief. Earlier, in the first issues of the "liberated" *Politika*, it seemed that this newspaper would undergo such change that it would be difficult to distinguish it from *Danas* or any other independent paper. Fortunately, after only a brief spell of confusion, *Politika* yesterday came back to its senses and has now consolidated its position as the unofficial bulletin of the regime, just as it always was. Once more this daily provides me with the best source of credible information about this country's government, its views, its likes and dislikes. Once more I get real value for those few dinars I spend on *Politika* every day.

I was moved mostly by the article about the new Yugoslav president in *Politika* yesterday (October 9, 2000). This toadying piece by Biljana Baković should be understood as an informal oath of allegiance to the new president. Thus *Politika* stole a march on its potential competition in the market and preserved its endangered hallmark as the newspaper closest to the mind of the regime. In the days when the oath to the former boss was still current, *Politika* had described his rival, Vojislav Košunica, under the headline "Consistent Liar" (September 18). Yesterday the article about Košunica was headed "Man of Confidence and Principles". "No one can deny his intelligence, honesty, modesty, patriotism and personal politeness," it reads. Before the elections, *Politika* had described Košunica as a womaniser, a bizarre chap who keeps seventeen cats in his apartment. Yesterday we discovered that he is a normal guy with only one wife and the number of his cats has shrunk to two. Just in case anyone is suspicious about cats in general, we read that he also has a dog. Dogs are well known as animal symbols of power which are a regular accompaniment to presidents. As long as there's a dog, a certain number of cats may be tolerated.

Because *Politika* is obviously and successfully defending its position as an unofficial government bulletin, this article is important, particularly when describing the wisdom of Koštunica's election strategy. First we read that Koštunica is "a patriot who was aware of the importance of winning in elections and minimising the power of the United Left, so he accepted a broad coalition including a number of politicians widely known as "foreign mercenaries" and took part in the presidential and parliamentary elections." How should we interpret this? One thing is clear: *Politika* has not given up the talk of "foreign mercenaries" which it cherished in the days of loyalty to the former government. Even the new editors don't see this as hate propaganda, but as "the voice of the people". Anyway, "foreign mercenaries" still applies to some leaders of the DOS coalition. Koštunica is left out of this accusation. Furthermore he is indirectly invited, now that he is in power, to get rid of the treacherous company and the NATO mercenaries so hated by the people, because he was simply forced to accept their company at the time.

I'm reading the newspaper today. No denials, no further explanations. Has the showdown among the old allies begun? Is the new government, allegedly following the will of the people, preparing to cut its ties to the civil parties and organisations, getting ready to discard them as a cumbersome burden as it soars towards "the feasible, the justified and the only possible" national policy? Is *Politika* merely jumping to conclusions, or is it dancing to the tune played by the new government?

Danas, October 11, 2000

## How the Cult of the Serbian People Was Born (*Echoes and Reactions*)\*

*Echoes and Reactions* provides evidence of how a specific political religion was revived in Serbia in the late 1980s and early 1990s. A worldly, secular or civilian cult, as political religions are often labelled. This particular column in the daily *Politika* was a space for ritual political communication, for celebrating a secular liturgy lionising the Serbian people as a political divinity. It was a stage with a daily performance presenting "the voice of the Serbian people". But, in addition to their role as orator, the people also played both the audience and the topic of the discussion. In short, it was a rite of communication in the form of auto-communication, where the Serbian people spoke about the Serbian people.

My view of this column in *Politika* as a political rite is supported by the title given by Aljoša Mimica and Radina Vučetić to the CD: "The Time when People Talked". This is a quote from one of the articles. This view is best illustrated by the sentence the authors present as the slogan of their introduction. The sentence was uttered by Živorad Igić, a former senior official of the Socialist Party of Serbia. "Keep up the good work, about the people, beside the people, for the people." This endless repetition of the word "people", in the same way that words in religious rituals are repeated, clearly shows the kind of phenomenon we have here.

*Echoes and Reactions* was only one of a number of tools used to show the people to the people, for the people to

\* Presented at the round-table discussion on *Echoes and Reactions* organised by the Centre for Humanitarian Law on December 15 and 16, 2001. The discussion marked the release of the CD "The Time when People Talked – Politika, Echoes and Reactions, July 1988 – March 1991", edited by Aljoša Mimica and Radina Vučetić.

hear what the people had to say about the people. The column originated at a time when the staged political will of the broad masses was embodied in another political ritual more significant than the ritual communication of *Echoes and Reactions*. Political rallies in Serbia and Montenegro. These were organised in order to provide support for Slobodan Milošević, revered at the time as the new leader and the saviour of the people. Serbian media, including *Politika*, gave these rallies detailed coverage. This means that the revival of the pseudo-religious cult of the Serbian people and their Messiah was fuelled not only by *Echoes and Reactions*, but also by detailed reports of the political rallies. These included photo after photo and quoted a broad range of catch-cries and slogans from the rallies. I remember some of them to this day, for example "Even the Deaf Can Hear the Voice of the People"

The ritual celebration of the Serbian people in the late 1980s and early 1990s relied largely on the "martyr cult" model. Thus the most celebrated characteristics of the Serbs were not power, strength, victories or wealth, but their suffering, death wounds, exodes and other trials and tribulations which the Serbs endured with dignity and heroism. The martyr element within the newly-established cult of the Serbian people is seen in many articles published in this column. Writers competed to present the suffering of the innocent, crucified people with descriptions which were as moving, touching and gritty as possible. The index of key words and terms on this CD contains multiple instances of words such as "slaughter", "crackdown", "rape", "blood" and "bloodshed". The most frequently occurring term in this series is "the pit". This pops up in 983 articles, more even than the term "the Serbian people", which occurs in 778 articles.

As a kind of counterbalance to this review of Serbian martyrdom and suffering, *Echoes and Reactions* provided reminders of acts of heroism and great victories of "the great

Serbs". Thus, from time to time, there may be heard the solemn reverberation of the national Gloria, although this is not so strong as to drown out the dominant weeping over the Serbian Calvary. Amazingly, this nation which suffered so much has strong leaders, visionaries who are wise and brave. Even these include a number of suffering martyrs, such as Prince Lazar, but strong men and avengers prevail. The tales of suffering are intertwined with the hope that one day the suffering will come to an end, that a great hero will finally appear to save the people and punish their tormentors.

Just such a man rose in the sky over Serbia in the late 1980s. Contributors to *Echoes and Reactions* welcomed and glorified this shining star bringing the promise of better days. Contributor Mila Janković wrote, on September 5, 1988: "What no one dared to say, Comrade Slobodan Milošević has done. He did not fear to lose his position, privileges and the rest of it. He understood all the sorrows and helplessness of the Serbian and Montenegrin people and all honest Albanians: he understood that such a situation had to end, whether or not someone didn't like it. He expressed the mind and soul of the people; he stood for the people and shared their fate. This is why he is so great a man, because he has won the trust of the people."

Along with this central hero came some other "brave" and "wise" Serbs to help their boss in his noble ambitions. As well as the politicians there were priests, artists and writers. They were also gazed upon with hope, and any attack on them provoked an outburst of agitation and rage. So a number of pieces were written in defence of Matija Bećković when the presidency of SUBNOR<sup>4</sup> publicly protested this

<sup>4</sup> Savez udruženja boraca narodnooslobodilackog rata (SUBNOR) – In the former Yugoslavia, an organisation of war veterans who were Tito's partisans during World War II.

poet having been given "The July 7<sup>th</sup> Award"<sup>\*</sup> in 1990. One contributor (Rodoljub Jevtić, July 10, 1988) argued that Bećković "is labelled as an anti-communist with no argument". Another two, Milutin L. Đuričić and Duško Kosančić (July 13, 1989) say: "It was sad to hear some of Belgrade's veteran soldiers attack Matija Bećković in an insolent, shameless way, thus attacking the new course of Serbian policy. It is clear that Matija Bećković was not the real target. The target was Slobodan Milošević ... Matija only provided the motive for attacking Slobodan Milošević. It was as plain to see as an image in a mirror."

The attack on Bećković was interpreted as an attack on Milošević, as one of the attacks which, "objectively, go together with the false criticism and attacks on Serbian policy which come from the north-western parts of our country". (Dragoljub Jevtić, September 7, 1989).

All this brings us to the villains of the column. A number of scapegoats served for the ritual purification of the Serbian people. There were "Serbian turncoats" and "traitors" but, more than anyone else, other people of other ethnicities in the former Yugoslavia and their political leaders were identified as Serbia's enemies. The list of Serbian enemies, those who hate and exploit Serbs, and other culprits in the suffering of Serbs, was headed by Slovenians, then Croats, Albanians, Muslims and Macedonians. Then came the good old Serbian enemies: the Vatican, Germans, Austrians, Hungarians and so on, all the way to the British and Americans. For example, one reader of *Politika* (Jovan Ilić, in a letter published on February 4, 1990) described a Serbia under siege, shot at from all sides: "Serbia and its leadership are brutally shot at, the peo-

ple are shot by various Kučans and Ribičić, Smole and Pučnik, Stanovnik and Porte, Kocijančić and Zlobec ... The fire is heavier from Račan, Družić, Vrhovec and Dragosavac<sup>\*</sup> ... They are shooting at everything that is Serb. All in the name of some democracy of theirs, their pluralist society, independence of the republics and their self-sustainability ... And why is all this? This is a question asked by all honest citizens of our home land. My question is: is it a curse to be a Serb?"

In the late 1980s and early 1990s, the Serbian national elite hastily erected the "New Serbian Order". In other words, they reconstructed the image of Serbia as an imaginary community. In the course of this, images, performances and stories which showed the birth or resurrection of an imaginary "celestial" Serbia, were stripped of what until then had been the main player in the collective: the working and farming class, the Serbs as "hard-working people". In their place, a new actor was introduced: the Serbian people, Serbs as an ethnic community. Politics, as a special arena of performance for a broad audience, no longer presented plays about the different strata in Serbian society. Instead, this theatre offered more and more plays about doomed national divisions within the Serbian people and about the new, nation-conscious leadership which would finally bring reconciliation and unity.

This kind of orientation was welcomed by contributors to *Echoes and Reactions*. One of them wrote "The current great minds of the Serbian people have realised that it is high time for accord and spiritual unity, together with the ancient proverb: united we stand." However the agenda of "Serbianising the Serbs" was still not seen as a radical break with the symbolic order of the earlier, communist age. *Ech-*

\* Sedmohuljska nagrada – In the former Yugoslavia, an award given for special achievements in the arts, science, sports etc. On July 7, 1941, Yugoslav communists began an uprising against German occupation forces in Serbia. The name of the award commemorates this date.

<sup>\*</sup> Politicians from the former Yugoslav republics of Slovenia and Croatia at the time.

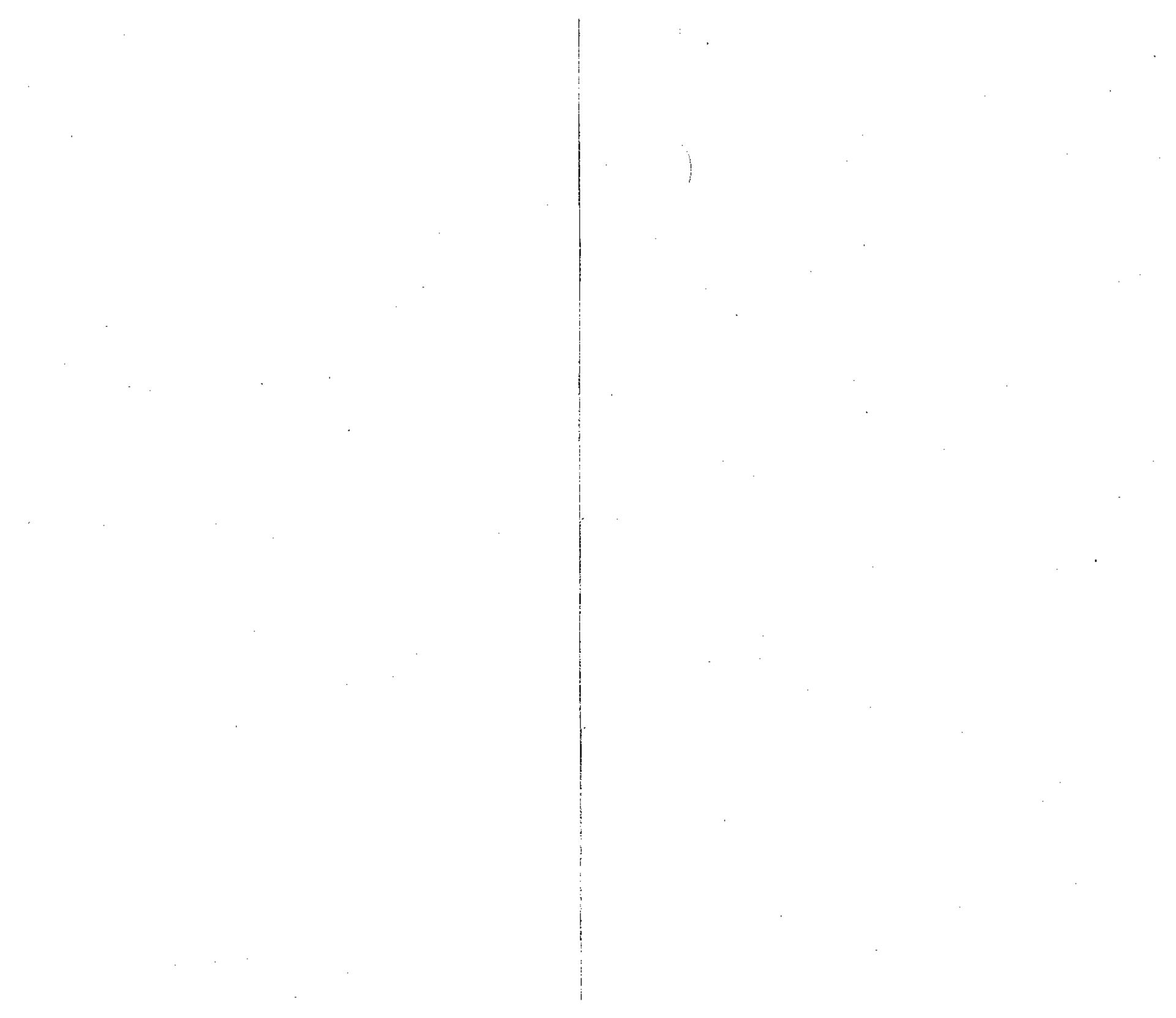
*Echoes and Reactions* bore witness to how the national homogenisation of the Serbs proceeded and the direction it took during the first three years of the Milošević regime (July 1988 – March 2001).

