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RUSSIA IN SERBIAN NATIONAL MYTHOLOGIES SINCE XIX CENTURY UNTIL THE FIRST WORLD WAR AND ITS INFLUENCE ON THE MODERN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

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This article will analyze how indigenous Balkan and Russian imperial motifs influenced Serbian national discourses from the second part of the nineteenth century until the First World War. It will focus especially on how the Russian Slavophil and Pan-Slav ideologies affected Balkan national myths, such as the Serbian myth about the Battle of Blackbird's Field (Kosovo Polje). The authors will describe main motives of the myths under study: Russia as an Orthodox brother, an 'eternal ally,' and a future liberator. The article will explain how these myths, rather than being based on reality, tended to create it. Further the article will focus on the way and how these myths influenced Serbian domestic politics and foreign affairs, identity and national sympathies nowadays. The authors conclude that some features of modern Serbian political culture (such as significant support of strong political leader, great respect to authority persons) and international relations (unclear vector of the Serbian foreign policy that drifts between eurointegration and cooperation with Russia) were influenced by the studied myths.

Keywords: national myths, international relations, Serbia, Serbian national myth, Russia in Serbian national myths, Serbian foreign policy, Serbian political culture

РОССИЯ В СЕРБСКОЙ НАЦИОНАЛЬНОЙ МИФОЛОГИИ С XIX ВЕКА ДО ПЕРВОЙ МИРОВОЙ ВОЙНЫ И ЕЕ ВЛИЯНИЕ НА СОВРЕМЕННЫЕ МЕЖДУНАРОДНЫЕ ОТНОШЕНИЯ

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Рассмотрен вопрос о влиянии балканских и российских имперских мотивов на сербские национальные дискурсы со второй половины XIX в. до Первой мировой войны. Особое внимание уделено тому, как славянофильские и панславянские идеологии затронуты балканскими национальными мифами, такими как сербский миф о битве на поле Блэкберда (Косово Поле). Проанализированы основные мотивы изучаемых мифов: Россия как православный брат, «вечный союзник» и будущий освободитель. В статье показано, что эти мифы, не основываясь на реальности, на самом деле создают ее. Далее основное внимание уделено тому, как в наши дни мифы влияют на внутреннюю политику и зарубежные отношения Сербии и ее идентичность. Авторы приходят к выводу, что некоторые из характеристик современной сербской политической культуры (такие как значительная поддержка сильного политического лидера, большое уважение к авторитету) и ее внешней политики (неясный вектор сербских зарубежных отношений, колебание между сотрудничеством с Россией и евроинтеграцией) находятся под влиянием изученных мифов.

Ключевые слова: национальная мифология, международные отношения, Сербия, сербская национальная мифология, Россия в сербской национальной мифологии, сербская зарубежная политика, сербская политическая культура

General characteristics of Balkan national myths. The term 'national myths' will be defined here as a set of simplified interpretations of national history, based on an idea of on-going confrontation between one nation, perceived as both 'virtuous hero' and 'victim,' and other nations, perceived as incarnations of evil [22, p. 26]. Such motives can be found in mythical schemata all over the world, but are especially potent during wars and social perturbations [13, p.335]. Serbia on the eve of the twentieth century was no exceptions to this rule. Its national myths in that period were composed of the idea of martyrdom, experienced as due to the Turks, of the memory of glorious uprisings against Ottoman rule, and of on-going threats to their Slavonic Orthodox identity, coming from Muslims but also from the West.

It needs emphasizing that the image of Russia, as reflected in the Serb national myths on the eve of the twentieth century, was predominantly positive. The national discourse about her referred in that period to the image of a country which had been formed hundreds of years earlier, at least in the sixteenth century, and had not evolved meaningfully thereafter. It was the image of 'Russia-the-Liberator': the state was seen as a mighty empire and the Russians as Orthodox Slavonic brothers. This discourse will be analysed first of all through the prism of its ambiguity between 'Pro-Russian' and 'European' outlooks.

What was the background that influenced the nineteenth-century image of Russia in the Balkan region? The Russian cultural influence on Balkan peoples should be underscored. Russia was, for the nineteenth-century Serbs, "a source of inspiration and an example by virtue of its own cultural attainments," as well as "a mediator insofar as it was via its culture and language that a number of [Balkan] intellectuals gained access to Western European and North American systems of ideas and artistic achievements," as Ludmila Kostova states [18, p 108–109].

