

THE CULTURIOCID, POSTEMOTIONAL MEMORICIDE AND FANONESQUE RESISTANCE OF VUKOVAR (A CONTRIBUTION TO THE ANTHROPOLOGY OF VUKOVAR)

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Brief historical introductory

The Croatian War of Independence was fought all throughout Croatia, in spurts and sporadic aggression strikes, which aftermath is to this date hard to detect and categorize within a straight timeline. However, the genocidal pattern and imprint of the Great Serbian/Yugoslav People's Army aggressive rampage upon Croatia, in the early 90s, was (is to this date) most visible in the town of Vukovar (East Croatia). What officially can be termed the Battle of Vukovar (yet in reality was primarily the battle against genocide that started with Croatia and continued throughout the whole region) left 1,624 civilians and 879 Croatian soldiers, defenders of town, killed; circa 2,500 civilians and 777 Croatian soldiers wounded; with a daily barrage on Vukovar in addition to 5,000-12,000 falling grenades; and to this date a great number of missing souls for which there is no trace and will of the opposing side to account for, together with the maps of mined territories and existing mass murder graves. To this date the aggressors confessed only one mass murder grave (Ovčara), regardless of all the International Tribunal efforts towards "truth". After the siege of Vukovar, on 18th November of 1991, Serbian army entered the town. Circa 7,000 people were taken to concentration camps in Serbia, where they were tortured, abused and raped. To this date the concentration camps remain negated by the aggressors. On the night from 20th to 21st of November, Great Serbian forces killed over 260 people (Croatian soldiers, personnel and patients) taken hostage from the Vukovar hospital, while supposedly under the protection of the EU and UN observers, the media reporters and the Red Cross forces of the International Community (Živić, 2008).

None of these crimes were ever compensated in words, deeds of good will or compensatory money. To this day there is no consolidation of the crimes into a war timeline, in which case the genocidal imprint would be visible enough to confirm genocide in the cases of the Vukovar-Sarajevo-Srebrenica genocidal cartography of the whole region. Instead, as we speak (in the time of writing

and reading this text) Croatia is awaiting the results of the *International Court of Justice* in ruling it's lawsuit against Serbia for Genocide, and by the well-known standards of the International Community, is called upon as the provoker of local historical ethnic animosities.¹

Shaming the once shamed victim is a well-known tactic.² Only a few months before the UN Genocide Court events, in much the same amoral fashion of *inversion politics, shaming and guilt-blaming*, Croatians of Vukovar were put to the test.³ In the town, once reduced to rubble during the Croatian War of Independence in the 1990's, the politicians of the Independent Croatia chose to enforce (in the middle of the night) the placing of Cyrillic script Signs (according to the national minority rights laws of the census and ethnic percentages of Serbs). While the majority of (inter)national headlines ran about the barbaric Croatians tearing down the signs written in Cyrillic, it was overlooked that the focus is not on language, bilingualism, script and/or Serbian culture. It was on defending the last traits of dignity for all those that underwent the terror, of only two decades ago, in which Cyrillic was the script through which terror was conducted. Terror never acknowledged, confessed, detached from or accused by the aggressors. The fact that this can be perceived as a continuation of the politics of terror, aggression and domination in the name of (inter)national political equilibration tactics remains unsaid, unanalyzed and unspoken of in the interest of political correctness and the politics of Human Rights. This paper is aimed at demanding a reversion of this strategy into the politics for Rights.⁴ Rights of those that underwent genocidal destruction and are now accused of being violent when defending their *cultural memory*. Politics for Rights names the shamers and shames their extent and capacity for amoral politics. The same was demanded by the veterans of Vukovar when they proclaimed Vukovar to be the place of (inter)national piety.

Places of piety... places of shaming the shamers

Piety. The word of last resort to be called upon. In the defense of Vukovar in 2013 and 2014, a little more than two decades after the underwent genocidal

¹ For instance, see <http://m.deseretnews.com/photo/765648887>

² For further elaboration on the *politics of shaming* in connection to the Croatian War veterans and the Croatian War of Independence see Špoljar-Vržina (2005, 2007, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013a, 2013b).

³ For instance, see <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-23934098>

⁴ The distinction is made according to Upendra Baxi's analysis of the state of manipulations through Human Rights (2002).

patterned spree, needs to be called out. Needs to be verbalized. Verbalized and endlessly repeated. It has been even politically adopted as a kind of double-bind mantra for re-shaming, yet always visibly opposite to the feelings of hearts, consciousness and conscience. Thus to say it is understandable that the Croatian veterans defend Vukovar in such a “violent” manner is also offensive to those that, regardless of being veterans or not, remember. Remember and testify that the “violent” reaction is a reaction of defending cultural memory that is intended to be wiped out.

The analysis within this paper uses *concepts* that although seemingly diverse are all rooted in the recognition or non-recognition of piety as an outcry of *cultural memory* and one’s capacity to do so. For a decade or so, at least in one segment of scientific questioning it is apparent that it equals to the *Anthropology of Vukovar*.⁵ Simply defined, what is taken from a population, through science, must be returned into a population, through knowledge — and through an anthropologically most widest method of cultural trace tracking, fact ground-ness and on-ground long-term scientific dedication (Špoljar-Vržina, 2005).

