

TURBO FOLK AND DANCE MUSIC IN 1990S SERBIA: MEDIA, IDEOLOGY AND THE PRODUCTION OF SPECTACLE

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“Media contents consolidate the mythological background of a community by producing metaphors which are to be used in the domain of the popular. For a totalitarian power the colonization of media space is the most effective shortcut to everyday life.”

—Snježana Milivojević, *The Nationalization of Everyday Life (Nacionalizacija svakidašnjice)*, in: “Serbian Side of War” (“Srpska strana rata”), Samizdat B92, Belgrade 2002, p. 230.

Turbo-folk and dance music and sensibility significantly marked the era of war, chaos and despair in 1990s Serbian politics, life and culture. [1] Moreover, these musical genres and their total media presentation proved themselves to be one of the most powerful ideological weapons of Milošević’s regime. Forming a popular culture counterpart to the unscrupulous ideological propaganda of RTS (Radio-Television of Serbia), which used nationalist and chauvinist rhetorics to justify and support involvement of Serbia in civil wars in Croatia and Bosnia, and later in Kosovo, turbo-folk and dance music promoted the life-style and system of values of the new Serbian elite formed during the nineties: regime politicians, war-profiteers, criminal bosses turned into “businessmen” and glamorous turbo-folk stars, mainly highly eroticised female singers. This system of values aimed to establish the cult of crime and violence, war-profiteering, national-chauvinism and provincialism, together with the abandonment of morals, education, legality, and other civic values. It had also encouraged the war-orientated, retrograde patriarchy and the prostitution and commodification of women, while accepting the iconography of Western mass culture, the values of the ‘American dream,’ ‘body culture,’ culture of leisure and consumption. All this, of course, had been available only to the new Serbian ruling class, which supported the rule of force and violence, nationalism and political oppression, while the majority of people lived in poverty and isolation.

This text shall try to explain some of the aspects of style and production that gave the music industry of turbo-folk and dance the power to shape lives and politics during the last authoritarian regime in the Eastern Europe.

Definition of Turbo-folk and Dance

The name ‘turbo-folk’ originated at the beginning of nineties and it refers to both musical genre, subcultural

style and, in a wider context, a worldview. ‘Turbo-folk’ is a neologism created from two words: the word ‘turbo,’ which originally comes from the world of automobiles, where it signifies the type of cars whose motors’ power had been improved by a special turbine, *turbo*, *turbo-diesel* and *turbo diesel injection* cars, and the word ‘folk,’ which stands for the popular, people’s or folk music. [2] Figuratively, ‘turbo’ referred to a challenge, speed, fearlessness and participation in the upcoming, fashionable trends, ascribed to turbo-folk artists and audience, while ‘folk’ signified that ‘turbo-folk’ represents one of the genres of Serbian popular, folk music.

Popular music in 1990s Serbia comprised three musical genres: ‘newly composed’ or new folk music, turbo-folk and dance, the last two being newly discovered and developed genres in the beginning of the ’90s. ‘Newly composed’ or new folk music, [3] which achieved an enormous popularity in the ‘second,’ ex-Yugoslavia since the early ’60s, is the predecessor of turbo-folk music. New folk music hybridly combined the influence of traditional Serbian folk music melodies with many predominantly recent musical influences, from Greek and Turkish traditional and popular music, Gypsy music, Russian and Hungarian romances, to western pop music and sometimes (particularly in the ’80s) of a rock-n-roll and disco sound. At the beginning of nineties, however, a large part of the new folk music is transformed into a much different sound: into a fusion of the folk musical matrix [4] and rap, hip-hop and dance of American and West-European artists, and even with a house and techno music.

The third one among these genres of the new Serbian ’90s music is the genre of dance, which is, just like turbo-folk, the exclusive invention of the 1990s. Musical sources of Serbian dance were pop-dance and r’n’b hits from all over the world, disco, techno, commercial rap and hip-hop. Why is this domestic genre similar to

turbo-folk music? The answer lies in their similar production and distribution techniques. The way in which turbo-folk accomplished a monopoly and a domination in all Serbian mass-media since the beginning of '90s served as a model for promotion of Serbian dance. The hyper-production of turbo-folk CDs and music videos, with very slight differences among the music and looks of its numerous singers, at the monopolized semi-private TV stations, controlled by the regime, inspired the managers of turbo-folk to create yet another commercial genre and produce a huge number of very successful, although unauthentic, dance hits for the local audience. A curiosity regarding dance music is that it existed almost exclusively within the medium of television, in numerous TV shows at TV Pink and at TV and Radio Košava, whose owner was Marija Milošević, the president's daughter. If TV Pink was to establish the so-called 'Pink culture' and worldview, based on sound, iconography and promotion of turbo-folk music, together with ruling politicians, 'businessmen,' fortune-tellers and similar regime promoters who participated in all TV Pink entertainment programmes, Radio and TV Košava was to establish the accompanying 'world' and genre of Serbian dance, which promoted similar values but with a more 'contemporary' 'touch.'

Turbo-folk and dance music had many more similarities than differences. Therefore, those who were not fond of these genres considered Serbian dance a 'turbo-folk' sound without 'turbo.' This was supposed to mean that, while turbo-folk combined dance and techno rhythms with a way of singing that originated from 'newly composed' or new folk music, a corrupted version of the oriental way of singing, called 'thriller' (in Turkey, this characteristic kind of singing is called 'arabesque'), dance used the same rhythms which were followed by a 'normal' way of singing, like the one in pop music. Similar media promotion, iconography and system of values, and the fact that dance, being only a copy of western dance music, as well as, in a large part, a copy of the powerful style and music of turbo-folk, never had the same persistent influence to Serbian culture and life-style during the nineties, defining the 'fashionable culture' of dance only as an inferior branch of the phenomenon of turbo-folk.

Media, Politics and Instrumentalization of Popular Culture

As in the more developed western countries, The former Federal Republic of Yugoslavia experienced a growth of significance of both consumerism as a life-style and influence of mass-media during the 1980s. The process of transformation of a 'mild communist' country such as Yugoslavia into a mass-culture society and a society where mass-media, particularly television become the key factor

of political, family and social life [5] was, however, finalized at the point of break and civil war in ex-Yugoslavia, at the beginning of the '90s.