Although the Russian government never officially supported Pan-Slavic ideology, its adherents had an enormous impact on Russian politics and public opinion in the second half of the nineteenth century¹. In particular, the Bulgarian War (1877–1878) was accompanied by strong Pan-Slavic feelings in Russian society. An expressive impression of the public opinion of this time was given by Leo Tolstoy in *Anna Karenina* (1878):

The massacre of men who were fellow-Christians, and of the same Slavonic race, excited sympathy for the sufferers and indignation against the oppressors. And the heroism of the Servians and Montenegrins struggling for a great cause begot in the whole people a longing to help their brothers not in word but in deed [28].

For a second time, strong-although not as strong as in the 1870s – 'brotherly' emotions towards the Balkan Slavs emerged in Russian society in 1908, after Austria-Hungary annexed Bosnia-Herzegovina. Although it happened without political objection from the Russian government, this move was perceived in Russian public opinion as a betrayal of a Serbian ally², and – what is also

¹Furthermore, on the eve of the First World War in Russia there was a widespread social network of Pan-Slavs which included both government and non-government members, as well as those in economic and academic circles.

²The Bosnian Crisis began after Austria-Hungary annexed Bosnia and Herzegovina in October 1908 – the territories occupied and administered by Austria-Hungary since the Treaty of Berlin (1878). The great powers of France, Britain, Russia, and Italy, as well as the Ottoman Empire and Serbia, viewed these events as violations of the Treaty of Berlin. As a result, a flurry of diplomatic protests and discussions began. The crisis eventually

important – as a warning. On the one hand, it was a warning against emerging German expansion as well as a warning against the internal threat connected with Russia's own cultural insecurity – “the feeling that they were living on the edge of a backward, semi-Asian society and that everything modern and progressive came to it from the West” [11, p. 247].

The other factor that influenced the attitude of Balkan people towards Russia was their inferiority complex towards Western Europe. In Maria Todorova's opinion, both the Western European and the pro-European indigenous Balkan discourse about the Balkan region had much in common with the 'oriental' 'colonial discourse,' in the meaning given it by Edward W. Said. Said argues that Western people have made use, consciously or unconsciously, of an 'orientalist discourse,' according to which the West is considered as the main point of reference on issues concerning the universal patterns of civilization and 'all human values,' while the East is seen as the personification of all that is associated with a lack of culture and backwardness. The West is rational, masterful, masculine, and creative, while the East is unpredictable, affectionate, feminine, and passive [9, p. 7].

According to Todorova, Balkanism – a Western European discourse about the Balkans—differed from Orientalism in some important points. Firstly, the region was not perceived as totally alien, but as Europe's 'incomplete self' [27, p. 18]. Secondly, the Balkan culture was seen as a masculine one: as “suspended between 'machismo' and imagined 'feminine frailties' such as impulsive spontaneity, hyper-emotionality, moody unpredictability and unreliability” [6, p. 23–25]. Yet, the mentioned image of the Balkans was still negative, just like the Western image of the Orient.

Political realities also played an important role in creating the image of the Balkans in the period in question. After the unification of Italy and Germany in 1870 and 1871, the Western Europeans preferred to consider all nations without their own countries as too immature to create them, and the establishment of new states as a way to damage the European balance of power. This way of thinking led, in turn, to the newly established countries in the Balkans being seen as, at most, semi-independent actors of international relations, and therefore as being unable to maintain an autonomous existence without the 'parental' care of the great powers. It was deemed self-evident that it was the European powers that should decide about establishing new countries in the Balkans and choose monarchs for these states. This kind of thinking was reflected, for instance, in semi-official statements of European politicians like the German Chancellor Otto von Bismarck, who said that European governments should make the “sheep thieves” understand that they did not want to be troubled by their rivalries and caprices [4, p. 5].

Indeed, the majority of political events in the Balkans caused much anxiety throughout Europe. The period in question saw several outbreaks of military conflicts, as well as of Balkan nationalism, growing under the flags of pan-Hellenism¹, Illyrism², Great Serbia³, or Great Bulgaria⁴. What is more, events such as the 'Bosnian crisis' from 1908 to 1909, when Serbia dared to make a diplomatic intervention against the annexation of Bosnia-Herzegovina by Austria-Hungary, proved that Balkan countries ultimately tended to revolt against the *status quo* established by the great powers.

ended in April 1909. The great powers agreed to the amendments of the Treaty of Berlin and accepted the new status quo. Nevertheless, the crisis destroyed relations between Austria-Hungary on the one hand and Russia and the Kingdom of Serbia on the other, which indirectly contributed to the outbreak of the World War.