Furthermore, *culture* as a term is defined by a feeling of enduring, a feeling of time. Feeling the passage of time in the name of all that defined our paths of passing and all who will come through our passage defining. Culture is only understandable through respecting the dimension of time and deeds towards its endurance, extended far enough to be able to talk of transgenerational transmission — far enough into the past and sufficiently far into the future — to be conscious of the value of “constant” and “passable” in relation to the power of substantial — here and now.

For all these reasons, the opposition to *culturocide* is hard, and only conductible through a sufficient number of those with awareness. In the scientific field — with enough scientists in a period of time prepared to understand that the process is long and overbridging in such ways that they themselves are under its weight (culturocide). Perhaps the scientists around the project of *Vukovar '91* are such scientists aware of the aforementioned and stand out as an example of enduring the slow pace attempts of cultural memory wipe-outs. In line with the scientific precision there is an existing slow passage of culturocide that generations of certain populations and cultures are sacrificed to, spiritually conditioned and stigmatized through. Simultaneously with the numbing down of those prone to witnessing and memorizing, colonizing their awareness, and banalizing their memorizer’s consciousness through acts of shaming. To this day it is apparent that with all the recognition of the Holocaust happenings we are

⁵ The strict definition may be found in the author’s paper from 2012.

still under threat of anti-Semitism in the heart of Europe. Perhaps reasons should be searched in the factography of the hardships and poor capacity within ones (humanity) time for acknowledging such great scale cruelties (Stratton, 2005, Hirsch, 2001).

If analyzed in the context with an anthropologically defined relation of time, space and culture, it can be concluded that from the times of the Croatian Homeland War the **culturocide and memoricide** of those days are prolonged to this day.⁶ Yet, the awareness is defined and refined through the questions of experience. Were You a witness within or outside the borders of the events (fled the country to safer grounds in midst of all happenings or fled towards the epicenter of all fighting's to defend your people)? Were you in the shelters, spending sleepless nights, consolidating the defense courage or along the front lines of defense with those watching over Vukovar in battle, as Rogić termed, the Croatian (Thermopiles) firegates? The narrative is powerfully unique. Undestroyable through *equilibrium narratives* that see "ethnic hatred", "ethnic strife" or "ethnic conflict" as a normalcy of all sides. Undestroyable through politically correct *equilibrium narratives of tolerance, peacemaking* and the politics of human rights. Although the emotional side of memorizing and continuous deprivation of **post-memorial** under the direct political influence of equilibration and postponement of the truth, the memorizers know their time of colonization and usurpation of the truth. In the case of Holocaust it took two decades to reach a break-through term into the consciousness of international forums, and still the term is questionable.⁷

The significance of the time/space dimension upon culture and witnessing are of paramount importance. If one was an on-ground witness in the time of 90s he can testify of on-rolling happenings to Vukovar, its foremath and aftermath, encompassing, cartographically, whole Croatia and the region. Yet today the reminisces of these courageous days are attenuated and attempted to be extinguished through acts of visible veteran shaming (Špoljar Vržina, 2009).

Throughout the last decades veterans were depleted of their honor rights, pensioned, devalued through the diminishing of the rights to special treatment

⁶ For a more detailed analysis of the time/space dimension relations for the Croatian War of Independence see Špoljar Vržina, 2013a.

⁷ Stratton testifies — "...What translated the knowledge of the Judeocide and established it in cultural memory as a defining moment in modern, western history was the discourse of the Holocaust. It seems that there are cases of the use of 'Holocaust' to describe the destruction of European Jewry during the Second World War. However, the Israeli memorial of remembrance, Yad Vashem, founded in 1953, was still translating Shoah as Disaster in 1955" (Stratton, 2005:59).

(from housing benefits and trans-generational family benefits to medical treatments), all the way to being called nationalists when they stood up against force (this time, towards the force of their own Government) in Vukovar. Vukovar is and always will be the *Thermophile Gates* where **culture, history and survival** are tested. Only when perceived with respect to these three signifiers can it become a symbol of **multiculturalism, tolerance and peace**. Broken into basic elements of literal happenings the question can be asked — Can it be expected of Croatian people, especially veterans, to be “tolerant” and “peaceful” upon the uncaught perpetrators living amongst them and succeeding into (according to the minority law rights) putting Cyrillic letter tablets upon the Institutions? The battle of survival has once more reappeared, from being fought on the physical level (in 1991) to being fought on the visible symbolic level (2013). If we change the ethnic denominator from Croatian to French, English or German we get an answer of the obvious kind. Nowhere would a letter associated, even remotely (as in the case of German script Kurrent) with a totalitarian killing regime (such as fascism or nazism), be enhanced as a symbol of multiculturalism and rights. Even worse, approved as a downgrader of the rights of the oppressed side to their (once more endangered and defended) culture. To this day all across Croatia we can find memorials to the Second World War partisan Heroes with a denominator that they fought against the “... *hated German enemy*”. In reverse, can we imagine a former Nazi official living on the outskirts villages surrounding Bergen-Belsen and demanding the rights to cultural expression through swastika symbolism and Gothic script in official documents? Yes we can, and that is the shame of the European Union standards, laws and ruling. They are aimed at shaming the oppressed, victimizing the victimized and persecuting the survivors, not oppressors.

In the case of Croatians from Vukovar, we must continuously stress the fact that Croatian Defense War veterans, together with civilian casualty witnesses, were never officially permitted their victimhood, never were declared as existing and never had the chance of officially being allowed to pass on into the stage of survivors and thrivers. They were shamed and “petrified” as victims, instrumentalized in various ways of political puzzle making, all equally morally corrupt. Yet the posttraumatic western society still practices the same tactics of peace in all the more growing peaceless World (Coleiro, 2002).