During and after the breakdown of the former F.R. of Yugoslavia, politicians of the nationalist option in Serbia, Croatia and Bosnia and their ruling parties, elected at the first democratic elections as a result of merciless nationalist media propaganda and monopolization of media space, now (unlike Tito) used mass-media, particularly television as the most powerful one, for a total disintegration of the idea of 'brotherhood and unity' once cultivated in former Yugoslavia, and for the spread of national and religious hatred, intolerance, violence, war and fear. 'Newly-composed' nationalist warrior folk music, with similar melodies but opposite lyrics of hatred (on all three sides), and local popular culture which represented the paradoxical fusion of national-chauvinism and provincialism with 'beauties of consumerism' and war-profiteering economy, fulfilled the picture and prevailing system of values of those troubled times. Generally speaking, dominant popular culture in Croatia had its expression in Croatian dance music and 'petit-bourgeois,' neo-conservative patriotic songs, while its rough version spread among the majority of ordinary people included war-songs of hatred (in quasi-traditional style, with modern lyrics); [6] in Bosnia, Bosnian Muslim forces also cultivated nationalist songs of hatred and religious songs of the Islamic 'holy war,' 'džihad,' while entertainment scene in the region was marked by a pop-folk music very similar to new folk music and to Serbian turbo-folk, with love lyrics that celebrated both patriarchalism and eroticism and melodies that contained strong Arabic and Turkish influences.

At the same time, with the help of mass-media turbo-folk became the dominant cultural pattern in Serbia. In the first half of the 1990s, it took the shape of the national-patriotic, 'newly composed' 'warrior' culture and folk entertainment cultivated by TV Palma, a populist TV station established in 1991 which was the first one to specialise as a 'music television.' Still, the nationalist warrior songs could not penetrate too much into the official television programmes, since Milošević denied the official participation of Serbia in civil war in Croatia, presenting the situation in the news as a spontaneous rebellion of Croatian Serbs, 'our brothers,' who experienced Croatian nationalists' political oppression. It did not stop him, though, from mobilizing a huge number of young Serbs, not rarely taken almost by force by military representatives from their homes to be mobilized into still-called Yugoslav army forces and fight for Milošević's state interests in Croatia and later in Bosnia. This partial official media censorship did not make Serbian warrior songs of hatred less influential. The nationalist hysteria and warrior-enthusiastic moods were spread throughout the country and in

the war-field, achieving an enormous sell on pirate audio-cassettes and an outrageous promotion on new patriotic radio-stations, such as “Radio-Pride” (“Radio-ponos”) from Belgrade. [7]

A very good analysis of the war-patriotic songs during 1990s civil ex-Yugoslavian war is given by Croatian journalist Ivo Žanić in his significant study “A Deceived History” (“Prevarena Povijest,” Durieux, Zagreb, 1998). Žanić is studiously following the history of Serbian folk singers on a traditional musical instrument called ‘gusle,’ how it has become a sort of a show-business in its ‘newly-composed’ version, how the cult of ‘hajduci,’ the outlaw Serbian army which fought against Turks until the 19th century, was spread and kept in folk culture until the 1990s and how it was manipulated and used as a speech of hatred and nationalist propaganda during the war in Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina in 1990–1995. [8]

The largest part of broadcast programme at TV Palma, also called “Serbian MTV” (being actually a sort of a comical counterpart of a famous “MTV” channel) in the first half of the nineties was given to music videos of the ‘newly composed’ folk music and turbo-folk music. The first music videos at “TV Palma” (it also broadcast some of the old, rudimentary music videos, song performances in a TV-studio, produced in the ‘80s by RTS [9]) had a modest, technologically old-fashioned, naive and kitsch quality, as well as the music produced. Production managers at TV Palma did not care much for the quality: they were producing thousands of music videos and taking money from any anonymous talented or non-talented villager or city inhabitant who wanted to become a star for her or his TV-presentation. The musical hyper-production flourished, fulfilling both the need for escapist contents by impoverished, isolated, oppressed and manipulated Serbian people suffering from the neighbouring civil wars, and the drive for enrichment of regime-controlled media and music producers of turbo-folk. [10]

Radio-Pink, a populist radio-station which enthusiastically promoted the new folk music and turbo-folk sound for 24 hours, preceded the establishment of TV Pink in 1994. Financially superior to TV Palma and all other television stations, TV Pink, an omnipresent media giant which monopolized the media space being under financial and political patronage (and most probably ownership, at least in the first years of this TV station’s existence) of Mirjana Marković, spouse of Slobodan Milošević, and her party, JUL (Yugoslavian Left), one of the two cooperating ruling parties in the country, [11] overtook the primacy in TV entertainment and turbo-folk music production. The ‘carefree’ contents of TV Pink were, in fact, highly ideologically shaped, promoting the above mentioned new Serbian elite and its problematic values of war-profiteering, national-chauvinism, crime

and violence, politics of robbery and oppression and pornographic sexuality.

TV Pink both produced turbo-folk music by its own music production company “City Records,” and advertised it in its various entertainment music shows, together with music produced by two other ‘private’ music production companies “ZAM—Entertainment for Millions” and “Grand Production,” which together with TV Pink had a monopoly for this ultra-commercial music branch production. No music alternative was offered to the audience. Politically subversive and critical rock and pop music did not have any opportunity to be seen and heard at this mainstream popular culture promotion channel of the Milošević regime. Only the trash, kitsch but very ‘glamorous’ aesthetics of TV Pink, characterized by a ‘pink’ view point, which included the dominant ideology of the regime and life similar to the one in music videos was pronounced. The political perspective of TV Pink, as well as of the whole 1990s regime, was not clearly defined. It produced chaos more than a coherent economic and political system, in a process typical of all transitional countries of the former Eastern bloc. The old financial system, controlled by the state, was destroyed, as well as the legal state and the rule of the law, and both state property, ‘social’ or ‘common’ property [12] and the new, private property co-existed, all of them controlled by highest officials of Milošević’s authoritarian regime and of course his family. [13] Therefore TV Pink promoted both consumption of western goods and wealth as a life-style of local nouveaux riches, and political populism and nationalism, present in all its entertainers’ and speakers’ and presenters’ rhetorics. This was done in order to justify the illegal and violent enrichment of the mafocratic Serbian oligarchy as necessary, presenting them as ‘patriots,’ while ordinary people’s misery was explained as due to ‘corrupted western politics against Serbia’ and ‘domestic traitors’ (oppositional politicians, journalists and intellectuals). The Karić brothers, one of the most powerful families who enriched themselves serving Milošević and using a monopoly on various economic businesses (some of them illegal) under the protection of his regime, established their own ‘private’ TV station, BK TV, which combined yuppie-styling of its news presenters with populist and kitschy nationalist rhetorics that promoted sentimental iconography and propaganda of Orthodoxy and Serbian Orthodox church as the main backing of Serbian people (in fact, a significant part of this church more represented a backing for Milošević regime, believing its nationalist rhetorics.) But the most powerful tool TV Pink used to support the regime was not direct political propaganda, but production of the entertainment programmes of an instantly recognizable style (style of clothes and total looks, of behaviour and of the studio) that glamorized and promoted the powerful criminal elite.

