suvremene TEME, (2010.) God. 3, Br. 1
CONTEMPORARY issues, (2010) Vol. 3, No. 1

UDK: 323.14(497.1)"19"
Prethodno priopćenje
Primljeno: 29. 9. 2010.

Myths about Borders and the Reconciliation Moment

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This article deals with the relevant historical and political myths, especially myths about borders, firstly regarding the nationalistic movements within the FPRY/SFRY (including political emigration myths), and the myths and counter-myths concerning the new states created in the 1990s. Methodologically, this article emphasizes the dynamics of these myths and observes them in their continuous interaction. Thus, as opposed to the architects and engineers of these myths who see these myths as "natural" and "eternal", as well as freed from "artificial creation", this article places the emphasis on the artificial, or constructed, character of myths about borders and states, both Yugoslav and post-Yugoslav, as well as on their changes, dynamics and interaction. The text covers the period from World War II until the present day. Also, article is seeking for the political solution how to deal with myths and placing it in political context of apology and reconciliation in the Former Yugoslav Territories same as breaking the veil of secrecy in the Former Yugoslav Territories.

Key words: myths, borders, nationalism, communism, Yugoslavia, justice, reconciliation, cross-border cooperation

1.Borders and Nationalism

After the end of the Cold War, and especially during the last fifteen years, the human need to right the immoral wrongs has been expressed in political discourse as a propensity to apologize for acts of past injustice. World morality, not say human nature, changed. Moral issues have become so powerful in the international arena but, unfortunately, in the same arena, transition between 1989 and 1999 has been dramatic. It includes the horrendous wars in Yugoslavia and Africa, as well as the liberation of Eastern Europe and South Africa and the return to democracy in many Latin American countries. Even these beneficial changes from totalitarian regimes or dictatorships have been a painful experience for many countries. In several of these transitions, instead of revenge against perpetrators, truth and reconciliation committees have tried to weigh culpability on pragmatic scales (Barkan, 2000: XVI).

But before it happened, it is important to know that the wars in the former Yugoslavia were waged with the purpose of forming ethnic national states with ethnic national borders

which – as early as in the phase of ethnic nationalist movements, and later, following the consolidation of the state – had imposed new myths, i.e. mutually conflicting versions of history, so that the new states be as different from each other as possible and new national identities be formed. The history of the peoples who once lived in the unified Yugoslav state has remained shared regardless of the fact that this state no longer exists but has given birth to several new states, with mostly same old socialist borders, but strongly shaped with national mythology, each of which has its own national history, interpreting the same events, processes and problems in different ways. Nations and national states that sprouted from that multinational socialist federation (1945-1991), overthrown by ethnic nationalist movements and the wars of the 1990s, remain unfinished national/nation-building products in the process of construction. At present, these are states in transition waiting to join the EU, and they face serious economic difficulties, as well as internal national consolidation problems, tense relations with their neighbors same as borders problems that ethnic nationalism tried to draw during the last two decades. By focusing on the situation in the former Yugoslavia twenty years after the crucial year of 1989, we can say that the borders partially helped in attention of the nationalists to answer the question of "who is who" in the region today, and partially not, because the hunger of different types of nationalism never can be solved and always it is giving possibilities for opening the new appetites for the new territories.

It is important to mention that all post-Yugoslav states (including Slovenia, to a certain extent) define themselves primarily in relation to the past (Yugoslav states, wars of the 1940s and 1990s and pre-modern history), then in relation to one another and in relation to the leading Western countries. As states in transition, they are close to fitting into the concept of failed states, yet they made more progress when it comes to nation construction than the construction of statehood and the political/economic system. These nations have a "symbolic nationality" above all: a flag, national anthem, state religion, sport national teams, as well as collective fantasies about history, historical national borders and the present articulated as political myths and counter-myths. Wars might be waged again in the region because of the "symbolic-mythical nationalism" but I hope that a bigger conflict will not erupt because of transitional bankruptcy, the corrupt political elites and the influence of the local mafia. For that reason, the analysis of the imaginary rather than the real, i.e. the political mythology of new nations, is the only way to answer the question of who is who today in the former Yugoslavia. In this article it is impossible to present all the myths in the ex-Yugoslav region that are connected to borders. So, I decided to show some of the myths that are closely related with borders and who are, in the same time, are the important national myths that, during the last war helped to mobilized nationalism of the two biggest nations, Serbs and Croats.[1]

