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Patriotism and Cosmopolitanism in Intellectual Discourse: *Peščanik and Nova srpska politička misao*

Abstract *Rather than being just abstract notions scholars write about, patriotism and cosmopolitanism are used by social actors in ongoing social life. Whether employed to name “us” and exalt the values of one’s own group, or to name “them” and stigmatize what the opponents stand for, the two terms have long served as potent discursive weapons in the struggle for various kinds of power in Serbia. While they retain some significance to this day, the peak of their intensive and consequential employment in public discourse occurred between 2005 and 2010. In this paper we aim to reconstruct the symbolic battles over the foundations of Serbian political community, based on critical discourse analysis of the discursive material produced by intellectuals and made public via Peščanik and Nova srpska politička misao media outlets.*

Keywords: *patriotism, cosmopolitanism, symbolic struggles, discourse, Serbia*

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Introduction

In the literature, both cosmopolitanism and patriotism are contested and multifaceted terms.¹ Cosmopolitanism, to list just a few possibilities, can denote the sociocultural condition brought about by globalization; a philosophy promoting human brotherhood; a political project of international cooperation and global citizenship; a personal attitude of valuing difference; and a set of practices and competences in (multi)cultural consumption (Vertovec and Cohen 2002: 8–14). There are descriptive and normative aspects of cosmopolitanism and the distinction between the two is not always clear.² Similarly, there is a whole set of patriotisms (Virgili 1995), from the ancient Roman imperative of absolute dedication to the glory of the Republic or the Empire to the various modern forms. These in turn may hinge on either nation or state (ethnic and civic patriotism),

1 This paper is part of the project *Politics of Social Memory and National Identity: Regional and European Context* (179049) financed by the Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development of the Republic of Serbia.

2 On the lack of attention to the social foundations of cosmopolitanism see Calhoun 2008.

sometimes retaining the old connection to militarism, sometimes replacing the latter with a more 'civilian' orientation towards promoting the community's wellbeing. The most discussed version in contemporary political philosophy is Habermas' "constitutional patriotism".

Although cosmopolitanism and patriotism are not always taken as opposites, cosmopolitanism generally indicates allegiance to the world community of humankind as against particularistic ties, so that it always involves a tension with moral obligations to one's local origins and group memberships (Lamont and Aksartova 2002: 2). This obviously can include the patriotic bond as well. Even if we allow that patriotism is not the same as nationalism – which is another long-lasting controversy – the question of how to combine it with cosmopolitanism, and whether this is possible at all, remains open.

To make things more complicated, in addition to being topics of philosophical reflection and theoretical debate, cosmopolitanism and patriotism are feelings and attitudes of real people in real social contexts, points of reference that guide them, for better or for worse, in their everyday and not-so-everyday actions. Of all the possible approaches to studying cosmopolitanism and patriotism developed in the social sciences and humanities, and there are many indeed, the one best suited to our purposes is what may be called the practice approach. According to this view, both cosmopolitanism and patriotism are not (only) ready-made analytic categories but social practices, discursive and nondiscursive, that social actors use in particular contexts which are defined historically, politically, and culturally. Their semantic substance, as well as their performative power, are shifting and context-dependent, because both cosmopolitanism and patriotism are (also) a kind of language actors use to communicate with other actors, in a given society, on the basis of a set of shared assumptions and participating in one or more ongoing social games.³

Taking Serbia as an example, patriotism and cosmopolitanism have been used quite directly, and explicitly, by participants in social and political struggles. Descending from the rarefied realm of theory into messy real life, the two concepts have become vivid labels for specific political positions, and groups of people taking them. Whether used to name "us" and exalt the values of one's own group, or to name "them" and stigmatize what the opponents stand for, patriotism and cosmopolitanism have long served as potent discursive weapons in the struggle for various kinds of

3 This understanding of cosmopolitanism is elaborated in Spasić 2011.

power in Serbia. While they retain some of their significance to this day, we shall argue that the peak of their intensive and consequential employment in public discourse occurred between 2005 and 2010.⁴

In this paper, we are interested in the symbolic battles recently fought in Serbia over the foundations of political community. Hence, instead of starting from precise definitions of cosmopolitanism and patriotism we are looking into the different ways the two notions are talked about in the public sphere. What does it mean to be a *true patriot* in Serbia between 2005 and 2010? Conversely, what does it mean to be a *true cosmopolitan*? What is the relation between the two positions in Serbian public discourse? What kind of *state* do the patriots acknowledge and strive for? On the other side, what precisely is this *world* that the cosmopolitans invoke so often? And from both positions, how is the relation of the state (Serbia) and the world described and prescribed? What is the place of *culture* in all that?

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For analysis we selected two very prominent outlets for intellectual debate – the journal *Nova srpska politička misao* (hereafter NSPM) and the radio program and periodical publication *Peščanik*. They illustrate rather clearly the “patriotic” and the “cosmopolitan” position, respectively. The initial sample⁵ comprised five issues of NSPM which, according to their titles, could be expected to bear on the subject of the present analysis⁶ and the publication *Peščanik FM* (transcripts of the *Peščanik* radio program from 2005 to 2009). For the purposes of the present analysis, the sample was expanded to include texts posted at the *nspm.rs* website during this period, and *Peščanik*’s *Godišnji almanah* (*Yearbook*) collecting the key texts

4 Serbian society in the second half of 2000s was shaken by numerous struggles over the country’s foreign policy orientation on the outside, and over the bases on which to build the political community from within. During these years, the State Union of Serbia and Montenegro was dissolved; in 2008 the former Serbian province of Kosovo proclaimed independence; a new Constitution was adopted (2006); political parties oscillated continuously in their foreign policy, turning to the EU, then Russia, China, and countries of the former “Third World” (or even all of the above – as in the so-called doctrine of the “four pillars” of Serbian foreign policy promoted by the incumbent coalition government and the President Boris Tadić); the balance between (European) integration and nationalist isolation was tipped a few times.

5 The original data was gathered during the research for the Center for Empirical Cultural Studies of South-East Europe’s project „Social and Cultural Capital in Serbia“, funded by RRPP.