Eric Gordy, American sociologist and the author of the prominent book *The Culture of Power in Serbia*, explains the situation in Serbia under the Milošević regime as a constant destruction of the political, media and musical alternatives. “The story of changing of Serbian musical scene during the war is actually the story of marginalization of popular cultures /such as rock culture/ and of popularization and instrumentalisation of marginal cultures” [14] /such as criminal, ‘Warrior Chic’ subculture/.

Social Conditions for the Development of Turbo-folk and Dance Music

The social conditions under which the success and mass-consumption of turbo-folk and dance music was accomplished were the situation of disintegration and isolation of Serbian /Yugoslavian society, civil war, economic clash, poverty, fear, rule of force and violence, and NATO bombing in 1999. The situation caused an enormous number of war victims and refugees, breakdown of social position and economic status of whole families and individuals, national currency hyperinflation and mass-unemployment, inadequate health care, pain and suffering for the majority of Serbian and Montenegrin population. [15] The regime used any available means to enlarge its wealth and influence and keep authoritarian control of the country and its citizens. It consciously produced national currency hyperinflation and a black market economy, in which the Milošević family (his wife Mira, son Marko, and daughter Marija) and their closest collaborators controlled all the major sources of income in the country, such as the trade of oil and tobacco, the trade in all mass-imported goods, medical supplies, the banking system, [16] and finally the mass-media. All these activities were black-marketed due to economic sanctions, strictly monopolized and coordinated with criminal bosses who worked for the regime, some of them being the leaders of paramilitary formations (such as Željko Ražnatović-Arkan), as well as with other cooperating politicians, such as Vojislav Šešelj, leader of the Serbian Radical Party, Radovan Karadžić, Serbian political leader in Bosnia, and Milo Đukanović, president of the Republic of Montenegro. State funds and political power were usurped to such a degree that the borderline between this regime’s state rule and organized crime was very slight, and sometimes non-existent. “In order to prevent social revolt, government intentionally stimulated the so-called ‘grey economy’: black market, smuggling, street peddlers, etc.... As a result, ‘grey economy’ proved to be a good shock-absorber of social discontents. But it resulted in the decay of moral values and other objective social values. Honesty became a vice, and dishonesty a virtue and a basic condition for surviving.” [17]

These seriously disturbed social conditions then produced the flourishing of militant youth subcultures, much different from their 1980s predecessors: “As the sociologist of culture Ratka Marić puts it, the place of politically subversive and socially conscious urban youth music subcultures of Serbia in the 1980s has been taken over by ‘new debutants.’ ... The violent social environment, war, poverty, and decay of moral values define the narrowed horizon of the world of Warrior Chic subcultures and the similar world of turbo-folk music: they are characterized by the atmosphere of temporary, ‘fast’ and ‘dangerous’ life, if not on the other side of the law, then at least within the musical subculture of turbo-folk which glorifies all the symbols of crime and violence.” [18] A certain parallel in reaction to circumstances of war among youth subcultures can be found in Croatia, where “soccer fans, punkers, speed metal followers and others brought their own aesthetics directly to the war zone and significantly contributed to the image creation of a Croatian soldier in the first phase of war, as the ‘urban warrior.’” [19]

And here turbo-folk enters the stage: these new militant subcultures of criminal youth, drug-dealers, war-veterans, thugs, ‘dieselmen’ (macho guys in diesel jeans, wearing large golden chains and tracksuits), ‘sponsored girls,’ [20] and other desperate youngsters, were the main protagonists and the audience for production and consumption of turbo-folk sound, as, for them, a perfectly suitable combination of nationalist ideas, due to its national folk musical origins, and aggressive, macho and criminal attitudes, found in rap and hip-hop rhythm and its visual presentation. All these subcultures shared a common worldview, lifestyle, gender roles and iconography, and are therefore considered under a common name of “Warrior Chic Subcultures.” The Warrior Chic Serbian youth subcultures shared similar “Warrior Chic” style and iconography, based on specific gender roles and structure of sensibility. These symbols were then included into a mass-culture spectacle and also widely accepted among a subculturally ‘neutral’ audience.

The Production of Spectacle: Style, Lyrics and Structure of Sensibility in the Turbo-folk and Dance Era

How did turbo-folk and dance music producers fulfill the above-mentioned aims of keeping the order and ideology of the Milošević regime? They produced a massive, overwhelming spectacle which included intended ideological messages into style, iconography and visual presentation of turbo-folk music, as well as into its lyrics. In the first half of the nineties the process of appropriation and mainstreaming of these militant youth and criminal subcultures by the regime-controlled media took place, and the iconography and style of these Warrior Chic subcultures

were included in the iconography of turbo-folk and dance music as a basic element, giving a sort of cultural background, moral excuse and spectacular promotion to the new, war-profiteering ruling class in Serbia and Montenegro. The main channel of promotion of the turbo-folk and dance image, which contributed to the creation and establishment of turbo-folk style as a dominant mass culture and popular culture style in Serbian media during the 1990s, was the music video. Erotically provocative photographs of turbo-folk female stars in magazines and the tabloid press, as well as all the entertainment TV-shows, many of them going 'live,' also established and celebrated the style which was widely accepted and imitated among Serbian youth but also among representatives of the new 'business' class and ruling politicians.

Style

"Spectacle is a continuous discourse of the ruling order about itself, its uninterrupted monologue of self-praise, a self-portrait of the order in the phase of its complete domination in all the aspects of life." [21]

The rapid development of music video aesthetics in Serbia during the 1990s happened when people in power noticed an incredible financial and manipulative potential and gave it a massive financial and media support. Thanks to this new funding, the managers of turbo-folk music could employ the professionals with a good knowledge of culture, cinema, fine arts, technology, fashion and design who would enable turbo-folk to give up its previous local 'newly composed' style in favour of a contemporary, luxurious, cosmopolitan image. The authors of these progressive music videos (among whom the leading ones were S.Ž. Zli, a graduated director of photography and a former alternative rock-photographer, and Dejan Milićević, fashion photographer and stylist) gave the new visual identity to turbo-folk and dance music and its stars consolidating it as a first-rate urban phenomenon and dominant Serbian mainstream popular culture. In the middle of '90s Zli included numerous aesthetic innovations into the language of domestic music videos: a highly dynamic editing, an interesting story, continual camera movements and a combined use of color and black-and-white picture, also introducing rock iconography—black leather and motorcycles, sports cars, violence and aggressive eroticism. On the other hand, Milićević dresses 'folk-divas' into hollywoodian dresses, applying a soft-focused camera lens and a make-up and hairstyle like those seen in most contemporary fashion magazines. While Zli, with his prodigious talent for moving photography, marked the turning-point in transformation of street Warrior Chic subcultures and local folk singers, such as Ceca Veličković (later Ražnatović) and Dragana Mirković, into dominant

