JUSTYNA PILARSKA | University of Wroclaw, Poland

"Cultural" hate speech and the fall of Yugoslavia – discourse analysis of the selected aspects

„Kulturowa" mowa nienawiści i upadek Jugosławii – wybrane aspekty analizy dyskursu

Streszczenie

Artykuł porusza temat (nacjonalistycznej) propagandy reprezentantów świata kultury w Serbii i Chorwacji u schyłku istnienia Socjalistycznej Federacyjnej Republiki Jugosławii, a więc na początku lat 90. XX wieku. Punktem wyjścia dla dalszej analizy autorka uczyniła zbiór esejów Dubravki Ugrešić „Kultura kłamstwa (eseje antypolityczne)", oraz zbiór tekstów Ivan Čolovicia „Bałkany – terror kultury". Poprzez analizę prowadzonego w mediach (w słowie i piśmie) dyskursu, zrekonstruowana została brutalność, a zarazem banalność retoryki nacjonalizmu, a także sposób, w jaki ideologia nacjonalistyczna przeniknęła do nauki, kultury i mediów, angażując konformistyczne postawy intelektualistów, propagandę, cenzurę oraz pozostałe strategie manipulacji innymi. Przedmiot analizy obejmuje dyskurs medialny w byłej republice Serbii i Chorwacji, dyskurs nauki (szeroko pojętej humanistyki), oraz innych pisemnych form dekonstrukcji ładu społecznego przed rozpadem Jugosławii.

Słowa kluczowe: rozpad Jugosławii, mowa nienawiści, analiza dyskursu, kultura, propaganda nacjonalistyczna w Serbii, propaganda nacjonalistyczna w Chorwacji

Abstract

This article tackles the issue of written and spoken propaganda in Serbian and Croatian realms of culture and media proceeding the fall of Yugoslavia at the beginning of the 1990s. It makes two pieces of writing a point of departure for further analysis, i.e. Dubravka Ugrešić's "The Culture of Lies", and Ivan Čolović's "The Balkans: The Terror of Culture: Essays in Political Anthropology". By so, the article attempts to reveal the banality and brutality of nationalism and the way that nationalistic ideology permeated science, culture and media, involving the conformity of intellectuals, propaganda and censorship, followed by the strategies of human

manipulation. The subject of analysis embraces the use of the Serbian and Croatian state-run mass media, anthropological discourse and other written forms of deconstruction of the social order, shortly before and following the fall of Yugoslavia.

Keywords: Fall of Yugoslavia, hate speech, discourse analysis, culture, nationalistic propaganda in Serbia, nationalistic propaganda in Croatia

Introduction

In 1997 an international symposium called „Interculturalism versus racism and xenophobia" took place in Belgrade. Looking at the very theme of the event, it is striking that racism and xenophobia were not juxtaposed with culture, but interculturalism. It might have taken place perhaps due to the fact the first notion has been compromised as one of the key reasons for the aggressive, ethnic nationalism "speaking and acting on behalf of the culture", that thrived during the dissolution of Yugoslavia. In such view, culture, despite its creative and constructive potential, served as a justification, legitimization or a cover for the policy of national egoism and dominance, providing a tool of exclusion and intolerance. Moreover, hate speech usually associated with the political rather than cultural realm, apparently truly flourished in the cultural discourse. The latter took place despite the fact the nationalists movement had both a religious and rural character from its beginnings (Velikonja, 2003, p. 93).

The impulse to focus on the hate speech proceeding and contributing to the deconstruction of the social and cultural deal in former Yugoslavia came from the reading of Ivan Čolović's "The Balkans: The Terror of Culture: Essays in Political Anthropology", where the author deconstructs culture as the catalyst for hatred and war in the Balkans, as well as Dubravka Ugrešić's "The Culture of Lies". The first author revealed the post-war "patriotic" discourse and the use of culture in Serbia and other Balkan countries, with the intention of determining how, and through which rhetorical strategies, this sort of discourse managed to preserve its ability to trigger conflicts. As for Dubravka Ugrešić's "The Culture of Lies" (or – as the author puts it – the "anti-political essays"), she deconstructs the way that nationalistic ideology permeates various aspects of life, including culture, the conformity of intellectuals, propaganda and censorship, as well as the strategies of human manipulation by culture. These two references were made a point of departure for the reflections on the "cultural hate speech" that sparked in the former republic of Yugoslavia, especially in Croatia and Serbia.

The analysis allows to throw light on some cultural "procedures" applied by the (at times) prestigious figures to Serbian, or Croatian culture, that prepared the foundation for the process of deconstructing the social and political order of the former Yugoslavia. It took place via one of the most dramatic and violent way, namely though the war, focusing on myths about the so-called "national spiritual and cultural space", i.e. the alleged organic unity between the Balkan nations and the soil on which they live, and to which they lay exclusive claim. Due to the fact that most of the examples of the "cultural hate speech" make reference to the national foundation, the case of Bosnian Muslims was

excluded on the ground of unparallel dynamics of their nation-building practices, rooted in the historical course of events and some political factors[1]. Acknowledging that "culture consists of the derivatives of experience, more or less organized, learned or created by the individuals of a population, including those images or encodements and their interpretations (meanings) transmitted from past generations, from contemporaries, or formed by individuals themselves" (Schwartz, 1992; cited by Avruch, 1998, p. 1), cultural hate speech concerns these social actors, that generate, project and transmit given visions of the social and cultural reality, affecting the course of lives of the society embers. As follows, the analysis embraces the statements, ideas and decisions of those directly linked to the cultural realm, i.e. writers, journalist, academic teachers, linguists, poets, etc. Thus, the discourse analysis entails some selected examples of the cult of national languages, national poets, and the epic tradition.