6 The issues are: *Kosovo and Serbia’s European identity*, *Democracy in Serbia after 2000*, the special edition *Cultural Policy in Serbia*, all from 2008, and *Culture and the Media in the (Post)Global Era* from 2010). One of the issues from the original sample, upon closer inspection, turned out not to be sufficiently relevant in terms of the research topic.

posted on the *peščanik.net* in the year 2008. The broadening of the sample was introduced in order to reduce genre imbalance, since the data representing the two ideological sides were initially not sufficiently comparable in terms of the kind of discourse they comprised. On one side (Peščanik), we had transcribed talks in a radio show, i.e. oral communication transformed into text, and on the other (NSPM) a scholarly journal publishing (more or less) regularly formatted papers. It is reasonable to suppose that the internal rules of the latter genre urged, but also enabled, the authors to present their argument more carefully and develop it more fully than was available to speakers at Peščanik, who acted in the heat of the moment. By including material from the two websites this asymmetry was somewhat reduced, but these methodological reservations should be kept in mind.

Nova srpska politička misao

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The first impression gained by reading the articles published in this journal did not support the assumption that NSPM played a major role in reviving the concept of patriotism and introducing patriotic discourse into public debates. Patriotism as a concept almost never appears explicitly in the inspected journal issues, although it is referred to indirectly in some of the papers discussing cultural policy, democracy building, or the Kosovo problem. Cosmopolitanism on the other hand is brought up much more directly, most often in negative terms by attacking the *falsely* cosmopolitan *false* elite. However, bringing in the texts posted on the *nspm.rs* website changed the first impression considerably, as much more direct references to patriotism were patently there.

In the first quote we will be looking at patriotism is not explicitly mentioned but is hinted at in the idea that protecting national interests in Kosovo is a precondition for internal democracy and normality,⁷ as opposed to “pragmatic realism” (i.e. the claim that it is more reasonable for Serbia to comply with Western pressure and recognize Kosovo’s independence) which would result in bolstering authoritarian tendencies in society, encouraging corruption and making the legal system even more fragile.

By acquiescing to the right of force one can hardly achieve normalcy, democracy and stability, while pragmatic realists are pretending there is no dramatic incoherence between force and normality, un-law and democracy. (...) If the principle of force in the place of law is accepted

7 The trope of normality („normal country“, „normal life“) is often used by the opposing political camp, here represented by Peščanik discourse.

with no critical reflection, that is, on the basis of realism, which is nothing but consent to what is imposed, then internal authoritarian forces are also granted legitimacy (...) we shall witness selective and inconsistent implementation of law flourish, along with corruption, non-institutional pressures, extortion, shady deals along the lines of the internal structure of power. (Nakarada 2008: 14–15)

Here, normalcy, democracy and stability are placed at the side of the patriotic position (the one that maintains that Kosovo is and must remain part of Serbia), while pragmatic realism, as mere consenting to what is imposed (“with no critical reflection”) reinforces authoritarianism and debilitates the state. In some papers, the defense of national integrity of Serbia in Kosovo is interpreted as the assertion of Serbia’s European, transnational identity.

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If we are to be equal from the viewpoint of EU countries, particularly its historical core, we have to learn how to work towards protecting our national interest the same way as they do, but also to strive to build a good system, to create a responsible state which serves its citizens, instead of treating them as subjects who are there for the government. Demonstrating our European identity, in the original sense of the term, when it comes to the protection of our territorial integrity is, without any exaggeration, also a question of defending our national identity. (Anđelković 2008: 134)

In defending Kosovo and Metohija⁸ Serbia has thus found itself in a unique historical situation (...) that the defense of its national identity is at the same time an act of defending European identity (...) The choice between Kosovo and Metohija and the European Union in the current political context is a choice between a conceptual foundation and concrete empirical model of national and transnational identity, on one hand, and getting lost in the hybrid virtual model of the Euro-American globalist individualism, on the other. (...) Moreover, the question of Kosovo and Metohija can only be understood [as] part of the struggle of a set of countries and diverse social groups against contemporary forms of Western hegemony. (Koljević 2008a: 26, 28)

Here we are already tracing a discursive strategy we are going to come upon many more times in our analysis. It is a more or less coherent integration of the adversary’s view into one’s own argument, with the effect of delegitimizing the rival’s position. In this particular case, by arguing that *defending the national identity in Kosovo means simultaneously defending the transnational identity through anti-imperialism*, that is, that *true patriotism is also at once cosmopolitanism*, the binary opposition national-transnational is pulled down, and the idea that Serbia’s EU accession is incompatible with insistence on a Serbian Kosovo, is

8 In the Serbian discursive context, using the phrase “Kosovo and Metohija” (instead of just Kosovo) is a linguistic marker of the “patriotic” position.

subverted from a rather unexpected angle.⁹ At the same time, instead of the “hybrid virtual model of Euro-American globalist individualism”, the “true” cosmopolitanism (understood as transnationalism) is linked to the struggle against Western hegemony.

The thesis that *true cosmopolitanism does not exclude patriotism*, and vice-versa, is put forward explicitly in a text on NSPM website:

The true patriot does not kill the cosmopolitan within their self, because cosmopolitanism does not exclude love of country. (...) Those who do not love their country will hardly fight for a more just international order. To be attached to one's family and nation is not evil, but rather a first link in the chain linking us together and leading us to general virtues. (...) No patriot will give up the ideal of protecting human rights, will not preach “my country, right or wrong!”, nor will s/he sow injustice by acting against the law. (Vasović-Mekina, internet)

On this view, patriotism is love of one's fatherland which ranks the same as attachment to family and nation, to that which is close to us, but all that together leads to general virtues. Only in this way, the author contends, can justice, international order and human rights be secured (patriotism = national interest + cosmopolitanism = democracy).

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The argument that the national interest is an indispensable ingredient of patriotism figured in a 2007 debate on patriotism which unfolded in the media and was subsequently put together by the NSPM editors and posted at their website as a collection of texts. It was launched by Nebojša Krstić, then an advisor to the President of the Republic.

Slobodan Antonić and Đorđe Vukadinović [editors of NSPM], writing their columns in „Politika” [the most respectable Belgrade daily], always start from the axiom that Koštunica and the Government are hard-boiled patriots, while Tadić and his milieu are soft and, when their patriotism is concerned, rather suspect. (...) After a piece Vukadinović wrote, I asked him jokingly, where this certificate of patriotism is issued and to which counter one should go to get it, so that we from the Presidency may also have one! (Krstić, internet)

That same day, the NSPM editors responded:

No, Mr Krstić, we are not promoting anyone. Apart from three or four quite simple things, which we believe should be common to all citizens and officials of this country. And these are: common sense, truth, elementary honesty, and – elementary patriotism. (Vukadinović and Antonić, internet)

⁹ For the intersections of patriotism and cosmopolitanism, nation and democracy see also our analysis of “Third Serbia” (Spasić and Petrović 2013).