urban mainstream, creating the symbolic mass-culture match of the social process of establishment of the new ruling, war-profiteering class, [22] the glamorous, imitative style of music videos, trailers and promo-photographs of turbo-folk and dance stars created by Dejan Milićević gave the main visual identity to the leading promoter of fashionable 'Pink culture,' TV Pink in the other half of the nineties, as well as to 'fashionable culture' of Serbian dance. Zli also successfully formed the aggressive macho-image of the most profitable domestic pop-dance band, "Moby Dick." The iconography of TV Pink, created by Milićević, also included and corrupted elements of style belonging to the Serbian techno and 'rave' scene. Serbian rave subculture, related to many sub-genres of techno music (techno, techno-trance, goa, goa-trance, etc.), was particularly vivid in Belgrade during the other half of the '90s, and it strictly belonged to independent, peace-making urban youth subcultures opposed to the regime (together with listeners of rock music), which continued the tradition of subversive '80s youth urban subcultures even if their influence had been marginalized and reduced by the official mass-media. Still, since it was a brand-new, fashionable subculture, preoccupied largely by a 'happy narcissism' and fascination with style and extraordinary 'styling' of its protagonists, the iconography of techno-scene was also successfully recycled and included into TV Pink iconography and the iconography and visual style of Serbian dance. It had been done as a part of typical turbo-folk strategies, to conquer, subordinate and include into itself all other urban subcultural styles, particularly those ones whose style had a powerful symbolic subversive potential, unlike the imitative turbo-folk and dance style, which firstly belonged to people from villages and suburbs, therefore frustrated by their own 'non-urban,' modest origins. It also freely used all possible visual sources of contemporary western pop-iconography, which was easy to do thanks to the country's isolation. [23] Following this pattern, Dejan Milićević very creatively carried out the transformation of the famous turbo-folk singer Ivan into a fictitious protagonist of the Serbian techno-pop music and rave scene in his music videos for the CD "I Wanna Dance With You" ("Hoću s' tobom da đuskam"), Ivan Gavrilović, 1996. In spite of all, these music videos remain among the highest achievements in Serbian music videos' aesthetics during the '90s and in the expression of spirit of techno music and rave subculture.

The Dancing

The way of dancing also expresses the 'hybrid' nature of turbo-folk and dance music and style. Turbo-folk female singers in solo performance combine western techno and disco-dancing with dancing with Oriental motifs—hold-

ing their arms up and 'twisting' them, and even with the elements of belly-dancing. Similar, but more reduced choreography is applied by turbo-folk male singers. Still the most important accent in female singers' dancing is stressing their erotic qualities, very often in a way which is too provocative and vulgar. This intention to 'arouse' and seduce the audience is more important than the dancing itself. If it is a group performance of several singers in the studio, as for example in New Year's Eve TV show-programmes, then dancing to turbo-folk and new folk music may often include the Serbian national folk dance, the kolo. Serbian dance music is related to western techno and disco-dancing, but sometimes it can also include a little bit of the 'arms twisting' as an echo of Orientalism, particularly when the very music combines western disco-techno-house music with some Oriental melody. Together with turbo-folk the 'newly-composed' or new folk music is also consumed, its way of dancing closer to national folk dancing with some Oriental 'twisting' than to western disco-dancing. Still, some modern singers of new folk music at the end of '80s who later turned into turbo-folk stars, like a very popular singer Dragana Mirković, preferred the western way of pop or disco-dancing to traditional Serbian folk dance. At the end of the nineties, both turbo-folk, pop-folk and dance singers and bands are almost regularly followed by a group of, most often, all-female and all-male dancers, and also sometimes mixed dancers, whose choreography represents an effective fusion of postmodern dance, erotic dancing, disco-funky and break-dancing, and some elements of Oriental and local folk dancing in their TV and live performances at concerts.

Structure of Sensibility

The messages of turbo folk style are best described by a specific structure of sensibility that was formed during the domination of turbo-folk in the '90s. This sensibility is in compliance with the values that a turbo-folk protagonist praises: tolerance toward criminal activities and involvement in them; agreement with war actions; the idea that the end justifies the means; expressing status by means of money, expensive cars and exclusive clothes; considering women just as sex objects and status trophies; and displaying uncritical delight towards fashion and consumption of western goods and towards the turbo-folk scene itself. Civil values are looked down on with a feeling of superiority (education, respect for the law, morality and peaceful life are at the very bottom of this cultural model). This system of values is not surprising when it is remembered that turbo-folk functions as a product of the connection between show-business, politics and a criminal mafia during the ten years of war. The structure of sensibility which is the result of these values includes also the militant atti-

tude, aggressiveness, vulgar eroticism, uncritical feeling of superiority (something like "I am OK you are not OK" from transactional analysis [24]), the desire for war challenges and dangers; and among women also for being well-evaluated by the others (men and other female 'competitors') as sex objects and goods. The desirable woman of turbo-folk culture takes all her energy from the acknowledgement that she receives from militant men and from her passionate surrendering to the position of dependence. The paradigmatic couple for this kind of relationship during the nineties were Željko Ražnatović-Arkan ('businessman' and war criminal) and turbo-folk singer Ceca, who, thanks to media propaganda, paradoxically stood for her audience both for a desirable sex-object and an exemplary 'Serbian mother' and wife of a 'patriot,' a symbolic 'mother of the nation.' [25]

These values and feelings can be best noticed in video clips which were the main visual representative of neofolk culture. In the era of turbo-folk music, drugs, murders, weapons, body-guards, luxury and 'femmes fatales' are among the main motifs of music videos. They express a new violent sensibility of the nineties. Besides, the prime importance which turbo-folk attaches to the visual presentation and appearance speaks about its own strongly expressed narcissism.

Narcissism is defined as love towards one's own picture, as self-love, falling in love with oneself. The name comes from the mythic character Narcissus who was condemned to look at his reflection in the water for the rest of his life because he refused the love of nymph Echo. Sigmund Freud used the term "narcissism" to mark all the manifestations that relate to investing sexual potential towards one's own body. The failure in overcoming this early auto-erotic model leads to psychopathology. Outside of psychopathology (in which it reflects psychosis, and especially schizophrenia), this term is used to signify certain ideological cultural and moral orientations which are marked with a strong narcissistic component. Many prominent theoreticians understand narcissism as one of the main characteristics of contemporary culture and civilization, amongst others Christopher Lash, the author of the fundamental study "Narcissistic Culture" (1979). Dr Jovan Rašković, a prominent Serbian neuropsychiatrist, writes in his notorious study about the social dimension of narcissism, "Narcissism" (1988) the following: "The modern society gave plenty of evidence for solid links between narcissism and the system of values. Total communication, control of information and high publicity of mass media enables the narcissistic group of a very high level of expression. Fame was never so easily sold as it is in the modern society. It is easy for a narcissistic person to appear on the cover of newspapers, magazines and in other forms of communication. Auditorium is easily obtained. Group narcissism is not just easing of manipu-

lation but it is also a removal of anxiety and fear. The weak ones in narcissistic group become strong, and the uncertain gain the feeling of higher level of value, while the unsettled ones become more relaxed.” [26] Modern narcissism cannot exist without aggressiveness, and that is why it always needs an ideology. The Narcissi from the myth is introvert, gentle, lonely, with no connection to life, while today’s social Narcissi is “real, very direct, violent, keeps his feet on the ground and is strongly connected to life,” [27] concludes Jovan Rašković.