1.1. Myths and Borders

It is interesting how ambivalently the national community adheres to national territory, in the sense that this territory never has clearly-defined contours and established borders. In modern Serbian folklore that sprouted during the wars of the 1990s, various landmarks were proclaimed as the borders of ethnic territory. In one case, the national territory extended from "Karlovac to the plains of Kosovo", while in another more humorous case, "Serbian land will extend from Oslo to Crete". On the Croatian side, a band called *Zlatni Dukati* wrote nationally-engaged verses with a similar intonation:

> "Between the Sava, Adriatic and the Drava
> Always somewhere near a border
> From ancient times lived
> The Croats – men and women"
> (Čolović, 1996:280).

1 More about it in Perica, V. and Gavrilović, D., 2010. This collection of papers is a result of work carried out on a project that was jointly developed by a group of scientists from the territory of the former Yugoslavia under the auspices of two non-governmental organizations for peace/humanitarian activism – the Center for History, Democracy and Reconciliation (CHDR) from Novi Sad, Serbia, and the Institute for Historical Justice and Reconciliation (IHJR) from Salzburg, Austria and The Hague, Netherlands. The text was written in the form of a so-called "shared narrative". This is a fairly new method which is most frequently used both in theory and in the practice of peaceful conflict resolution. The concept behind this method is that history be written without the imperative to reach a consensus regarding every controversy. Rather, it is a joint study of history, with teamwork between the authors representing the sides in the conflict or post-conflict phase, and the issuance of a joint publication and presentation that contribute to a peaceful resolution of the conflict.

This brings us to a group of myths about the special role of small Balkan peoples as the protectors of larger civilizations, for instance Christianity – both Western and Eastern – and so forth. These myths are linked to the myth about sacrifice made by a small people to fulfill the role of savior of a large civilization. For example, some of the Serbian myth-makers have gladly seen themselves as the "keepers of the gates to the civilized world" (*Antemurale*), taking particular pleasure in citing poems from the Kosovo cycle. For them, the Battle of Kosovo of 1389 was a sacrifice made by the Serbian people for the benefit of the entire Christian civilization, as well as an example of how the same civilization never "repaid" this sacrifice, for it was the Serbs who – in spite of their defeat – weakened the Ottoman Army, thus rescuing Europe from an invasion from the East. According to this myth, the Serbs made a sacrifice for which they were never rightfully rewarded. Slobodan Milošević also called attention to this in his famous speech delivered in June 1989 at the celebration of the 600-year anniversary of the Battle of Kosovo in Gazimestan. Due to this obvious lack of understanding for the "Serbian issue", Serbs harbored a growing feeling of injustice and bitterness towards the West, while the nationalists once again found themselves inspired by topics from ancient history.

Croatian nationalists, Milošević's contemporaries, also focused on myths about borders and their role as gatekeepers of civilization. However, as opposed to Milošević, who did not continue where Serbian nationalists had left off at the end of World War II, the Croatian nationalistic establishment did begin at the point where their predecessors had left off in 1945. The ideology promoted by Franjo Tuđman attempted to ensure continuity with the old forms of Croatian nationalism.