¹The modern idea of pan-Hellenism – a union of all Greeks in a single political body – emerged in the 1820s, resulting in the Greek War of Independence (1821–1829) against the Ottoman Empire, and became a potent movement in Greece shortly prior to, and during, the First World War.

²Illyrism was a cultural but also a political movement that emerged in the nineteenth century among the South Slavs of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, especially the Croats. The adherents of Illyrism wanted to unify all the South Slavs culturally, with a common Slavonic language, and politically, within an independent Slavonic state.

³The term 'Great Serbia' applies to the Serbian national ideology and movement, originally formulated in 1844. Its main aim was to unite all Serbs, or all historically Serb-ruled or Serb-populated lands, into one state, including the territories of modern day Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Macedonia, Albania, Bulgaria, Hungary, and Romania.

⁴The modern idea of Great Bulgaria refers to nineteenth century Bulgarian territorial aspirations, based on historical arguments (Bulgarian conquests in the ninth-beginning tenth century) but also on what the Bulgarian nationalists of the 19th century understood as “Bulgarian ethnicity,” related especially with the language. Great Bulgaria of the Treaty of San Stefano was to include, besides the territory of the Principality of Bulgaria from 1878, the territories of East Rumelia, Macedonia, and Thrace.

The ambiguous relations between Russia and 'Europe' should be also considered among the factors that influenced the image of Russia in the Balkan region in this period. On the one hand, Russia had never come closer to the ideal of Europeanness than at that time [21, p. 211–217]. According to Martin Malia, this situation was connected with the Russian defeat in the Crimean War and the peace concluded between Turkey and Russia in 1856. It was also related to the social reforms carried out in Russia by Alexander II (1855–1881), such as the abolition of serfdom (1861), the introduction of a unified, independent court system with the institution of jury trial and professional advocates, and the institution of provincial- and district-elected self-governments (*zemstvos*) (1864). These reforms initiated the process of building a civil society in Russia, especially of the *intelligentsia* – a group that began to lead the discourse on the role of Russia in Europe. These changes were perceived as a sign of the gradual Europeanization of Russia.

On the other hand, the images of Russia and Europe were still functioning as complementary entities in that period. In the literary and philosophical discourse in the West, but also in Russia, there were prevailing images of the latter as an Other, an imagined space that is strange, dangerous, and psychopathic. A popular way of describing the relations of the Western Europeans with the Tsarist State was as a collision between Europe and Asia. Russia was treated as an example of a world gone awry and the source of threats, caused by militarism and Asiatic despotism hidden under the appearance of Europeanness [5, p. 28].

Summing up, in the period in question, both Russia and the Balkan countries tended to be seen by the Europeans as the regions most striving to 'catch up with Europe.' The inhabitants of these countries also perceived 'Europe' as the most important reference point: both as an unattainable ideal as well as a threat to their national identity. The mutual perception of the Balkan countries and Russia was, on the contrary, built on the conviction of the reciprocal and far-reaching historical and cultural bonds between the Balkan countries and Russia, and that Russia's destiny was to obtain a leading position – politically and culturally – in the Balkan region.

The Russian Messiah crying upon Heavenly Serbia. In Serbian culture, Russia was traditionally perceived as an Orthodox brother, an 'eternal ally,' and a future liberator [24, p. 354–355]. These Russophile images were especially widespread among the Serbian folk and the conservative part of the Serbian *intelligentsia* [3, p. 356]. Nevertheless, the specificity of the Serbian attitude towards Russia consisted especially of strong mystical connotations of Russia's image. One vision that was highly influential was the idea of Russia-the-Saviour – the image of a Russian Messiah. This meant the Serbian myth about Russia had much in common with Serbian quasi-sacralised beliefs about their own national specificity.

The Serbian national identity at that time was based on the ancient – launched in the fourteenth century, and constantly reinforced – Kosovo myth which consists of a legendary vision of the Battle of Blackbird's Field¹ in 1389 and its consequences. The battle took place between the army led by Serbian Prince Lazar Hrebeljanović² and the invading army of the Ottoman Empire³, and ended with the death of both commanders, Prince Lazar and Sultan Murad I. The most likely outcome of the battle was that it was a draw. What is more, it did not have any short-term negative results for Serbian statehood⁴. Nevertheless, as all Serbian historians state, "in the Serbian 'collective memory' the battle is remembered as a fateful defeat which led to the loss of independence and the 'five century-long Turkish yoke'" [8, p. 215–233].