A contribution to the debate by the journalist Zoran Ćirjaković followed:

If Kosovo's independence is imposed in the future, i.e. recognized by the key factors in global politics, will the advocates of the acceptance of such a state of affairs be proclaimed unpatriotic? Or in other words, if the idea of "elementary patriotism" as something that ought to be "common to all citizens of this country" is introduced, does this suggest that the attitude to the future status of Kosovo is the measure of such patriotism? (...) If all the people who come out with opinions questioning the postulates of the official platform on Kosovo are to be proclaimed unpatriotic – and, as we know from recent history, from such a label it is only a small step to the label of traitor and to public lynching – this would be a huge leap backwards and would damage enormously the formulation of the national interest. (Ćirjaković, internet)

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In the second quote we find a new formula: patriotism = national interest - fighting for Kosovo, which helps us, through the responses that ensued, to gain more insight into what patriotism and national interest mean for other participants in this debate.

Zoran Ćirjaković is asking if the attitude to the future status of Kosovo (and Metohija) ought to be the measure of "elementary patriotism" as defined by Mr Antonić and Mr Vukadinović. Of course it should. Can there be any other measure of patriotism for state officials but the defense of sovereignty and territorial integrity of the country they have sworn to serve? Let us leave aside for the moment that fact that (...) the constitution and laws of Serbia are respected as much as those of Zimbabwe. (...) Accepting aggression, occupation and forceful change of borders can be patriotism? How come? Where? Since when? (Malić, internet)

I would like to ask Ćirjaković one more thing – what is it that we should "patriotically turn to", after turning our back on what was ours in a most intimate sense, and has been stolen from us? To which values? (Pavić, internet)

Here we see that patriotism assumes the care for the national interest, which in this particular case necessarily involves the protection of Serbian sovereignty in Kosovo, the most intimate, central value of the political community we must not "turn our back on." Values are important indeed and in the next round of the debate Đorđe Vukadinović introduces new (and final) restrictions on what it means to be acting in an "elementary patriotic" way.

No, Mr Krstić, unfortunately, the vague mantra "we shall never sign the independence of Kosovo" but at the same time "we must by no means spoil our relations with our Euro-Atlantic allies" no longer suffices. These same "allies" have for years been working systematically towards making Kosovo an independent state, with justifications that insult elementary patriotism as much as elementary logic. (Vukadinović, internet)

So, when the whole argumentative chain is traced ending up in just two alternative options (Euro-Atlantic integrations OR keeping Kosovo within Serbia), there is really only one way out, in Vukadinović's opinion. We have thus arrived at the conclusive formula: patriotism = national interest = Kosovo.

Closely related to the dangers threatening territorial integrity is the danger threatening the concept of patriotism itself. This idea is put forward frequently by the authors on this side of the symbolic front. NSPM editor Slobodan Antonić begins his paper published in the scholarly journal *Teme* thus: "In Serbia today there is no word more slandered than patriotism" (Antonić 2008b: 713). To begin with, an individual's very right to freely express their (national) identity is challenged.

Daković's [the writer, a philosopher, is here responding to a previous statement by another philosopher, Nenad Daković] phrase „I ought to be a human being rather than Serbian or Hungarian” is appallingly authoritarian, repressive and insulting for all the people who in democratic systems have the right to freely express who and what they are. This is actually a clear example of attack on people's right to freedom of expression of how they understand their own identity. This approach implies that the people who say of themselves they are Hungarian, Serbian, Croat, Roma etc. are not human. Outrageous, sinister, and sad. (Divjak, internet)

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Moreover, people who would want to nurture patriotism see themselves as the victims of the unpatriotic (civic) elite, which prevents them from acting patriotically and is annoyed by all that is national. In the two following quotes, patriotism is one more time described by words taken from the emotional register, as something intimate, a need of the individual to belong, in the cold modern world, by way of the feeling of national pride.

The Olympics is always a time of reinvigorated patriotism. Yet what happens in a country in which a part of the elite thinks that every patriotism is nationalism, and every nationalism fascism? In such a country the Olympics is one more opportunity to launch an attack on national symbols - from the anthem to the ways of saying hello (...) what comes next? Will the very name of the country be changed? Really, why should this country be called Serbia? Why not simply "Citizenia", so that everything may be perfectly "politically correct"? (...) Let this people feel its national pride, at least during the Olympics. This is neither "nationalism" nor "militarism". This is patriotism. And if someone finds this feeling alien, he or she should not spoil it for others. (Antonić, internet 2)

Other NSPM authors also have something to say about this denationalized elite. Reviewing the book by Slobodan Samardžić *Gradnja i razgradnja*

države (Building and Unbuilding the State), Bogdana Koljević refers indirectly to cosmopolitanism, delegitimizing its proponents, the “heteronomous elites”, in a twofold way: first, they are not legitimate representatives of the cosmopolitan elite – instead, they are pseudo-elites incapable of truly understanding the “world” (delegitimation of membership), and, second, they misconstrue their own role in cultural policy, which should consist in maintaining the connection to the “authentic cultural institutions” and promoting the specific traits of their own country (delegitimation of goals and values).

The author analyzes the phenomenon of „heteronomous elites”, as pseudo-elites whose activity boils down to mere mimesis of what is often wrongly taken to be “of the world”. At the same time, what the actions of these pseudo-elites lack is precisely a connection to the authentic cultural institutions of modern states – and this elite has actually been created for the purpose of countering at any price every national culture. (Koljević 2008b: 245)

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The cosmopolitan pseudo-elite described in this way appears often in NSPM papers. Thus in the special issue titled *Cultural Policy in Serbia* we find it again, under the label “immature elites”, “missionary intelligentsia”, and in the comical character of the “provincial cosmopolitan”¹⁰.

Our society has (...) assumed some features of a “divided society” in which an immature elite uncritically, inauthentically adopts borrowed cultural patterns, holding onto the missionary intelligentsia, while “ordinary folks” –aware or not of such wholehearted adoption of imported forms of behavior which have not arisen spontaneously and are not adjusted to our cultural traditions – stands at the opposite side. (Gajić 2008: 142)

The pseudo-cultural stereotype is (...) nowadays embodied by the provincial cosmopolitan – a citizen of the world who sympathizes with everyone and anyone, except for his boorish neighbor who listens to folk music. (Kanjevac 2008: 53)

The legitimacy of the local cosmopolitan elite is attacked by pointing to its hidden (material) interests, and to alleged purpose of their activity in the media field, described as colonization – leading the rest of the population into cultural, ideological and moral slavery, while they themselves can afford the life of the “European middle class”.

