

Jasenovac – Vukovar. Vukovar – Jasenovac.

The ultimate definition of Serbo-Croatian relations. In space, it amounts to less than a hundred kilometers. Geographically quite close, like the beginning and the end of a full circle. In time, on the other hand, Jasenovac – Vukovar amounts to fifty years. Too much time to cover such a short distance. By car, it takes an hour. On foot, for example, if one is in no hurry, it takes 5 to 6 days, perhaps even less. Still, it took Serbs and Croats more than 50 years to reach the final destination. Which already says enough about the arduousness of the given distance/relation. Stood opposite each other, face to face, Serbs and Croats simply could not bear it any longer. They got lost somewhere along this way.

THE ŠAKIĆ – MILOŠEVIĆ SYNDROME

A Mental Matrix of Total Existential
Corruption

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An obvious sign that the truth about the closing of a full circle, which finally put an end to the defining of Serbo-Croatian relations, was recognized as such, came after a statement of Dinko Šakić, the Commander of the Jasenovac concentration camp, shortly prior to his trial. I read the statement in the newspapers, and I cannot quote Šakić word for word, but the meaning was, without any doubt, the following: he would accept coming to Belgrade to be tried there. Under the condition that Slobodan Milošević accepts going to The Hague.

What is the meaning of this statement (of the statement as it is, given in the time prior to Milošević's indictment by the Tribunal, which was based on the crime of Kosovo, not that of Vukovar?) What is the meaning of this statement, standing on its own, in its own authentic context, thus, what is Šakić's message

(and what is the lesson we could possibly learn)?

First, we have here an acknowledgment/confession of responsibility, the acceptance of Serbs judging him for what he had done. Secondly, we have the denial of guilt, signaled by the obvious (according to the intonation of the statement) absence of a guilty conscience. Thirdly, the message is that this is something between him and Milošević, even though the two of them have never met or seen each other; this seems almost like a relationship between two macho guys from the 'hood whose gangs are fighting for supremacy and the control of crime in a poor suburb.

Ultimately, that statement means so much more: the equalizing of the meaning and the level of responsibility. That statement points clearly to an equivalence which, formulated explicitly and expressed in words, is as follows: Vukovar was not ok (that is why Milošević should be tried), but it still does not necessarily have to provoke a guilty conscience (that is why Milošević does not need to worry, he is not guilty), since it represents an understandable and justified reaction to Jasenovac. Because, in the same logic, Jasenovac was not ok (that is why Šakić should be tried in Belgrade), but it can be understood without the feeling of a guilty conscience (that is why Šakić does not need to worry, he is not guilty), since it is justified by an accu-

rate assumption about the certainty of the Serbian crime of Vukovar.

It is as if both cases were about self-defense. Like taking out a loan without guarantees and then getting it back, God forgive. Jasenovac is a gesture of self-defense, of a taking out of a loan without a fixed collection date, and that 'collection' is taken to be realized in advance through Vukovar. Vukovar, however, from the Serbian perspective, is not just a collection of the loan, made worthless in the fifty years of inflation, but also a loan of self-defense, following the same prophetic logic of prevention, where there is also no need for a fixed date of collection, since it is understood as already realized through Jasenovac.

Let us call this insane equivalence, this morally perverse "school of thought," this mental mechanism, the inexorable mold of this type of conscience: the Šakić-Milošević syndrome. How is this gruesome disturbance possible? How are the arbitrariness and the illusion of some trans-historical "giving meaning," of a perverted "economy of survival," forged into a matrix of evil?

Let us look again at the symptoms for a moment: the Šakić-Milošević syndrome makes the world in which reality lasts fifty years possible, active. In spatial terms, that means that the 100 km distance from Jasenovac to Vukovar equals the 5,000 km distance from Belgrade to The Hague. The hypertrophying

of the chronotopical aberration is grotesque. Except in the case when the one who is judging it is not already a part of that world, suffering from the same sickness, cloned in the same mold of insanity. Then, for such a person, Šakić's statement is an offer that makes sense, and in that "sense," is perhaps one of those offers you can't refuse. What is the allure? Are not the 50 years of a permanent reality a very reliable proof of the reality of a whole eternity? Or, isn't the 100 km that can so easily and effortlessly, in a brief moment, be turned into 5,000 km, isn't this like reaching infinity?