The fall of Yugoslavia

The framework of this paper does not allow for an elaborate and in-depth insight into the complex reasons and conditions that contributed to the reconstruction of Yugoslavia as a state, nonetheless, some hallmarks of this process should be taken into consideration in the context of the topic of these reflections. Undoubtedly, varied reasons for the breakup of Yugoslavia encompassed cultural and religious divisions between the ethnic groups making up the nation, memories of WWII atrocities committed by all sides, some economic crises that had been affecting Yugoslavian economy from the 1970s, as well as centrifugal nationalist forces. It can be, however, commonly acknowledged, that upon Marshal Tito's death some fundamental issues embraced, among others, divergent ethnic interests remained, inefficient economy, and the country's institutional structure incapable of retaining Yugoslav unity, followed by other aspects concerned the contradictory institutional structures of the Yugoslav state and the collapse of authoritarian rule. Unfortunately, the dissolution of multinational communist federations and the ensuing armed conflicts that have emerged with their transformation into independent nation-states "have returned the national question to the forefront of debates over international politics, law, and theory" (Pešić, 1996, p. 1). Nonetheless, it needs to be stressed that statistically, Yugoslavia has never had a *staatsvolk* ("state-people") that would create the majority and provide a foundation on which a modern nation-state could be built[2]. This "mechanisms of empowering

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1   The *Muslims were granted status* as a constitutive people (*narod*) as late as in 1971 when "Muslims by nationality" was introduced as a category in the census. Cf: Banac, Ivo (1988). *The National Question in Yugoslavia: Origins, History, Politics*. Cornell University Press, pp. 287–288. Recognition of the Muslims as a distinct group was initiated with the 961 census of Yugoslavia, for which the answer "Muslim" was accepted as an ethnic but not a national category. "Recognition of Muslim nationality was also facilitated by the emergence of an active Muslim intellectual elite, supportive of and loyal to the existing political order. These intellectuals advanced a secular national identity that was built upon the party's own ideology of interethnic equality" (Burg & Shoup, 1999, p. 41).

2   As members of the most populous national group, Serbs constituted only 40 percent of the total Yugoslav population.

mutual hatred and establishing a racial attitude of intolerance function well on the ruins of communistic systems, where it is (was) easier to create nationalistic dictatorship instead of stable democracy" (Jezernik, 2003, p. 168). In, for example, the Yugoslavian Republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina inhabited by Bosnian Serbs, Croats and Muslims as the three major ethnic groups, public manifestations of national intolerance were suppressed by the communist regime, yet "no effort was spared to assure, at least in theory, that the three national groups had equal access to education, jobs, and positions or responsibility in the government and the party" (Bourg & Shoup, 1999, p. 42).

The creation and maintenance of Yugoslavia hinged on the interdependence of Serbs and Croats, the country's two largest national groups *(Pešić, 1996*, p. 3). Unfortunately, the nationalist fervor of the nineteenth century also pitted Serbs against Croats. Consequently, "the 1890s were a period of pronounced rivalry between the Serbs and Croats over the fate of Bosnia-Herzegovina, also with the formation of Yugoslavia in 1918 the national issue in Bosnia-Herzegovina was overshadowed by the struggle between Croatian and Serbian conceptions of the Yugoslav state" (Burg & Shuop, 1999, p. 35). All in all, these peoples not only shared their everyday life existence, but also "imagined" the borders of their respective states as overlapping and clashing.

The breakup of Yugoslavia occurred as a result of a series of political upheaval and the decline of communist ideology, severely weakening Yugoslavian fragile, unifying factors. Although Yugoslav communists were trying to build a strong state by placing the Yugoslav nation as a counterbalance to ethnic tensions that existed in society at the time, nationalist tensions escalated in the early 1990s, and it was clear that the idea of the Yugoslav nation has experienced a collapse. As Sabina Ramet claims:

> *"Undoubtedly the roots of the Yugoslav wars (in Slovenia, Croatia, and Bosnia-Herzegovina, 1991–5, and in Kosovo and Macedonia (1998–2001) are diverse, and there is no need to engage in Procrustean efforts to reduce the complexity of socialist Yugoslav development to some supposed pre-eminent factor. On the contrary, **economics, demographics, programmatic choices, institutional structures, religious cultures, elite dynamics, and deficiencies in system legitimacy all played a role in pushing the country towards violent breakup**"* (Ramet, 2005, p. 56).

To avoid any sort of biased judgment and taking the Norwegian scholar remark into account, it shall be only emphasized that culture played also its part in the process of deconstructing Yugoslavia, moreover – it was profoundly and excessively used as a tool of manipulation and stirring up the ethnic and national animosities, as the following analysis of some of the hate speech samples proves.