We see how the Serbian people began their national awakening in those times (or, to be precise, how they were awakened), but the people still didn't sever their bonds to the identity of workers and farmers, or to Yugoslavia. There were still the voices of those who refused to accept that it was the fault of communism that the Serbs were "blind men walking", that they lacked an adequate national consciousness. "There is no honour for the Serbian people in assertions that the communist regime, in the past fifty years, has destroyed the identity of the people and trampled on their national dignity. It's well known that the Turks did not manage to achieve that during their five hundred year rule here. If the Serbs of today feel it is necessary for someone to allow them to declare themselves Serbs, then this is really sad, it is their own national shame. The same goes for other peoples." (Contributor Vesna Klepac, Feb 15, 1991). Another writer (Dragan Biorac, September 24, 1990) was astonished by "the movement of young Serbs", claiming that communism had no harmful influence on Serbs because they were able to find some good in it. "Although generations of Serbs have been indoctrinated by communist Bolshevik propaganda, they have managed to pick out what was progressive and humane in it," he wrote.

During those few years, the supporters of the new national course in Serbian policy included many who had still not renounced Tito and had still not seen him as "a Serb-hater". Veteran partisans from World War II and their associations frequently presented their views in the column. They tried to depict the unity of the Serbian people and their national awakening as something which would have been dear to the heart of their former commander. In their view,

Tito had protected Serbs and respected their history. He was the leader of all the Yugoslav peoples, but the Serbian people were closest to his heart because they had suffered the most, they had been cheated the most and unfairly accused of oppressing others. In support of this view, one veteran partisan (Mirko Vraneš, July 18, 1988) quotes Tito, at the same time striving to add his own comments about the current meaning of Tito's thoughts on the injustice inflicted on the Serbian people: "Not only did the Serbian people have nothing to do with the national policy of their rulers, they were also exploited and exposed to the wilfulness of the police, as were all the other Yugoslav peoples. Even more, the Serbian people realised they were cheated. The Serbian people were hurt by these offences (and, unfortunately, are still offended today – M. V.), injustice and the accusations (they are accused to this day – M. V.) that they were an apprentice in the national oppression of the other Yugoslav peoples."

Thus many contributions published in this column make it clear that the writers wanted to reconcile the new cult of the people as an ethnic-national community with the contemporary political sacred cows. These writers, together with other representatives of the "national forces" in Serbia were working on a particular translation of symbols. As the conflicts of war began, this transition was to be accelerated until, soon, there would be no more old communist symbols and cults. What would remain would be one, ethnic, national "We" as a loud, menacing voice of the tribe gathered around its leader, ready for the final showdown. The voice of the "We" can still be heard in some contributions to *Echoes and Reactions*. For example (Borisav Simić, March 3, 1989): "Throughout history we have always been moved and dispersed at someone else's will, burned and slaughtered on our doorsteps, converted and clubbed to death in the name of Christ. We have an undeniable human right to care about the fate of this country, about the fate of the children yet to grow up, no matter whose they are."



**IVAN ČOLOVIĆ**

**KAD KAŽEM  
NOVINE**

**Drugo, dopunjeno izdanje**

**Medijska knjižara Krug  
Beograd, 2004**

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## **Predgovor drugom izdanju**

Novo izdanje ove knjižice nudim kao skroman prilog obeležavanju "Politikinog" jubileja, sto godina od izlaska prvog broja. Moja knjižica govori samo o jednom trenutku istorije "najstarijeg lista na Balkanu", o onome što se tu moglo pročitati tokom leta 1999. Prva tri poglavља napisao sam dok je još trajao kratki rat NATO pakta protiv Srbije, a ostala u vreme proslave velike srpske pobede i podele odlikovanja. I ranije je za mene čitanje "Politike" bilo inspirativno, ali tog leta u "Politici" sam nalazio mnogo više od nadahnuća: samu istinu! Bila je tu, na dohvatu ruke, na svakoj strani, skoro u svakom članku. Nudila se istinoljubivom čitaocu skoro otvoreno, odevena samo u laku, providnu laž.

Požurio sam da svoje otkriće obznam (preko Radija B 92 i lista "Danas", a zatim u obliku knjige). Jer istina koju sam našao na stranicama "Politike" odnosila se na sve nas i bila je ponuđena svima nama u Srbiji, pa nisam imao srca da je čuvam samo za sebe. Međutim, moja uveravanja da se puna istina o Srbiji može svakog dana naći u "Politici" primljena su s nevericom. Tešim se time da je to slučaj sa svakim pravim otkrićem, onim koje dovodi u pitanje uvrežena shvatanja. Moje heureka imalo je protiv sebe uverenje, u to vreme već široko rasprostranjeno, da je "Politika" poslednje mesto gde bi ozbiljan čovek tražio istinu. Zato mnogi nisu ni pokušavali da je tu traže, govoreći da ne žele da čitaju gomilu laži koje Miloševićev režim preko tog lista bezbočno plasira u javnost. Tako se desilo da je u vreme kad je u "Politici" istinu od očiju javnosti krila samo lako prepoznatljiva, sasvim neuverljiva, transparentna laž ovaj list malo ko htio da čita. Kakva šteta!

Danas to više nije isti list. "Politika" više nije "Kad kažem novine". Ona je prestala da koristi propagandni slogan sa kojim se jedno vreme bila identifikovala. Jedan novinar "Politike" objasnio je zašto: "Reklamni slogan "Kad ka-

žem novine – mislim "Politika" dobio je čak posprdno značenje devedesetih godina kada je, na kraju XX veka, ugled lista doveden na rub propasti". Ponekad vam priznanje za trud stigne i ovako, bez tačne adrese, ali ja ga i tad sa zahvalnošću primam.

Tačno je da u "Politici" i danas ima neuverljivih, prozirnih laži, ali istina u ovom listu više nije samo ono što laži ne uspevaju da sakriju. Ona se sad ne javlja samo iza njih, nego i uz njih, to jest uporedo sa lažima, pomešana sa njima. Samim tim i put do istine o Srbiji koja se može naći u "Politici" sada je nešto duži i teži. Da bi se do nje stiglo više nije dovoljno da se samo ukloni tanka koprena laži koja tu istinu skriva, nego se mora primenjivati i mnogo složeniji postupak razdvajanja istinoljubivih iskaza od lažljivih, koji se inače nalaze na istoj strani novina, a ponekad i u istom tekstu.

"Politika" naših dana najviše liči na onu jučerešnju na stranicama posvećenim kulturi, a naročito kad se tu piše o književnosti. Na tim stranicama zadržalo se i ušančilo ono tobože pesničko umovanje o srpskom rodu i jeziku koje, od dolaska Miloševića na vlast do danas, služi sve brojnijim predstavnicima folklorno-šamanskog pravca u srpskoj književnosti da se preporuče novim gazdama Srbije zahvaćene talasom nacionalističke euforije. Isti novinari i isti pisci i danas u ovom listu izvode iste one seanse političke magije kojima se već deceniju i po služe da bi pokazali svojim sponzorima u politici, crkvi, vojsci i biznisu da odgovor na pitanje kojim putem treba da ide Srbija bolje znaju ljudi obdareni šamanskim moćima nego oni obdareni razumom.

Ako ne shvatimo da je reč o političkoj magiji, koja ume da oživi mrtve i umrtvi žive da bi ih politički iskoristila, nećemo razumeti ovu vest, objavljenu u "Politici" od 26. decembra

2003: "Mitropolit crnogorsko-primorski gospodin Amfilohije obnovio je juče članstvo u Srpskoj književnoj zadruzi. U članskoj knjižici, koju je popunio akademik Matija Bećković, upisano je samo 'Mitropolit crnogorsko-primorski' i kako se to odnosi na sve mitropolite, pa i na Svetog Petra I Petrovića Njegoša, kao datum učlanjenja upisano je 'Orašac 1804'".

Tri dana kasnije, "Politika" objavljuje članak koji otvara da se magijska radnja učlanjenja svih crnogorskih mitropolita u SKZ u mestu i godini Prvog srpskog ustanka zasniva na verovanju u čudesnu moć plemenske krvi. Pomenuti članak<sup>\*</sup> govori o crnogorskom poreklu Karađordevih ustanika, a napisan je na osnovu podataka koje je izneo mitropolit Amfilohije na konferenciji za novinare održanoj u SKZ posle ceremonije učlanjenja. Ako je verovati tim podacima, ono što je u Srbiji u vreme Prvog ustanka valjalo bilo je ma-hom crnogorsko i plemensko. Međutim, najinteresantniji podatak koji je mitropolit crnogorsko-primorski izneo pred novinarama je onaj da su u Orašcu u vreme Ustanka živeli "samo doseljenici iz plemena Rovaca i Nikšićke Župe", to jest Amfilohijevi i Bećkovićevi saplemenici. Iznoseći to, Amfilohije nam stavlja do znanja da su on i Bećković – kao i predsednik SKZ Slavenko Terzić i njen urednik Dragan Lakićević – mogli da se začas prebace u Orašac 1804. godine i da se isto tako brzo vrate među novinare koji su pratili njihovu šamansku seansu, zahvaljujući tome što u njihovim žilama teće krv crnogorskih plemena koja su navodno odigrala ključnu ulogu u Prvom srpskom ustanku. Jer plemenska krv je – kao što tvrde naši šamani – jača od vremena, zahvaljujući njoj pleme je uvek isto, a njegovi članovi mogu istovremeno da budu svoji preci i svoji potomci.

Ovaj i drugi njemu slični primeri, uveravaju me u to da istinoljubivim ljudima mogu da preporučim i ovu današ-

\* Milorad Ćirilović, "Od telegrafa do računara", dodatak "Politike", "Mi i naši partneri smo tu uz vas", 16. septembar 2003.

\* D. Stevanović, "Istaknute ličnosti Prvog srpskog ustanka", Politika, 29. decembar 2003.

nju "Politiku", kao što sam im knjižicom "Kad kažem novine" preporučio onu iz Miloševićevog vremena. Ne mogu da im stavim u izgled isti dobitak, ali jemčim da se trud i danas isplati. U svakom slučaju, nadam se da će im u traganju za istinom u današnjoj "Politici" korisno poslužiti moje iskušto takvog traganja od pre nekoliko godina.

30. decembar 2003

## Predgovor prvom izdanju

Kad kažem "Kad kažem novine", mislim na "Politiku". Na ovu današnju, u službi Miloševićevog režima. To su novine koje se umnogome razlikuju od onoga što je pod tim imenom ranije izlazilo. Tokom svoje duge istorije, "Politika" je uglavnom držala stranu vlastima, ali nikada nije bila toliko srasla s režimom kao danas. Ovaj list nikada nije bio šampion poštjenja i istinoljubivosti, ali nikada nije bilo toliko ljudi, koliko ih ima danas, koje je sramota da pišu za "Politiku", pa čak i da je čitaju. Zato kad kažem "Kad kažem novine" (skraćeno, KKN) mislim i na list koji baš i nije "Politika".

U člancima koji slede nudim primere čitanja KKN-a koji, nadam se, svedoče o tome da ono ne mora da bude, kako se o njemu obično misli, samo nekorisno i, uz to, pomalo odvratno preturanje po gomili laži. Uz malo istraživačke radoznalosti, čitanje KKN-a postaje poučna i zabavna lektira. Čak mislim da bi ta lektira morala biti obavezna za sve one koji hoće da steknu pouzdano znanje o tome ko i kako vlada današnjom Srbijom.

Istinljubivo čitanje KKN, koje ovde demonstriram i na koje druge nagovaram, dolazi do jedne granice. To je granica, namera, ideja, laži, podvala, jednom reči, granica do koje čovek uspeva da prati, da prepoznaće i da tumači smisao objavljenog u ovim novinama. Svakodnevna bujica stotina hiljada reči, koje tutnje novinskim stupcima, ponavljajući se, sudarajući se, rasprskavajući se, gomilajući se oko nekog imena ili neke lozinke moći i vlasti, može da zbuni i opčini čitaoca KKN-a, da kod njega izazove pravu malu vrtoglavicu, kojom je praćeno posmatranje neke spektakularne i zastrašujuće prirodne pojave. Može se reći da ove novine svoju ulogu režimskog glasila ostavruju ne samo tako što svemu o čemu pišu daju ili oduzimaju politički podoban smisao, nego

i tako što taj podoban smisao nude u prekomernoj, nepotrošivoj količini, pred kojom pamet zastaje.