This kind of interpretation of narcissism explains why members of turbo-folk (sub) culture are fascinated with force and violence. The obsession with ‘perfect’ looks (by the criteria established by mass-media from the west and in the country, particularly by TV Pink) led to a trend of violent changes of one person’s own looks by the means of plastic surgeries (of nose, eyes, mouth and breast). Turbo-folk singers compete to see which one will implant silicone breasts first, thinking of it as a question of prestige and a way to sell a music CD and gain a show in well-paid disco-clubs. Since the end of the nineties the bodies of Ceca Ražnatović and Jelena Karleuša have been leading as sex-symbols and trade-marks of turbo-folk style. Their erotically aggressive images embody a specific ‘rhetoric of power.’ For example, the style of Karleuša expresses a sort of mannerism of turbo-folk style, a combination of a ‘sponsored girl’ and a techno and gay-icon. Her aggressive looks consists of wearing mini-outfits made of artificial leather and techno materials tight close to the body, underwear, high heels, overstressed breasts, artificial nails and vulgar make-up in a ‘vamp’ style. Marina Blagojević, a significant Serbian sociologist, describes Karleuša’s paradoxical image in the following way: “With J. Karleuša ends the succession of creating image which destructs everything in front of its self. J. Karleuša is not natural, nor is that her goal, because she has become more natural than the nature itself; she created herself and for that she needed no nature, no talent, no luck, but just the power to create herself.” [28]

Lyrics

For the structure of sensibility of turbo-folk music, the lyrics are very significant. They underline the importance of the protagonist’s feelings—the masochism which includes self pity. The fact that masochism temporarily eases the individual’s conscience by freeing him or her from responsibility for his or her own life (“I am powerless”) probably explains why the authors and auditorium of folk and turbo-folk music, as well as of the mass-culture in general, are so much attracted to the expression of masochism.

Women’s masochism is present in all great hits of the main neo folk star Ceca Raznatović. The lyrics of the song “The Dead Sea” go like this:

“I sank a hundred times because of you / And a hundred times I washed up on a cliff / And I missed everything due to the beauty of that pain/ Now I don’t have you any more / Refrain: My life is a dead sea / Without even one wave / Only memories stay afloat following the trace of the old ads / You remained and will always be my guiding star / While my heart is fighting to get some sleep as if it were an old nanny. “

We can see the perfect explanation of why the heroine of the song gives herself in to masochism—she sees the beauty in the pain. This is the culmination of masochism connected with self-destruction. The heroine does not find any other meaning in life except to worship the man whom she (as it seems) loves no matter how he treats her, whether he loves her or neglects her. This kind of female masochism is really hard to understand unless we see it as a metaphor of woman’s giving in to her partner (where masochism would result in an orgasm), which is only one of its many meanings. It would be unfair not to notice that Ceca’s position becomes perfectly erotic and not at all unattractive if seen in this context. But this is not the case with all her songs. Most of them do not offer such subtle erotic metaphors of masochism, but include a masochism which is trivial and connected with militant ideas, for example in the song “If you were wounded”:

“I would tie my desiring hands in a knot / Before I let any other devil’s man hug and kiss them / I would sleep on doorsteps as a dog / Through centuries I would burn for us / If you were wounded I would give you blood / Both of my eyes if you were blind / But with no hope, without a soul you are ice.”

Next to women’s masochism stands the men’s masochism, which is connected with the idea of loss and death. A masochistic man still loves his fatal woman that left him, usually for another man:

“Light candles for me as if I were gone / As the soul of mine is long hers / My heart cracked as if it were made of glass / The path to her lips is a shortcut to hell-” (Džej Ramadanovski)

The song “Evil Woman” from another singer gets its title after a very popular Latin American ‘soap-opera’ TV series of the same name.

“You evil woman, you live on my sadness / You are the same as all the others / You evil woman, I gave you my whole life / And I regret that I met you.”

Especially interesting is the case of a famous Serbian new folk singer Miroslav Ilić, who cries over the masochism of his beloved, understanding the mentality of the Balkans and its cultural necessities (men’s patriarchal domination) in his famous old song “To you, my faithful friend”:

“To you who waits for me patiently throughout these long nights / To you who sits alone when I’m with another woman / To you, my faithful friend, my happiness, my

sadness / To you I'll give my crazy heart / I gave away everything / I have nothing else to give you."

Still a man's masochism fascinates us less than a woman's—here we naturally come to feminism taking the shortcut. While the folk lyrics mostly express masochism as the characteristic of sensibility, the lyrics of dance songs describe aggressiveness, repression, machoism, jealousy and murderous moods:

"Tonight, that made me sin, baby / I killed a man for you / where will you go now when he was your friend / I don't know what happened to make you go in to the darkness with him when you know it is easy for me to drag a gun for such a shame / Boom boom Bang, straight to the heart / Boom boom bang, it should hurt you as it hurt me." (pop-dance band "Moby Dick")

"Musical police is a necessary thing—in every city to remove the damage / Musical patrol to create the order / and compose some other sequence." (pop-dance all-girls band "The Models")

In the song "30 days" performed by a dance music duo called "Twins," the protagonist, i.e., the singer, is sorry because he wouldn't be able to be with his girlfriend for thirty days and nights (i.e., because he wouldn't be able to control whom is she sleeping with), whilst the jail punishment doesn't worry him at all.

"It is not hard for me because of thirty days but because my girl is sleeping alone / It is not hard for me because of thirty nights but because my girl is not coming to me."

Military vocabulary and the system of values based on violence also penetrated into love lyrics of dance music from Croatia, like the war song "Friday" by Vlatka Pokos and the great hit "I am dying" by a very successful pop-dance band "Magazin":

"When will the Friday come, so I can see you, see you again / Oh, you are like a bullet which I long for, I long for it" (Vlatka Pokos)

"I am dying for you, my love / Like a soldier on a night guard / Like a man who is seeking happiness / I am dying for you / And I am only anxious about one thing / As I will admit everything to myself / when the memories kill me" (Magazin)

The lyrics of Serbian dance music also include women's masochism. It is found in love songs, in which a female singer is a sad love victim, used and abandoned by heartless men:

"I was one in a hundred / I gave you my heart / You gave me pain / But I longed for love / And forgave you everything." (Leontina)

"Believe me, I would give you everything for one trace of your love / But that is not much / As you are never going to be mine." (Funky G)

"Why are my tears flowing now when you betrayed me / You took away the last trace of happiness / And all of my dreams, oh!" (Energie)

"Only once is not enough / I feel moody / Only once is not enough / For you to kiss me and touch me." (Focus)

"Each and every letter of your name hurts me / You are beside her and sadness is beside me / Nothing new / When I become just a number on a wall / You should have in mind / That my tears your soul will be charged for." (Lidija)

Gender Roles and Male-Female Style

The Warrior Chic subcultural style, soon after its appearance also incorporated into turbo-folk media style, implies different variations of male-female style, just like every other subcultural style. This male-female style is in compliance with previously clearly determined roles that male and female protagonists have in the turbo-folk subculture.