Culture has here long been a “reserved domain”, a preserve in which the cultural elite in the capital decides the rules of the game. (...) From

¹⁰ The term “missionary intelligentsia” was introduced into public discourse by Slobodan Antonić in his 2003 text, where the term refers to dogmatic, exclusivist and rigid “civilizers” who do not think well of their own people and, by their irrational fixation on nationalism, obstruct the modernization of society (Antonić, internet 1).

the rest of society it only expects one thing – to supply enough money for all the “artistic projects” and for this elite’s comfortable life at the level of the European middle class. (Antonić 2008a: 180)

This is precisely the current functional importance of the Other Serbia.¹¹ (...) The easiest way to show the inquisitor to be right is for the victim herself to confess she is a witch. The easiest way to prove that the bombing of Serbia in 1999 and the occupation and secession of Kosovo were justified is for Serbs themselves to confess that they should have been bombed, occupied and parceled. (Antonić 2010: 218)

The false alternatives – „Europeans” and „patriots”, various numbered and branded „Serbias” – have been fabricated by media manipulation. (...) The basic, shared function of all of them is just one: to pull in the broad strata of the population into “Matrix”-type media-ideological “reeducation” (...) to squeeze out of them all the remaining emotions, consciousness and conscience allegedly tarnished by a “collective cultural backwardness”, and push them towards global horizons of emancipated external and internal slavery. (Gajić 2010: 39)

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Cultural policy was the main subject of the above mentioned special issue of NSPM, a frequent topic of pieces posted on the *nspm.rs* website, and a special rubric. This brings us to one more field of symbolic contestation over dominant meanings and policies in Serbia: What kind of culture does this society need?

The protection of minority, regional or national cultures through affirming the right to cultural identity is a defense against any forced intervention into the authentic cultural substance, a defense against deformations and oppressions of national and minority cultures by the stronger, richer or more aggressive members of the international community. (Inđić 2008: 101)

A critical attitude towards the Europeanization of Serbian culture is also advisable. Entertainment is being aggressively imposed on authentic culture. Serbia cannot be an exception. But it must learn to distinguish some other things that are also European products: depravity, greed, violence, pursuit of dominance, mass culture. (Avramović 2008: 92)

The ideological atmosphere surrounding the studies of nationalism today seems to be trying to convince us that national culture should not exist at all, since it can no longer reflect any value that would be relevant in the modern or (...) postmodern world. (...) We should beware however that the empty space created by such exclusive renouncing of the national culture does not remain empty. (...) It is precisely mass, industrial culture that is the pretender to the throne of the supra-national culture. (Vladušić 2008: 126–127)

11 On the division of the Serbian political and cultural sphere into a “First” and an “Other” Serbia, as well as the shifting meanings of these labels, see Omaljev (2013), Naumović (1999), Prošić-Dvornić (2000), Spasić and Petrović (2013).

As can be seen, NSPM authors mainly propose the preservation of imperiled national arts and culture, that is, a cultural policy serving patriotic purposes and pursuing the goal of protecting an “authentic” culture from the invading mass, industrial culture, along with its protagonists – the uprooted elites, described above.

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Summing up the main conclusions of the analysis of the NSPM corpus: although this ideological current was rather close to the government in power at that time, NSPM writers present their own values and opinions as being if not minoritarian (because they often speak in the name of the people) then certainly threatened. In the picture of Serbia gleaned from *Nova srpska politička misao*, a whole set of agents are imperiled: the state – by the problem of Kosovo, the society – by the colonizing pseudo-elites, culture – by the imperialist mass culture coming from the West; national identity is defamed, patriotism maligned. In this discourse, patriotism is mostly understood in an ethnonational sense, as love of and loyalty to the existing state understood as the embodiment of the nation, and a desire to protect the national interest. Cosmopolitanism is understood in a number of ways, sometimes in a more inclusive fashion (the true cosmopolitanism is patriotism, the two are not mutually exclusive but are connected), at other times more negatively (as cultural imperialism). The genuineness of the cosmopolitan identity of the rival group (the “missionary intelligentsia”, Other Serbia, pseudo-elites, transnational elites) is seriously disputed and their delegitimation is attempted on the basis of membership, values, and goals. The global framework is persistently invoked, with two opposing purposes – either to legitimate the patriotic position, or to present the latter as jeopardized by this same framework. Antiglobalism appears often, but what also appears are references to universal human values and the heritage of democracy in different parts of the world.¹²

Peščanik

While, as we have seen, in NSPM they think patriotism is menaced in Serbia, most participants in the Peščanik radio program say it is them who is menaced by such overdrawn insistence on patriotism.

¹² We should not overlook though the rather Eurocentric reference to “Zimbabwe” above, as the model of lawlessness. Since it is very unlikely (even if not impossible) that this comparison is based on factual knowledge of Zimbabwe the real country, “Zimbabwe” (sounds exotic enough) rather functions as a stereotypical shorthand for the violent and chaotic third-worldly Other. This is an indication of a disturbing presence of Orientalizing tendencies in Serbian political discourse – and at both sides of the symbolic divide, as we shall presently see.

The Serbian society has become hostage to non-transparent internal power, now embodied by Vojislav Koštunica, in which advocates of crimes or even criminals themselves come forward dressed in patriotic garb. (Prokić in: Peščanik FM 7, 2006: 432)

We are slowly sliding into a state that we know all too well from 1991, when every scum and scoundrel can say they are patriots and in this way become automatically a sort of aristocracy in this country. (Pančić in: Peščanik FM 9, 2007: 222)

For a long time already scavenger patriotism has been commonplace here. Still, one is really struck by how far some people can go. (Lukić in: Peščanik FM 12, 2008: 72)

What arises repeatedly in these quotes is pointing to the political continuity with the 1990s („advocates of crimes”, „criminals”, „scums and scoundrels”), and arguing that patriotic discourse is threatening the society („scavenger patriotism”, the society as „hostage to intransparent internal power” in patriotic guise). We see a set of strategies to delegitimize the proponents of patriotism at the other side of the symbolic divide. Throughout the five years of this radio program that we studied the drive to question the legitimacy of the bearers of the official patriotic discourse never subsided.