Članke koji čine ovu knjižicu ne bih napisao da to od mene nije tražila Jelena Subotić, prenoseći mi poziv na saradnju Radija 92, koji je, posle proterivanja iz radnih prostorija u Beogradu i sa radio talasa u Jugoslaviji (mart 1999), jedno vreme našao utočište u sajber prostoru na adresi FreeB92.net. Tu su se ovi članci prvi put pojavili, između 22. maja i 4. avgusta 1999, dvojezično (na srpskom i engleskom), potpisani sa "Redovni čitalac štampe". Zatim ih je preuzeo list "Danas" (u četiri broja, od 17-18. jula do 7-8. avgusta 1999), gde su objavljeni s autorovim potpisom. Izdanje ovih članaka u obliku knjige omogućilo mi je da dodam jedan broj fusnota, što je, uz nekoliko stilskih intervencija, jedino po čemu se ovde objavljeni članci razlikuju od njihovih prethodnih verzija.

25. septembar 1999

## Povratak u Lepenski Vir

Mislim da novine, kao i drugi mediji, govore istinu. To važi i za novine u Srbiji pod Miloševićem i, od pre dva meseca, pod bombama. Nijedno od to dvoje nije isteralo istinu iz naših novina. Opstaje ona i u "Kad kažem novine", našem najstarijem i najuticajnijem listu. Koliko god da me pogadaju ovih dana učestale nestašice struje, vode i hleba, još više me muči pomisao da bih mogao da ostanem bez svog primerka "Kad kažem novine", a time bez jednog dragocenog izvora istine o našem sadašnjem životu. Ovo ne kažem ironično, paradoksa radi. Nije moj cilj da preokrećem uvreženo mišljenje da novine lažu i da u tome kod nas prednjače "Kad kažem novine". Lažu, nego šta!

Pa ipak, čak i u najlažljivijem listu istina izlazi na video, i to mnogo više nego što njegovi urednici i novinari mogu i da zamisle. Ima je tu ne samo mimo njihove volje, nego i uprkos njoj. Javlja se kao neželjeni, ali neizbežni višak informacija ili, kako bi se danas reklo, kao kolateralni efekat laganja. To, međutim, nije dovoljno da bi novine zaista govorile istinu. Kad im se ona omakne, kad se uhvati između redova, kad procuri, potrebno je da se nađe neko da je prepozna, da je prigrli, da je udomi. Na žalost, mnogi ljudi vole novine baš zato što ih lažu, tako da oni i najkрупnije istine na koje tu nađu spretno, ponekad gundajući, zaobilaze.

Drugi, koji neće da ih lažu, dižu ruke od novina i ostalih medija. Oni veruju da je istina, ako je uopšte ima, sigurno na nekom drugom mestu. Čude se kad me vide kako uporno, s najvećom pažnjom, kao da je reč o nekom proročkom za veštanju, čitam "Kad kažem novine". Ne veruju mi da ja tu trazim istinu, a još manje da je često i nađem. Možda će me ta sumnja podstaći da jednog dana napišem pledoaje za istraživanje istine u lažljivoj štampi. Zasad, mogu samo da naveadem primere koji pokazuju da se trud uložen u takvo istraži-

vanje isplati. Ponekad višestruko. Ponekad je on nagrađen pravim otkrovenjem.

Evo, mogu da se pohvalim da mi se posrećilo i da me je epifanijom jarke istine nagradilo čitanje jučerašnjeg broja "Kad kažem novine" (koji nosi datum 22. maj 1999). Nije bilo struje, novine sam čitao pri svetlosti sveće, čiji je otopljeni vosak kapao po njima, dok su iz mrklog mraka oko kuće dopirali odjeci dalekih eksplozija i nešto nalik na urlanje. A ja na 31. strani novina čitam članak u kome se odjednom i savršeno prepoznajem, ovako sa svećom, u Srbiji u mraku i strahu, jer tu se najozbiljnije govori o "mogućnosti jednog novog društveno-ekonomskog poleta naše zemlje na temeljima civilizacije Lepenskog Vira". Sad recite da novine lažu.

23. maj 1999

## Naš neprijatelj Satana

Većina ljudi u ratu ide oborenog pogleda. Gledaju šta ima da se pojede, čime da se operu i obrišu. To primaju psujući ili ēuteći, kao sramotu i poniženje. Ali, ima i onih za koje je rat prilika za uzlete u najveće visine, čiji se pogled uzdiže iznad jada i čemera ratne svakodnevice, preleće i preko političkih tema, da bi se zaustavio tek na najkrupnijim pitanjima ljudske sudbine. Zašto da ne? Žašto bi mi smetalo filozofsko, teološko, antropološko ili neko drugo metafizičko viđenje rata. Moje podozrenje prema ovoj metafizici i moje interesovanje za nju (koje, priznajem, inače nije veliko) izaziva samo to što je ona izuzetno dobro zastupljena na stranicama dnevnika "Kad kažem novine". Ima je tu skoro u svakom broju.

Na primer, u članku čijem se autoru omakao šaljiv naslov "Nebo nad nama je prazno", objavljenom u "Kad kažem novine" od 27. maja, preneto je mišljenje jednog našeg uvaženog filozofa da je duboki istorijski i filozofski uzrok bombardovanja Jugoslavije u tome što se "nešto dogodilo sa strukturom ljudskog uma", što je došlo do "otupljenosti sveta". To što ceh tog strukturalnog poremećaja i te otupljenosti plaćamo baš mi *hic et nunc*, uvaženi filozof pripisuje sudbinu. A pametan čovek zna da se protiv sudbine ne može. Ostaje nam samo da verujemo da ta sudbina nije slepa, nego da nam je nju dodelilo proviđenje, radi nekog samo njemu znanog tajanstvenog cilja. Zato tu sudbinu treba, kao što to čini i naš uvaženi filozof, zvati srpskim prokletstvom i srpskim poslanstvom. "Ovaj narod", veli on, "ima neko poslanstvo. Govoreći oporije, to poslanstvo bi se moglo nazvati prokletstvom. Po četvrti put u ovom veku istrajavamo u nečemu što ne može biti drugačije."\*

\* Ljubiša Petrov, "Savremeni varvari protiv iskonske civilizacije".

\* Mihajlo Đurić u članku Mirjane Ognjanović, "Filosofski odgovor na rat".

Slično njemu na stranicama "Kad kažem novine" razmišlja jedan književnik i novinar. Po njemu, ovo srpsko prokletstvo-poslanstvo traje od 1389. i on ga zove "srpskim raspećem", na kome Srbi mučenički istrajavaju jer imaju "veru u višu božansku pravdu koja je iznad ljudske". Ali ni srpski neprijatelji nisu obični ljudi. To su "sile mraka" udružene u dvočlani "pakleni savez", u sastavu: "sotona u obliju NATO-zveri i bog-monstrum u obliku SAD".\*

Na satansku, odnosno paklenu ili monstruoznu prirodu naših neprijatelja ukazuju, u člancima i intervjuima objavljenim u "Kad kažem novine", i mnogi drugi predstavnici metafizičkog pravca u tumačenju rata. Neprijatelji Srbije, kaže jedan pesnik i političar, "nose zlo u sopstvenom biću... pripadaju samom paklu"\*\*, a ako oni pobede, plaši nas drugi autor, po zanimanju istoričar, "na Zemljinoj lopti ostaće samo antihrist"\*\*\*. Treći, antropolog, misli da postoji slabašna nada da svet neće potpasti pod vlast satane, ako Srbi, braneći svoju ljudskost "živim štitovima", metom kao simbolom žrtvovanja, uspeju da dopru do preostale humanosti u sataninim slušama i tako "potisnu i preobraze zversko u neprijatelju"\*\*\*\*.

Đavo je Amerikanac. To je otkrio i u predavanju na Kolarcu izneo jedan "naš poznati filozof i esejista", kako je autor ovog otkrića predstavljen u "Kad kažem novine", koje opširno izveštavaju o njegovom predavanju. "Satana je", rekao je on, "u Americi očigledno duboko ukorenio svoju vlast, sad mu je ambicija vladavina nad celim svetom". Pri-

\* Ratomir Damjanović, "Američki kiklop", 28. maj 1999.

\*\* Milisav Milenković u članku Muharema Đurić, "Nebesko čudo", 23. maj 1999.

\*\*\* Nikola B. Popović, "Greh Evrope", 26. maj 1999.

\*\*\*\* Bojan Jovanović, "Prkosna meta", 29. maj 1999.

bližava se tragični kraj Evrope, zapadnoevropske civilizacije. Još se nekako drže samo Srbi, i u njihovo ime poznati filozof i esejista dovikuje paloj Evropi, posrnuolu svetu: "Više smo nego Evropa, mi smo svet, bolji deo sveta, svetlost sveta!"\*

Nije teško shvatiti zašto "Kad kažem novine" posvećuju pažnju i daju prostor ovim umovanjima s metafizičkim i teološkim pretenzijama. Ona su režimskoj propagandi korisna najviše zato što su naizgled s oně strane politike, nadahnuta čistim patriotizmom. Kad se tu tvrdi da je za sve, za rat, razaranje, pogibije, sramotu i stid, kriva sudbina, da smo žrtve od nas nezavisnog tragičnog sunovrata civilizacije i prevlasti Satane, onda je deplasirano, glupo, sitničavo pitati da li tu možda ima i nekih drugih, nama bližih, lakše prepoznatljivih krivaca i zlikovaca. Staviše, ova metafizičko-teološka umovanja obesmišljavaju i postavljanje pitanja odgovornosti naših neprijatelja za rat. Jer ako su oni u vlasti đavola i ako su zahvaćeni nekim nezaustavljivim i nepopravljivim sunovratom, čemu priča i o njihovoj odgovornosti. I njih je snašlo, kao i nas.

30. maj 1999

\* Dragan Nedeljković u članku B. Radivojše "Opet se javila veličanstvena energija našeg naroda", 28. maj 1999.

## Rokfeler i sedam čelavih glava

Ko, u stvari, vlada svetom? Amerika? NATO? Multinacionalne kompanije? Ne, niko od njih. To su mogli da saznači čitaoci "Kad kažem novine" zahvaljujući nizu članaka objavljenih poslednjih dana u ovom listu u kojima se govori o gospodarima sveta. Nisu oni među navedenima, niti našom planetom vlada ma koja vidljiva sila. Drugi su naši gospodari! Naš najstariji list obaveštava nas da svima nama, celim čovečanstvom, upravlja, konce naše sudbine drži u svojim rukama, i još se trudi da svoju vladavinu učvrsti i našu sudbinu zapečati, jedna nevidljiva, tajna svetska vlada. Na njenom čelu je grupa bogatih i moćnih zaverenika, željnih još većeg bogatstva i još veće moći. Urotili su se oni i protiv legalnih vlada i protiv priznatih crkava, protiv čoveka i protiv Boga.

Priča o svetskoj zaveri ima svoje folklorne, teološke i političke izvore. Njeni junaci mogu biti jezuiti i masoni, anarhisti i komunisti, fundamentalisti i satanisti, ali su to najčešće Jevreji. Stari mit o jevrejskoj uroti, oživljen u XIX i XX veku, poslužio je nacistima za opravdavanje istrebljenja Jevreja. Prema tom mitu, kako piše Norman Kon, jedan od njegovih najboljih poznavalaca, "postoji tajna jevrejska vlada koja, preko skrivenih agencija i organizacija rasutih širom sveta, kontroliše političke partije i vlade, novine i javno mnjenje, banke i ekonomski razvoj". Njen je cilj "da se postigne jevrejska dominacija nad čitavim svetom". Pišući o tome krajem šezdesetih godina, Kon je mogao da kaže da je "čitava ta priča skoro potpuno pala u zaborav".

Danas, naprotiv, izgleda da je dosta onih koji je otržu od zaborava. Ima je, na žalost, i u raspredanjima o takozvanoj "teoriji zavere", koja često i opširno prenose "Rekoh li

novine?". Tu izneta nagađanja o postojanju tajne svetske vlađe i niza njoj podređenih tajnih službi i organizacija stiču privid ozbiljnosti i verodostojnosti zahvaljujući tome što ih ozbiljno uzimaju i neki ovde poznati i zvanično uvaženi ljudi. Tako se (u broju od 30. maja) moglo pročitati da je i jedan naš uvaženi filozof i akademik, bivši ideolog vladajuće stranke, mišljenja da u teorijama zavere ima istine "budući da najvećim delom sveta vladaju tajne organizacije", kao što su Savet za spoljne poslove, Bilderberg grupa i Trilateralna komisija, i da one čine "tajnu svetsku vladu".

Istina, u ovim člancima ne govori se eksplicitno o Jevrejima, nego se zaverenici koji su usurpirali vlast nad planetom i stvorili "samozvanu svetsku supervladu" opisuju ili samo kao finansijski magnati, najmoćniji svetski bankari, vlasnici multinacionalnih kompanija, svetski priznati naučnici i politički lideri (na primer, u članku "Pakleni planovi grupe Bilderberg", 30. maj 1999), ili, mnogo slikovitije, ali i dalje bez nacionalne specifikacije, kao "ljudi sa žigom zveri", "mesije religije Novog doba", "sedam čelavih glava", "gregori – pali anđeli" (u seriji od tri članka, čiji naslovi vrede pomenu: "Nevidljiva vrhuška upravlja planetom", "Ko je ko u antihrišćanskoj zaveri" i "Ljudi sa žigom zveri", 4–6. jun).