Discourse Analysis

The concept of discourse accomplished by Michael Foucault (1926–1984) is transformed in to epistemological category, that allows to analyze not that much the language as the systems of knowledge, hence the structure of the discourse entails the system of

knowledge, values and aspiration of a given community, that also generates meanings within its framework. The French philosopher linked discourse to the power and authority, as the process of production and distribution of discourse was subject to, and dependent from, the power. According to Foucault, the structures and mechanisms of power are noticeable in the socially created meanings, a meaning therefore remains in a tight relation to the mechanisms of power (Foucault, 2002, p. 16). Consequently, every discourse is both system of knowledge, as it entails imposing on given number of people some definition of the truth and false, good and evil, normality and pathology. Therefore, at the foundation of the will of truth there are some institutionalized practices, that concurrently empower and carry out, legitimize and implement the obeying truth (Foucault 2002, p. 16). In such view, the objective of the hate speech propaganda in culture was to convince the members of Serbian, or respectively Croatian society, that their version of the history, the course of events and intentions of "the Others" provide a legitimate and "one and only" version of the reality that is to be followed, obeyed and spread.

The domain of the discourse is "the truth", understood as a socially consolidated knowledge, thus, on the account of acquisition of "the truth", the discourse has the authority to include or exclude of given contents from the resources of social knowledge (such as who is superior and inferior, who is loyal and who is untrustworthy, who is historically and contemporarily "right", and who is "wrong"). Hence, the critical discourse analysis refers to the relation between the production and distribution of the discourse and the power. According to Foucault (1998, p. 189) the main task of the authority is to generate a reality accessible to an individual, as the authority "produces reality, subject domains and rituals of truth" (Ibidem). The ways of presenting the contents evolves around strengthening the "binding" perspectives and diminishing, or quieting the competitive (rivalry ones) as it took place before the fall of Yugoslavia in the public cultural discourse of Serbia and Croatia. Discourse can be therefore considered as a culturally anchored social practice of experiencing the reality. Schiffrin et al (2003) note that there are three main categories of discourse definitions, including "anything beyond the sentence", language in use and a broader range of social practice that includes nonlinguistic and nonspecific instances of languages. Yet, according to Foucault it is not just the language of an individual communication (which s/he regards as a "sample"), but the larger systems of thought within a particular historical location that make certain things "thinkable" and "sayable", regulating who can say them. Such perspective reveals how publicly declared "truths" become automatically linked to the legitimization of power and authority of those saying them, and vice versa, whatever public figure holding a power says, turns into commonly accepted, unquestionable "paradigm of truth", differentiating and separating members of a given, so far common, cultural realm as it took place in the former Yugoslavia.

There are five steps in using "Foucauldian discourse analysis" (Kendall & Wickham, 1999). The first step concerns the recognition that discourse is a body of statements that are organized in a regular and systematic way. The subsequent four steps are based on the identification of rules on how those statements are created, what can be said (written) and what cannot, how spaces in which new statements can be made are created, making practices material and discursive at the same time (Kendall & Wickham, 1999, p. 42).

Consequently, the discourse analysis methodologically encompasses:

a) formal linguistic discourse analysis (sociolinguistics), with the source of data concerning samples of written or oral language and texts, where the analysis embraces microanalysis of linguistic, grammatical and semantic uses and meanings of text (Hodges at al 2008, p. 571);

b) empirical discourse analysis such as conversation or gender analysis using samples of written or oral language, text and data on the "uses" of the text in social settings; hence the analysis takes place on micro and macro levels and concerns ways in which language and/or text construct social practices (ibidem);

c) critical discourse analysis (such as the recalled Foucauldian analysis) with sources of data encompassing samples of written or language/texts ad data on the uses of the text in social settings, and data on the institutions and individuals who produce, and are produced by the language text. Therefore, the latter is a macro level analysis and focuses on the aspect how discourses (in many forms) construct what is possible for individuals and institutions to think and say. **Such stand is corresponding to the specificity of the rhetoric of hate speech as promoted by the main educational and cultural figures in Serbia and Croatia proceeding the collapse of Yugoslavia.**

The approach applied for the purpose of this reflection is a combination of the Foucauldian analysis and critical discourse analysis (CDA), which is a type of discourse analytical research that primarily studies the way social power abuse, dominance, and inequality are enacted, reproduced, and resisted by text and talk in the social and political context (Van Dijk, 1993, p. 249). Fairclough and Wodak (1997, pp. 271–80) summarize the main tenets of CDA as follows:

1. CDA addresses social problems
2. Power relations are discursive
3. Discourse constitutes society and culture
4. Discourse does ideological work
5. Discourse is historical
6. The link between text and society is mediated
7. Discourse analysis is interpretative and explanatory
8. Discourse is a form of social action.

In the context of analysis of the selected aspects of hate speech in the cultural sphere proceeding the fall of Yugoslavia, the ideological and historical domain of discourse comes to the forefront, empowered by the authority that projected the image of holding "the only one truth" on the surrounding reality.

Origins and examples of the Serbian and Croatian hate speech of culture

The Council of Europe's Committee of Ministers" Recommendation 97(20) on "hate speech", defined it as follows: "the term "hate speech" shall be understood as covering all forms of expression which spread, incite, promote or justify racial hatred, xenophobia, anti-Semitism or other forms of hatred based on intolerance, including:

intolerance expressed by aggressive nationalism and ethnocentrism, discrimination and hostility against minorities, migrants and people of immigrant origin."

Hate speech is a speech that attacks, threatens, or insults a person or group on the basis of national origin, ethnicity, colour, religion, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, or disability. It is a communication that carries no meaning other than the expression of hatred for some group, especially in circumstances in which the communication is likely to provoke violence. Hate speech often concerns the most sensitive areas of human identities, including religion, nation, race or ethnicity, i.e. factors highly susceptible to abuse.