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Sanda Rašković-Ivić [a government minister, from DSS] and Koštunica, and also Tadić to a degree, hold a monopoly on defining state and national interest. Why shouldn't I be entitled to say what the nation's and state's interest is? (Milić in: Peščanik FM 9, 2007: 12)

Wherever you look in Serbia, you'll find Matija [Bečković] and Dobrica [Čosić, two publicly prominent conservative writers, and representatives of the 'national canon']. I feel insulted when somebody claims to love my country more than I do, or more than anyone else. (Prokić in: Peščanik FM 9, 2007:83)

The true patriots are, in fact, at the other side – they are the ones who have been excluded from making decisions on the national interest, but who have actually done for their country much more than the usurpers and the monopolists.

I am really upset while I am speaking about this, because I do care that things begin changing here, while people who sweep all the problems under the carpet and justify that by saying they are siding with this people, so they won't speak badly of it, they should think about what they actually care about. (...) I think this is the main dividing line, between those who really love their country and people around them, and those who just want to be left alone. (Rak in: Peščanik FM 4, 2005: 265)

Yes, they are so generous they will tolerate as co-citizens even the ones who in their opinion are not patriotic, they won't harm them, right - but

only provided these people are forbidden to claim to love this country and to think they work in its interest. And when the final balance sheet is made, the ones who were nationally suspect will turn out to have done much more for this country, for this people, than the ones who were blowing their own trumpet all the time. (Dimitrijević in: Peščanik FM 15, 2009: 314)

Many speakers in Peščanik stress it is precisely them who „really love their country”, and therefore they reject the role of the “nationally suspect” and “traitors”.

And we traitors will one day, who knows, die all at once or perhaps emigrate. And the rest will starve to death, fantasizing about Kosovo. In this way the Church, Koštunica and the Army are leading the whole people to the brink of extinction. In this way we come to a situation that in fact people who are called traitors are at this moment the greatest Serbs living in this country, because they are the only ones who reflect in terms of the 21st century. (...) Really, I see myself as a much bigger Serb than any of the guys in those black cassocks [Serbian Orthodox Church priests] (...) although I do not shed tears every time Kosovo is mentioned. (Vidojković in: Peščanik FM 4, 2005: 376)

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If the alleged traitors are the true patriots, then false patriots are actually traitors. While in NSPM dishonest intentions and hidden material interests are ascribed to the cosmopolitan elites, Peščanik similarly argues that the motivation of those who call themselves patriots is basically pecuniary.

There is one more reason why he [Koštunica] may now be taking the lead concerning Kosovo and injecting smaller or larger doses of madness and patriotism into the public. This is the privatization of the petrol industry. This was proven in the 1990s already – when big words are on the stage, a big theft is always behind. (Ostojić in: Peščanik FM 4, 2005: 320)

And when it comes to patriotism, I must say clearly – it is all just a sham. Whenever someone starts talking about patriotism, I reach for my wallet, to make sure it is still there. (Vasić in: Peščanik FM 9, 2007: 97)

Even if this is not so, the false patriots are the real traitors by virtue of the fact that they want to isolate their country from *Europe* and *the world*. Consequently, Peščanik’s formula is: patriotism = antinationalism + cosmopolitanism.

We have people who in the name of patriotism speak against Europe, but out of this same patriotism they work against their own country, because the country is lagging behind, it is becoming poor. Our country has been knocked out. And who did it – certainly not the tiny, miserable, marginalized globalists, they could never knock it out even if they wanted to. This country has been knocked out by its patriots. (Vegel in: Peščanik FM 4, 2005: 120)

I'm asking the nationalists – where is that patriotic pride? What is the measure of this dignity if it is not measured against something outside? I used to call them “nationalist gang”, but “nationalist traitors” is better. (...) When I see what they are protecting and what they are proud of, I feel sick. (Pešić in: Peščanik FM 12, 2008: 96-97)

True, not all speakers at Peščanik take pains to stress how much they love their country. Still, it doesn't mean they do not nurture emotions towards it and to the imperative to be loyal to it.

A couple of days ago, Velja Ilić [Construction Minister, from the ‘patriotic’ party bloc] accused us of hating the state. Yes, he is right, I hate this state. I hate the state in which the Prime Minister and the Finance Minister can say that Velja Ilić has achieved fascinating results (Lukić in: Peščanik FM 4, 2005: 9)

I am ashamed to have such a state, as it is now. How can I respect it? By no means. I rejoice at its failures because (...) that is a guarantee that some good things may happen in the future. Only when we get used to defeat, when we confront things, when we beat our head against the wall, when we come to our senses, then I imagine this country can become normal. (Luković in: Peščanik FM 4, 2005: 92)

It is assumed that I must love the same things they adore, while I feel I am in no obligation to love the coat of arms, the flag, the new kit for the national football team, Bishop Nikolaj [Velimirović], perhaps even Matija [Bečković] or Hilandar. As a citizen, I am obliged to stop at the red light, to pay my VAT (...) but I am not obliged to love the things they love and prescribe. (Živkov in Peščanik FM Vol. 7, 2006: 235)

All these quotes provide good examples of the struggle over defining the very concept of patriotism and over what it means to act in a patriotic way and in the country's interest. This must be viewed in conjunction with the normative visions of how the state should be and of the foundations on which to construct the political community. So even the speakers who didn't care to present themselves as Serbia's fans tended to limit their negative feelings to its current condition rather than extend it to Serbia as such (“I am ashamed to have such a state, as it is now”). And what should the state be like for Peščanik speakers to respect?