Today, Vukovar is once more a case of zero ground battle. This time on a visibly symbolic level, leaving the people of Vukovar and its veterans as the last witnesses, not willing to succumb to the oppressing tactics against one’s historical facts buried in cultural memory. The key word of today is culture. One is shamed through culture, yet in places of piety shamers are shamed back and culture is defended.

Memoricide, Culturocide and Fanon's legacy

Today's politics of Human Rights is pathologically swollen with patterned equilibrium gaming in which joining festivals, parades, workshops, contests, volunteer gatherings, rallies, and similar events are all providers of quasi-cultural community uprising. Happenings of an authentic memory are proclaimed to be un-significant personal junk memorabilia. In our midst, the battles around quasi cultural communion sway form the factor of **estradiation and celebritization** in which ex-Yugoslav artists and alike parade through the region calling upon solidarity, union and brotherhood; to the factor of **humanitarization** in which the youth lead by their Hollywood gurus carry main roles of democratizing those with a stubborn memory and negating facts with the power of International Institutions of relativizing; to the factor of **history inverting** where oppressors of lost battles become victorious winners, battle conquerors become heroes and criminal conqueror armies become just one of the armies of the relativistically perceived "sides" of a righteous battle. From the times of the peaceful reintegration in Vukovar, some conveniently live next door (not having to escape into exile). Today's Croatia is portrayed as a holiday Disneyland suitable for the lame for historical factography and intellectually lazy, except for discovering the pleasurable sides of the Croatia worth "experiencing". The neoliberally spoiled consumers are satisfied in reading that Croatia is War safe and consists of the Mediterranean worth seeing and the continental part still burdened with War reminisces, not worth spending time on. To these consumers Croatia is nowadays explained as — stay, shop, dine, wine and make merry time in the 28th nation of the EU family. The War details are kept to a minimum, especially the fact of the Great-Serbian aggression which would spoil the Merkel-Anglo-American lullaby of — *We did good in that region!*

In grand tourist guides such as the *TimeOut Croatia Guide*, it is taught how to make more out of being in Croatia, annulate its past, concentrate on delights and research around Zagreb. The whole "War issue" is mentioned (page 168) — overbridging 30 years of Croatian existence — from the communist times to nowadays, comprimated in few sentences. Explaining how the rock liberal scene, predominant in the communist times, remains to this date. Shockingly we learn "... *Many Socialist-era shop fronts can still be seen around the Lower Town. At the same time, an underground rock and art scene flourished and Zagreb spirit emerged, distinct from the bourgeois atmosphere between the two world wars. It was savvy, independent, liberal, certainly not supportive of rule from Belgrade, but neither comfortable with the nationalist undercurrents of Franjo Tudjman and his cronies. Apart from an audacious rocket attacks in 1991*

on the Ban's Palace and one on citizens in 1995, Zagreb was spared the worst of the Yugoslav war. Its population swelled by refugees from Bosnia and the countryside, Zagreb and its outskirts did see a significant political shift to the right." (www.timeoutcroatia.com). The clear message of the time-out renown team is — Tourists, come and democratize Croatia through Your consumerist enjoyment. This land of right-winged spoiled citizens needs to be taught how to forget their past, especially the one that is squeezable in a few sentences of — “a strife here”, “strife there” and some “audacious” city bombing from 1995 (regardless of the fact that Zagreb had casualties). Who F***k's them. Croatia has joined the western-style merry consumers and should not be surprised that patriotic memory is regarded as “primitive” and allowed only in the case of Your belonging to the famous family of Great nations with the “race” of acknowledged history. Nowadays, does one go as a tourist to the US or UK veterans cemeteries?⁸

We must get used to the fact that the midst of the geographically falsely called “Balkans”⁹ is the safest eastern peek of Western neoliberal fun and enjoyment. From Iraq to Syria to Sudan (Darfur) to Libya to Mali and back to Iraq — Rwanda and the Balkans got to be the only two developments of the early 90s with International Tribunals, where the oppressors and defenders were treated as equally responsible warring sides. For the other mentioned places of “developments” and “conflicts” the (in)visibility of International key players in the entangled webs of destruction and criminal conquering prevents the International Tribunal to be more active. After all, the Tribunal is perhaps financed by the same gate-keepers that spur the warring sides and finance the “bad guys”. The cascade and drip-down of power protracted in this manner is reserved for the chosen ones. These chosen ones succeed in establishing “*the rule that is lack of rule*”, as shown by Meštrović and Romero (2012:64-68) in the case of Abu Ghraib camp. The authors applied this Durkheim's concept in explaining that all are responsible for the Abu Ghraib abuse, especially those that were the amoral architects of the “*poisoned command climate*” professional groups. When a number of soldiers are then put to trial, the authors conclude, the Durkheimian solution for changing the poisoned climate is to be sought in the work of professional groups (of the tried soldiers) towards engaging in soul-search-

⁸ If you think this is exaggerating, refer to the <http://www.tripadvisor.com/> sights for Libya, Syria, Iraq... all “spoiled” by local memories of conflict, yet awaiting to be consumeristically, ad hoc digested in a naïveté of a western searching wonderer ... and yet we are puzzled why so many western journalist and humanitarians are taken hostage and decapitated?