According to the Kosovo myth, the battle was a symbol of national tragedy, but also of Serbian heroism and the hope of resurrection. Serbian heroism was exemplified there through two main motives.

Firstly, by the motive of Prince Lazar, who rejected the 'earthly kingdom' in favour of the nobler ideals of victimhood and sacrifice – the 'kingdom in heaven.' As Dejan Djokić says:

According to legend, on the eve of the battle the Holy Prophet Elijah offered Prince Lazar a choice between an empire in heaven and an empire on earth. Lazar's choice – a heavenly empire – would mean defeat by the Ottomans but it would secure a kingdom in heaven for the Serbian nation.

¹Also known as the Battle of Kosovo or Kosovo Field.

²His army consisted predominantly of Serbian Christian forces. Bosnians, Bulgarians, Albanians, and Vlachs as well as some Hungarians are also believed to have participated in the battle on the Serbian side.

³The Turkish army also included Serbian, Albanian, and other Christian vassals and mercenaries.

⁴Serbia survived for another seventy years before finally capitulating to the Ottoman Empire in 1459.

The sacrifice that Lazar and his knights made at Kosovo turned a military defeat into a moral victory [8, p. 218–219].

In other words, Lazar died so that his people could live. Therefore, the Kosovo myth implies a direct analogy between Lazar and Jesus [8, p. 215–233].

Secondly, Serbian heroism was exemplified in the aforementioned myth through the motif of Miloš Obilić, the brave and faithful knight, who allegedly killed the Sultan, thus avenging Prince Lazar's death [15, p. 30–40].

It seems, therefore, that the Serbian myth about Russia was significantly influenced by the Kosovo myth in the period we are considering: the image of Russia was predominantly perceived through the prism of the significant component of that myth – the cult of self-sacrifice and death [23, p. 216]. In the following considerations the Serbian discourse concerning figures and plots connected to Russia and the narratives on the Kosovo myth will be traced starting from that time.

Most of all, these figures and plots were based on narratives about Russian heroes who sacrificed their lives while defending or fighting for the independence of Serbia. The image of the Russian Orthodox ally was especially connected with Russian reactions to the Serbian anti-Turk uprisings in the nineteenth century. From 1875–1878, about 3,000 Russian volunteers, including 700 officers, rushed to the Principality of Serbia, making selfless sacrifices to help the Serbs fight the Ottoman Empire. Many of them became commanders of the large Serbian military formations, and many died and were revered in Serbia as national heroes [20, p. 25].

In particular, Count Nikolay Rayevsky (1840–1876) became such a personage. He volunteered to go to Serbia, willingly joined the army of Russian General Mikhail Chernyaev, and as a commandant of a detachment of the Serbian army showed great courage in the victorious battles of Šumovac and Aleksinac. Yet the decisive fact that started the impulse to create a legend about him was his death in the lost Battle of Adrovac at the age of 36. This meant that the Serbs could make of Rayevsky not only a heroic warrior, but also a young man sacrificing his life for a beloved country. It should be pointed out that Serbs have been drawn to the idea of some scholars that Leo Tolstoy made Rayevsky a model for Count Alexei Vronsky – the tragic lover of Anna Karenina¹ – which made the figure of Rayevsky appear even more tragic. He came across to be a noble man with a broken heart, longing for death in a battle. Serbian myth thus associated him with a great number of their own Serbian heroes who – like Prince Lazar in the Battle of Kosovo – chose the heavenly kingdom and death in the field of glory.

Pera Todorovic, one of the first modern Serbian journalists, dramatically described in his *Diary of a Volunteer* the battle of Adrovac and the death of another Russian volunteer:

We saw Russians taking [...] poor Kirillov from the battlefield. [...] We kissed his gory forehead. [...] An old Russian man standing next to me kissed Kirillov and said: "Good-bye, old friend [...]. You served an honourable Christian mission" [16].

It is worth mentioning that on the place where Rayevsky was killed, the bishop of Niš, with the help of the Serbian Queen Natalya, built a Russian church with frescos commemorating the hero (1903).