O broju 666 kao "žigu zveri" dosta je pisano u našoj paranaučnoj i parapolitičkoj literaturi (na primer, u časopisu "Nostradamus" i u knjigama u svetu te literature poznatog pronalazača "svetlosne formule"), ali ne pamtim da je o tome ranije bilo reči u "Kad kažem novine". Izgledalo je da, bar kad je o toj vrsti ludila reč, naš najstariji list ne gubi glavu. Sada i njegovi čitaoci mogu da saznaču da su tri šestice simbol Antihrista i da ih njegove sluge proturaju gde god stignu, u šengenske pasoše, u kod BAR kojim se označava roba široke potrošnje, u piramidu u Luvru, koja je navodno sasta-

\* Norman Kon, *Poziv na genocid*, prev. Branislav Kovačević, Matica srpska, 1996, str. 9.

\* Mihailo Marković u članku B. Radivojše "Četvrti pokušaj osvajanja sveta", 30. maj 1999.

vljena od 666 elemenata. Ovo poslednje izveo je antihrist Fransoa Miteran, za čije je vladavine piramida podignuta, s ciljem da "simbolizuje grobnu hrišćanskog kraljevstva". Miteranovu vladavinu, kao pišu "Kad kažem", pretskazao je sam Nostradamus, kao vladavinu prvog od sedam čelavih gospodara sveta. Izgleda da oni danas potajno vladaju najrazvijenijim zemljama, jer j izvor našeg lista otkrio da "G u nazivu G-7 ne znači grupa, nego zapravo "gregori", a gregori su pali anđeli koji su se pobunili protiv Boga".

Ipak, ovi članci u "Rekoh li novine?", ne navaljujući, diskretno, navode čitaoca na zaključak da je antihrišćanska zavera skovana radi preuzimanja svetskog nebeskog i zemaljskog carstva (a što je najgore, i vlasti u našoj slobodo-ljubivoj zemlji) u stvari jevrejska ujdurma. Uloga glavnog, najmoćnijeg i, treba li uopšte reći, najbogatijeg zaverenika, nepriznatog vladara sveta, dodeljena je ovde čoveku po imenu David Rokfeler. Pored Rokfelerovih agencija, on je na čelu većine drugih tajanstvenih i zlokobnih organizacija, klubova i udruženja, o kojima "upućeni" u stvarno stanje sveta imaju šta da kažu čitaocima novina. Rokfeler je glavni u Savetu za spoljne odnose SAD, nalazi se na čelu Bilderberg grupe, osnivač je Trilateralne komisije. Ali najvažnija njegova funkcija je predsedavanje Komitetom 300, koji se u ovoj literaturi o svetskoj zaveri još zove i "Olimpijci". To je, kako objašnjava naš list, "gigantski oligarhijski i nadnacionalni oktopod, nadređen svim vladama sveta, obuhvata celu zemaljsku kuglu", a David Rokfeler je na njegovom čelu i to "sa titulom cara iz Davidova roda".

Sporadično oživljavanje priča o planetarnoj zaveri – a posebno najstarije i najopasnije od njih, mita o svetskoj zaveri Jevreja – pa makar to bilo u ovom za malo nedorečenom, indirektnom obliku, u kome se te priče javljaju na stranicama "Da li sam rekao novine?", uvek je upozoravajući znak da je sredina u kojoj se to događa u haosu. Taj haos se ogleda upravo u tome što se odgovornost za njega ne traži

razumno tamo gde bi se ona i mogla naći, nego ludo i, kako potvrđuje vekovna tradicija antisemitizma, uvek na nekom drugom, pogrešnom mestu, koje onda pogadaju mržnja i zločin.

7. jun 1999

## Budi heroj i čuti

Dan posle prestanka bombardovanja Jugoslavije, na naslovnoj strani "Kad kažem novine" (od 11. juna) osvanuo je krupan naslov "Narod je heroj". Tako je redakcija nasloviла tekst Miloševićevog obraćanja naciji povodom kraja rata. Izbor naslova nije bio težak, jer ga čini misao koju je autor teksta, to jest naš Predsednik, ponudio kao sažet opis ishoda rata: "Narod je heroj – možda tako glasi najkraći zaključak ovog rata". Ali, kao da je posumnjao da se mi, njegov narod, sponatno prepoznamo u herojskoj ulozi, pa je zato tom lapidarnom zaključku dodao još jednu rečenicu, kojom nam poručuje da svoj heroizam imamo da prihvatimo kao zadatak i obavezu, ma šta o tome mislili, ma kako se osećali: "Narod je heroj i zato mora da se oseća herojski, i zato treba da se ponaša herojski, a to znači dostojanstveno, plemenito i odgovorno". Znači i to da narod treba da prezire kukavice. Predsednik će nam pomoći da otkrijemo ko su i gde su oni i utešiće nas informacijom da su van zemlje i da ih ima malo, da "nikada u dosadašnjoj istoriji nismo imali manji broj kukavica, koje su pobegle iz zemlje da tamo, na sigurnom, sačekaju kraj rata". Ostaje da se vidi šta herojski narod treba i mora da odluči o njihovoј судбини: da im zabrani povratak u zemlju ili da ih pusti da se vrati, pa da ih popljuje.

Radosnu vest o narodu – heroju, čim su je čuli, požurili su da po narodu prošire razni tumači i zastupnici Miloševićeve politike. Da je heroj ponavljaju mu i teraju ga da u to poveruje u saopštenjima rukovodstava i izjavama portparola vladajuće i njoj bliskih stranaka (objavljenim u "Kad kažem novine" 11. i 12. juna). Tu se govori o "herojstvu celog našeg naroda", o njegovoj "herojskoj i patriotskoj genijalnosti", o "herojskom narodnom otporu". Izvesnih razlika ima samo u razumevanju izraza "naš narod". Milošević je bio jasan. Čak upadljivo jasan. Očigledno je da je njemu važno da odagna sumnju da su mu na srcu samo Srbi. "Kad govorim o našem narodu", objasnio je

on, "mislim na sve građane Jugoslavije i na sve nacionalnosti". Držeći se toga, jugoslovenski komunisti, u svojoj oceni govore o heroizmu "jugoslovenskog naroda". Međutim, politički komentator "Pomenuh li novine?" ne obazire se na to i "heroizam naroda" nedvosmisleno pripisuje samo Srbima, objašnjavajući da je to "dominantna ideja među Srbima na koju je posebno ukazivao još i Jovan Cvijić". "Naš narod" je ovde srpski narod, a takva je i nacija, sa sabornošću kao središtem identiteta. "Ako smo se u ovom ratu", piše komentator, "boreći se za očuvanje Kosmeta, borili za nacionalni identitet, onda ne treba smetnuti s um da je, pored istine i pravde, centralni element tog identiteta i – srpska sabornost". Da li ovakvo pisanje našeg lista treba protumačiti kao znak neslaganja sa Miloševićevom politikom, kao srpsku nacionalističku interpretaciju njegove poruke svim građanima Jugoslavije? Naravno, pitanje je čisto retoričko.

U Miloševićevom govoru naciji pominju se i "heroji koji su dali svoje živote u odbrani otadžbine", uz obećanje da će "njihova imena biti objavljena u celini", a u izjavama i člancima povodom tog govora herojstvo se pripisuje i našoj vojsci i policiji. Upadljivo je da u ovom Miloševićevom govoru o herojima nema herojskih ličnosti. Nema ih ni u govorima i izjavama drugih srpskih političara o ratu, niti ih je tokom proteklih ratnih nedelja igde bilo. Nisu se pojavili ni Dragan, ni Arkan, ni Giška, ni major Tepić, \*\* niti neko njima

\* Radivoje Petrović, "Moralni svetionik osramoćenog sveta", 12. jun 1999.

\*\* "Kapetan Dragan" je bilo konspirativno ime jednog vojnog instruktora srpskih paravojnih jedinica na početku rata u Hrvatskoj (1992); "Arkan" je nadimak Željka Ražnatovića, osnivača Srpske dobrovoljačke garde, koja je učestvovala u ratu u Hrvatskoj i Bosni (1992-1995); "Giška" je nadimak Đorda Božovića, komandanta Srpske garde, koja je učestvovala u ratu u Bosni, gde je Božović poginuo (1991). Pre rata u bivšoj Jugoslaviji, sva trojica su bili osuđivani ili traženi u Jugoslaviji i u inostranstvu zbog raznih kriminalnih radnji, a na početku tog rata u novinama i drugim medijima u Srbiji slavljeni su kao novi srpski ratni junaci. Major Tepić je bio oficir bivše JNA, koji je poginuo u ratu u Hrvatskoj; posthumno je odlikovan ordenom narodnog heroja.

nalik. Jedini čovek kome su tokom ovog rata pripisivane herojske osobine bio je Milošević. Ishod rata opisuje se sada u novinama kao njegov trijumf, kao rezultat njegove "hrabre i mudre politike", kako je ta politika nazvana u saopštenju Saveza penzionera Srbije. Patriotski savez Jugoslavije našao je u svojim redovima vešto pero da sroči poruku Miloševiću u kojoj stoji da je narodni i Miloševićev heroizam jedno te isto: "Vaše delo i napor simbol su jedinstva i heroizma našeg naroda" (12. jun).

Teško je poverovati da našem Predsedniku ne gode ovakvi komplimenti. Ipak, ostaje jak utisak da on ne želi da zadrži za sebe zaslugu i slavu za, ako je verovati njemu i njegovima, u suštini pobednički ishod rata, a još manje da prihvati samo za sebe priznanja za lepe perspektive razvoja zemlje koje taj ishod obećava. Milošević radije ustupa venac slave i pobjede celom narodu, zadržavajući za sebe samo skromnu ulogu vođe koji je, krećući u rat protiv sveta i izlažući zemlju višenedeljnog razornom bombardovanju, samo udovoljavao nezadrživim herojskim porivima svog naroda. Time hoće reći da bi i svako drugi na njegovom mestu tako isto morao da postupi.

"Nesrećan je narod kome su potrebni heroji", rekao je na jednom mestu Hegel. Nemački filozof nije mogao znati da će doći vreme totalitarnih režima i populizma kad će se pojaviti još nesrećniji narodi, oni kojima je potrebno da sami budu heroji.

14. jun 1999

## U žetvi i pred žetvama

Neke stvari postaju upadljive baš zato što su iznenada gurnute u zapećak. To je slučaj sa ovogodišnjim Vidovdanom. Posle deset godina slavljenja 28. juna, dana Kosovske bitke, kao najvećeg nacionalnog i državnog praznika, srpska vlast je odjednom od njega skoro potpuno digla ruke. Ranijih godina, danima pre i posle 28. juna, režimske "Kad kažem novine" bile su pune izveštaja o raznim vidovdanskim svečanostima, manifestacijama, akademijama, opelima, molebnima, izložbama, takmičenjima i drugim priredbama organizovanim u čast 28. juna. Svake godine je tu bilo bezbroj podrobnih opisa proslava Vidovdana širom zemlje, opširnih navoda rodoljubivih misli političkih, verskih i književnih poglavara o svetoj srpskoj zemlji, koju Srbi, kako im kosovski zavet nalaže, moraju da brane po cenu života. Ove godine ništa od toga. Apstinencija režima od Vidovdana utoliko je upadljivija što pada na okruglu, 10. godišnjicu gigantskog slavlja 28. juna 1989. na Gazimestanu, koje je bilo upriličeno kao simbolično ustoličenje Miloševića u ulozi novog srpskog vođe i kosovskog osvetnika. I taj jubilej je prošao kao da ga nije ni bilo, pa se tako niko zvaničan, a time i niko u "Kad kažem", nije setio ni "istorijskog" govora koji je tom prilikom održao novi vođa, da bi svom narodu poručio da se nalazi "u bitkama i pred bitkama", koje "nisu oružane, mada ni takve još nisu isključene".

Pre deset godina "Rekoh li novine?" su o vidovdanskom slavlju pisale u tekstovima čiji su naslovi, kako je na jednom mestu zapazio Aleksandar Nenadović, "Štampani slovima većim od onih kojima su najveći svetski listovi obaveštavali javnost da je počeo Drugi svetski rat".<sup>6</sup> Ove godine samo nekoliko jedva primetnih članaka i pomena Vidovdana, kao da je redakcija lista, posvećujući malo prostora i toj temi, htela da izide u

<sup>6</sup> Aleksandar Nenadović, "Politika' u nacionalističkoj oluji", u: Nebojša Popović (ur.), *Srpska strana rata*, Beograd, 1996, str. 603.

susret i nekim sasvim specifičnim potrebama dve grupe svojih čitalaca, ljubitelja istorije i pravoslavnih vernika. Samo jedan članak o Vidovdanu objavljen je uoči praznika, u broju od 27. juna, i to u rubrici "Iz naše prošlosti", samo jedan i na dan praznika, ali sad u rubrici "Za pravoslavne vernike".