⁹ For a precise scientific definition refer to Slukan Altić (2011).

ing and implementing their respective, traditional ethical standards and sanctions, since no society can survive without morals (Meštrović and Romero, 2012:68). Interestingly or not, today no one understands “*soul-searching and traditional ethical standards*” seriously. Today’s activists, especially the Human Rights trained ones, forget that activism cannot be an agenda for the sake of monetary, political and ideological missions. Activism and civil awareness starts with heart, soul and culture. The respect towards one’s own is the core of respecting the Other. This passage through the time/space societal consolidation, the citizens of Vukovar and all the Vukovars of Croatia and the region, never did have. From the time of the peaceful reintegration to the times of EU (censored) exhibition, the portrayals of reality were too harsh to be expressed. Probably because of endangering the German *stability project* of the peaceful “Balkan” harmony and investment cooperation.¹⁰ Truth is questionable, politically uncorrect and dangerous. Understandably so, when silence over truth is the object of being bought and sold by International Institutions, companies, international activist networks, humanitarian estradization civilizers and profiteering webs of neoliberal bargaining and investment.

Fanon’s Ground Zero Vukovar

If anything the response to the putting of Cyrillic signs on the Institutions in Vukovar proved that the morally right towards the factography is to be defended by those Croatians whose memory is in line with the historiography of unacknowledged suffering. Local politicians, lost in the language of accelerated profiteering, have a hard time in learning that not all can be pressured into patterns of forced change. Memory and culture, the least. The majority of Croatians are slowly entering into a phase of full blown awareness of a needed resistance towards the chronically long-term culturocide, historicide and memoricide.¹¹ A resistance based as much on being conscious of one’s culture passage through time, of generations that suffered, as well as the foreseeing the time of its ending. As Fanon stated, “*Each generation must out of a relative obscurity discover its mission, fulfill it or betray it*” (Fanon, 1963: foreword).

The legacy of the generations of Vukovar remain, however naïve this tendency may be across cultures and people, in a scenario of betterment and returning deeds towards one’s descendants. In times of defending one’s home,

¹⁰ Referring to the incident where the exhibition was censored and the authors were asked to withdraw certain exhibition photographs — see <http://www.sabor.hr/exhibition-about-vukovar-staged-in-ep-building-in-Strasbourg>

¹¹ Fora detailed analysis of terms see Grmek et al. 1993.

land, country and life — the moment of consolidation is physically felt, such as in the case of Vukovar, whose defense lasted for over 100 days. Vukovar, together with all places where Croatia was defended, is a place of a nation's eternal quality of centennial unification. To talk of dignity and piety for the dead veterans and civilians, in relation to Vukovar, is to *defend Vukovar from a culturocide symbolism*, as well as expose the hypocritical nature of webs of significance different players perceive while contextualizing meanings that are opposite to the healthy livelihoods of its people. The same people of 1991 that defended the right to liberty of Croats. The same people that were planned to be run over within only two hours, after the attack on Eastern Slavonia.

Translated into scientific terms this means opening the themes of genocide, culturocide and memoricide. The themes of who gets awarded and when for peace. Or asking — Why have the themes with the postfix *cide* been scarcely researched in the region of former Yugoslavia, especially in the case of *ground Zero Vukovar genocide*?

In a *Fanonesque way*, these themes need a great amount of intellectual courage. They are *dangerous themes*. Let's not forget who Fanon was. For whom was he dangerous? For communists, Marxists and capitalists — alike. He was a physician, born on Martinique in 1925. With a vision and stance of intellectual honesty he portrayed the poverty, colonization and slavery of the soul. Above all, as a grandson of African slaves he defined the culture of every nation as less a sum of material belongings and achievements, and chiefly a sum of spirituality, imagination and knowledge capable of unification that arise in times of physical and spiritual threats to their existence, meaning, purpose and progress (Fanon, 1963:145). In connection to this *Fanonesque definition of culture* we may perceive Vukovar as a permanent Croatian epicenter of survival, not only in the sense of its gothic physical Christlike history, but also as in contemporary times of these days — of pending memoricide and culturocide.

Furthermore, if upon reading Fanon we escape the usual and wrongly explained marxistic-communistic discursive utilitarian debates of class, equality and fight — Fanon's plead is based on justice, ethics and articulated primarily through personalized engaged humanism. Thus, according to Fanon, culture is the work for which one dies for; Memorizing, a work not valuable if only immersed in daily secular go-about of material greedy existence; resistance is necessarily revolutionary and violent if one's defense is the interest of the survival of generations to follow. All these are well known determinants of endangered cultures. Those that are tried. Those that are called out for their memory that needs, for reasons of functionality, be extinguished, yet which is paid with the most precious of all — people's lives in times of endurance. Enduring being

wiped out through the equilibristic politics of amorality in its trials of wiping out the impossible to forget.

Thus, this is not an analysis that should be based on the lamentations over weak and enduring victims and their anxieties over historical spots of lost dignity, rather an analysis based on survivorship and the thriving through proud, courageous carrying of the unacknowledged sufferings, into a trans-generational mode of powerful and articulated stance of vital living. Overbridging any enforced *catch phrase paradigm* that tries to subdue its vital fluidity. Such as the much loved one by politicians — “*Let’s forget the past and turn to the future*”. As Fanon would state for his people in the process of decolonization and fighting the oppressor — *Living means not dying. Resisting means saving one’s mere life* (Fanon, 1963:232).