In addition, the allure lies in avoiding a direct test of competence and working abilities, a test in freedom, it lies in the cover against panic produced by a subconscious realization of one's own helplessness, laziness, stupidity, giving up, the idiotic practice of leaving things to chance and circumstances that supposedly cannot be influenced. Perhaps we do not know how to work, but we can surely fight, said Milošević at Gazimestan in the name of the tribe and the clan, reading the lips of millions of the like-minded, the like-conceited, the like-frightened before a promise of real responsibility for one's own life, before the scare that was spreading across Eastern Europe after the fall of the Berlin wall. A genuine opportunity for affirming and confirming personal and national potentials, this becomes in the eye of the masses a genuine nuisance that

will expose us for what we are: worthless and miserable, narrow-minded and backward, lazy and unimaginative. Our truth about ourselves, the core of our identity – it was shown – is crushing, it is frightening, so instead of facing it we choose escape, escape into an illusion of identity that we lack and that we can only wish for. The dimensions of the illusion correspond to the dimensions of the yearning for an immediate and complete salvation that this identity would induce. These dimensions, as we have seen, are unlimited, both in the physical sense, like in the perception of space and time, and in the semantic sense, like in the perception of historical telos. Like in the case of Serbia in the beginning of the nineties, so *mutatis mutandis* in Croatia in the beginning of forties (it is just the initial reasons for the all-encompassing social sickness that differ). And once that the fantasy about the infinity of one's own greatness and importance was adopted, it becomes very exploitable as an excuse for every poor performance, dishonesty, irresponsibility, for every insolent lie and stupidity, for every otherwise inadmissible act, for every crime committed for its glory and in its defense.

When you add everything up – especially when you add up all that suffering and all those lives – here it is, the truth emerges, the indestructible, immortal and infinite truth of the Serbo-Croatian incestuous relationship. Šakić's statement finally put everything

ad acta. So let us conclude then, with a reminder of the main issue: if Jasenovac is the ultimate justification of the Vukovar crime, then – it is now clear – Vukovar has always been the ultimate justification of the crime of Jasenovac. Both perversions of one single history unfold symmetrically and synchronically, causing each other in the same disgusting gesture which thereby offers the other a teleological illusion of legitimacy.

This perpetuum mobile of pseudo-rationality that is actually nothing but inhumanity, calls out for a disgust that permeates the whole body from head to toe, a profound sickness one has nowhere to hide from. It is unbearable, the skin bristles constantly, you feel the urge to vomit, and it does not let go, but Serbs and Croats must live with this.

Jasenovac – Vukovar. The ultimate definition of Serbo-Croatian relations. Short circuit. An abundance of sparks. Darkness. Shame.

And now let us look at how and to what extent the “logic” of the Šakić-Milošević syndrome is working in the example of Kosovo. In this case, the Serbs do not feel much pressured to assume the “Croatian” role. Nothing, it seems, is difficult, in the case of the Šakić-Milošević syndrome.

To be concise: within the mental mechanism typical for the Šakić-Milošević syndrome,

what Albanians are doing to the Serbs after the international occupation of Kosovo is the ultimate justification of the Serbian crimes committed on Albanians before the international intervention. The Serbian terror was not ok, but it can still be understood without the feeling of a guilty conscience, since it is justified by the correct assumption of the certainty of Albanian terror which became the truth after the international forces had moved in. The typical Šakić teleology of deriving legitimacy from the future, the prophetic “economy of survival,” expressed like a self-defensive loan.

If we add to this the “magnificent” Milošević legitimacy derived from the past – in which the ultimate justification of the recent Serbian crimes committed on Kosovo Albanians invokes Knez Lazar and Tsar Murat, Dušan’s Holy Archangels and the mosque of Sinan-Pasha – the horrific chronotopical hypertrophy of the Šakić-Milošević syndrome shows its (shining) ugly face again. Except to those who are immortally infected with the same virus, who are “gifted” with the same talent of consciousness without a conscience, ready to kill for a conviction that the promise of an undeserved and instantaneous “happiness,” actualized through the medium of an “infinite” clan, implodes all difference between yesterday and tomorrow, between here and there, between the executioner and the victim, between good and evil.