Sutradan, u broju od 29. juna, jedva nešto više. Istina, tu se Vidovdan pominje i kao praznik od šireg nacionalnog značaja, ali mu se sad pridaje nov smisao. Više se u vezi s njim skoro uopšte ne pominju bitke i junaci, niti umiranje za otadžbinu, niti Lazareva kletva, nego se o njemu odjednom piše kao da je to neki praznik mira, ljubavi i plodnosti. S tim novim miroljubivim likom Vidovdan se obreo i na prvoj strani lista, u članku "Prvi otkosi pali na Vidovdan", koji nas ne poziva, kao u ranijim prilikama, da se setimo junaka koje je smrt pokosila na Kosovu, nego da se obradujemo početku žetve u Srbiji i našem budućem blagostanju. Izveštaj o vidovdanskim svečanostima u unutrašnjosti zemlje, objavljen na 16. strani najsjajnijim slovima, i to pod naslovom dostojnim Centra za antiratnu akciju – "Za budućnost bez ratova", obaveštava nas da je Vidovdan u Kruševcu obeležen otkrivanjem spomenika "Majka Grčka – Majka Srbija", čiji je autor Milić od Mačve. "Dve majke", objašnjava se u članku, "zagrljene u velikom monolitu, simbolizuju prijateljstvo dva naroda i celom svetu nose poruku pravde, ljubavi i mira među narodima". Da bi istakao miroljubiv karakter proslave, novinar nas obaveštava da su "spomenik otkrili mališani iz kruševačkih vrtića". Poseban članak izveštava čitaoce da je Vidovdan miroljubivo i veselo proslavljen i u Mesnoj zajednici "Borča tri", gde su povodom praznika organizovana dva takmičenja, turnir u malom fudbalu "Trofej Vidovdana" i nadmetanje u spremanju riblje čorbe. Uz članak ide i fotografija: alas pored kotlića, a ispod potpis "Čija će čorba biti najukusnija?". Pitanje nad kojim se valja zamisliti.

Nit pas kosku glođe nit je drugom daje. Nā taj poslovično poznat način ponešla se vlast, to jest njen najvažniji

list, prema ovogodišnjim proslavama Vidovdana koje je organizovala konkurenčija. Patrijarhova vidovdanska liturgija u Gračanici i njegovo opelo na Gazimestanu dobili su u "Kad pominjem novine" desetak redova na 15. strani, a isto toliko, ali na još zabačenijem mestu, dobio je i SPO, kome je Vidovdan "krnsna slava". Najgore su, ipak, prošli princ Aleksandar Karađorđević i njegov Krunski savet, koji su Vidovdan proslavljali u manastiru Podlastva u Grblju. Pominju se u nekoliko reči, uz druge seoske i gradske priredbe u čast Vidovdana. To mesto počinje malom nevinom rečenicom: "I u Grblju je bilo svečano".

Uместo bitke Milošević je Srbima na ovaj Vidovdan obećao žetvu. Šta bi i mogao drugo, kad se danas do Gazimestana može doći samo u pratnji KFORA, a naš predsednik ni tako. Jedini šef neke države koji je ovih dana boravio na Kosovu i tamo govorio bio je Havel. Slušali su ga nemački vojnici. Pustimo to, kaže sad Milošević, da vidimo šta je sa žetvom. Nalazimo se u žetvi i pred žetvama. Ali, bojim se da će taj njegov manevar samo da izazove paniku, jer će ljudi – kad vide da je Milošević počeo da brine o žetvi – početi za nju ozbiljno da strepe. Sa njim ni oružane žetve nisu isključene.

30. jun 1999

## **Neočekivano duhovno bogatstvo**

Već godinama u javnoj komunikaciji u Srbiji traje ekspanzija reči "duhovno", koja se tu pojavila kao nova lozinka političke korektnosti, namesto nekada važećih "klasnog" i "idejnog". Kad sam pre četiri godine prvi put pisao o tome, činilo mi se da je ta ekspanzija na vrhuncu. Prevario sam se. I tada ste teško mogli da se krećete prostorima javne reči a da ne ugazite u "duhovno", ali u međuvremenu je nadiranje ove naizgled krhkog i benignog reči dostiglo razmere prave poplave. Što je najgore, nema znakova da se ona povlači. Pre bi se reklo da je nivo "duhovnog" (duhovnostaj) u javnom govoru u Srbiji u tendenciji daljeg porasta. Prema rezultatima mojih povremenih merenja, koja su ograničena na nivo učestanosti "duhovnog" na stranicama "Kad kažem novine", ove godine je indeks (prosečna učestanost ovih reči u jednom broju lista), sa 2,5, koliko je iznosio februara 1996. godine, porastao na 4,3. Na primer, u toku jedne nedelje, od 29. maja do 4. juna, čitaoca ovog lista "duhovno" je zapljušnulo u izrazima: "duhovno stanje", "duhova dimenzija", "duhovna funkcija", "duhovno nasilje", "duhovno zračenje", "duhovni vašar", "duhovna avantura", "duhovna snaga", "duhovni prostor", "duhovna gimnastika", "duhovna institucija", "duhovnost čoveka", "duhovno nikad jadniji", "duhovni rang", "duhovno stanje", "duhovna komunikacija", "duhovni korenji", "duhovni podsetnik", "duhovna trauma", "duhovno uništavanje", "duhovni otpor", "duhovne mogućnosti", "duhovni temelji", "duhovni ritam", "duhovni centar", "duhovne poruke" i "duhovna energija".

Ovo oduhovljavanje javnog govora najpre se ustalilo u centrima političke moći, kao znak raspoznavanja, odnosno kao jedna od obaveznih figura u govorima svih iole važnih nosilaca vlasti, a posebno u tzv. "oblasti kulture". Nedavno je predsednik SANU ponudio Srbima da, kao kompenzaciju za propalo političko ujedinjenje, prihvate "duhovnu homoge-

nizaciju" i "duhovnu čvrstinu"<sup>6</sup>. Ministar kulture Srbije proteklih nedelja često je govorio o "duhovnom otporu" srpskog naroda agresiji NATO, čime je zaslužio kompliment jednog čitaoca našeg lista, koji ga je nazvao "uvek produhovljeni ministar"<sup>7</sup>. Nastavljući da se širi prostorom javne reči, talas "duhovnog" danas već plavi i neke njegove periferne delove. Osvojivši najpre važne govornice, velike teme i svečane prilike, on sada dopire i do svakodnevnog jezika, mada i tu najpre napada govor o kulturi. Tako je prodaja knjiga na tezgama u Knez Mihajlovoj ulici u Beogradu u novinskom članku postala "duhovni vašar", odnosno "duhovna avantura" (30. maj); jedna knjiga sabranih intervju pretvorila se u "zbirku duhovnih podsetnika" (2. jun), jedna predstava grupe glumaca ametera dobila je naziv "duhovna gimnastika" (1. jun), a izložba jedne mlade slikarke "duhovna mašina" (24. jun).

Među žrtvama poplave "duhovnog" nalaze se termini koji pripadaju osnovnom rečniku rasprave o državi i društvu, kao što su "političko", "socijalno", "pravno", "demokratsko". Oni sada tonu kao ostaci za "duhovnike" nedopustivo sitničavog, prizemnog i banalnog govora o suštinama, o biću, o duhu, o identitetu nacije. Isto tako prolaze i "intelektualno", "etičko" i "racionalno", koje preplavljuje tobože nadmoćna metafizika "duhovnog". Ipak, prva i najveća žrtva prodora "duhovnog" u prostor javne komunikacije u Srbiji je "materialno". Ono nije potpuno zbrisano. Ostalo je da bi prizori poraza, smrti, bede i ruševina svedočili o ništavnosti materije i svemoći duha. Prema političkoj filozofiji naših "duhovnika", koju u znatnoj meri prihvata i u delo sprovodi srpski režim, osećaj posedovanja "duhovne" nadmoći, koji prožima srpsku vladajuću elitu, vredi gubitka ovozemaljskih radosti i bogatstava, gubitka koji danas srpski narod, tobože svesno i

<sup>6</sup> U članku A. C., "Godišnja skupština SANU. Traganje za istinom", 25. jun 1999.

<sup>7</sup> Branko Kosić, "Strani natpisi u našim autobusima", 9. jun 1999.

dostojanstveno, podnosi. Jedan od uticajnih predstavnika "duhovnog" pravca u srpskoj kulturi i politici pisao je nedavno o tome u časopisu "Dobrovoljački glasnik", što bi promaklo mojoj pažnji da se Tanjug nije potrudio da emituje vest o tome i da "Kad kažem novine" nisu požurile da je prenesu. Hvala im. Jer tu se mogu pročitati i ove poučne misli filozofa Mihaila Markovića o napadu NATO pakta na Jugoslaviju: "Ko god je brinuo zbog mogućih efekata potrošačke civilizacije, može da oseti vidno olakšanje. Duhovne vrednosti su sačuvane. Materijalno smo osiromašili, ali smo se duhovno neočekivano obogatili" (27. jun).

Bogme, što se mene tiče, nije bilo neočekivano.

6. jul 1999

## Ubistveni zraci ironije

Od onih koji su ih poveli u rat za Kosovo Srbi ovih dana dobijaju ono što su zaslужili: odlikovanja. Prinos te vrste plodova rata ovog puta je bio izuzetno dobar. Odlično su rodile i stare (nasleđene od prethodne države) i nove (uveđene prošlog decembra) sorte ordena, medalja, plaketa, venaca, znački i drugih odličja. Dobar rod odlikovanja snizio im je cenu, približio ih je mogućnostima običnog čoveka, pa ih ima za svačiji ratni podvig. Šef države je već razdelio nekoliko hiljada odličja. Spisak imena jednog dela njegovim ukazom odlikovanih policajaca, kolektiva i pojedinaca proteže se na dve strane današnjeg izdanja "Kad kažem novine" (11. jul).

Odlikovanja su data, kako stoji u obrazloženju objavljenom uz vest o Predsednikovom ukazu, "za poseban doprinos i izuzetne rezultate u odbrani zemlje od agresije". Padaju u oči da su se, sudeći prema spisku odlikovanih, takvim doprinosima i rezultatima, dakle, ratnim zaslugama, istakle i mnoge kulturne institucije, pozorišta, galerije, orkestri, domovi kulture, izdavačka preduzeća, muzeji, umetnička udruženja. Među njima su i neke najvažnije kulturne institucije u Srbiji: Beogradska filharmonija, Narodni muzej, Narodno pozorište, izdavačko preduzeće "Prosveta", dva najveća umetnička udruženja: UKS i ULUS. Svi su od Predsednika dobili prošle godine ustanovljen orden "Vuk Karadžić" za dostignuća u kulturi. On je sada prvi put dodeljen, ali u svojstvu priznanja za ratne zasluge.

Očigledno je da je Miloševiću stalo da pokaže da je u poslednjem ratu uz sebe, pored vojske i policije, imao i simbolično možda najvažniji deo Srbije, koji čini njena kultura. I pre i za vreme poslednje ratne epizode, "nacionalni radnici u kulturi", bilo da je reč o Miloševićevim službenicima ili o dobrovolicima, svim silama su se trudili da sukob srpskog

režima sa svetom zbog stanja na Kosova predstave kao borbu duhom nadmoćne srpske kulture protiv tehnički razvijenog, ali kulturno inferiornog neprijatelja. Tako se sada i ishod rata prikazuje kao da je reč o uspešnom završetku neke olimpijade znanja na kojoj je Srbija najviše pokazala, na kojoj smo, kako se nedavno izrazio Predsednik Srbije Milan Milutinović, "znanjem i umećem nadvisili višestruko jačeg agresora" (KKN, 1. jul). Srbi su se navodno varvarstvu svojih neprijatelja uspešno oduprli sredstvima civilizacije, na rakete i bombe uzvratili su dostojanstvom tradicije, na razaranje gradova i ubijanje civila nadmoćno odgovorili knjigom i pesmom. Tako ratujući, oni su, prema rečima Jovana Zebića, jednog od potpredsednika Savezne vlade, ne samo odbranili sebe i svoju zemlju, nego su učinili i podvig od univerzalnog značaja, jer su spasli "obraz svetske civilizacije". "Na taj način", kaže Zebić, "naš narod je udario u samu bit agresije i rata. Reč je o napadu na zlo u samom njegovom začetku i to će, nadam se, biti veliki dobitak u ljudskom i međunarodnom razvoju potrebnom za stvaranje i utemeljenje svetskog mira" (KKN, 8. jul).

Originalan doprinos širenju ideje o pobedonosnom sukobu srpske kulture i modernih varvara u proteklom ratu dao je Željko Simić, ministar kulture Srbije. On je izjavio da su Srbi u tom ratu raspolagali jednim moćnim oružjem nepoznatim neprijatelju – radijacijom duha. "Radijacija srpskog duha", rekao je ministar, a novine prenele, "bila je jača od radijacije agresorskih bombi". Od njega smo saznali i to da je taj ubistveno zračeći srpski duh u stvari duh ironije: "U istorijskim hronikama nije dosad zabeleženo da je jedan narod u vreme bezočne agresije bio sposoban da skupi svu svoju intelektualnu snagu i stvaralačku moć i da se neprijatelju odupre ironijom koju on nema u svom istorijskom pamćenju jer nema tradiciju" (KKN, 7. jul). To je ministar Simić izgovorio na svečanoj sednici Kulturno-prosvetne zajednice Srbije, na kojoj su dodeljene "zlatne značke" Zajednici "zaslužnim poslenicima u kulturi". Prvo ime na listi dobitnika tog

priznanja je ime generala Nebojše Pavkovića. Da li je to na-goveštaj da oružje ironije možda i nije samo obična metafora, nego da je to sofisticirano borbeno sredstvo u arsenalu naše vojske? Ili je – što izgleda bliže istini – dodeljivanje priznanja posle izgubljenog rata generalima, za zasluge u kulturi, a glumcima, pesnicima, muzičarima i ostalim umetnicima, za zasluge u odbrani, primer takozvane ironije istorije?