Postemotional society and Vukovar symbolism (concepts of Fanon, Rogić and Meštrović)

Frantz Fanon was not only a physician, but also a psychiatrist, paving the way for a specific kind of diagnostics, very applicable to our times. He precisely defined the possibility of the conversion of every revolutionary party and power into the opposite direction of negative deviations (such as the cult of a leader, political avant-gardes, bureaucratization, profiteering and greed in in pursuit of one’s own personal interests, shown and presentable as one owns). He postulated the phenomena of colonization, amidst one’s culture, and all psychological adjoining symptoms — the most important one’s being negationism, supri-
mation, denial and negation, as well as purposeful manipulation with reality (culture) on the basis of narcissistic border-line type psychology.

In these analyses of many phenomena surrounding Vukovar *Fanon’s concept on culture, violence and revolution* cannot be fully understood without the analytical intersection of two more important concepts. That of the *postemotional society* (Meštrović, 1997) and the *reformist rules influencing the liberation resource symbolism of Vukovar* (Rogić, 1992, 1998, 2000, 2004, 2013). Together, they make an *explanatory matrix* dense enough to sustain all observed and analyzed data. Dense enough to sustain, encompass and help “surgically” cut through all discursive political processes and factography, contextualized in the constructs surrounding Vukovar, Croatian Defense War and the European accession processes of Croatia.

According to Rogić the *processes of modernization in former Yugoslavia* developed along the line of firm rules that greatly influenced the context of today’s independent Republic of Croatia (Rogić, 1992, 1998, 2000, 2004, 2013).

The rules are specifically applicable to the *symbolism of Vukovar* and its resources, especially in the context of reformist rules, after 1990. His main word of caution warns that this concept “does not imply a straight-line influence upon the application of certain rules on the Vukovar ‘case’”. Rather, the usage is drawn from **pre-conceptualized narratives, being the basis of re-mythologizations, that entered certain programs and aims** of Croatian government practices and/or the dictates of the “International community”. Based on this it is possible to diagnose four (possible) “reformist” ways/narratives of approaching the **liberation resource symbolism of Vukovar**:

1) In the **narrative about West Balkans**, Vukovar’s liberation resource symbolism is inverted, becoming once more dependent upon the aggressors, since the borderland collaboration is seen as an imperative for the Croatian economic development.

2) In the **antifascist narrative**, it is glorified and re-symbolized as the source of antifascism of the region, while the facts of 1991 Vukovar remain hidden. In 1991 Vukovar was attacked by communistic forces joined with fascist formations run loose (Chetniks). Thus, the liberation resource symbolism of Vukovar is inverted in the sense that it becomes based on antitotalitarianism, and not on the abolition of Serbian communists as the actual organizers of the aggression.

3) In the **narrative of democracy**, Vukovar, as well as whole Croatia, is under the programme of “enhanced democratization”. Yet the bureaucratic maneuvers that should enhance a level of public order based on morality in fact bring great disorder through not conducting a principle of differing the victims from the perpetrators. This kind of “democracy” is more suitable for the perpetrators and downgrading of the victims, and in fact closer to a Durkhemian anomie.

4) In the **narrative of a new justice**, the **liberation resource symbolism of Vukovar** is sacrificed and totally wiped out. The freedom factor is sacrificed in the name of progress, equality (of victims and perpetrators, alike) and the future is based on forgetting the past and memory annulation. The main inversion dictates that all forms of memorizing the past must succumb to a total recall from the ties to the past.

In all described narratives, according to Rogić (2013:29-31), we can decipher **four** visible *constructional prints of the former Yugoslav period of (unsuccessful) modernization*. The schematic being: the exceptionality of the Region above States (former Yugoslavia); the communists always know best (regardless

of the genocidal prints they pulled the Region into in the early 90s); the greater responsibility of the people of Croatia (and Bosnia and Herzegovina for that matter) for the state of Yugoslav dissolution, and therefore the withdrawal of their right to living in a situation of moral order; the revolutionary principle when it suits the Master plan, etc. (Rogić, 2013:31). Rogić warns, once again, that the withdrawal to constructional rules must not be put in the idealistic context of nostalgia and nostalgically defended in the system of returning to the past. The rules carry a potential of rationality. Dangerous, we might add since the unsuccessful modernization and its aftermath (Vukovar '91 Ground Zero) were the physical endpoints of proving the case of incompatibility of former Yugoslav Communistic capacity for liberty, democracy and rights to freedom (Špoljar Vržina, 2012, Rogić, 2013). In fact, it is visible that today's main aim (in Vukovar as in whole Croatia) is the old/new normalization of non-freedom, in which the symbolism of liberation won by the sacrifices of all the victims (survivors) of a city of Heroism is to be inverted into, according to Rogić unsuccessfully, a place of symbolic offerings towards a futile past and rescue-offering future (Rogić, 2013:31). Rogić's (interdisciplinary) study of the *liberation resource symbolism of Vukovar* is a rare study in our Croatian social science academia. Although the reasons are manifold, the main fact resides in the studies on Vukovar and Croatian Defense War being heavily immersed in the functionality of the former Yugoslav context (the very phenomena observed by Rogić) in the wider stability of the region international community plan.