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That virus has persisted in these areas, unfortunately, from the ancient times, from the times and the spirit of myth, times prior to Nomos, when time did not yet mark off its dimensions in relation to people. To not know the difference between what was and what will be is a very comfortable position, it releases one from any responsibility, because both the former and the latter are always, that is, *now*, without consequences and without reasons, so – in the name of that one *now*, everything is permitted, that *now* has to be saved, literally at any cost. When now is everything, is the only reality, the threat of losing that idiotic paradise of the eternal present equals the threat of ontological extinction. And since that one single reality is in itself already so miserable and worthless, it does not need any objective external danger to legitimize its feeling jeopardized, because it substantially and directly jeopardizes itself as such. The exemplary world grounded in the Šakić-Milošević syndrome, in spite of the iron matrix of self-satisfaction over nothing, is still transparent enough to be afraid of itself. The fear is immense, and in fear the eyes become hysterical, bloodshot – not human anymore. Violence is freed of every psychological and institutional control, and becomes the Law in place of all other laws. So the members of the tribe attack the first person that appears to be different.

In Kosovo, this applies for Albanians as much as it does for Serbs. What we have at

work on the Albanian side is the same illusion of eternal teleology of the legitimacy of terror, both from a past that is the present, and from the future that is the present. To the benefit and for the glory of the Šakić-Milošević syndrome, Kosovo Albanians are now taking the role of “Serbs,” that is, the role that Serbs had in 1993 and 1994 in relation to Croats. Just like over there, for the Serbs, Vukovar was not ok, but we had Jasenovac to justify it, so here, for Albanians, the current terror over the remaining Kosovo Serbs is not ok, but we have the earlier Serbian crime to justify it.

Which puts the case of Kosovo ad acta too. Everything is clear, everything fits, every why has easily found its because...If observed from the viewpoint of the Šakić-Milošević syndrome – which is, of course, the view of a blind spot that supposedly has fixed its gaze into the past, but is in fact blinded by fear and hatred – every dilemma or a perplexity can be resolved in a fast and simple resolution, even if it considers a serious, difficult problem, concerning the nation, the state, truth, life or death.

That resolution is in fact vulgar, but that will be noticed only by the few anyway, the few who have alienated themselves from the crowd.

So, in the moral perversion and historical idiotism of the Šakić-Milošević syndrome, this is the main answer to the unpleasant issue of Kosovo, dramatically turned into a

current event by what happened in the Spring of 1999: the responsibility of Serbs exists, but it can be accepted without a guilty conscience, because it is justified by Albanian guilt. At the same time, the responsibility of Albanians exists, but that too can be accepted without a guilty conscience, because it is justified by Serbian guilt. This is the ultimate definition of the Serbian-Albanian relations. This perpetuum mobile of pseudo-rationality (which is actually inhumanity), calls out for a disgust that permeates the whole body from head to toe, a profound sickness one has nowhere to hide from. It is unbearable, the skin bristles constantly, you feel the urge to vomit, and it does not let go, but Serbs and Albanians must live with this.

Serbs and Croats, Serbs and Albanians keep killing each other not because of their irreconcilable mutual differences or threats to their different identities, but precisely because of their common, shared identity, represented in the same prehistorical model of action and the same collectivist-narcissistic-holistic way of thought. Serbs and Croats and Albanians keep killing each other because of primitive, vulgar and perversely constructed "national" priorities which they

share among themselves like brothers (for example, it is not important how we live, but in which country we live), and which are effectively manifested in an ecstasy of unconsciousness, xenophobia, chauvinism and fascism.

We Serbs, kill others and ourselves because we are afraid of living. How pathetic! Frighteningly pathetic. Slobo, we love you, I love you too. Milošević is still in power because he is still sucking the last drops of blood of the moral substance of his own people, which is the sweetest resource to him. All other resources, the list would be too long, have been destroyed as means of a definite perversion of total moral devastation. The method was infernally simple: existential corruption. Individuals acted in a way that undermined their own humanity after they have allowed themselves – they couldn't wait for it – to be bribed, to the core, with an illusion of their own moral supremacy, personified in the taboo of collective victimhood. The shameful justification, before themselves and before others, was provided by the mental matrix – the matrix of values of the Šakić-Milošević syndrome. The name for those among us for whom there can be no justification.