Since religion is generally considered to be one of the earliest and most fundamental forms of collective distinction, "religious dimensions also represent one of the most important factors in the creation of national consciousness and politics, especially in the absence of the other, more compelling, factors" (Velikonja, 2003, p. 12). Therefore in the former Yugoslavia national mythologies were tightly linked to the "nationalization of religion", involving national religion messianims and other confessional phenomena evolving around the core of the national identity. The 'Croatian' writer Slavenka Drakulić described its consequences in personal terms:

> *"Being Croat has become my destiny ... I am defined by my nationality, and by it alone ... Along with millions of other Croats, I was pinned to the wall of nationhood – not only by outside pressure from Serbia and the Federal Army, but by national homogenization within Croatia itself ... reducing us to one dimension – the Nation ... Whereas before I was defined by my education, my job, my ideas, my character – and yes, my nationality too – now I feel stripped of all that"* (Drakulić, 1993, p. 50–2).

It seems to be also echoed in the auto-biographical note of Dubravka Ugrešić who said that „I grew up in a multinational, multicultural and mono-ideological community, that had a future ahead (...) words like faith, nation, nationality, or even communism and party meant nothing for me" (Ugrešić, 2006, p. 15).

The origins of contemporary Serbian and Croatian religio-national mythologies should be searched for between the eighteenth and twentieth centuries, also from the perspective of their usurpation of Bosnia-Herzegovina and the Muslim Slavs. Croatian national resurrection began similarly as the Serbian in the late eighteenth century and was "a response to the pressures of Hungarian nationalism and Habsburg centralism" (Velikonja, 2003, p. 105), when "a continual rise of religious nationalism, intolerance, and hatred toward other religious communities (and consequently because of religo-national affinity toward other national groups as well) could be observed" (Idem, p. 115). As for the Croats, two major options of national mythology emerged in nineteenth century, namely the international option, the aim of which was to unite the various South Slav peoples, and the exclusivist group, which fostered Croatian religio-national mythology (Velikonja, 2003, p. 106)[3]. Since "the essence of ethnic conflict is the

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3   Pedro Ramet cites five crucial reasons for the "marriage" between religion and nationalism: 1. Religion represents the historical essence of culture, 2. Religion is a symbol of collective identity and distinguishes one people from another, 3. The avant-garde role of religious groups in the development of a national language and literature, 4. The leading role in society assumed by the clergy because of

struggle between mobilized identity groups for greater power" (Burg & Shoup, 1999, p. 4), the mythology was to encourage the Croatian people to "regain" what meant to belong to them in a manner designed by the leaders of nationalistic parties. Unfortunately, the ideas of nations and nation-states meant "exclusive 'ethnic' rather than (...) more inclusive 'civic' terms, (...) formal 'liberal democracy' has a particularly marked tendency to degenerate into 'ethnocracy' (...) by instituting oppressive new 'collectivist tyrannies of ethnic majorities over ethnic minorities" (Bideleux & Jeffries, 2007, p. 16).

Almost concurrently, the reconstruction of Serbian religio-national mythology began "in parallel with the Serbian *reconquista*, with the uprising of the Christian peasantry against the Turks in 1804–13 and 1815, and the creation of the modern Serbian state" (Velikonja, 2003, p. 93)[4]. Thus, for instance, the motives of the battle of Kosovo were not preeminent features of Serbian epic poetry until the nineteenth century, yet with the assistance of the tradition of the Orthodox Church and early Serbian historiography, the folk epic poetry portraying the Battle of Kosovo "helped bridged the gap between the old and the new Serbian state. The ideological myth of Serbian religious nationalism, now recast with artistic reflection, completes the structural inadequacy of the traditional myth" (Velikonja, 2003, p. 95).

Consequently, the political developments in the late 1980s and early 1990s presented an excellent opportunity for the long-awaited reconversion of their nations' national, political and cultural identity.

In the 1970s, Danilo Kiš, a Serbian writer, said that nationalism is predominantly a paranoia – single and collective one. It is the ideology of banal, a group madness resulting from jealousy and fear. Nationalism, unfortunately, worked for culture, and vice versa – the culture justified its existence for the policy of the national egoism. Nationalism in this context can be also perceived through the ideas of Ernest Gellener as a rebirth of the atavistic cult of blood and own territory (Gellner, 1983). Combining such two extreme and separatist ideologies prepared a gloomy scenario for the (former) inhabitants of Yugoslavia. As the history and the course of the events and discourse proceeding the war in the Balkans at the beginning of 1990s prove, all the factors were utilized by cultural powers. According to D. Ugrešić "created in political and writing cabinets, under the patronage of the Academy of Sciences and Art, the Serbian national-socialistic program found its interpretation in *lighter* literary genres, in the so called newly composed folk literature. *Grandparents bones mark the borders of Serbian lands* – that is the summary of the Greater Serbian scheme" (Ugrešić, p. 32). This view seems to be reflected in the finding of Sabrina Ramet who observes that "Indeed, it was the Serb nationalists who promulgated the slogan, 'All Serbs should live in one state' – a slogan strikingly akin to the allegedly 'German idea of citizenship through blood alone" (Ramet, 2005, pp. 87–88).

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their education, prominence and political awareness, 5. The conviction that the religion of a group of people – as opposed to a neighbouring people or religion – is theirs alone. Pedro Ramet, *Religion and Nationalism in Yugoslavia, in: Religion and Nationalism in soviet and East European Politics*, ed. Idem, 1989, p. 299.

4   For instance, V. Đorđević (Serbian prime minister at the end of the 19th century, 1897–1900) member of the Serbian Academy of Science described the research Albanians as „troglodytes reminding him of a primitive people sleeping on trees and hanging there thank to their tails" (Jezernik, p. 328).