This seemingly static scheme can be further explained if viewed as an entangled domain of experiences, knowledge and emotionalism explainable through the **concept of postemotional society conceived in the late 90s (Meštrović, 1997)**. The main core of this concept (applicable for this analysis) is that we are living amongst contexts developed and orientated through matrices with a strict rule of synthetic, quasi-emotional approaches as the basis of smooth going, uncomplicated and widespread manipulations- through the self, the self of others and the total industry of culture as such (Meštrović, 1997:1-17).

Synthesizing all into an ***explanatory matrix*** of the phenomena facing contemporary Croatia and Vukovar, we are stuck in the revolving doors of inverted facts with blocked exits on both sides. Neither is the past permitted, neither is the future livable. Neither are people aware, neither they care for awareness. This might be the ***fifth narrative***, if added to Rogić's concept, that of ***blinded wheel training into colonization***. The subsidiary level non-existing, individuals going nowhere and accomplishing nothing, with no perspective of a community catharsis, since they are side-tracked into more profitable regional investments of selling themselves into the orbits of Reality Shows, Big brothers and media invested projects led by trained specific cause spokesmen/spokeswom-

en. Could one seriously speak of the rapings in the “Balkans” before the coming of a Hollywood trained spokeswoman for UN?¹² Regardless of the fact that *postemotionalism* was diagnosed recently, it is rooted in centuries old globally widespread attitudes of discrimination, racism and totalitarianism. The case of Vukovar and Croatia or Srebrenica and Bosnia and Herzegovina or Kosovo are not news to the colonized/decolonized list of happenings.

The Fanonic rules of existence — response to the training into colonization

In accordance to the agreed longevity of this paper, we can provide only the basic orientation into the applicability of, what we must term, the **Fanonic rules of resistance/ existence** upon the case of Croatia, Vukovar and its people. Fanon’s approach to colonization, revolution and violence (much to the disappointment of marxistic and communistic discursive needs) is based on the recognition of the colonization of the soul, psyche and all its traumatic layers. Thus, for this deeper grasp of comprehending the world of the colonized we must enter into the domains of symbolic manipulative oppressions. Precisely what Rogić does in his study of the fate of **liberation resource symbolism of Vukovar**, or what is further explainable if Meštrović’s **postemotionalism rule** is applied. The whole context of the mentioned matrix becomes visible through the rules of postemotional society where the further mechanism of colonization owes its acceleration to the mere fact that people do not care, have curtailed indignation, a carefully managed “niceness” and recycle the dead emotions of the past (Meštrović, 1997:1-3). The contemporary citizen simply does not care for the many memoricides surrounding his/her livelihood and the people in their midst, carrying the burden of memorizing.

The extent to which indifference stretches is shocking. Regardless of the much flagged Holocaust condemnation, awareness of the dangers of Judeocide and knowledge of all fascistic/totalitarian atrocities, there is a whole brand of art in the Western filmography where the image of the Jewish concentration camp woman has been normalized all the way to pornography (Stratton, 2005:65).¹³ Care is not built on any spiritual dimension and on no recognition

¹² See Špoljar Vržina, 2013b.

¹³ Stratton explains the occurrences in a posttraumatic society — “The corollary is that description of what took place in concentration and death camps and, indeed, the actual images photographed at the time, became pornographic opportunities for sexual arousal — even, perhaps especially for Jews. Thus, for example, in his autobiography, Alan Kaufman, born in the Bronx to a French survivor an American-Jewish father, tells how, one day go-

of the Other (Levinas, 1994, 1998). Suffering the state of oppression to the limits of wiping out the difference between right and wrong; good or bad; honorable or dishonorable; moral or amoral; real or imaginary. All those that still have the memory and abide by the principle of differing; that have the courage to defend these rights of action, fall into the category of a very specific type of annihilation and symbolic attenuation. They no longer represent the people of a mentally confident witnesses register, with memory, memorizing and truth, being exposed to media attenuation. In fact, even more so, in extreme cases of totalitarianism, one may be sanctioned through disciplines of traditional political gate-keeping such as psychiatry, psychology or penology, and confined behind ward walls of silencing.

The remaining part of this paper gives just a few *syndromes* of peek-amorality where the *posttraumatic factography meets the postemotional and Vukovar symbolism culturocide and memoricide*. Where the end result is to be observed as understandable only under the *Fanonic rules of existence*. Euphemistically, not-caring is not an end-point. However we turn ourselves to the future, forget the past in order to invest for the future, enjoy in memoricidal lives of the Others suffering... *memoricide and culturocide* remain unforgivable, unforgettable, undeletable. Eternal reminders of amorality. In the case of Vukovar, living in a such a world of insecure possibilities for one's dignity and respect in line with the genocide that happened there, turns everyday living into the *Fanonesque resistance of Vukovar*.

Fanonesque resistance of Vukovar — basic facts of Croatia's culturocidal and memoricidal circulus vitiosus syndromes

Fact #1 (Figure 1)

Case: from Šreter Syndrome to Pajičić Syndrome

On the 30th of October 1984, a high military official of the Yugoslav People's Army Major Stevo Majstorović was examined by dr. Šreter, a doctor of the Lipik Hospital Compound. Doctor Šreter, in writing a sick leaf used Croatian language

ing through the books in the children's section of the public library on Grand Concourse, he found a misshelved book with photos taken in the camp." (Stratton, 2005:66). In much the same fashion the posttraumatic Croatian and regional society is exposed to glorifying the Hollywood actress, Angelina Jolie, as a spokeswoman for the War raped women (Summit) and the globally known feminist celebrity of the *Vagina talks*, Eve Ensler, as knowledgeable key authors for matters of raped women rights (Špoljar Vržina, 2013b). Yet both women are successful culture industry investment players, which are paradoxically taken as highly visible UN spokes personnel, as well. Perhaps, not so paradoxical when analyzed through Stratton's and Meštrović's concepts of posttraumatic society.