The Russian diplomat Ivan Yastrebov (1839–1894) should be mentioned as another example of a Serbian national hero whose life and death was interpreted through the prism of the myth of self-sacrifice. Yastrebov was Russian consul in Shkoder and Prizren (1879–1886) and an ethnologist, one of the most prominent researchers of Old Serbia (Kosovo) and Albania in the second half of the nineteenth century². Nevertheless he became famous first and foremost as the incarnation of the Serbian *hajduk* – a kind of Balkan 'noble robber'³. His often illegal acts against the Ottoman authori-

¹Anna Karenina, the heroine of Leo Tolstoy's novel of the same name, is an aristocratic married woman who has an affair with an army officer, Count Alexei Vronsky. After leaving her husband and going to live with her lover, Anna falls into social disgrace. She soon becomes extremely jealous, suspecting Vronsky of infidelity. Eventually she commits suicide.

²The monument of Ivan Yastrebov was built in Prizren churchyard near the monument of Serbian national hero, Emperor Stefan Dusan, in the 1980s (and destroyed by Albanians in 1999).

³*Hajduk* (probably from the Turkish word *haiduk* or *hayduk* meaning bandit) – a term commonly referring to outlaws, highwaymen or freedom fighters in the Balkans and Central and Eastern Europe. In Balkan folkloric tradition, the *hajduk* was the romanticized figure of a hero who steals from, and leads his fighters into battle against the Ottoman or Habsburg authorities; Aleksandar Petrović.

ties in favour of Serbian people discriminated against in Kosovo made him similar to such figures as Milos Obilić – the man who allegedly killed Sultan Murad I in the Battle of Blackbird's Field and therefore became the first 'avenger of Kosovo.' Yastrebov's death in Thessaloniki also became the subject of legends. The Russian consul died suddenly in mysterious circumstances after visiting the Turkish authorities. This fact was strongly underscored by the Serbs because it enabled them to make Yastrebov not only a 'noble robber' but also a Slavic Orthodox martyr.

The Russian Tsars, especially those who fought wars against Turkey, were also revered as caring, selfless protectors of Serbia. Nevertheless, it should be underscored that the strongest empathy among them was gained by Tsar Nicholas II (1894–1917), as he joined the Great War (1914), fighting on the side of Serbia, and three years later was murdered with all his family by communists. In other words, the life and death of the last Russian Tsar stirred deep sympathy among Serbian people largely because it could be interpreted as another variation of the self-sacrifice motive. This was precisely the interpretation of the fate of the last of the Romanovs given by Nikolaj Velimirović (1880–1956), the bishop of Žiça and Ohrid and a future saint of the Orthodox Church¹. During the First World War he stated in one of his works that:

The Holy Emperor Nicholas did not hesitate to go to Calvary together with his family and his nation, for the sake of the Serbian people with whom he shared the Orthodox faith. He deliberately chose the heavenly instead of earthly kingdom, as once our pious Prince Lazar did [2].

Apart from this, the myth about Russia was also used by the representatives of the Serbian conservative movement to strengthen the belief in Serbia's natural place in the 'East' rather than in Europe [25]. This can be observed in Serbian literature from the eve of the twentieth century, which was highly influenced by the ideas of Russian Slavophile and Populist ideologies.

These ideas were presented in (among others) the famous novel *Hajduk Stanko* (1896) by Janko Veselinović (1862–1905). The book describes the First Serbian Uprising against the Turks in the beginning of the nineteenth century and can be considered as a 'patriotic primer' that glorifies patriotism and the moral values of the Serbian people. However, the novel also had additional political contexts. It was also targeted against the despotic, corrupt, and inefficient policies of the contemporary governments of Milan (1868–1889) and Alexander Obrenović (1889–1903). In Veselinović's novel, salvation for Serbia was seen in the 'return' to traditional folk values. At the centre of this philosophy was the idealization of Orthodoxy, autocracy, and nationality – ideas taken from the official Russian state ideology of the nineteenth century. Old Serbia was supposed to represent, just like the old Russia of Russian Slavophiles, an original type of social development. It was personified by the Orthodox – implying 'pure' Christian – faith, by mutual confidence between the monarch and his people and by *zadruga* – the extended patriarchal family [15, p. 26].

It is important to appreciate that the Slavophil ideology was also adapted by the Populists (*Narodniks*) – the Russian revolutionists acting outside and against the Russian political system. The *Narodniki*, being the adherents of a communist ideology, sought to establish a just society based on indigenous folk institutions, notably the system of communal land tenure known as the *mir*. Although they initially aimed to awaken the masses through peaceful methods, the combination of peasant indifference and government persecution drove them in the mid-1870s to a more radical program and radical, terrorist methods. The Populists became known not only in Russian society; their ideology and activity became famous throughout Europe, including the Balkans. What is more, it was especially in the Balkan region, and first of all probably in Serbia, where the *Narodniks* found their most eager, determined followers [29, p. 226–227].