Nezgodna je, neočekivana je ironija! Teško se može kontrolisati i usmeravati. I mnogi sasvim sveži primjeri to potvrđuju. Recimo, da li je Predsednik Srbije Milan Milutinović bio svestan snažnog, takoreći ubistvenog zračenja ironije u rečima koje je izgovorio prilikom nedavne posete Kuršumliji: "Sačuvali smo Kosovo... A to što je trenutno pod protektoratom Ujedinjenih nacija, to je isto zasluga ovog naroda, jer smo se borili da dođe do toga"? Da li su njegovi domaćini u Nišu, rukovodioci Duvanske industrije i Nišavskog okruga, bili svesni ironije kad su Milutnovića, posle obilaska u ratu stradalih delova grada, "darivali albumom slika porušenih objekata i ikonom raspeća Hristovog" i da li je novinar koji je o tom svečanom događaju izvestio čitaoce "Kad kažem novine" (KKN, 1. jul) namerno koristio ubistvene zrake ironije kad je napisao da je te darove Predsednik dobio "u znak zahvalnosti za sve što je učinio na razvoju ove fabrike i ovog kraja"?

14. jul 1999

## S dušom u nosu

Poznavaoci narodne duše kod nas su uvek bili na ceni. Jedno vreme su im konkursali stručnjaci za klasnu svest, ali njihovu reputaciju nikad nisu ozbiljno ugrozili. Danas su oni koji narod znaju u dušu opet bez premca. Posao im cveta, svi ih traže. Nema dana da se neko od njih ne oglasi na stranicama "Kad kažem novine". Političari i vojnici se pozivaju na svoje iskustveno poznavanje narodne duše, pesnici, popovi, psihijatri i drugi naučnici govore kao kompetentni stručnjaci. Ali, svi su saglasni u tome da se pravi smisao onoga što se danas događa u Srbiji otkriva samo uvidom u dušu naroda. U zrcali raznolikih i haotičnih ratnih, političkih i drugih događaja ona je, kažu ovi znalci, jedini putokaz istine. Samo dobro pozvanjanje srpske duše – odnosno narodnog duha, karaktera, rasnog supstrata, bića, genetskog koda, arhetipa ili identiteta, kako se narodna duša danas još naziva – omogućava da se uvidi da je vlast u Srbiji upravo onakava kakva jedino i može da bude, to jest da Srbi imaju vlast kakvu im duša želi. Ono što radi voda, odlučujući o ratu i miru, o životu i smrti, samo je naizgled stvar njegovog izbora i njegove odgovornosti, a u suštini je nizbežno, imperativno ostvarivanje najdubljih naloga narodne duše.

Ko zna šta narod nosi u dnu duše zna odgovore na glavna pitanja. Zašto je Srbija danas siromašnija nego ikad ranije? Zato što njena duša neće bogatstvo. Govoreći o tome, Slavko Vejinović, zamenik ministra za Srbe izvan Srbije, navodi jedno mišljenje o Srbima izrečeno krajem prošlog veka, po kome "Srbin daje na sve strane i daje po srcu, a ne po razumu" (KKN, 1. jul). Zapad uzalud dosađuje Srbima nudeći im materijalnu pomoć, kaže potpredsednik vlade Milovan Bojić, jer "naš narod dobro zna da nije sve u novcu" (KKN, 7. jul). Zašto su Srbi morali da se masovno isele iz Hrvatske i iz Bosne i zašto danas odlaze sa Kosova? Zato što su Srbima "seobe postale sudbina" (KKN, 1. jul). Zašto Srbi danas

ratuju? Zato što im je to u prirodi, što oni uvek ratuju. "Dok se koło srpske istorije uporno vrti ukrug", objašnjava u razgovoru za novine jedan psihijatar, "muškarci odlaze na front i žene ostaju kod kuće da čeznu i pate za njima". Zbog toga "srpska žena, kao i nekad, danas ponovo ima zadatku da bude stub podrške vojniku i mora biti spremana na sve" (KKN, 14. jun). Psihijatra dopunjava geograf, predsednik Srpskog geografskog društva, koji, pozivajući se na Cvijića, tvrdi da u Srbiji između naroda i vojske oduvek postoji "potpuna zajednica i uzajamna ljubav", a ta ljubav nije nešto "školsko, knjiško, naučeno, već potiče iz konsolidovane narodne duše koja je oduvek ujedinjavala naš narod" (KKN, 20. jul).

Ljubav prema oružju i vojsci obično se tumači kao simptom autoritarnog karaktera, pomisliće neki obavešteni čitalac novina. Za pravo mu daje jedna novinarka, koja vrlo kritički analizira sklonost ka autoritarnosti koju ispoljavaju njeni súnarodnici. Ona bez uvijanja kaže: "Srbi su vrlo autoritarni narod." I nastavlja: "Pokazuje to više istraživanja objavljenih u poslednje vreme. Istraživanje o vrednostima i društvenim promenama među mladima otkriva da u toj populaciji raste broj autoritaraca. Srpska mladež više veruje autoritarnom vodi nego zakonima.... Citirani rezultati objašnjavaju žilavost SPS-ove vlasti. Između autoritarnog vođe i naroda koji voli čvrstu ruku postoji duboka saglasnost. Diktatorski Milošević bio bi pravi poglavar za autoritarno raspoložene Srbe samo da njegova vlast nije tako otvoreno krala.... Veći korak nazad prema autoritarnosti, koji su Srbi napravili za deset godina, rezultat je uporne indoktrinacije, ispiranja mozga preko medija i na svaki drugi način... Dajući prednost tradicionalnim institucijama nad novim civilnim pokretima Srbija se prilično razlikuje od zapadnih evropskih zemalja. Takva haotična situacija u kojoj se želja za socijalnom pravdom meša sa čežnjom prema čvrstoj ruci pogodna je za sve scenarije."

Ne verjete da je ovako nešto moglo da bude objavljeno u "Čim kažem novine"? U pravu ste: nije moglo. O autoritarnim

Srbima može se govoriti u ovim novinama samo kao o laži koju je smislila srpska peta kolona. Jer zna se ko su autoritari: naši neprijatelji. "Ovaj rat je pokazao", kaže jedan profesor sociologije na Filozofskom fakultetu u Beogradu, "slobodarsko biće našeg naroda, ali i podaništvo masa u zemljama agresora". To, dodaje on, "protivreči našim sorošovcima", koji potenciraju autoritarnu ertu u našem mentalitetu\*.

Međutim, članak o autoritarnom narodu nisam izmislio. On je zaista objavljen u našem listu (KKN, 9. jul), koji ga je preuzeo iz programa radija "Slobodna Evropa". Njegov autor je hrvatska novinarka Jelena Lovrić. Samo u članku nije reč o Srbima nego o Hrvatima. U citiranim mestima ja sam samo jednu stvar promenio: umesto Hrvatske, Hrvata, Tuđmana i HDZ-a stavio sam Srbiju, Srbe, Miloševića i SPS. Možda je i to bilo nepotrebno. Jer mogućnost čitanja članka Jelene Lovrić na koju ukazuje moja mala intervencija vidljiva je i bez nje. To je mogućnost da se primeti da nešto što bi trebalo da važi samo za Hrvate (bar takvo važenje mu namenjuju "Kad kažem novine", dajući članku Jelene Lovrić naslov "Kakav su Hrvati narod") skoro u svemu važi i za Srbe, a sigurno i za neke druge narode i prilike u kojima oni žive. To je, istovremeno, i mogućnost da se razume da tobože rodoljubiva naklapanja o urođenoj i fatalnoj srpskoj sklonosti prema odricanju, žrtvovanju i ratu u stvari služe održavanju i opravdavanju opšte neodgovornosti i raspojasanosti, a posebno neodgovorne i nasilničke vlasti, i da pravi odgovor na kitnjaste priče o narodnoj duši nudi samo ozbiljna analiza ideologije i prakse vlasti koja narodu vadi dušu. Tako uspešno i tako dugo da on danas jedva diše. Živi, kako se kaže, s dušom u nosu.

21. jul 1999

\* Miodrag Ranković u članku B. Radivojše "Veliki žele podeljeni Balkan", 19. jul 1999.

## Čudo u Francuskoj 7

Neki srpski pesnici misle da ih samo čudo može spasti. Jedan od njih, Matija Bećković, obratio se za pomoć Srpskoj pravoslavnoj crkvi, instituciji kompetentnoj za čudesna spasenja. Crkva je molbu uslišila i odlučila da molioca, ali i sve druge srpske pesnike, stavi pod zaštitu hilandarske ikone Bogorodice poznate pod imenom Trojeručica, kojoj se pripisuje velika čudotvorna moć. Kako su izvestile "Kad kažem novine", Trojeručica je odabrana da bude "zaštitnica i slava srpskih pesnika" na osnovu Bećkovićevog mišljenja da je njena treća ruka u stvari "ruka srpskih pesnika i da je njome ispisano sve srpsko pesništvo". Uz pesnike, čudotvorna ikona dobila je zadatak da štiti i ostale vrste srpskih književnika, jer se uzima da su svi oni nastali od pesnika. Obredno instaliranje čudotvorne zaštite izvedeno je u sedištu Udruženja književnika Srbije u Francuskoj 7, koje se u novinskim člancima o tom događaju zove "dom srpskih pisaca". Najpre su njegove "odaje" propisno okađene i osvećene, sećen je i slavski kočač, a na zid jedne sale okačena je zaštitna ikona. Uz ovu meru kolektivne zaštite pesnika, svima njima je preporučeno da se i individualno stave pod okrilje čudotvorne ikone. Udruženje u celini štiti velika zidna ikona, a članove pojedinačno protežiraju stene ikonice. Naš list je preneo i preporuku u tom smislu, koju je kolegama pesnicima dao Bećković, kao čovek koji je sa nadležnim u Crkvi stvar dogovorio: "Svaki srpski pesnik držaće ikonicu Čudotvorke iz Hilandara na pisaćem stolu"\*\*.

Čega se to srpski pesnici iz Francuske 7 boje? Od koga im preti opasnost? Šta se to tako opasno i pogibeljno nadneulo nad glave naših pesnika i drugih u UKS organizovanih umetnika reči da je Crkva morala da im pritekne u pomoć i da preduzme jednu takoreći radikalnu meru radi njihovog

\*\* Mirjana Kuburović, "Trojeručica zaštitnica srpskih pesnika", 24. jul 1999.

obezbeđenja i zaštite, čije je donošenje Bećković nazvao "velikim datumom naše Crkve, kulture i poezije"?

Nije lako odgovoriti na ova pitanja. Ono što znamo o položaju pesnika i književnika u današnjoj Srbiji, a posebno onih okupljenih oko Bećkovića i Rakitića, nekadašnjeg i sadašnjeg predsednika UKS, ne pomaže nam da otkrijemo šta je moglo da ih podstakne da od Crkve zatraže jednu tako spektakularnu meru zaštite. Naprotiv, sve govori o tome da su poslednjih desetak godina pesnici i drugi književnici u Srbiji ne samo bezbedni i zaštićeni nego i izuzetno cenjeni i traženi. Toliko da bi danas bilo teško naći zemlju u kojoj oni imaju tako dobru proštu kao ovde. Nalaze se na čelu nekih važnih nacionalnih institucija, drže neke od glavnih poluga vlasti, predvode neke od najvažnijih političkih partija. Bećkovićeve stihove podjednako hvale rukovodioци SPS-a i vladike SPC-a, pevaju ih uz gusle na folklornim priredbama i recituju na vojnim paradama. U njegovo i Rakitićevo udruženje književnika, nekoliko nedelja pre ikone Trojeručice, stiglo je jedno veliko priznanje od vlasti: Milošević ga je odlikovao ordenom "Vuk Karadžić" za junačko držanje tokom poslednje ratne epizode. A ni tom ordenu ne može se poreći zaštitnička moć.

Nema sumnje da piscima iz Francuske 7 osećaj sigurnosti i zaštićenosti uliva i brižna pažnja s kojom "Kad kažem novine" prenose sve što oni umiju da smisle i izvedu. Dobar primer za to je i ovaj događaj s Trojeručicom. Nigde kao u ovom nezvaničnom organu SPS-a i JUL-a nije tako podočno i opširno pisano o stavljaju srpskih pisaca pod zaštitu "hilanderske Čudotvorke". Kad se sve to zna, onda nema ničeg neobičnog u tome što se danas u Srbiji ambiciozni i prestižni ljudi raznih zanimanja (sveštenici, oficiri, biznismeni, političari, novinari, lekarji) trude da sklope i negde štampaju bar jednu zbirčicu pesama ili priča i da se, ako ikako mogu, učlane u UKS.