One of the maximalist forms of Croatian nationalism which is rooted in the Party of Rights ideology of Ante Starčević insists on the Drina River as the border. Ante Starčević believed the Croatian national territory to extend all the way to the Drina. This idea was later accepted by Stjepan Radić. However, as opposed to the later Ustasha ideology, Radić accepted religious, regional and other forms of pluralism, while the Ustasha ideology insisted on a repressive role of the state that strives towards homogenization. In Croatian political circles, but also among Croats and Bosniaks in the 20th century, a thesis that would be very frequently put forth was that in the past there was a border on the Drina, that is to say, that on this river there used to be a centuries-old – even thousand years old – border between the East and West, i.e. between the Catholic and Orthodox faiths. Though this mythologem seems old, it actually is not. It originated from the Pure Party of Rights, then found its way into the works of Milan Šufflaj in the 1990s and continued to develop abroad, among the Ustasha emigrants, in the 1950s. The mythologem about the "border on the Drina" is based on a myth maniacal use of the fact that following the death of Roman emperor Theodosius in 395 the Roman Empire was divided into the eastern and western parts, and that along one part the border followed the Drina valley all the way to the Montenegrin coastline. This historical fact is only relatively accurate, because the divisions in terms of culture, civilization and society extended both east and west of the Drina. In order to establish the border on the Drina, the radically negative view of the Bosnian Muslims had to be altered, which is what Starčević did, and the Muslims became "the flower of the Croatian people",[2] while at the same time the Croats in Slavonia in the north were able to keep the myth about their land as a sort of *Antemurale Christianitatis* – "the bulwark of Christianity" (Goldstein, 2003: 111). Pro-Ustasha oriented intellectuals wrote about this myth, emphasizing the racial differences between the Croats and the Serbs. In his collection of essays, articles and speeches, Filip Lukas (geographer, geopolitician and president of *Matica hrvatska* for a number of years) presented a racial map of the Balkans. He concluded that Croats and Serbs represent opposite racial types but that the Montenegrins belong to the Croatian racial type. He agreed with the Iranian theory about the origin of the Croats, but his interpretation of it was particularly biased (Goldstein, 2003: 116).

After World War II, during the "second emigration"[3] of the Ustashas, the myth about the Drina transformed from the "gate of civilization" to a source of longing, nostalgia, resistance and the desire for revenge, to which numerous works of prose and poetry bore witness.

It is important to mention that early medieval history is extremely important for the fabricated tradition in modern Serbian and Croat nationalism. In the beginning of the 1990s, just prior to the breakup of Yugoslavia, writers appeared

2 During the existance of the Independent State of Croatia, Mladen Lorković considered the entire Bosnia and Herzegovina to be Croatian land, while he considered the Bosnian Muslims to be Croats of an "Islamic faith".

3 The first emigration took place during the time of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia.

on the Serbian literary scene who expanded on the work and ideas of Serbian nationalistically-oriented historians who wrote history textbooks in the second half of the 19th and beginning of the 20th century. At that time, Serbian creators of myths about the longevity of the Serbian people and size of the territories they occupied claimed that "all Slavs were once called Serbs, and only in the 6th century after Christ did they start calling them Slavs..."(Vukičević, 1904: 1). Some of their colleagues – geographers – saw the states of the neighboring peoples as exclusively Serbian and considered Dalmatia to be an exclusively Slavic country where "all the people of a Slavic origin – Orthodox and Catholic – are Serbs... Statistical information about Dalmatia and its population is not stated in historical textbooks. All that was written in them was that the first Serbian settlements in Dalmatia extended all the way to the Cetina River. This is why the islands of Brač, Hvar, Korčula and Mljet were identified as Serbian" (Jelavich, 1992: 182), while Serbian lands stretched further, from „the Drava and Tamiš and to the south over the Sava and Danube, reaching the Thessaloniki Plain, as well as Mount Olympus and Pindus, the city of Durrës in present-day Albania; in the west, the border of the Serbian fatherland extended to the Una River, the Cetina River and the Adriatic Sea, and in the east past the middle region and the Rhodope Mountains..." (Vukičević, 1904: 28,30-31). Following the example of their colleagues from the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century, the Serbian myth-bearers of today have readily placed their fountain pens in the service of the national idea and continued to spread the myth about the "chosen people". The work of these writers – among them Borislav Vlajić-Zemljanički, Jovan I. Deretić, Dobroslav Jevđević, Olga Luković-Pjanović and Draško Šćekić – was also supported by painters such as Milić Stanković and Dragoš Kalajić. They all shared one idea, which is that Serbs are the oldest people in the world. During the time of difficult Presidency sessions, when suspicions were first voiced in public that the state would disintegrate in the vortex of war, such statements made by writers – probably according to the creators of national policy – were intended to have a beneficial and mobilizing effect on the national consciousness of the Serbian people. Their works soon reached the public, and among those that attracted the most attention was the book by Olga Luković-Pjanović titled "Serbs ... the Oldest People", published in 1990. Through the work of this author, the long-familiar and ideologically well thought-out way to prove the greatness and age of this (chosen) people by means of language and its link to toponyms, had found a simple path to the readers with the intention of awakening their national self-awareness in the ideological sense. This is profoundly contradictory to Croatian myths about the oldest national states, which insist on seniority, especially in comparison to the Serbs, thus mythologizing the Croatian state and its rulers who governed at least 300 years before the Serbian state that was created in the 13th century.