Figure 1.

Clockwise — Dr. Šreter, Head of the Lipik Hospital in the early 90s; The Croatian “milicija” and Croatian veteran Darko Pajičić, in the aftermath — a survivor of the Defense Homeland War and 20 years afterwards, survivor of an attack of his own police/militia countrymen against his practicing the democratic rights of a veteran in defending his memory and culture

(Sources: www.hkv.hr/izdvojeno/vai-prilozi/ostalo/prilozi-graana/12490-zaboravljeni-mucenici-i-ubijeni-logorasi-bucja.html; <http://balkans.aljazeera.net/vijesti/ponovno-skinuta-cirilicna-tabla-u-vukovaru>; SaFraTi Archive 2013-branitelj Darko Pajičić).

instead of Serbian language (instead of “*pensioned officer*”/*penzionirani oficir*, he wrote “*pensioned official*”/*umirovljeni časnik*). In 1991 with the local Extremist Serb uprising he was one of the first captured and taken to the concentration camp Bučje, near Lipik, where he was executed. Not by chance, if one analyses the local newspapers, prior to that he was withheld of his doctoral license and tried for “enforcing” Croatian language. The author of this text and dr. Šreter, students from the same Medical University of Zagreb around the late 80s, could both be alive now, if in the early 90s he lived in Zagreb where being on “a list” did not equal death. His sacrifice, in 1991 is a denominator of the times in which a right to Croatian language and culture equaled to being exterminated. Years after, being first on the list as a Lipik “Croatian nationalist” be-

cause of using Croatian language on the occasion of medical examinations (August, 1991). To this day his body has not been located; he was probably killed, tortured, forensically lost in a unfound mass murder grave or someone's back yard, still pending to be found. Is it dangerous to uphold Croatian culture? Definitely, equally so when defending it.

Two decades afterwards, a compatriot of dr. Šreter testifies one can almost lose one's life if one is against Cyrillic alphabet in the midst of Vukovar and its genocidal remnants. Veteran Pajičić nearly lost his life testifying the procedure in 2013. A side-road poster was put up after his surviving the attack of the Croatian Intervention police forces. It states cynically and metaphorically, what once was an extremist Serbian slogan of Milošević for the Serbs of Kosovo "Nobody can bully You", only in the case of Croatian Veterans it is the reverse of being bullied by one's own "protectors" of the country they, the veterans, fought for. Thus, "Nobody can bully You but the Croatian Militia" (Niko ne sme da vas bije sem hrvatske milicije). Furthermore the Croatian term "police" is replaced by the Serbian term "militia", alluding to the fact that we live in times of the communistic past where Croatian culture was oppressed to the level of physical danger of being imprisoned and beaten for writing "nationalistic" books. Conclusionary, in the land of doctor Šreter, some twenty years after, one can still get killed, even if being a Defense Homeland veteran warrior. Additionally, in the land of veteran Pajičić one can get killed because of one's memory, because of one's culture, because of defending one's cultural history.

Fact #2 (Figure 2)

Case: Borovo Village, Eastern Slavonia negatory syndrome

If asked, the majority of the citizens of Croatia will exclaim that for them, the Croatian Defense War begun upon realizing that 12 Croatian policemen were brutally massacred and killed on the entrance to Borovo Village by Serb extremists, supported by the Yugoslav People's Army on the second of May 1991. The symbolization of this place was erected by veterans, themselves, in 2011, not the Croatian Government authorities. In what kind of State do we live if the killed are unhonored? In a state that allowed the victims of genocidal strategies to be silenced and politically manipulated in the name of *peaceful reintegration, political correctness and regional stability*. Thus, we might expect to see tourist by-passers through today's Borovo Village asking — Is this a remembrance for the Serb minority victims terrorized and killed in Croatia in 2011? Thus, paradoxically, regardless of the recent genocidal spree throughout the whole region, the extremist Serbs remain "endangered" by the "Ustashes", Bosniaks and Kosovars, and fully supported by the national minority rights into oblivion of their genocidal acts of the past decades. Simultaneously, they breach national minority



Figure 2.

Belatedly erected memorial to the 12 policemen killed by the Serb extremists on 2nd May 1991, which marked the beginning of an open Great Serbian aggression on Croatia [Source: SaFraTi Archive; time of observance — from 2010 to 2014].

rights for all others, even their own. The extremist Serb rhetoric has not changed since 1991, and neither has it been dissolved by democratized Serbian leaders (not yet in power) and the minority of conscious Serbian population. Currently, the extremist “care” stretches into helping the Russians in Ukraine or establishing the Monarchy in Serbia.¹⁴ Even more paradoxically, the genocidal strategy of Extremist Serbian hegemonists was not exposed in Croatia because of the bargaining over Croatia’s entering the EU, and it still remains to be an obstacle of Serbian entering the EU. In that way, the chance of the victims of the Great Serbian aggression throughout the region lies, once more, in the democratization of Serbian politics and the rising awareness of Serbian people, hopefully, not oblivious to the truth, as in 1991, until today. True democracy is and should be hoping for the same gesture of awareness and apologizing in Borovo Village.