Pa u čemu je onda problem? Šta to pesnike muči? Šta im je? Neće vam to reći ni oni koji su čudotvornu zaštitu

Trojeručice tražili i primili, Bećković i Rakitić, ni predstavnik onih koji su zaštitu odobrili, otac Petar Luković, starešina Saborne crkve. Oni to ne znaju i naglašavaju da ne znaju. Ne znaju i ističu da ne znaju zašto je zaštita tražena, niti zašto je odobrena, čak ni ko je stvar odbrio. Bećković samo zna da je za to "tek sad došlo vreme", jer se "ništa na ovom svetu ne dešava slučajno" (KKN, 24. jul). Ne poriče da je on pokrenuo postupak stavljanja pesnika pod zaštitu Trojeručice, ali ne ume da kaže zašto je to učinio, kao što ne zna i poziva nas da obratimo pažnju na to da ne zna ni to ko je u stvari njegovu molbu uslišio. "Ovaj datum upisan je u kalendar crvenim slovima", kaže on u izjavi za KKN, "i ko zna ko je odlučio da tako bude". Slično njemu, i Rakitić o događaju s Trojeručicom govori kao da je reč o nečem potpuno neочекivanom i ničim izazvanom, o nekom tajanstvenom radosnom znaku koji se pojavio ko zna kako i zašto, "kao Božja milost i radosni znamen u mračnim danima". I otac Luković izneo je da je čudotvorna ikona "konačno ušla u odaje u kojima joj je i bilo mesto", ali ni on ne govori kako je, po čijoj želji i čijom odlukom do toga došlo, jer znanje o tome je neznanje onog glavnog, to jest da se stvar desnila "po primisli Božjoj".

Međutim, ovo tajanstveno držanje glavnih učesnika događaja s Trojeručicom u Francuskoj 7 može se razumeti. Da bi čudesna zaštita delovala i samo dobijanje i uvođenja zaštitne svetinje mora biti čudesan, razumu nepojaman događaj. Neznanje u tome ima presudnu ulogu. Ali to je jedno naročito, negovano neznanje, neka vrsta znanja-neznanja. Znanje tog neznanja, ako se tako može reći, odnosno veštoto korišćenje tog specifičnog neznanja, koje je potrebno da bi se čuda događala, deo je kao svet starog umeća rukovanja svetinjama, tajanstvenim znacima i formulama, pretskazanjima i proročanstvima, svetim moštima i drugim relikvijama i misterijama. Na toj staroj veštini temelji se moć religije, moć

\* M. Đorđević, "Radosni znamen", 27. jul 1999.

vračeva i sveštenika. Ona je oduvek i oslonac političke moći, naročito kad drugi, manje čudesni oslonci te moći, počnu da se izmiču. Uvođenje čudotvorne ikone iz Hilandara u ulogu zaštitnice srpskih pesnika pokazuje da se u veštrom rukovanju čudima može potražiti i oslonac pesničke moći, kad ona počne da se gubi, kad usahnu njeni pravi izvori. Od Trojoreućice srpski pesnici u stvari traže da zameni od njih odbeđle i, na njihovu žalost, nezamenljive Muze.

28. jul 1999

## Pevrni, primakni ili na zemlju spusti

Na početku ove serije članaka izneo sam mišljenje da se istina nalazi čak i u novinama koje nije glas da ne lažu samo u rubrici čitulja. Nadam se da to moje mišljenje, posle nekoliko ovde iznetih primera istinoljubivog čitanja "Kad kažem novine", izgleda manje neosnovano, ako ne i sasvim uverljivo. Ni sam se zadržavao na primerima onih oblika istine u ovim novinama do kojih se dolazi najlakše, jednostavnim preokretanjem onoga što je izneto, čitanjem teksta u smeru suprotnom od onoga koji mu je u novinama dat. Ovde je odavno poznata veština naopakog čitanja novina i mnogi po navici pretvaraju sve što je u novinama crno u belo, sve što je dole u gore, sve što je loše u dobro. To je toliko uvrežena navika da me ne bi iznenadilo da "Kad kažem novine" počnu da govore istinu samo zato što znaju da njihovi verni čitaoci po navici preokreću u suprotnost sve što tu nadu, pa će tako učiniti i sa istinom i progutati laž koja im je na taj lukav način servirana.

Zasad nema nagoveštaja da se to lukavstvo već primenjuje. I dalje se u ovim novinama istina često javlja kao naličje iznetih tvrdnjii. U današnjem broju KKN (4. avgust) ima nekoliko zgodnih primera takvih tvrdnjii, koje bez velikog otpora, čim ih preokrenete, postaju istinite. Navešću samo neke naslove: "Počinju reforme na svim poljima", "Uz pomoć Vlade tri puta veća proizvodnja i tri puta veće plate", "Modernizacija železnice biće nastavljena", "Junski rast industrijske proizvodnje 28,7 odsto", "Niko neće ostati bez krova nad glavom", "Ovo rukovostvo nas vodi pozitivno", "SPS vodi politiku u interesu građana Srbije i SRJ", "Socijalisti dosledni politici u funkciji države i građana", "Vladika Artemije ima problema s narodom", "SPS ima jasan program obnove zemlje".

Relativno lak pristup mogućan je istini u novinama i onda kad je ona izmeštena, prostorno pomerena, kad je izneta tako kao da važi za nekog drugog, za druge zemlje, za

druge ljude a ne za nas ovde. Po pravilu su to neprijatne, ružne stvari, koje se pominju kao s nekim olakšanjem što ih kod nas srećom nema. Ako preterano ne uživate u tako dobijenoj iluziji da ovde živimo na ostrvu sreće okruženom okeanom bede i zla, dovoljno je da rastojanje ukinete i sliku ružne stvarnosti preneseta na domaći teren. Videćete da u većini slučajeva ona taj prenos sasvim dobro podnosi. I za to imam dobar primer u današnjim broju KKN. Tu ćete na prvoj strani naći istinite reči o "podaničkom novinarstvu", o novinarstvu "odanosti", o "licemernom, jednostranom, i neobjektivnom izveštavanju o krizi koja potresa Balkan". Ali taj realistički opis novinarstva dat je u članku pod naslovom "Podaničko novinarstvo na Zapadu".

Desi se da istina u našim novinama iznenada zasvetli kad se o nekoj temi piše u rubrici u koju ona inače ne spada. Na primer, sportska strana često nudi građu za razumevanje srpske politike interesantniju od onoga što se može naći u političkim člancima. Najvažniji srpski političari misle, ali će danas retko otvoreno reći, da je za njih najveća vrednost, takoreći svetinja, istokrvna narodna zajednica i da je prirodna povezanost članova takve zajednice osnov zdrave nacionalne politike. Ali to će bez oklevanja reći sportski komentator, jadikujući zbog tuče i nereda koje su izazvali navijači "Crvene zvezde" na fudbalskoj utakmici u Čačku, zbog čega su, kako ističe komentator, "u bolnici završili i navijači i policajci, a svi su, tugo naša pregolema, istoga roda".

Nešto teže je otkriti prisustvo istine u novinama u onim slučajevima kad je ona data u obliku govora o kulturi, umetnosti, tradiciji, duši, Bogu i drugim uzvišenim temama. To je govor takozvanih umnih ljudi, koji ne bi ni slučajno da se bave politikom, i političara koji se tobože trude da politici daju dimenziju umnog rada. Zbog toga istinoljubivo čitanje novina traži da se taj govor, uvek lažno učen, pretenciozan,

kitnjast i tobože rodoljubiv, nekako spusti na zemlju, da se zapaze njegove veze sa politikom, režimom, vlašću i novcem. Našao sam da je jedna od glavnih figura tog "uzvišenog" govora politički fatalizam, to jest pronalaženje tobože dubokih istorijskih, geografskih, metafizičkih, religijskih, mitoloških i dugih uzroka svega što se ovde događa.

Na primer, Kosovo u ovoj vrsti govora nije stvar politike i političke odgovornosti, nego srpska sudbina. "Kosovska rana", stoji u jednom prikazu knjige rodoljubivih stihova Milovana Vitezovića, "nije utkana samo kao stožerni stub duha ovog naroda, već je ona u Vitezovićevim stihovima, srasla sa našim telom, teče kroz našu krv, vijuga kroz naše misli i nikako ne zarasta...". Ako zanemarimo teškoću koju osećamo pozvani da sebi predstavimo ranu kao stub, zatim da zamislimo da je ta stubasta rana za nas srasla, što je nije sprečilo da istovremeno vijuga kroz našu krv, poruka ovog mutnog govora o Kosovu ipak je jasna: na Kosovu, a i u Srbiji, nema istorije, nema izbora, nema odgovornosti, nema krivice, nema kazne, a nema ni promene. Ko to tamo priča o nekom Savezu za promene?

Ostajem pri rečenom. Istina je tu, svakog dana na kiosku. Samo treba da kažete: novine. Ali ne budite nestrpljivi. Učinite bar jednu od tri stvari s onim što tu nađete: ili prevrnete, ili primaknite, ili spustite na zemlju. A onda uživajte. Ja ću, ipak, ako dozvolite, malo da predahnem.

4. avgust 1999

\* Dobrivoje Janković, "Hitani posao za fudbalski vrh", 2. avgust 1999.

\* Dragan Mraović, "O klanjanju i nadanju", 31. jul 1999.

## **Dodatak**

## **Strani plaćenici i dalje među nama**

Čitajući jučerašnju "Politiku", odahnuo sam. U prvom trenutku, u prvim brojevima "oslobodene" "Politike", izgledalo je da će promene u tom listu biti takve da će biti teško razlikovati ga od "Danasa" ili nekog drugog nezavisnog lista. Srećom, posle kratkotrajne konfuzije, "Politika" od juče pokazuje da dolazi sebi, to jest da se konsoliduje kao nezvanično glasilo režima, što je uvek i bila. U ovom listu opet imam najbolji izvor verodostojnih informacija o tome kakva je vlast u ovoj zemlji, na koga se oslanja, kako govorи, šta voli ili ne voli. Opst "Politika" vredi onih nekoliko dinara koje svakodveno za nju dajem.

Da ovo kažem naveo me je, pre svega, članak o novom predsedniku SRJ objavljen u jučerašnjem broju "Politike" (9. oktobar 2000). Ovaj udvorički članak, koji je potpisala Biljana Baković, treba shvatiti kao nezvaničnu zakletvu na vernost novom šefu države. Time je ovaj list preduhitrio mogućnu konkureniju i sačuvao uzdrmanu poziciju glasila čiji su uho i glas najbliži režimu. Dok je na snazi bila zakletva data prethodnom šefu, "Politika" je o njegovom konkurentu Koštunici pisala (18. septembra 2000) pod naslovom "Dosledan u lažima", a jučerašnji članak ima nadnastav "Čovek od poverenja i principa". U njemu čitamo da Koštunici "niko ne osporava inteligenciju, poštenje, skromnost, patriotizam i ličnu kulturu". Pre izbora Koštunica je u "Politici" opisivan kao ženskaros i bizaran tip koji u svom stanu drži sedamnaest mačaka. U jučerešnjem broju saznajemo da on, kao što je red, ima samo jednu ženu, i to zvaničnu suprugu, a i broj mačaka spao je na samo dve. Ali da bi bila otklonjena svaka podezrost, koju kod nekih ljudi izaziva ljubav prema mačkama, njima je dotat i jedan pas. Jer, kao što je poznato, od životinjskih simbola moći, uz lik šefa države po pravilu ide pas. Kad je on tu, onda ni prisustvo umerenog broja mačaka nije nedopustivo.

S obzirom na to da "Politika", po svemu sudeći, s uspehom brani položaj nezvaničnog režimskog lista, poseban značaj dobija jedno mesto u ovom članku u slavu novog šefu države, gde se govorи o njegovoj mudroj i patriotskoj predizbornoj strategiji. Koštinica je, stoji tu, "kao patriota svestan značaja pobeđe ili bar potiskivanja udružene levice na domaćoj sceni pristao na široku koaliciju u kojoj su neki od stranačkih lidera u narodu okarakterisani kao 'strani plaćenici' i izišao na predsedničke i parlamentarne izbore". Kako ovo razumeti? Jedno je jasno: "Politika" ne odustaje od govora o "stranim plaćenicima", koji je negovala i redakcija ovog lista odana prethodnoj vlasti. To ni za nove urednike "Politike" nije propagandni govor mržnje, nego "glas naroda". Pri tom, "strani plaćenici" su i dalje neki od lidra DOS-a. Koštinica je izuzet od optužbe. Ali, i više od toga. Prečutno je pozvan da se sada, kad je na vlasti, oslobođi izdajničkog društva u narodu omraženih NATO plaćenika koje je u jednom trenutku morao da prihvati.

Čitam današnje novine. Nema demantija, nema ogradijanja. Da li je reč o početku obračuna među dojučerašnjim saveznicima? Da li se nova vlast, tobože sledeći narodnu volju, spremi da prekine saradnju sa predstavnicima građanskih stranaka i civilnog društva, da ih odbaci kao balast, koji je sprečava da se vine do visina jedine moguće, jedine ispravne, "vazda valjane" nacionalne politike? Da li "Politika" "trči ispred rude" ili vuče kola putem kojim je prut nove vlasti tera?

"Danas", 11. oktobar 2000

## Rađanje kulta srpskog naroda ("Odjeci i reagovanja")<sup>\*</sup>

"Odjeci i reagovanja" predstavljaju svedočanstvo o tome kako je u Srbiji krajem osamdesetih i početkom devedesetih godina prošlog veka oživljena jedna politička religija – jedna vrsta svetovnog, sekularnog ili civilnog kulta – kako se političke religije obično nazivaju. Ova rubrika u "Politici" bila je mesto na kome se održala jedna ritualna politička komunikacija, gde je služena sekularna misa u slavu srpskog naroda kao političkog božanstva. To je bila pozornica na kojoj je iz dana u dan prikazivanao kako "srpski narod progovara", ali je tu taj narod, pored uloge govornika, imao i ulogu slušaoca i ulogu predmeta govora. Kratko rečeno, tu je bila upriličena jedna obredna komunikacija, odnosno auto-komunikacija, u kojoj srpski narod srpskom narodu govorи o srpskom narodu.