1.2. Promised Land

Intertwined with the myths about borders are elements of the archetypal myth about the Promised Land. For example, in his 1994 book titled "Sorabi: istoriopis", referring to the words of Sima Lukin Lazić, Draško Šćekić claims that the First Migration of the Serbs and their dispersion began about 4500 years before the birth of Christ (Radić, 2003: 38,39). Moreover, on page 72 of his book it is stated: "In India, the first cradle of the Sorbs or Serbs, where as early as 5000 years before the birth of Christ two Serbian states existed: the great Sarbar state, in the Gangetic region, and the coastal Panovska state...", [4]based on which it turns out that the Serbs are such an old people that, when compared with the Old Testament, they are older than Adam and that, since the author himself stated that the world was created exactly at 9 o'clock a.m. on 23 October 4004 BC, they are older than the world itself. Therefore, if we were to follow this train of thought, it turns out that first the Serbs existed, and only then did God create the world

4 Jovan I. Deretić also wrote about the ancient history of the Serbs, emphasizing that ancient Serbia extended across the Adriatic peninsula several centuries before the Roman conquest. Its capital was Sarda, present-day Shkoder. Other than this Serbia, there was another Serbia in Dacia, and yet another in the north on the Sarmatian Sea, which is today called the Baltic Sea.

(Radić, 2007:124.)![5] Of course, there were many similar writers who were receiving the greatest coverage in the media as theirs beliefs suited the propaganda activities of Milošević's regime – which had to instill the feeling of uniqueness and greatness among the Serbian people in order to prevent personal political failure.

Certain Croatian scientists considered the ancient inhabitants of Iran to be the ancestors of the Croats, whereas others considered them to be the Ostrogoths – an idea that was particularly popular during World War II, with the aim of pointing out that Croats are not Slavs. Prior to the appearance of authors who served the Ustasha propaganda with the intention of separating the Croats from the Slavic group of people by coming up with fanciful ideas about the origin of the Croats, there were quite a few of those whose vision of the greatness of their people and their borders was – similarly to their Serbian colleagues from the beginning of the 20th century – far removed from reality. For example, Vjekoslav Klaić, whose specialty was the Middle Ages, wrote about the existence of a "Great or White Croatia, from which Slavic tribes and peoples emigrated in all directions" (Jelavich, 1992: 210). This was an assertion somewhat similar to the one made by the Serbs. According to this Croatian author, all Slavs were once Croats. The lands inhabited by the Croats matched the descriptions of Serbian lands. As Srkulj had stated,

> "the land where the Croats settled extended from the Adriatic Sea and Raša in Istria all the way to Bosnia in the east, and from the Danube in the north to the Bojana River in the south. Chronicler Priest Dukljanin calls the land which at first extended from Cetina to the Zrmanja river, and then to Raša in Istria – the old Liburnia – White Croatia, whereas the region between the Cetina and Bojana rivers he calls Red Croatia... Croats also inhabited Southern Panonia, the land from the Drava and Danube rivers all the way to Kapela and Gvozd to the south and southwest" (Srkulj, 1912:58).