Woman is just a desirable object and goods. She is supposed to attract a man by her looks and to thrill him; her appearance has the aim of confirming the status of the man who has her around him, or to represent a potential status symbol in the man's absence. The female looks in this subculture and later mainstream popular culture expresses the fascination with wealth and consuming—as a life style, and it consists of the evening dresses, tight black outfit, fashion designer's clothes and worldwide spread logos, expensive shoes and jewelry or, in a more modest version of the style, sparkling kitsch outfits. At the very end of the 20th century (1999–2000), these looks also included silicon breast augmentation and effects of plastic surgery interventions, as the latest 'hit,' with the aim of gaining the 'most perfect' looks. This fashion was constantly present on television and it was followed by an incredible number of mostly young women, who by watching television hold the illusion of the ease of gaining rapid fame and status via sexy and 'perfect' looks, an idea they accept since they have no better identification model. This expresses another desire of a turbo-folk woman connected with her narcissism, that the other women shall admire and envy her, as a successful object that was well 'sold.'

The man is supposed to leave an impression of a dangerous, robust male. He is a macho guy who drives an expensive fast car, has a mobile phone and, if necessary, can also carry a gun. He wears black and dark grey suits, black leather or the most expensive sportswear with a foreign trademark. His main preoccupation and his system of values are based on money, no matter how gained. He is a criminal or a so-called "businessman," that is a tradesman or an entrepreneur who fits into the corrupted and monopolized grey and black economy controlled by the higher circles of the Serbian political elite in the '90s. Women are there for him so that he can 'spend' them, or be fascinated by their vamp looks. He appreciates women who fought for their position in his circles thanks to their

provocative looks and relationships with powerful men. Since he doesn't like any commitments, or any other sort of emotional intimacy, he chooses women easily approachable, but is thrilled by the ones that aren't within his reach. In the woman he chooses for his life partner—and mostly he praises folk singers—he adores his own strength and power.

Drugs also stand for a status symbol of neofolk scene, as they naturally follow the world of criminal and show business. Drugs are attractive as a new and tempting, expensive amusement; they are consumed to smash the boredom, fulfill the time of idleness, and also to reduce the tension, a result of stress which protagonists of the criminal world face all the time, aware of different life dangers. But it is also a ruinous follower of that life-style.

As in the case of the newly composed style where the looks of a show-business star is this style's culmination, and the 'boors' make its modest, street version, so does the described Warrior Chic represent the culmination of this style, which also has many elements of a street subculture. The street version of style during the '90s implied cheap imitations of foreign trademarks and of local show-business stars' looks. Girls wore tight shirts and trousers, mostly black, they had long dyed hair, high-heeled shoes made of cheap materials (plastic, artificial leather), a strong make-up (the eyes and mouth often framed with black crayon), the "wonder-bra" is unavoidable—for pushing up and enlarging the bust, and it can easily be seen under short micro shirts: the logics of turbo folk demands that breast and body are in the foreground, as if a woman says: 'Here you are.' The men's version of the street style copies the luxurious criminal and business looks with the help of cheaper clothes: suits and black shoes or jeans are worn, just like shirts and sport shoes. The macho and criminal elements of the outfit are stressed, for example black sun-glasses, eye-catching leather belts, golden chains with a cross and similar; a mobile phone is the logo. Even though stratification in style is present, the system of values remains the same.

In order to be established as a woman and to confirm her female identity, a girl who wants to be a part of this subculture has to accept the role model. A young man also should accept this aggressive role model in order to confirm his masculinity. Both men and women in this system stay deprived from emotions.

The clear prostitution and commodification of women as a basic characteristic of the Warrior Chic style is supported by poverty, war, criminal expansion, the strengthening of persistent patriarchy, and also by the direct influence of western mass culture products where the woman is presented as a sex object. The prostitution of women is sometimes indirect or hidden, known as the phenomenon of 'sponsored girls,' while modeling can easily be the

screen behind which procuring is hidden. The position of women within this subculture is precisely described in the lyrics of the song "Bumble-bee," performed by a dance singer, Lina. The myth about a rich boyfriend, handsome as Arkan's football players (Arkan himself was in his life time an ideal and standard of a handsome and attractive man in our society), whom all the girls watching TV Pink dream of, here gets more realistic tones:

"I went out that evening / I was alone and looking for my friends in a disco club / Somewhere out of the dark he approached to me / With a tie around his neck, fat as an elephant / He told me he would like to take me across the pond / But first in the booth / When we sat down he asked me what I would like to drink / I saw it's gonna go bad / When his hand started touching my waist / I understood it all and I was sick / Bumble-bee, who wants a bumble-bee / Full of cash, bumble-bee / I don't need any / Bumble-bee, who wants a bumble-bee / Full of cash, Bumble-bee / Fat and old!

This is one of the rare songs that openly criticize the sexual order in turbo-folk subculture, which is relevant even if you suspect that the lyrics are sincere. The song describes a fat, rich 'bumble-bee'—a new Serbian businessman, the successor of the powerful communist company directors, the so-called 'lamb brigades,' [29] while searching for a young candidate for his own "sponsored girl." He wishes to possess her, pay for her drinks and maybe clothes, and that is the only thing their relationship should be based on, observing from this rigid Warrior Chic protagonist's point of view.

The video clip for this song [30] includes a new item (beside the 'stupid' fat, rich man with golden chain and mobile phone and besides Lina, who revolts coquettishly—and the point of it is to be obstinate and so more attractive): a young man of model looks with long hair appears half naked in the video, while she pats him and talks to him. His looks are a combination of a macho style, strong body and feminine beauty. He is the sign of a hidden gay culture, imported from the West, whose influence can be noticed in turbo folk and dance video clips, commercials, fashion photography, magazines and TV announcements at TV Pink. [31] This influence was particularly present in Pink products created by Milićević. Although the scene is marked by an omnipresent masculine identity of the Warrior cult, young feminized gay men are also present at the turbo-folk subcultural scene in some numbers, confirming again its hypocrisy. These young men are usually working in Serbian fashion and show-business, while some of them only 'hang around,' wishing to attract some wealthy and powerful sponsors by their beauty. Maybe the extreme crime—macho style needs no more a woman, who is anyway reduced to an object, to be used so that a man can prove his power and satisfy his needs.