¹⁴ Serbs in Crimea send false message — http://ukraine.setimes.com/en_GB/articles/uwi/features/2014/03/24/feature-02; Monarchic Nationalist Coup in Yugoslavia — <http://forum.nationstates.net/viewtopic.php?f=5&t=297686>



Figure 3.

Once an entrance into the building of the UN Peaceful reintegration Mission in 1998, where General Jacques Klein and Croatian authorities had a hard job of peaceful negotiations with the Extremist Serb "authorities" of the 1991, occupied zone around the city of Vukovar
(Source: SaFraTi Archive; time of observance — from 2010 to 2013).

Fact #3 (Figure 3)

Case: Borovo Workers Village, Eastern Slavonia negatory syndrome

Borovo Workers Village is only two kilometers farther, in the direction of Vukovar. There is a building on its main square with forgotten signs on its facade. It was obviously a very important entrance since several official Institution signs of the Croatian Government still hang on its entrance. These signs have not been so carefully tended to as the Cyrillic ones in Vukovar (2013). They are covered with dust, filth, bird excrements and are hard to approach because of the high grass. Yet, they should be memorically acknowledged since they are signifiers of the Croatian peaceful reintegration times in Eastern Slavonia (Coleiro, 2002). What was once famous and famed as the glorious victory of (at least) one successful UN Mission, today is a forgotten entrance covered in rubbish. At the same time, not all signs are so insignificant, since in putting down the one in Vukovar, as we have seen, a veteran got almost beaten to death. Peace is obviously not what it seems and peacekeepers obviously upheld the wrong kind of peacedeals. Worse than that, history, culture and memory matter only to the extent of investors' cravings. Croatian official politics was bribed by every significant international institution and unfortunately there was not one politician that stood up to the silencing of the genocidal truth. However, negatory symptoms and syndromes are piling all around us and soon we will be able to expose the many fake "entrances".



Figure 4

Two monuments spontaneously erected by family members of the missing in Homeland War. Erected in front of the Red Cross (left) and UNPROFOR (right) headquarters in the early 90s in Zagreb. Today these monuments are depleted of their original meaning and (in the case of the UNPROFOR monument) displaced to another location at the city cemetery

(Sources: Horvat, V.: *Gdje su naši najmiliji?/Where are our loved ones?* Zagreb: Udruženje Vukovarske majke: Poglavarstvo grada Vukovara, 1995).

Fact #4 (Figure 4)

Case: Zagreb negatory syndrome

In Zagreb, the traces of negation and annulation of memorials are also still visible. To this date we have thousands of missing persons of the Croatian Defense War, yet we have no answers where to find their remains. On the official site of the Ministry of Internal Affairs their numbers are joined with all other statistical numbers of missing in Croatia. Simultaneously, the monuments that signify that this was “a problem” as early as 1991 have been neglected and displaced. Two monuments were erected in the midst of Zagreb in the early 90s as mothers and family members “screamed” for protection towards two international community institutions — United Nations (UNHCR) and Red Cross, that they found responsible of not helping enough. Today, the memorials are displaced and depleted of their significance to the extent that a passerby might wonder of their meaning. The *Wall of pain* (once in front of the UNHCR headquarters) has been displaced to the Zagreb city cemetery. The *Globe* (once in front of the Red Cross headquarters) has been left in front of the, ironically, *Privatization Agency*. It is

also across the *Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences of the University of Zagreb*, and if asked, the majority of students have no clue what it represents or since when it has been there. It is a "... *strange ball with some interesting pendants on it*". Originally those were name tags of the War missing persons that family members hanged on the globe, now devastated by neglect. To this date the missing family members are still not found. To this day Croatia remains a Disneyland playground of humanitarian institutions, experts and their projects, that in hindsight (of facts such as all mentioned) lose their humane meaning, since nothing can be learned and gained from a memoricidal past.

Conclusionary remark

The *Fanonesque resistance of Vukovar*, in its response toward the Cyrillic signs, might be seen as a cry, appeal or a spontaneous emotional outburst. Yet, the more wisely (politicians, hopefully in existence) understand that continuous cultural and memory annulation is not an act without repercussion. Culture is defended through bodies. How can we talk of a peaceful reintegration, community reconstruction, regional stability and "The Future" in a culture where there are still missing from a Defense War, for which no one sees a (political) interest of finding? In a former communistic society where churches and mass attendances became part of the election gaming competition all around the region? In a land established solely by the lives of veterans, where veterans can become beaten to death.

The anthropologically mapped-out state presented in this paper, except shaming the shamers that do not uphold piety, also directs towards seeking the War compensations that Croatia should receive, together with the affirmation that it had a genocide happening in the early 90s. Postmodern exercises in human and minority rights are much needed, yet one also needs to acknowledge that they are dependable upon which receiving end one is on, in relation to the continuous culturocide, memoricide and repetitionism.

Fanonesque Vukovar is a Vukovar of defending one's dignity, not measured by empty slogans of minority, majority, ethnicity, religion and any other differentiation. Rather, with justice for all based on acknowledged truth. That which, for now, seems to be hidden in cycles of unaccounted culturocide, memoricide to genocide, and back.

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