The tendency to reach so far back into the past continued during the 1990s, and the creation of geographical and historical maps with state or national borders had largely aided the creators of the wars in the former Yugoslavia to convince the population of the ethical value of their deeds. Particularly imaginative was Mate Marčinko, who decided to convince the Croatian people of their multi-millennial existence as an ancient Indo-European people, while the borders held by the Croats, according to him and those with similar beliefs were far wider than they are today.

In this context, a significant role was played by newspaper series, feuilleton-type articles – in rare cases signed by historians but much more frequently by history enthusiasts. Historians usually do not hold monopoly over their profession in the media; it is the history enthusiasts, with their simplification of the past, who dominate, and it is they who are the creators of historical culture.

2. The Reconciliation Moment

After the end of the Cold War, and especially during the last fifteen years, the human need to amend immoral wrongs has been expressed in political discourse as a propensity to apologize for acts of past injustice. A wave of apology continues to work its way through global politics. In September 2003, the presidents of Croatia and Serbia and Montenegro unexpectedly exchanged apologies for "all of the evils" perpetrated by their countries. Nicholas Tavuchis was among the first scholars to take up the subject of these political apologies, and his text: "Mea Culpa: A Sociology of Apology and Reconciliation" still serves as a historical starting point for the field. Tavuchis regarded apology as one of the „deep truths" of social life and as a „moral expedition" which could repair damaged social relations and allow the parties of past injustices to go on with their lives (Barkan and Karn, 2006: 5). From Argentina, to South Africa, to ex-Yugoslav countries, to the United States – societies and international institutions are deciding how they

5 Such a mythological notion fostered Serbian nationalism during the 1990s. Nevertheless, it very quickly found itself in opposition to another mythological notion – that of the Russians, the friendly and brotherly nation of the Serbs. At the time the Russians also harbored the myth about being the oldest people in the world, and its loudest proponent was Y. P. Mirolyubov. The already published "Book of Veles", which he persistently adhered to as the book about the creation of the world, spread the dream about the Slavic Russians being the oldest people on earth, that their original homeland is located between Sumer, Iran and North India, from which they had migrated approximately five thousand years ago, broke through to Iran, crushed despotic rule in Mesopotamia with their cavalry, conquered Syria and Palestine, invaded Egypt, and reached Europe in the 8th century BC. I think that the followers of Y. P. Mirolyubov should come face to face with the followers of Olga Luković Pjanović for an endless discussion in a "brotherly Serbian-Russian embrace", during which they can express their arguments regarding which people are the oldest in the world.

should reckon with past and atrocities (including genocide, war crimes, and crimes against humanity, rape and torture) that may have been committed by a government against its own citizens, by its opponents, or by combatants in an international armed conflict.

One of the possible ways to deal with the past injustices and to preventing genocide is to research the past, which is shroud with political myths, without bias and prejudice. This is impossible, even as a first step if we are, at the first level, faced with ideologically controlled society and closed archives with valuable documents that can shed light into our past. And on the second level, if we are faced with myths that are building blocks of nations (only no national history is myth-free). Due to all this, both the intentional and non-intentional cover-ups of the historic truth about the causes of conflicts among South Slavs only prolong the existing conflicts and bring about new conflicts with even more perilous consequences. (Kožar, 2005: 182)

According to that, on the other side, if we are faced with these cover-ups and new myth-making that ruined our lives in last two decades and if we still want to make steps forward to do away with nationalism and try to create civil society, and face the past through documents as historians are doing, it is imperative for all of us from ex-Yugoslav territories to work on apologies and reconciliation as the important step toward preventing genocide. That process is going in four phases.