We still live in a nation rather than a state. (...) Let us see if we, precisely as Serbs, are capable of creating a modern, constitutional and legal state, which will place itself on a European road, rather than being pulled by strings to join regional and European integrations. Or else we shall remain in this condition of chaos and continuous conflict with others, with no coordinates enabling a normal life order, and the rule of law. (Pešić in: Peščanik FM 4, 2005: 44-46)

A state has or does not have value, not by being mine, but by being democratic or not. If the state is not democratic, it is bad, even if it be Serbian a hundred times. (Dimitrijević in: Peščanik FM 7, 2006: 254)

I really see the state as a service of its citizens. The state exists only so that we the citizens can live a more or less safe and comfortable life and for no other reason. It cannot draw its legitimacy by taking up a territory and that's the end of the story. (Ilić in: Peščanik FM 9, 2007: 298)

The interest of the state is the interest of its citizens, and these are, in a minimal sense, safety and justice. In democracies, affluence is perhaps the most important. In pursuing these interests, the government is accountable to the citizens, not to some imaginary ones who will never exist but to the existing generations. (Gligorov in: Godišnji almanah, 2008: 168)

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What the speakers at Peščanik basically argue is that it is necessary to build a functional democratic state, which must not be integrated on an ethnic basis; moreover, instead of the national or state interest what really exists is only the citizens' interests (safety, justice, affluence). This position comes close to what is known in theory under the label of *constitutional patriotism*, unlike the ethnonational one we encountered in the discourse analysis of NSPM.

Furthermore, while the symbolic-geographic center of the authors represented in NSPM is in Serbia and Kosovo, and they look at the world mainly through an antiglobalist (or sometimes alter-globalist) lens, the Peščanik speakers are primarily oriented to Europe (=European Union) and the world (=the Western civilization). Just as the Serbia of Peščanik (ironically called "Citizenia" by Slobodan Antić) is different from the one that NSPM is talking about, so their "world" tends to be different. It is resolutely Western-centered and, for many speakers – although by no means all of them – it excludes the "uncivilized".

These same people [the political adversaries] admire the Iranian culture. Iran is great for them, while the US is disgusting. I want to stress very clearly that when I say "civilized society" I mean Western Europe and the US. And whoever wants to argue the opposite let him or her pack their stuff and go to Saudi Arabia and experiment with civil liberties there, and we'll see what happens. (Stevan, student, in: Peščanik FM 15, 2009: 44)

In each Third World country there is a human group who is openly abused and who suffers. These countries that Koštunica and Vuk Jeremić [Foreign Minister] appeal to in the UN Security Council and General Assembly, they are not democratic countries, because their representatives have not been democratically elected in a free election. These are little local cannibals and tyrants who terrorize their own nations as well as religious, ethnic or racial minorities. (Samardžić in: Peščanik FM 12, 2008: 50)

The factors of the success of our Western civilization are: Christianity, optimism, science, liberalism, individualism. When we compare this to ourselves, it's a disaster. Instead of optimism we have defeatism,

instead of individualism populism, instead of economic growth we have calamity, and instead of science we have tribal beliefs. This shows us what a huge job is awaiting us when we say – Europe. (...) We are in a big trouble and I want to believe in the ideas that are to be credited with the unparalleled success of our, Western civilization. (Prokić in: Peščanik FM 12, 2008: 108)

In the last quote the thing to note is that the speaker identifies simultaneously with Western civilization (“our Western civilization”) and with a particular society (“when we compare this to ourselves”, “what a huge job is awaiting us”), which illustrates very well the position of the politically engaged Peščanik speakers, who claim they want to do something for their country. In order for them to act in accordance with their views, they must fight for the identity of the political community they belong to and reappropriate the meaning it has been assigned. By strategically doubly emphasizing that the Western civilization is *our civilization* from which we have fallen, but into which we ought to return, both the fundamental definitions of the nature of the society and the policies that should be pursued accordingly, are redefined at once.

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Isolation from Europe and the world which was in force throughout the 1990s but continued also during the better part of the 2000s is the crucial societal problem identified by the Peščanik speakers. In their opinion, the fact that cosmopolitan, universal values are not firmly rooted in the population detracts from the moral quality of the Serbian society from within (cosmopolitanism = democracy).

We are so terribly focused on ourselves. Just have a look at our newspapers and see how much space internal politics takes up, and compare that to foreign news. (...) We have shown ourselves very insensitive also on the example of the tsunami that took away so many lives. This is all so far away from us that even this elementary human solidarity has been suppressed – it didn't happen to us, so why worry. (...) I don't know if the protracted isolation is the reason that we are no longer aware of being part of humanity. All this creates xenophobia, racism and nationalism, even Nazism. (Rakić-Vodinić in: Peščanik FM 7, 2006: 106-107)

This historical backwaters we live in is in fact political backwaters, it concerns values. Here a system of values was constructed, in that spasm of fighting against the whole world during the 1990s, resulting in a kind of hedgehog attitude which does not allow any universal human values to penetrate this society. And we have grown accustomed to this isolation. (Popović in: Peščanik FM 15, 2009: 158)

The *We* often invoked in the Peščanik discourse is also rather interesting and deserves closer inspection. It tends to include (although in negative terms) all members of the political community (understood as either the Serbian nation or citizens of Serbia) juxtaposed to the world with which

they are compared. In other words, the We is usually not limited to just “one’s own side” in the symbolic battle. If we followed the methodological suggestions of critical discourse analysis, especially van Dijk’s “ideological square,”¹³ we would be at a loss: this group of, let us call them “internal outsiders,”¹⁴ seem to be employing a novel strategy, a *strategy of negatively representing one’s own group* which Van Dijk’s methodological device does not allow for. This kind of strategy is, no doubt, characteristic of the “missionary intelligentsia”, to use the term coined by the rival camp. Yet instead of insisting on this group’s “badmouthing their own people” as NSPM writers are fond of doing, it is far more interesting to note that by constructing a We in this way the Peščanik speakers actually self-identify as primarily members of *this* political community rather than voluntary outlaws from it. Due to the deep identity cleavages in the Serbian society (Naumović 2005), this is not always readily perceived. Moreover, such self-positioning may be related to frequent emphasizing of their own patriotism on this side of political divide as well (“*And I really see myself as a much bigger Serb than any of the guys in those black cassocks*”) in the struggle to define the bases on which to effect political integration.

Hence this type of identification can be said to involve two different ranges, or two degrees of „We”: a larger, more encompassing **WE** (the political community), and a more restricted, ideologically delimited “we”. The formula goes as follows: **WE** = we + they.