As one of the Serbian writers says (cited by Ugrešić):

"(…) *since Europe wants to beggar our world, in the time of suffering and hardly physical vegetation, all we have left are words, messages passed on to next generation, words out of which in the dust, blood and the everyday life of enslaved fate a noble epos emerges, that overcomes everything, and there are messages we hear that are passed on to us given by our ancient pagan gods*" (In: Ugrešić, p. 97–98).

Some instances of the absurdity of the nationalistic discourse in culture (and education) include the Croatian Ministry of Education that shortly before the war in 1991 decided that the teachers of Croatian shall be "pure" Croats, and sadly none of the institutions, even the Croatian university teaching the future teachers of Croatian language and literature, opposed to it in public. Moreover, on account of the recommendations of the Croatian Ministry of Culture, "patriotic librarians" were encouraged to liquidate books by Serbian writers, getting rid of works in Cyrillic and other text filled with the "Yugoslavian spirit". The covers of Croatian books were marked with a Croatian plaiting, which in the future was to distinguish Croatian writers from all non-Croatian, including Shakespeare (sic!) (Cf. Ugrešić, p. 102). It seems to be working against the logic that "while the Croats are overwhelmingly Catholic, the Serbs and Montenegrins predominantly Orthodox Christians, and the Bosniacs exclusively Muslim, large majorities of each ethnic group speak mutually intelligible dialects, blurring their religious and ancestry marking" (Greenberg, 2004, p. 6). Perhaps that is why one of the most frequently used words in the hate speech was "clean", hence some Croatian intellectual euphorically supported the idea of a "spiritual rebirth" of the Croatian nation, poetically writing that "this is the road of a spiritual revival of the beautiful and clean generations, the path of us all, people of bright and clean conscious" (Ibidem). Existence of one language, common for Serbs, Montenegrins, Croats and Bosnians was not enough, so the „national workshops of the language" constructed three separate national idioms legitimating new, internal political system, i.e. protecting ethnicity oriented at nation, whereas its spirits was to be reflected and hidden in the culture, especially the language.

Since language functions as the predominant form of the foundation for national identity, the linguists and writers were assigned with the task to protect the sacred language from "betrayal and contamination", establishing a form of a *lingua sacra*, a phenomenon already indicated by Jurgen Habermas[5]. Thus, some, as the Croatian linguist, Božidar Finka dared to claim that „Croatian language is the most important feature of Croatianism (…) and we shall not case to protect this feature" (Finka, 1992, p. 69). On the other hand, a Serbian linguist (and a former dean of the Philological Faculty in Belgrade) suggested that „each betrayal is a betrayal, but a cultural betrayal of the Serbian nation is the biggest national betrayal, and betraying the language, one betrays own history and own future", adding that "None Serb sold own language. The stronger ones took it away from us by force, as they know when they get our language, they will get the nation too" ("Politika", 03.04.1998, p. 42). On the other hand,

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5   Already in the middle of the 19th-century Germany he pointed to the fact of shifting the accents from teaching the people to teaching a nation in schools (Habermas, 2002, p. 32).

"purifying", "cleansing" term was used by a Croat writer Petar Selem, who dwelled on the period before emergence of the independent Croat state when Croatian cultural space was to be protected and purified, implying it had been previously deeply contaminated. In a corresponding manner the Croatian writer Slobodan Novak noticed, that Croatia cleans itself from

> *"yugo-unitarian and great-Serbian garbage it has been thrown at in the last century, re-freshing its own primary image and **returning to its roots**[6]. Since today Croatia must painfully interfere in own language, history, knowledge, change the names of the streets and places, this process proves to what degree Croatia has been a **contamination** of foreign elements and how all its spheres of live become **dirty**"* (Ugrešić, 2006, pp. 105–107).

Croat intellectuals deliberated on the language and symbolism of the spirit stressing the fact that "when we speak of a **spiritual revival**, we must first departure from the meaning of the word 'duh' in Croatian it kept its **primal meaning**, it means the air, the air we breathe, the soul" (Ugrešić, 2006, p. 103).

It provides an evidence to the fact that in the 1990 "Croats whose variant of Serbo-Croatian had been quite similar to the Serbian variant save for the alphabets (Latin letters for the Croats, Cyrillic and Latin letters for the Serbs) and slight differences in vocabulary and syntax initiated a campaign of language **purification**, purging forms deemed to be 'Serbian' and replacing them with old Croatian forms or crafting new ones from 'pure' **Croatian roots**" (Magner & Marić, 2002, p. 56). Simultaneously, "the Serbs in Croatia, who had voted to secede from Croatia and in 1991–2 captured nearly one-third of Croatian territory, insisted upon the use of the Cyrillic alphabet in their enclaves" (Greenberg, 2008, p. 12). As Misha Glenny recalls:

> *"According to moderate Knin Serbs I met in 1990, only about 5 percent of the local Serbs used the Cyrillic script, the rest not only spoke the Croatian variant, they used the Latin script. Eighteen months later, on my return, I witnessed the extraordinary spectacle of a Knin Serb attempting to write the address of his relations in Belgrade in Cyrillic—he could not do it. Half-way through the address, he gave up and wrote it in Latin"* (Glenny, 1996, p. 11).

Consequently, applying Naylor's terminology (1992, p. 83), language in the Balkans has functioned as a "flag" with which each people has asserted its independence and sovereignty, becoming subject to various separatist activities.