2.1. Group Apology

Group apology is first step, and it represents a new and compelling iteration of our commitment to moral practice. Despite new tensions and escalating hostilities associated with what some view as the new world disorder, apology remains a powerful trend in global politics. Even as cycles of violence emerge in some spots, in others, we see rival groups (like in ex-Yugoslav countries) willing to put their troubled histories in the service of justice and peace.

In the best cases, the negotiation of apology works to promote dialogue, tolerance, and cooperation between groups knitted together uncomfortably (or ripped asunder) by some past injustice. A sincere expression of remorse, offered at the right pitch and tenor, can pave the way for atonement and reconciliation by promoting mutual understanding and by highlighting the possibilities for peaceful coexistence. Practiced within its limits, apology can create a new framework in which groups may rehearse their past(s) and reconsider the present. By approaching their grievances through a discourse of repentance and forgiveness, rivals can explore the roots and legacies of historical conflict as a first step toward dampening the discord and frictions that they produced. It is possible, of course, to overstate the effectiveness of apology, but the psychological attraction it has for perpetrators, victims, and those who live in the shadow of historical injustice seems empirically undeniable. Especially at the group level, apology has emerged as a powerful negotiating tool for nations and states eager to defuse tensions stemming from past injustices (Barkan and Karn, 2006: 7). It is important to mentioned, that apology and dialogue, in general, are only the first step in the longer process of post-conflict reconciliation. Reconciliation requires the sides of the conflict to accept their own past first and only then to reach an understanding of the shared past.

2.2. Trials and Truth Commissions

If the apology is the first way of how to resolve the clashes and national tensions, the second consists of trials and truth commissions that can work cooperatively, each responsible for emphasizing one of the two ideals – punishment and reconciliation – but not completely ignoring the other. It is better if neither tool is overloaded with functions that the other can perform better. For example, the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia has indicted, has put on trial, and is punishing some middle-level implementers, some high military commanders, former presidents, and other alleged planners of atrocities in Bosnia. In contrast, a proposed truth and reconciliation commission, comprised of representatives of the Serb, Croat, and Muslim communities, could investigate and deliberate together concerning the truth about past. This kind of investigation and a resultant authorized report would partially settle accounts with the great number of rank-and-file rights violators. Such a report would also go beyond the scope of judicial processes – recognize and applaud those from all sides who found ways to aid their ethnically diverse and endangered neighbors.

The relations of trials and truth commissions can be complementary in a stronger sense, because each body may enhance as well as supplement the other. Fair trials and punishment may contribute to the reconciliation and truth sought by truth commissions. On the one

hand, if victims believe that their testimony might be used by national or international tribunals to bring perpetrators to justice; this knowledge can also satisfy the thirst for justice and lead to healing. On the other hand, the evidence that truth commissions unearth may have a positive role to play in judicial proceedings. Moreover, truth commissions, after evaluating the fairness and independence of a country's judicial system, might recommend judicial reform or argue that an international tribunal should have jurisdiction (Crocker, 2006: 73-74).

2.3. Scholar Projects and Meetings

The third step towards reconciliation is support of scholar projects and meetings that seek to promote (among students, teachers and pupils through journals, textbooks and seminars, same as in society especially through the documentary movies) a dynamic, multinational, multiethnic and non-partisan history. Its aim is to foster understanding and acceptance of ethnic and national differences, highlight similarities in cultural, religious, social and political life and harmonize the various histories that exist in the region. This projects have to engage scholars, educators, media representatives and civil society organizations in process to transform "the image of the enemy" and examine the historical myths that have been used as propaganda from different ethnic perspectives. This process includes working with teams built from the different regions with goal of researching, writing and disseminating shared historical narratives in an effort to build greater understanding of „the other" and thereby contributing toward the dispelling of public myths often used to conflagrate tensions.