Of course, there are other types of self-identification in Peščanik discourse as well. Quite often the more ordinary Us vs. Them situation is present, deploying the usual discursive strategies of positively representing one’s own group while negatively representing the opponent. In this case the We is more narrowly defined, while They are described in more concrete terms. In the following examples, They are the “new young” – the xenophobic generation growing up since the 1990s, or, alternatively, “ordinary Serbs”:

This is the generation that cannot get out of this country. You cannot turn Serbia into a Native American reservation, as Europe has done, and then expect that these kids won’t be xenophobic. Of course they

13 According to van Dijk (1998: 267), the overall strategy of ideological communication consists of the following main moves, constituting the ‘ideological square’:

1 Express/emphasize information that is positive about Us.

2 Express/emphasize information that is negative about Them.

3 Suppress/de-emphasize information that is positive about Them

4 Suppress/de-emphasize information that is negative about Us.

14 Naumović’s (1999) complex matrix of intersecting dimensions that define the relation of the cultural analyst to the culture s/he is studying, ranging from „double insider“ to „double outsider“, could be very useful here.

will be xenophobic, how can they not be when a whole generation has had any possibility of comparing itself to others taken away. (Prpa in: Peščanik FM 4, 2005: 365-366)

We are talking about the young not being able to travel, but whether the young really want to travel is questionable. I think a good survey would yield devastating results. What is creating their value system, their criteria, the public figures they identify with – all that is irrelevant outside of the very narrow confines of the milieu they live in. (Medenića in: Peščanik FM 12, 2008: 179)

It's like a Serb doesn't need to go abroad at all. He has gone nowhere, met nobody, but still he knows everything. (...) They don't watch TV, don't learn languages. What would they need languages for, when they speak Serbian? (Luković in: Peščanik FM 9, 2007: 140)

Whether this group is described in relatively mild terms, as in the first quote, or the speaker clearly takes his/her distances, depicting them in extremely negative light like in the other two, the isolation from, ignorance of, and a basic incompatibility with the world are seen as being at the heart of the problem. As long as They are that way, of course the World will treat Them, that is, (again) “US” in the larger sense.

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You can't leave young kids alone in the house, they'll do all the crazy things that come to their mind. (...) So the international community knows it and now behaves like a custodian. (Babić in: Peščanik FM 4, 2005: 275)

The world no longer cares how we live, what we are doing. (...) They look at us as a sort of mental hospital, and what the lunatics do inside doesn't matter, what matters is that they do not leave the building. (...) And now we are talking inside this building, we are talking about how to organize life here, if we can have it a little bit better. But we can't go out, they won't let us. (Luković in: Peščanik FM 4, 2005: 89)

The policy of conditioning was the best thing that has happened to Serbia. (...) But they used up all the trumps in their, I won't say pressure, but influence on Serbia. I like the phrase “steering Serbia” the most. (Milić in: Peščanik FM 9, 2007: 11)

I think it important that Europe has realized that we desperately need help at the moment, the difference between the pro-European forces and these backward guys is just a couple of points in our favor [in 2008 elections], so that they simply must offer us some support – or else Serbia will sink. (...) We should be treated in a way like a retarded person, very slowly and carefully. (Srblijanović in: Peščanik Vol. 12, 2008: 188)

The wealth of metaphors used to describe the attitude of the World to “US”, as well as *our image in this world* borrowed from the psychiatric register (lunatics, immature children, retarded, ought to be steered) witnesses to what extent the isolation from the world is a sore point for the speakers whose identity is founded importantly on reference points

located outside the society they feel they only belong to by chance of destiny. This is also a reflection of political positioning towards the state policy to which, whether proclaiming themselves patriotic or not, the Peščanik speakers refuse to be loyal.

In this section we have talked about the relation of Peščanik speakers to the world, universal values, Western civilization and forms of social order and political action within these frameworks, all of them in concurrence with cosmopolitanism. However, leaving aside societal macro-structures and state policies, the discourse of cosmopolitanism as the identification of a particular individual, rather than the whole society, appeared very rarely in the data, just in a couple of instances. We are quoting all of them here for purposes of illustration.

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I had a dream of sitting in a Starbucks Coffee Shop at Terazije, in the place where of course it is not actually there, and have an espresso with milk. Then someone gives me a book, the history textbook for the 8th grade of elementary school. The author is Radoš Ljušić, and Legija is on the cover. (...) Is this dream completely crazy? (Kuzminović in: Peščanik FM 7, 2006: 363)

It is quite normal that people who don't travel, who don't meet other people's values and way of life, close upon themselves over time. I know it from my own experience. It was enough for me not to travel for a couple of years in the early 1990s to begin thinking and acting like a DSS official. (...) But when after 1996/97 I resumed traveling, I went back to the times long past, when I lived in this pathetic, shabby Belgrade trying to emulate the life lived in Paris, London or California. In this way, I came back to myself. (Samarđić in: Peščanik FM 9, 2007: 340-341)

I was raised and live as a cosmopolitan. (...) I will tell you a lovely anecdote (...) One day, I was in Germany, me and my three friends decided to go for a dinner. There were four of us, and the Serbian, that is, me, represented Europe. The European pariah was Europe in this combination, because one friend was from Brazil, the other from South Africa, and the third from India. Four continents. And our racial structure was very politically correct, because the South African was white, while the Brazilian was of Chinese background, so it was total mess. And so we entered one of those authentic German taverns in which a dozen German soldiers were sitting, bald-headed macho types, half of them in uniform. We were talking in English and they started to mock our English, provoking us for our multiculturalism. It was the most wonderful feeling, to be, as Serbian, in company with an Indian and a Chinese, and face threats from German nationalists in the midst of the developed European Union. A heavenly feeling, I must confess. (Medenica in: Peščanik FM 12, 2008: 183)

The speakers report strong emotions of joy („in this way I came back to myself”, a „wonderful”, „heavenly feeling”) caused in them by personal cosmopolitan practices, real or imagined. But here again, in the subtext there

is the implication that these people have realized these practices *in spite of Serbia*, or that Serbia is the cause of their failure to happen – even the dream of such a banal thing as a *Starbucks* at Terazije was spoiled by the appearance of Radoš Ljušić and Legija which turned it into a ludicrous nightmare.

Conclusions

Closing our analysis, let us compare more systematically the discourse of Peščanik to that of NSPM, particularly the ways patriotism is treated in the two. Just like NSPM authors, Peščanik speakers also present their values and views as threatened: they are the ones under attack, besieged and repressed by negative forces which do not wish well to either democracy or the Serbian society. Then, references to patriotism abound, and there is a kind of self-vindication through claims that *they* are the true patriots. The idea of patriotism as such is hence not renounced but its content is redefined, by suggesting new meanings to the term to replace the ones found too suspect of nationalism. Conversely, the concept of national interest hardly ever figures in the discursive constructions of the political community in Peščanik. Patriotism for them does not imply loyalty to the state as it is and uncritical promotion of its interests, but the construction of a high-quality, democratic state which would serve citizen interests. In other words, while in NSPM texts patriotism is seen as working towards preserving the given state (the issue of Kosovo is of foremost importance here), in Peščanik the state is yet to be built (through integration in the EU and the “world”).