The political rhetoric utilised language as a foundation of the nation and a guardian of the national identity, thus holding the view that language entails the existence of a nation in a form given by God, ergo – the existence of Serbian nation lies within the Serbian language. Consequently, "nationalists became increasingly messianic and collectivist, claiming rights for the nation rather than for individual citizens and demanding obedient service to the nation, which was seen as having a 'historic' or 'God-given' mission or destiny to fulfill" (Sugar, 1971, p. 11). To such a degree, we can read in the Serbian journal "Politika" from June 1988 that "poetical mentors are always most precisely tapping

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[6]   Bolding made by the author of the article to indicate some of the key words (themes/ tags) for the discourse analysis.

out the **spiritual rhythm** of ethnos, at the same time having the power to activate the **gene of centuries-long** accumulated message, collecting them together and giving **to own nation** so it can serve as a guideline in difficult times" ("Politika", 3.06.1988, p. 27)[7].

The process of empowering the discourse 'Us versus Them' took place also with regards to resettling the cultural borders. As Dževad Karahasan claims, cultural borders are a place of a fruitful tensions, a foundation for the identity, as „exactly in this feature, within which it would be empty, the identity overcomes a dull closure and opens up to something new" (Karahasan, 1997, pp. 110–113). To oppose such liberal, open and cross-cultural stance, the notion of the *Volksgeist* and *Volkseele* were highlighted and strengthened within the image of a final border, i.e. the border of a national culture. Anthropologist Zagorka Golubović observes that "national monism strengthened in Serbia at the end of the 1980s, when instead of orientation towards growth of pluralistic culture, open both within internal as well as external communication, a closure within own national borders took place, isolating the national cultures; this is how quazi-pluralism emerged, i.e. it was referring only towards other national cultures, whereas inside a given nation there was homogenization on the basis of nationalism as the only one, appropriate official ideology" (Golubović, 1994, p. 41). Milan Matić, implied that „in the 20th century as a result of some historical errors and illusions but also Serbian gullibility, a big alienation from **own ideas of autonomy** took place by subsiding to given forms of state and ideologies a totally contradictory to the idea of Serbia" (Matić, 2000, p. 76). Consequently, non-democratic authority is justified as the one according to the will of the nation, telling and allowing others to tell about how it is deeply rooted in the tradition and culture of a nation, i.e. in its spirit, revealing the "true facet" of the *Volksgeits* of Serbia in this regard. Interestingly, looking at the aspects of the spiritual space of the nation, it comes across as a result of separation from the material space. Therefore, the national spiritual space is an area within traces of history and culture of the nation such as the remains of medieval cities, monasteries, battlefields, tombs, toponims, etc[8]. For that reasons the Croatian and Serbian nations allegedly lived in a common symbolic universe, declared the same ideals, were faithful to the same traditions, realized the same God's will hoping to acquire the same fate, their *Volksgeits* was the same: common political fairy tales, symbols, rituals, cults, sacred places and other forms of expressing political imaginary, yet they generated different, contradictory *Volksgeits*. Interestingly, D. Ćosić, Serbian writer and the first president of the federal Republic of Yugoslavia in 1992–1993 publicly declared that "The lie is a form of patriotism and confirmation of our inborn

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[7] Since the cult of a national language is vague, the mystery remains uncovered, it can provide a substantial and national *topos* that can be presented only as a mystery. Hilandar sets one of such examples of topos, i.e. a Serbian national scared place, with its political and symbolic values: „Hilandar is ever-lasting, it is immortal, Hilandar is an ethics and the idea of our individual and national existence" ("Politika", 23.05.1988, p. 41). For the same reasons Serbian monasteries ceased to function as Christian/orthodox places and turned into those of national and Serbian origin. "Have we identified all enemies of our spiritual and historical heritage? Is the fact we didn't judge and punish the villains for their crimes the reason of what happens to us?" (Mileusnić, 1997, pp. 474–476).

[8] Thus, ethnic cleansing also included destroying of the material heritage of given cultures, and as a historian Milan St. Protić explains „ Kosovo can still be a part of the Serbian land, not being part of Serbia" ("Naša borba", 15.06.1998, p. 37).

intelligence", hence the deconstruction of dialogue and creating new reality took place openly and applying public discourse. For that reason, Serbian press reconstructed the facts from the II WW and Ustaša's camps where thousands of Serbs, Jews, Gypsies and Muslims died. The following terror of memory and amnesia demanded not to think, misinterpret the facts, wrongly explaining the most obvious truth, spread lies and reactivate the cult of empty clichés, i.e. doing everything against the most essential common sense.

The cultural fairy tales of Serbia and Croatia applied the figure of the "spiritual area" in order to imagine the national territory, which a nation does not inhabit yet, but hopes to (a national territory in spe). The spiritual area served as a version of a poetic (nonpolitical) dream of an ideal national territory, that is larger than it practically seems to be. During the Second Congress of Serbian Intellectuals, Vasilije Krstić said that "without real spiritual unity of our nation we won't be able to efficiently carry out the political and territorial unity" (Drugi Kongres srpskih intelektualca, 1994), accompanied by the claims of the historian Milorad Ekmečić that "cultural unification is a key premise of political unification" (Drugi Kongres srpskih intelektualca, 1994, p. 36). Such discourse seems to be echoed in the words of a poet, Ranko Jovović, who implied that "there is no unified Serbian state because there is no unified Serbian cultural area. Since, if there was Serbian nation, Serbian church, Serbian language and Serbian poetry…in each of us there would be Serbian state within the borders of Serbian lands" ("NIN", 27.08.1997, p. 52).