This unofficial, but recognizable tolerance of men's homosexuality, [32] if it is working for the system, is one of perverted strategies of TV Pink and other media managers of the Milošević regime, which consciously produced all variations of representation of sexuality and commodification of erotic desire, together with the illusion of 'belonging to the big world' and simulation of all kinds of freedom, creating confusion and contradictory messages as an effective way of keeping power.

Conclusion

Starting from a street subculture of deprived and violent youth, turbo-folk developed into a mainstream pop culture which sophisticatedly promoted militant, criminal and immoral values of the regime, making them a part of the entertainment. TV Pink completed the process of glamorization of the society of poverty, creating a 'Pink culture' as a permanent spectacle of Milošević's power, based on a picture of glamour, eroticism, wealth and consumption which was framed by a nationalist, rigidly patriarchal and authoritarian ideology. The hyper-productive music and entertainment industry of turbo-folk, followed since 1994 by a similar and unauthentic genre of dance, their lyrics and style, represented a powerful machine for shaping the reality and promoting the political power and economic strategies which destroyed the country and impoverished its citizens, while at the same time consolidated the authoritarian rule and personal enrichment of Slobodan Milošević, his family and his closest collaborators, from war-criminals to media magnates. These musical genres also embodied a fascinating solution to the identity crisis of Serbian society in troubled, criminalized transitional circumstances, by creating a controversial combination of different influences and ideologies in its hybrid music, way of dancing and visual representation: of its local, traditional Serbian national characteristics, Oriental and ultra-modern Western influences.

After the 5 October 2000 and the fall of Milošević's regime, with a short break in broadcasting TV Pink continued its work, with changes in editorial politics of the news (now promoting new, democratic politicians in power) and very slight changes in its style towards a milder version of turbo-folk, folk-pop and pop-dance music. The TV Pink satellite programme, which resembles the notorious heritage of the nineties, with fortune-teller shows and more aggressive turbo-folk sound, is extremely popular throughout Serbia and Montenegro and among Serbs abroad, but also in Bulgaria, Macedonia, Bosnia and even Croatia. TV Palma is regularly broadcasting music videos from the '90s. Tabloid magazines remain a persistent channel for the promotion of turbo-folk singers, stripteasettes and tough guys from sports and business (not completely

separated from the criminal underground), as well as nationalist political rhetorics. In spite of many positive changes in the official cultural climate and media picture after 2000, the style and influence of turbo-folk and similar music genres is still very strong in Serbia and Montenegro in the circumstances of social and economic transition towards a democratic but also liberal capitalist society.

ENDNOTES

1 For a more detailed explanation of the political significance of the phenomenon of "turbo-folk," see: Ivana Kronja, *Politics, Nationalism, Music, and Popular Culture in 1990s Serbia*, "Slovo," Vol. 16, No. 1, Spring 2004. Also see: Ivana Kronja, "The Fatal Glow: Mass Psychology and Aesthetics of Turbo-folk Subculture" ("Smrtonosni sjaj: masovna psihologija i estetika turbo-folka"), Tehnokratia, Belgrade, 2001.

2 For a detailed description and analysis of Serbian traditional folk music see: Dimitrije O. Golemović, "The Folk Music of Yugoslavia" ("Narodna muzika Jugoslavije"), Muzička omladina Srbije, Belgrade, 1997. Good papers belonging to contemporary criticism of traditional Serbian folk music can be found in the Reader: "The Exceptionness and the Co-existence" ("Izuzetnost i sapostojanje"), V International Symposium "Folklore—Music—Creativity" (V međunarodni simpozijum "Folklor—muzika—delo"), Belgrade, 1997, and in the Symposium Readers for the following years.

3 A very good analysis of new folk music and the accompanying 'newly composed' subculture—popular culture is given by Milena Dragičević-Šešić in her book: "The Neofolk Culture" ("Neofolk kultura—publika i njene zvezde"), Izd. knjiž. Z. Stojanovića, Sremski Karlovci—Novi Sad, 1994. For a detailed analysis of a 'newly composed' subculture and particularly its style meaning, see the study of Croatian ethnologist Ines Prica, "The Belgrade Youth Subculture—Symbolic Practices" ("Omladinska potkultura u Beogradu—simbolička praksa"), Etnografski Institut SANU, Belgrade, 1991, and other papers from Prica relating to this topic.

4 This folk matrix included, beside the local folk sound, a lot of influences of Turkish and Arabic pop-version of their own traditional folk music.

5 The single-party political system in former F.R. of Yugoslavia, under president Tito and after his death in 1980, until 1990, also used television and other media as a political propaganda tool to establish and maintain the ruling ideology of socialism, but this ideology insisted on 'fraternity and unity' of all ex-Yugoslavian nations and on equality of social classes (keeping invisible the fact that the ruling communist-bureaucratic social stratum, the so-called 'red bourgeoisie,' was already formed). This TV

and press propaganda had, therefore, rather a 'mesmerizing' than a negative effect. Besides, the origins of mass culture in former Yugoslavia did not offer such a variety of programmes or such an ideology of pleasure, liberal values and free consuming as found in usual mass-media contents in the West, as well as in popular mass-media contents now present in ex-Yugoslavian republics—newly formed states after 1990, that (even with many difficulties) adopted a democratic political option.

6 See, for example, the chauvinist lyrics of a popular Croatian war-folk singer, Marko Perković -Thompson, whose concerts are very popular and whose songs are issued by the biggest music production house in the state, "Croatia Records."

7 In the reader "The Anthology of Turbo-Folk" ("Antologija Turbo-Folka"), SKC, Belgrade, 2001, in the paper named: *Warriors' turbo/neofolk: New Heroes–New Poets (Ratni turbo/neofolk: Novi heroji–novi pesnici)*, journalist Goran Tarlać makes a successful comparative analysis of 'patriotic music' conceived during ex-Yugoslavian civil wars by all three nations: Serbs, Croats and Muslims. Tarlać defines this patriotic war music and its poetry of hatred as following: "The show-biz war poetry sticks firmly to its quasi-patriotic discourse, leaving the 'triviality' of everyday life behind. Her aim is to become a means for the approval of political theses. War patriotic songs, in their own way, also wanted to give a specific contribution to a military struggle." (p. 61). Ivan Čolović, our prominent ethnologist, defines this war folk music as a "kitsch based in nationalist myths, without any sense of distinction between reality and fiction, whose ideas express both xenophobia and megalomania" in his significant study: "The Warrior's Brothel" ("Bordel ratnika"), XX vek, Belgrade, 2000.