Alongside this, it is necessary to incorporate in such projects and meeting those political elites (creating in the region the groups of friendship among those political groups of different nations who wants to promoting peaceful relations and reconciliation as possible way for preventing genocide) who wants reconciliation in the region. Politicians should be invited to discuss future co operations with scholars on reconciliation processes and regional stability. These meetings should generally raise public awareness through online and print media. So, that can be the third step toward reverting genocide, post-conflict reconciliation, fostering of democratic values and peace building in regions afflicted by legacies of ethnic and religious conflict.

For example, in the ex Yugoslav region, that kind of project seeks to identify the following relevant political and national myths, looking at their mutual "dynamic interaction" during the period of the old regime, antebellum crisis, wartime and postwar transition: first, official myths of Titoism as well as alternative myths emerging during the socialist era; second, Serbian, Croatian, Bosnian, Montenegrin and Albanian old and new ethnic myths, third, the religious myths incorporated into the new national ideologies and fourth, myths about the wars of the 1990s and at the end to work with Group of friendship among Bosnian, Croat and Serbian parliaments in attention to find a way for preventing genocide. Also, the wish of the group of scholars who are working on that project is to emphasize the process and its dynamics because the nations under consideration are incomplete. In other words, no nation that came out of ex-Yugoslavia (not even Serbia, Croatia and Slovenia, not to mention Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo or Macedonia) is a finished product. All of them are in a rather raw shape let alone the feared possibility of further bifurcation and emergence of new nations-state lets.

2.4. Cross-Border Cooperation

Borders are the "scars of history". The wide range of problems and opportunities on both sides of borders in wider Europe makes cross-border cooperation indispensable. The border areas of the countries of Western Europe took the first steps towards organized cooperation already in 1950s where the state borders did not correspond to natural linguistic, ethnic, cultural or economic communities. At first it was done spontaneously, with bottom-up cooperation system evolving that lacking any formality. Later, principles and legal regulations influenced already functioning practice, mainly supported by the Council of Europe, the European Union and the Association of European Border Regions, and then slowly evolving into appropriate institutional structures. This tendency was enhanced by regional policies in the Union, the beginning of the INTER-REG program via which cooperation along the internal and external borders of the European Union was aided. So, at third level is cross-border cooperation (CBC) between the states in the divided region. It is the perspective of reinforcing cooperation with countries bordering the European Union, the European Neighborhood and Partnership Instrument (ENPI) that includes a component specifically targeted on that point. The CBC strategy has four key objectives:

- Promote economic and social development in border areas
- Address common challenges
- Ensure efficient and secure borders
- Promote people-to-people cooperation

Two types of programs have been established:

- Land border program between two or more countries sharing a common border (or short sea crossing).
- Multilateral program covering a sea basin.

It is the task of the regional and local partners on both sides of the border to analyze their common needs and to identify priorities and actions that are most relevant to their local situation. CBC uses an approach largely modeled on 'Structural Funds' principles such as multiannual programming, partnership and co-financing, adapted to take into account the specificities of the EC's external relations rules and regulation. But, also, CBC is a way to healing the trauma from the certain past.

2.5. Forgiveness

At the end comes forgiveness. It is a Christian morality, or rather its secular embodiment, which have raised forgiveness to the status of supreme, even constitutive value. Not only has Christianity emphasized internal transformative capacities, but it has also put suffering and its redemption at the core. The best that can be done in these circumstances is to implement legal justice, even though both are very much aware that justice cannot be done anymore. Jankelevitch wrote his essay in the midst of the French debate regarding the indescribability of Nazi crimes. For him, pardon is equal to forgetting crimes against Jews and true crimes against humanity, against the human essence. They cannot be pardoned. He also does not believe in German repentance: „German Repentance, it's name is Stalingrad ... it's name is defeat." (Jankelevitch, 1996: 552-572) For all these reasons, it may have nothing to do with the term reconciliation as we use it today, which is understood entirely in a social and political perspective that is completely independent of personal feelings. No one expects the victims to forgive anyone, but the social process of receiving restitution and processes of political forgiveness can still legitimately be considered part of a reconciliation process. At the end, it is important to conclude that despite its Christian origins and western dominance, it would be erroneous to conceive of these developments as a new form of "moral imperialism".