One of the most petrifying examples of hate speech discourse is reflect in a poem, that can serve as a punch line to these reflections. The tragically prophetic "Sarajevo" was created in 1971 by Radovan Karadžić, who moved to this city in 1960 to study psychiatry at the Sarajevo University School of Medicine. Twenty years later, this Bosnian Serb leader was the mastermind of the barbarian siege the city was under for over three years, consequently charged by the UN War Crimes Tribunal for genocide and crimes against humanity. According to some authors he spoke of his need to write "because it is through poetry that a nation defends itself" (Post, 2004, p. 175).

"I hear the misfortune threads Turned into a beetle as if an old singer Is crushed by the silence and turned into a voice. The town burns like a piece of incense In the smoke rumbles our consciousness. Empty suits slide down the town. Red is the stone that dies, built into a house. The Plague! Calm. The army of armed poplar tree Marches up the hill, within itself. The aggressor air storms our souls and once you are human and then you are an air creature. I know that all of these are the preparations of the scream: What does the black metal in the garage have for us? Look how fear turned into a spider Looking for the answer at his computer." (Cited in: Post, 2004, p. 175–6).
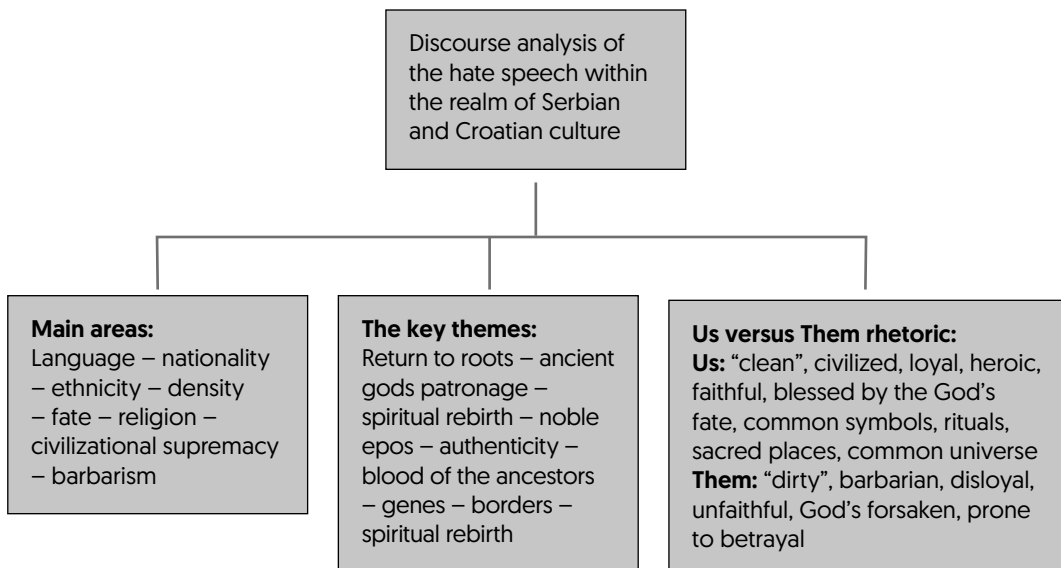
The poem, written 21 years before the war began "as Robert Donia puts it "acquired notoriety later in his life for its apparent prescience (...) contains forebodings of imminent turbulence and human devastation" (Donia, 2015, p. 34). Consequently, two decades later, Karadžić viewed the besieged Sarajevo from the Serb frontline drawing a visitors attention to the fact that "these verses (...) foretold the violent siege he was then commanding" (Donia, ibidem). This proves how such form of literature that uses aesthetic and rhythmic qualities of language as poetry can be used by the nationalist propaganda and adopted to the needs of the insane scheme.

Conclusions

Hate speech is an incitement to hatred primarily against a group of persons defined in terms of race, ethnicity, national origin, gender, religion, sexual orientation, and the like. Although it can be any form of expression regarded as offensive to racial, ethnic and religious groups and other discrete minorities, it can also takes shape of a cultural discourse that aims to separate, denigrate and exclude given ethno-nationalist groups from the mainstream. The objective of the "cultural hate speech" of various intellectuals, journalists and scholars from the cultural domain of Serbia and Croatia before the fall of Yugoslavia was to draw a clear line between "Us and Them", empower the alleged historical and cultural superiority, and point to the fact how inadequately culturally and civilizationally restarted are the former neighbours within the Yugoslavian state. Therefore, the process of dissolution of Yugoslavia was accompanied by the process of "confiscating Yugoslavian collective memory" followed by its replacement by the national memory. Consequently, the hate speech entailed the following key themes affecting the perception of the cultural reality of that time:

» **newly "rewritten" folk stories glorifying the national heroes and their toposes;**
» **accusations and judgments of all the "traitors" including Turks, Hitler, "the West", titotists, communists, ustashas, chetniks, foreigners and etc.;**
» **separation from everything that was "common", "shared" and joint" including the language, the material heritage of southern Slavs (literature);**
» **public ostracism, mockery and degradation of cross-cultural projects, schemes and discourse;**
» **creating a distinction division between 'Us versus Them' with a strong negative emotional attachment to the latter;**
» **sense of cultural, educational and academic superiority;**
» **projecting the image of possessing the monopoly to the only true version of the history;**
» **application of the "purifying" practices regarding the material cultural heritage- literature, the community of scholars, and the discourse concerning cultural superiority and importance;**
» **implications of the spiritual realm that is to be regained, reserved and possessed by given one nation;**
» **strong attachment to explicit notions as the truth, the evil, the good, justice, the villains and the heroes;**
» **creating a symbolic universe of the *Volskgeist* (unique 'spirit' possessed collectively by each people or nation) and the *Volksseele* (folk soul) acting the imaginary communities linked to the extensive, politically centralized territorial states emerging around them (or rather, that are to emerge, for instance within the framework of the Greater Serbia or Croatia schemes);**
» **new political myths and rituals (resulting from the above) that by separating diverse ethno-nationalistic communities, support their decomposition in order to regain "the long time dreamt independency";**

» **national homogenization and propaganda of solving problems by the use of violence (entailing some sophisticated tools as academic essays, academic research[9] and etc).**

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┌─────────────────────────┐
│ Discourse analysis of    │
│ the hate speech within   │
│ the realm of Serbian     │
│ and Croatian culture     │
└─────────────────────────┘
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| **Main areas:** Language – nationality – ethnicity – density – fate – religion – civilizational supremacy – barbarism | **The key themes:** Return to roots – ancient gods patronage – spiritual rebirth – noble epos – authenticity – blood of the ancestors – genes – borders – spiritual rebirth | **Us versus Them rhetoric:** **Us:** "clean", civilized, loyal, heroic, faithful, blessed by the God's fate, common symbols, rituals, sacred places, common universe **Them:** "dirty", barbarian, disloyal, unfaithful, God's forsaken, prone to betrayal |

Graph 1. The discourse analysis of the applied rhetoric within the framework of the Serbian and Croatian "cultural hate speech"
Source: The author's own study.

The discourse analysis allows to categorize the rhetoric used into the main areas, key themes and the separatist "Us versus Them" rhetoric, the notion to which set of various features is applied. It can be presented as follows:

With reference to the classification of the form of applied hate speech, the ethno-nationalist foundation comes to the forefront, clearly differentiating Others on account of their ethnic origin or religious belonging. The cultural discourse aimed at denigrating and diminishing the value and at time the sole existence of cultural diversity, questioning multicultural realm of the Yugoslavian societies (of course the degree to which is was a imposed or a grass-root level schemes is a disputable issue). Therefore, the discourse applied by the representatives of culture such as writers, journalists, linguists, historians and other scholars stressed differences, generated artificial sense of superiority and heterogeneity of their own cultures with reference to the cross-cultural atmosphere present in the communist Yugoslavia. Such rhetoric, deprived of civic accents and democratic implications, utilized explicit language of segregation, discrimination and xenophobia, proving that nationalistic politicians and

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9   For instance, a group of historians of Serbian literature from the Institute of Literature and Art in Belgrade, Academy of Science of the Universities in Belgrade and Vranjji in 1995 put forward a research project over Serbian literature in Kosovo and Metochia and Macedonia. Yet, in their project the call Macedonia the Southern Serbia, whereas Kosovo the Old Serbia (sic!).

their right-wing media advocates can be also supported by the persons of culture and education, that by their mission, should obey the democratic rule, preserve objectivity of science and promote open-mindedness and civil society.

The above reflections lean towards a rather pessimistic view that culture became an area where the fight and war for national interests moved from the real battlefields. Notwithstanding, apart from the recalled examples of nationalistic discourse of hate and antagonisms, there was also an opposition to such stance, although subject to even more sever attacks and hostility form the mainstream media. The overwhelming nationalistic discourse in the sphere of culture was criticized in many articles, essays and studies on nationalistic manipulation, revealing how cultural tradition, language, art and literature are used for that purpose. Some positive examples concern independent radio stations, journals and newspapers such as Radio B92, Danas, Vreme, Republika, Helsinška Povelja, Reč, Mosotvi, ProFemina. All the recalled formations analyzed various aspects of nationalistic manipulation of the culture, trying to throw a realistic light on the absurdity of the imposed discourse. The positive examples include, for instance, Democratic Center *Dijalog* that released its fist bi-annual volume autumn-winter in 1995, or the Belgrade symposium "Culture as a self-defense of the society and individuals", acknowledging and recognizing the fact that cultural identities are not inborn or autochthonic, they do not originate from the specificity of the land or langue, but emerge in the process of communication with others and are the fruit of such communication.

It can be assumed that political madness affects not only those directly engaged in some ideological agendas, but also the domain of culture, which has been rather perceived as a realm resistance the dominance of power, abuse and violence, providing shelter and an area to create (rather than destroy) for the sensitive minds of the writers, composers, poets, journalists, scholars and other creative figures. Being aware how immensely culture affects the process of personality and identity shaping, the fact that it can be also used for some separatist and violent purposes is alarming for a all the educationist, pedagogues, teachers and parents willing to share rather peaceful image of their children's future. Thus, taking into account the processes of upbringing, socialization and enculturation that use culture to instil given values and norms, it is of paramount importance to be cautious when the image of a culture is projected to the society members, since, as the examples of former Yugoslavia prove, it can be utilized for destructive and differentiating purposes, that can question the social and cultural deal given communities nourish, despite the obstacles and at times unfavourable circumstances.

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Justyna Pilarska
PhD,
Department of Intercultural Education and Social Support Research
Institute of Pedagogy, University of Wroclaw
Address: ul. Dawida 1, 50–527 Wrocław
email address: justyna.pilarska@uwr.edu.pl