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As much as NSPM talks about Kosovo, so Peščanik speaks of the world. Yet the main actors in these stories are not speakers themselves as individuals, but the Serbian state (or nation, or society) and international institutions. This cosmopolitanism is, so to speak, more political and collective than cultural and personal. The relation of Serbia to the world is likened to the relation of a bad pupil to a sometimes strict, sometimes benevolent teacher who is there to help the pupil. Integration of the Serbian society with the world is seen as a way to its recovery and moral healing. Hence genuine patriotism is actually cosmopolitanism.

To sum up, the two discourses *both* include the notion of patriotism as their major ingredient, although it remains more prominent in NSPM,¹⁵

15 To use the sociological jargon, in NSPM patriotism figures as an “independent variable”, while in Peščanik it is more of a reactive, “dependent variable”. Also, the solemn, humorless tone in which patriotism is discussed in NSPM (but generally not in Peščanik) suggests it is something the writers take very seriously.

with two different understandings of its (“true”) meaning. One, espoused by NSPM, centers on the nation and the state, viewed as the embodiment and safeguard of the nation. The ethnonational substratum of this understanding is visible in continuous references to “the Serbs”, Serbian history, qualities, achievements, and rights. Kosovo is so significant not just for having been legally part of the state territory but because it is considered the cradle of Serbian identity. Yet this ethnonationalism is not all there is. The NSPM discourse also takes pains to include legal arguments, including international law, to affirm its support for the values of human rights, equality and interethnic tolerance. It never openly questions minority rights (all “authentic cultures” ought to be promoted, not just the Serbian one) nor attacks individualism as such (only the selfishness of “missionary intelligentsia”). In this sense the ethnonational substratum is complemented by elements of something akin to “liberal nationalism” (Tamir 1993). The way cosmopolitan motifs are weaved into the position of NSPM (Serbia should join the community of nations as an equal member, by remaining distinct, proud and mindful of its interests just as the great nations are) also conforms to the liberal nationalist image of the world as a mosaic of more or less self-contained nations.

The Peščanik construction of patriotism, on the other hand, comes closest to “constitutional patriotism”, especially in the version recently proposed by Jan-Werner Müller (2007). Constitutional patriotism is generally the allegiance to the political community based not on shared “blood” ties, historical destiny, cultural traditions or even territory, but on the democratic values enshrined in the Constitution and warranted by democratic institutions. While the values to which allegiance is pledged are basically universal, attachment is concretized to *this* state, *this* democratic system, *this* Constitution. Therefore constitutional patriotism is rooted rather than uprooted, has an important particularizing aspect, but does not rule out – it rather invites – critical reflection, ambivalence, irony, and doubt. What makes Müller’s explication close to our case is, among other things, his stress on the role of the emotions: while “ordinary” (ethnic, national, liberal-national) patriotism is founded on the simple feeling of pride, constitutional patriotism is sustained by a host of diverse emotions, such as shame, indignation, spiritedness, anger, and guilt (Müller 2007: 62). We have found many instances of such feelings in our data.

For Peščanik speakers, although patriotism – defined in this critical and reflexive way – is important, it is still true that cosmopolitanism is even

more so, retaining the status of central reference point for their identity construction. Yet, their “world” is understood in a rather impoverished way, as basically reduced to Western Europe and North America. Although they undoubtedly seek to transcend the national context by reaching toward the universal, this universalism is not always upheld with consistency.

After reading the two sections of our analysis one gets the impression that they provide two completely different pictures of the Serbian society in the early 2000s, the basic principles of integration of its political community, and the course of future policies. It seems at times that what these two loose intellectual circles share are only the formal discursive strategies they employ (the most prominent being insistence on self-victimhood and presentation of oneself as being threatened, real or feigned integration of the opponent’s view into one’s own, and various strategies of delegitimation), but otherwise any rapprochement is ruled out, as long as the ones talk about interests of the nation, and the others about European integration.

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Yet this symbolic confrontation, coming out so clearly in the results of our discourse analysis, has in the meantime been rendered much less irreconcilable with the currently ruling Serbian Progressive Party (SNS), combining in its rhetoric almost all the elements identified in this analysis, at both sides of the symbolic divide and including the subtleties of their mutual play of legitimation and counter-legitimation. They are pro-European in foreign policy, yet do not forget the national pride; they foreground the “interest of the citizens” yet it somehow always coincides with the interest of the state (and the latter, of course, with the interest of the Party); the coalition government in which they were the strongest partner stepped the long-tabooed line of engaging in direct negotiations with the Kosovo authorities, thereby practically recognizing the independence of the former Serbian province; their cultural policy is conservative and old-fashioned, yet Serbianness is publicly promoted not significantly more than was the case while the Democratic Party was dominant; the list could be continued, but this much suffices to outline the strange ways of symbolic battles in the Serbian public space at this moment. It will be more than interesting to continue following the story into the near future to see whether any new forms of symbolic contestation will be taken upon or new lines opened in the days to come.

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Patriotizam i kosmopolitizam u diskursu intelektualaca:

Peščanik i Nova srpska politička misao

Apstrakt

Patriotizam i kosmopolitizam nisu samo apstraktni naučni pojmovi već je reč i o snažnim diskurzivnim sredstvima kojima se služe akteri u društvenom životu. Ova dva pojma često se koriste u javnom diskursu da bi se označili različiti „Mi“ i „Oni“ i konstruisale društvene grupe koje stoje iza njih, sa ciljem da se istakne vrednost sopstvene grupe, a suparnička grupa stigmatizuje. Iako nisu izgubili na značaju ni danas, vrhunac intenziteta diskurzivnih sukoba i simboličkih podela po ovim linijama u društvu Srbije dogodio se u drugoj polovini prve decenije XXI veka. Na osnovu kritičke analize diskursa u ovom radu nastojimo da ponudimo rekonstrukciju simboličkih borbi oko temelja političke zajednice koje su vodili intelektualci okupljeni oko medija *Peščanik i Nova srpska politička misao*.

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Ključne reči: patriotizam, kosmopolitizam, simboličke borbe, diskurs, Srbija