3. Conclusion

Europe is on the right track to round its Balkan and eastern boundaries and finally become one "community", but this community will comprise of historically aware nations and their states. There is no nation in the early 21st century Europe that has discarded its history as some kind of old coat which is no longer fashionable. Accordingly, the Serbs should do it neither; nevertheless, they should neither use it so bluntly for spreading nationalism. The worst thing that historians can do is put their knowledge in the service of ideology and attempt at validating an opinion formed in advance by distortion and the blunt exploitation of documents which support the formation of the myths of nationalism. The Serbs must be able to take the cultural treasure they have accumulated into the 21st century. Yet, to move into the future with a continual projection of cultural treasures into political myths of nationalism, a distortion of historical truths, and taking for granted historical half-truths and lies will not be a locomotive on the Serbian road to Europe but deadwood sitting heavily on its shoulders.

Nevertheless, this much should be admitted - not all people can live without myths. They are still needed for the majority of people, since, as emphasized by Christian von Krockow "it is not only what the reason tells that matters to people and nations, but also what speaks to their feelings, their hearts". This means not that this is the reason to allow nationalism to influence, or worse still, to build a society which will be based on them. Should we agree with both Strauss and Krockow and include the "tragic" into the future, which will take us back to the myths of nationalism, because, according to him, "it is only possible to explain why the definition of the national entity has to be fulfilled in the tragic and existential differentiating, in a delimitation in regard to the other and foreign from the aspect of an enemy". Or, a different road should be chosen, the road of life in freedom which requires no myth but only defense when this freedom is endangered together with the promise of humanity and happiness founded on it.

I am of the opinion that a new pragmatics should take the place of nationalism, the one which is capable of serving as a basis of legitimi-

zation of modern states. It is a democratic constitutional state, a legal state, a social state and a state with an environmentally restrained economic growth. It would be some kind of combination of the reaches the civilization has achieved since the 18th century in regard to political-historical "dual revolution" of the West, but it would also be a result of all the traditional aspirations which endangered the prevailing type of state in the countries of the West after World War II. The longer peace is maintained and this pragmatics confirmed as valid, the more nationalism will lose its social-integrative and political-legitimate forces. The weaker it gets, breaking its myths against the cliffs of sober and unbiased scientific approach, the chances for an honest, not just declarative, peace will increase in the territory of former Yugoslavia. In such a case, nationalism would be able to reach its decline, and the myths created within the cultural heritage of nations would remain unexploited by ideology, yet a subject of cultural history research, which would allow scientists to create more complete and politically unbiased images of their own pasts.

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Mitovi o granicama i trenutak pomirbe

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Ovaj članak bavi se relevantnim povijesnim i političkim mitovima, posebice mitovima o granicima, u prvoj liniji s nacionalističkim pokretima u FNRJ/SFRJ (uključujući mitove političke emigracije), kao i s mitovima i protumitovima stvorenima u novim državama tijekom 1990tih. Metodološki, ovaj rad naglašava dinamiku tih mitova i promatra ih u njihovoj stalnoj interakciji. Prema tome, suprotno arhitektima i inženjerima takvih mitova koji ih vide kao "prirodne" i "vječne" te slobodne od "umjetnog stvaranja", ovaj članak stavlja naglasak na umjetni, odnosno konstruirani karakter mitova o granicama i državama, kako jugoslavenskim, tako postjugoslavenskim te prikazuje njihove promjene, dinamiku i interakciju. Tekst pokriva razdoblje od Drugog svjetskog rata do danas. Također, članak traži političko rješenje suočavanja s mitovima i njihovog stavljanja u politički kontekst isprike i pomirbe na bivškim jugoslavenskim prostorima i razdiranje vela tajnovitosti u bivšoj Jugoslaviji.

Ključne riječi: mitovi, granice, nacionalizam, komunizam, Jugoslavija, pravda, pomirba, prekogranična suradnja