8 The only problem of this, otherwise fundamental, study is the fact that Žanić is dividing Serbian nationalist propaganda from Croatian nationalist propaganda, defending the thesis that Croatian propaganda of the same kind was 'necessary for its self-defence,' and therefore not a negative phenomenon. Nationalist propaganda is always considered a negative, manipulative ideological tool in all the scientific literature and criticism of populism and war. Therefore we believe that the study of Žanić would have been more profound and theoretically valid if it included more comparison of these nationalist rhetorics.

9 Until 1990, RTS (Radio-Television of Serbia) was a part of JRT (Yugoslav Radio-Television), a very powerful and a single state TV-system in former Yugoslavia.

10 Milošević and his closest collaborators monopolized and controlled all financial transactions, state and grey economy, and therefore he also controlled all the media space, although he allowed the establishment of so-called 'private' TV-stations, which were actually raised with state

and criminal money, and controlled by him. These TV stations were to simulate the 'democratic spirit' of the regime, while actually freedom of the media did not exist; oppositional independent radio-stations, such as B92, and newspapers were systematically oppressed, but not completely closed, so that Milošević could simulate a parliamentary and democratic society. The proclaimed 'owner,' actually the chief manager, of TV Palma had been a high official in Milošević's party, SPS. Following the same pattern, the chief manager and also the official 'owner' of the later established TV Pink was Ž. Mitrović, a high official of the party of JUL, run by Mirjana Milošević, the president's wife, today its real owner in large part.

11 The first one was SPS—Serbian Socialist Party, run by Slobodan Milošević himself.

12 In the ex-Yugoslavian economic and political system this was called 'društvena svojina,' and it signified the property of people, such as enterprises and all their buildings, equipment, furniture etc., managed by people's representatives.

13 "According to a *Transparency International* report on the index of corruption perception from year 2000, Yugoslavia had the largest level of corruption among all European countries. At the time Serbia had been a typical example of a deviant transition, which during the '90s functioned as a symbiosis between the state apparatus and organized criminal activity. Structural criminalization of Serbia during the former regime *caused criminalization of all transactions carried out by its political elite.*" —Dragan Jovanović, *Strategies and Techniques of Robbery (Strategije i tehnike pljačke)*, Journal "Republika," No. 320-321, Belgrade, November 2003.

14 Erik Gordi, "Kultura vlasti u Srbiji," Samizdat B92, 2001. Original edition: Eric D. Gordy, "The Culture of Power in Serbia: Nationalism and the Destruction of Alternatives," CEU, Budapest, 1999.

15 After SFRJ—F.R. of Yugoslavia—fell apart in 1990, Milošević proclaimed Serbia and Montenegro for a third, S.R. Yugoslavia (in translation: United Republics of Yugoslavia).

16 The phenomenon of 'pyramidal' banks, which took place also in some other transitional countries (such as Russia), entitled as 'private banks' but actually installed by Milošević and his closest cooperators, which used to give to masses of people a remarkable monthly interest rate, only to go bankrupt a year later and take the money away, into the pockets of the Milošević family and the highest officials of his party.

17 Mlađan Dinkić, "The Economy of Destruction" ("Ekonomija destrukcije"), Belgrade, Stubovi kulture, 1996, p. 247.

18 Ivana Kronja, *Politics, Nationalism, Music, and Popular Culture in 1990s Serbia*, "Slovo," Vol. 16, No. 1, Spring 2004, p. 7.

19 Benjamin Perasović, "The Urban Tribes—Sociology of Subcultures in Croatia" ("Urbana plemena—sociologija subkultura u Hrvatskoj"), Hrvatska sveučilišna naklada, Zagreb, 2001, p. 338.

20 Sponsored girl—a girl who has a lover, usually a criminal or a so-called businessman, who is showing her around as his property and a status symbol, buying her 'beauty requisites': expensive clothes, perfumes and make-up, and paying for her drinks and food at fashionable city venues, such as shopping centers, cafes and restaurants. In the English language this kind of phenomenon may be called "having a sugar daddy," but it mainly refers to a much older man, while the boyfriend of a 'sponsored girl' in Serbia doesn't necessarily have to be much older from her—but he must have lots of money (no matter how gained) and drive an expensive car.

21 Guy Debord, "The Society of Spectacle" ("Društvo spektakla"), Anarhija/blok 45, Belgrade 2003, p. 23.

22 Among the most powerful members of the class were also turbo-folk singer Ceca and her spouse, Arkan, a criminal boss and one of Milošević's closest collaborators.

23 For example, a 'costumed' photograph of two domestic dance music stars, Ivan Sexpress and Ksenija Pajčin, in which they are represented as a gladiator and an Amazon queen, appeared in the music magazine "TV Pink Review" just two weeks after the world premiere of the film "Gladiator" (2000), directed by Ridley Scott.

24 A movement in clinical psychology and psychiatry, established by Eric Berne and Thomas A. Harris, which understands human behavior through three conditions that exist in people: of 'a parent,' 'a grown-up,' and 'a child.' The interaction among people is then executed through various social 'games,' in which individuals communicate through taking over one of these roles, sending the message 'You are O.K.' or 'You are not O.K.' and 'I am O.K.' or 'not O.K.' to another person, depending on the role they

play. The ideal of healthy, mature communication, according to the theory, should be the attitude 'I am O.K.—You are O.K.,' that comes from the 'grown-up' element in human psychological condition (for more details see the books: "Which Game Do You Play" by Eric Berne and "I am O.K.—You are O.K." by Thomas A. Harris).

25 Ceca and Arkan got married in 1995, and had two children until his assassination in 2000. Her life story used to be presented in the media as a 'fairy-tale,' while the tragic outcome of her marriage 'only made her stronger.'

26 Jovan Rašković, "Narcissism" ("Narcizam"), NIO—Univerzitetska reč, Nikšić 1988, p. 55–56.

27 Ibid.

28 Marina Blagojević, *The Invisible Body and Powerful Bodilessness—the Media in 1990s Serbia (Nevidljivo telo i moćna bestelesnost: mediji u Srbiji 90-tih)*, in the reader: "Women, Images, Imaginations" ("Žene, Slike, Izmišljaji"), Centar za Ženske studije, Belgrade 2000, p. 197.

29 These high officials of state enterprises in ex-Yugoslavian times were ironically called this way because they were eating large portions of lamb meat at 'business lunches,' as a sort of a 'social ritual' or better to say a ritual of hedonism and power, all of it on public expense.

30 The author of this music video is the above mentioned Dejan Milićević. Both song and video clip were produced by the TV Pink music production house in 1996.

31 See the text "Controlling and Procuring" ("Nadziranje i podvođenje") by Miša Đurković, magazine "Republika," Belgrade, 2000.

32 TV Pink entertainment creators, since they worked for the system of a rigid patriarchy, tolerated only men's homosexuality, if it was hidden and included into entertainment—it was rumored for many popular male presenters at TV Pink that they were gay, while women's homosexuality was simply unimaginable.