Mojoj tezi o ovoj "Politikinoj" rubrici kao političkom obredu ide u prilog naslov koji su Aljoša Mimica i Radina Vučetić izabrali za ovaj CD: "Vreme kada je narod govorio". To je citat iz jednog od tu objavljenih tekstova. Ovu moju tezu dobro ilustruje i rečenica koju su autori stavili kao moto svog uvoda, a koju je sročio nekadašnji funkcioner SPS-a Živorad Igić: "Samo tako nastavite, o narodu, uz narod i za narod". To beskonačno ponavljanje reči "narod", onako kako se reči ponavljaju u religijskim obredima, pokazuje o kakvoj vrsti fenomena se ovde radi.

"Odjeci i reagovanja" bili su samo jedno među sredstvima korišćenim s ciljem da se narodu prikaže narod, da narod čuje šta narod ima da kaže o narodu. Ova rubrika je

\* Izlaganje na Okrugloj stoli "Odjeci i reagovanja", koji je održan 15. i 16. decembra 2001. godine u organizaciji Fonda za humanitarno pravo, povodom objavljuvanja CD "Vreme koja je narod govorio. Politika – Odjeci i reagovanja, jul 1988 – mart 1991" koji su uredili Aljoša Mimica i Radina Vučetić.

nastala u vreme kada je insceniranje političke volje narodnih masa bilo sadržina još jednog političkog rituala, čiji je značaj sigurno bio veći od ritualne komunikacije u "Odjecima i reagovanjima". To su bili politički mitizi u Srbiji i Crnoj Gori, organizovani da bi se dala podrška Slobodanu Miloševiću, koji je tu dočekivan i slavljen kao novi narodni vođa i spasilac. O tim mitinzima opširno su izveštavali mediji u Srbiji, pa tako i "Politika". To znači da su u ovom listu oživljavanju parareligijskog kulta srpskog naroda i njegovog novog mesije, pored rubrike "Odjeci i reagovanja", služili i opširni izveštaji sa političkih mitinga, uključujući tu i brojne fotografije i bogat izbor parola i sloganova sa tih mitinga. I sad pamtim neke od njih. Na primer: "I gluvi čuju glas naroda!".

Ritualno slavljenje srpskog naroda u Srbiji krajem osamdesetih i početkom devedesetih godina oslanjalo se najviše na model martirskog kulta. To znači da se nisu toliko slavile moć i snaga srpskog naroda, njegove pobede ili njego bogatstvo, koliko njegova stradanja, pogibije, rane, seobe i razne druge muke i nevolje, koje Srbi hrabro i dostojanstveno podnose. Tu martirsku dominantu u novouspostavljenom kultu srpskog naroda potvrđuju mnogi prilozi u ovoj rubrici. Njihovi autori se utrkuju u tome ko će plastičnije, dirljivije, potresnije da prikaže nevino stradanje jednog na krst istorije razapetog naroda. Indeks pojmoveva i imena, koji sadrži ovaj CD, pokazuje veliku učestalost reči kao što su "pokolj", "pogrom", "silovanje", "krv", "krvoproljeće". Najučestalija reč u tom nizu je "jama". Ona se pojavljuje u 983 teksta, češće čak i od sintagme "srpski narod", koja se pojavljuje u 778 tekstova.

Kao neka vrsta protivteže ovom martirskom evociranju srpskog stradanja, u "Odjecima i reagovanjima" oživljava se i spomen na junačka dela, na pobedonosne poduhvate "velikih Srba". Tako ovde povremeno odzvanja i svečani ton nacionalne Glorije, mada nikad tako intenzivno da bi nadjačao žalopojku o srpskoj Golgoti. Stradalni narod začudo ima moćne i snažne vođe, vidovite, mudre i hrabre ljude. I tu se

nade po neki stradalnik, kao što je, na primer, Knez Lazar, ali više ima moćnika i osvetnika. Opisi narodnog stradanja izmešani su sa rečima nade da će se to stradanje jednom završiti, da će se naći junak koji će narod konačno spasti, a krivce za njegovo stradanje kazniti.

Upravo jedan takav pojavio se krajem osamdesetih godina na srpskom nebu i saradnici "Odjeka i reagovanja" tu zvezdu, to obećanje boljih dana pozdravljaju i slave. "Ono što niko nije smeo", piše 5. septembra 1988. godine Mila Janković, "usudio se da kaže drug Slobodan Milošević, ne bojeći se da će zbog toga izgubiti fotelju, privilegije i ostalo. Shvatio je sav jad i nemoć srpskog i crnogorskog naroda i svih poštenih Albanaca, i da se sa takvim stanjem mora prekinuti, sviđalo se to nekom ili ne. Izrazio je dušu i mišljenje naroda, stao uz narod i deli njegovu sudbinu. Zato je on veliki, jer je zadobio poverenje naroda".

Uz ovog glavnog junaka, pojavili su se još neki "hrabri" i "umni" Srbi, da šefu pomognu u njegovim plemenitim nastojanjima. Pored političara, tu su bili i sveštenici, umetnici, književnici. I prema njima se dižu oči nade, a napadi na njih izazivaju uzbuđenje i gnev. Tako je nekoliko tekstova napisano da bi se stalo u zaštitu Matije Bećkovića, u trenutku kad je predsedništvo SUBNOR-a javno protestovalo što je ovom pesniku dodaljena Sedmojulska nagrada za 1990. godinu. Jedan člankopisac (Rodoljub Jevtić, 10. jul 1989) protestuje što Bećkovića "etiketiraju bez ikakve argumentacije kao protivnika komunizma". Druga dvojica, Milutin L. Đuričić i dr Duško Kosančić (13. jul 1989), pišu: "Tužno je i otužno bilo slušati neke borce Beograda kako, napadajući Matiju Bećkovića, besprizorno i besprimerno, napadaju novi kurs srpske politike. Nije – to je svima jasno – Matija Bećković bio meta. Meta je bio Slobodan Milošević... Matija beše samo povod da se napadne Slobodan Milošević. To se dobro video, jasno kao u zrcalu."

Napad na Bećkovića je raskrinkan kao napad na Miloševića, kao jedan od onih napada koji "objektivno, idu naručku patentiranim kritičarima i napadačima srpske politike iz severo-zapadnih krajeva naše zemlje" (Dragoljub Jevtić, 7. septembar 1989). To nas dovodi do negativnih junaka ove rubrike. To su razni žrtveni jaci, koji služe ritualnom čišćenju srpskog naroda. Ima tu i "srpskih izroda" i "izdajnika", ali se više od njih u ulozi neprijatelja srpske stvari ističu drugi narodi bivše Jugoslavije i njihovi politički rukovodioци. Na top listi srpskih dušmana, eksploratora, mrzitelja i drugih krivaca za stradanje Srba na prvom mestu su tih godina bili Slovenci, sledili su Hrvati, Albanci, Muslimani, Makedonci, a za njima su dolazili stari dobri neprijatelji Srba: Vatikan, Nemci, Austrijanci, Mađari, pa tako dalje sve do Britanaca i Amerikanaca. Na primer, jedan čitalac "Politike" (Jovan Ilić, u pismu objavljenom 4. februara 1990) opisuje opsednutu Srbiju na koju se sa svih strana puca: "Puca se do promuklosti u Srbiju i njeno rukovodstvo, u narod – od raznih Kučana i Ribičića, Smolea i Pučnika, Stanovnika i Potrača, Kocijančića i Zlobeca... Puca se, sada sve žešće i od raznih Račana i Družića, Vrhoveca i Dragosavaca... Puca se u sve što je srpsko. A sve to u ime nekakve njihove demokratije, njihovog pluralističkog uređenja, republičke samostalnosti i samodovoljnosti.... A zašto sve to – pitaju se svi pošteni građani ove naše domovine. Zar je, zaista – pitam se ja – prokletstvo biti Srbin?"

Srpska nacionalna elita krajem osamdesetih i početkom devedesetih ubrzano gradi "novi srpski poredak", to jest rekonstruiše sliku Srbije kao imaginarnе zajednice. U sklopu tog posla, ona se trudi da iz slike, igrokaza i priča u kojima se prikazuje rađanje ili vaskrsenje imaginarnе, "nebeske" Srbije, izbaci dotada tu najvažnijeg kolektivnog aktera, klasu radnika i seljaka, Srbe kao "radni narod", i da na njegovo mesto uvede novog protagonistu, srpski narod, Srbe kao etničku zajednicu. Politika kao svojevrsno pozorište za najširu publiku sve manje prikazuje komade o socijalno raslojenom srpskom društvu i

socijalizmu, koji tu raslojenost na revolucionaran način uklida, a sve više nudi drame o kobnoj nacionalnoj podeljenosti srpskog naroda, kome će novo, nacionalno svesno rukovodstvo, najzad doneti spasonosno izmirenje i ujedinjenje.

Takva orientacija nailazi na odobravanje autora priloga objavljenih u "Odjecima i reagovanjima". "Današnji veliki umovi srpskog naroda", piše jedan od njih, "shvatili su da je kucnuo odsudni čas sloge i duhovnog jedinstva, jer po narodnoj mudroj izreci: sloga je najtvrdi grad". Međutim, program "posrbljavanja Srba" još se ne shvata kao radikalni prekid kontinuiteta sa simboličkim poretkom prethodnog, komunističkog vremena. Rubrika "Odjeci i reagovanja" svedoči o tome kako se nacionalna homogenizacija Srba odvijala i dokle je stigla tokom prve tri godine Miloševićevog režima (jul 1988 – mart 2001).

Vidimo kako se u to vreme srpski narod nacionalno budi (tačnije, kako ga bude), ali on još ne kida sve veze ni sa radničko-seljačkim ni sa jugoslovenskim identitetom. Još se javljaju glasovi onih koji odbijaju da prihvate sud da je komunizam kriv što su Srbi "ostali slepi kod očiju", odnosno nedovoljno nacionalno svesni. "Nimalo ne služe na čast srpskom narodu", piše autorka jednog priloga (Vesna Klepac, 15. februar 1991), "izjave poput onih da je komunistički režim za poslednjih 50 godina uništio njihov identitet i pogazio njihovo nacionalno dostojanstvo, kada nam je poznato da to nije uspeo ni Turcima za 500 godina njihove vladavine. Ako je današnjim Srbima bilo potrebno da im neko dozvoli da se osećaju kao Srbi onda je to stvarno žalosno i to je njihova velika nacionalna sramota, a isto važi i za druge narode". Drugi autor (Dragan Biorac, 24. septembar 1990), oduševljen "mlado-srpskim pokretom", iznosi mišljenje da uticaj komunizma na Srbe nije bio štetan, jer su Srbi umeli da u njemu nađu i neke dobre stvari. "Mada su srpske generacije", piše on, "skoro pola veka indoktrinirane komunističko-boljševičkom propagandom, uspele su da iz tog doba odaberu samo ono što je progresivno, humano, dostoјno čoveka."

Tokom tih nekoliko godina, među pristalicama novog nacionalnog kursa u srpskoj politici bilo je dosta onih koji se nisu odricali Tita, za koje on nije bio Broz "srbomrzac". Bivši borci NOB-a i njihova udruženja, koji se često javljaju za reč u ovoj rubrici, trude se da nacionalno buđenje i ujedinjenje srpskog naroda predstave kao stvar koja bi i njihovom bivšem komandantu bila bliska i draga. Za njih je Tito ostao zaštitnik Srba, poštovalec srpske istorije, vođa svih jugoslovenskih naroda, ali kome je najviše na srcu bio srpski narod, jer je taj narod najviše stradao, bio najčešće prevaren i nepravedno optuživan da ugnjetava druge. U prilog tome treba da govore Titove reči koje navodi jedan autor iz redova bivših boraca (Mirko Vraneš, 18. jul 1988). On se pri tom potvrdio da citatu doda svoje opaske o aktuelnosti nekih Tito-vih misli o nepravdi nanetoj srpskom narodu: "Srpski narod ne samo što nije imao ništa zajedničko s nacionalnom politikom svoje gospode već je on kroz 22 godine bio isto tako izrabljivan i podvrgnut žandarmerijskoj samovolji kao i ostali narodi Jugoslavije. Šta više on je uvidio da je prevaren. Srpski narod je s bolom primio uvrede, (nažalost i danas ih prima – M. V.), nepravde, optužbe (i danas se tako optužuje – M. V.) da je sukrivac za nacionalno ugnjetavanje ostalih naroda Jugoslavije."

Dakle, u mnogim prilozima objavljenim u ovoj rubrici vidljivo je nastojanje njihovih autora da novi kult srpskog naroda kao etno-nacionalne zajednice izmiri sa zatećenim političkim svetnjama. Ovi autori, zajedno sa ostalim predstavnicima "nacionalnih snaga" u Srbiji rade na nekoj vrsti tranzicije simbola. Ona će u početku ratnih sukoba biti ubrzana, tako da od starih, komunističkih simbola i kultova ubrzo neće ostati ništa. Ostaje samo jedno etno-nacionalno "Mi", gromki i preteći glas plemena zbijenog oko svog vođe, spremnog na konačni obračun. Glas tog "Mi" već se čuje i u nekim prilozima "Odjeka i reagovanja". Kao u ovom primeru (Borisav Simić, 3. mart 1989): "Mi kroz istoriju vazda se ljeni i raseljavani tuđom voljom, spaljivani i klani na ku-

nom pragu, pokrštavani i ubijani maljevima u ime Hristovo imamo neotuđivo ljudsko pravo da brinemo o slobodi ove zemlje, o slobodi dece koja tek rastu bez obzira čija su."