It should also be mentioned how the Russophile narratives interacted in nineteenth-century Serbia with the pro-Western discourse. It is important to note that Serbian liberals, constitutionalists and pro-Austrians, including the last two monarchs from the Obrenović dynasty, tended to express more or less intensive anti-Russian feelings [3, p. 356]. Milan Obrenović said:

Most of my problems were caused by the fact that the majority of my people had been hypnotized by Russia so deeply that even in economic issues they expected salvation from this country, while I saw very clearly that Serbia both politically and economically depended on Central Europe [12].

¹Nikolaj Velimirović was canonized under the name St. Nicholas of Serbia in 2003.

King Milan often accused Russia of treachery, as well as of attempts to manipulate the Balkan countries for the sake of her own purposes. After the Russo-Turkish War of 1828–1829, Serbia achieved autonomy within Turkey, and after the Russo-Turkish War of 1877–1878 formal independence from the Ottoman Empire. Milan was still dissatisfied that in 1878 Austria-Hungary was allowed by the great powers to occupy Bosnia-Herzegovina, a region perceived by the Serbs as their own ethnic territory. That apart, he was convinced that it was in the Serbian interest to modernize Serbia through European science, technology, and cultural examples, as well as through political and economic cooperation with the Austro-Hungarian Empire [19, p. 370].

As a result, a clear division could be observed on the Serbian political stage in the second half of the nineteenth century. The political scene was divided into liberals, who tended to be pro-Austrian and anti-Russian, and conservatives, who tended to be anti-Western and Russophile.

Eventually, however, the anti-Russian option was defeated despite efforts to impose it by Serbian monarchs. This happened mostly because the Serbian 'modernizers' of that time managed to discredit their own ideas. The foreign and internal policy of the last Obrenovics turned out to be totally ineffective. Serbian rulers not only did not make any essential progress in modernizing Serbian society, but also became entirely dependent on political and economical support from Austria-Hungary, and led Serbia to defeat in a war with Bulgaria (1885–1886). What is more, they gained an ill reputation as depraved and despotic monarchs. Therefore, King Milan was eventually forced to abdicate the throne and his son, Alexander, was assassinated, together with his wife, by ardent Serbian patriots [26, p. 204–205].

Modern state of Serbian political discourse and its influence on international relations.

The modernity of Russian-Serbian relations has a complex multi-layer foundation, which is represented by various ideologies and mythologies. Presently many of them have a significant influence on the development of these relations. Many of researchers believe that the controversy between „Westernism” and „Slavophilism” is still topical in the Serbian ideological discourse.

According to the so-called „western”, or neoliberal concept, the future of the Balkan countries is associated with integration into Western political and economic structures. The West is seen as a "model" and as a friend.

According to the opposite point of view, both Serbia and Russia represent a different type of cultural-historical form, that differs from the West one. Following this concept, Russia is destined to be a patron and protector of the Slavs from the hostile worlds of the West and Islam. The ideas of Slavophilism in different historical epochs were embodied into the form of pan-Slavism (political and cultural ideology, which goal is to unite all the Slavic peoples on the basis of ethnic, cultural and linguistic community) and Yugoslavism (belief in the ethnic, linguistic and cultural unity of the southern Slavs).

Yugoslavism suffered a heavy setback when, in the early 1990s, the former Yugoslavia came to the disintegration. These events jeopardized any concept of the common state of the South Slavic peoples. From this period, as an alternative to Yugoslavia, the European Union has begun to be mentioned as the optimal political and legal basis for the common life of the southern Slavs.

At the moment, the Serbian public opinion is rather contradictory about the issues being studied. On the one hand, the image of Russia as a friend and defender of Serbia is still strong. This is evidenced by polls conducted by the Serbian research center Demostat in August 2017. The CAPI method was used on a sample of 1200 people (data on the sampling error are missing). Answering the question „Which country is the most friendly to Serbia?”, 41 % called Russia (while all other countries in the aggregate gained only 27 % of supporters). At the same time, answering the question „Which state, other than Serbia, you would like to live in?”, only 3 % noted Russia (the EU countries together gained 36 % of supporters). There is even a bigger difference in the question of where you would like your children to live in: the same 3% of the respondents noted „in Russia” and in the EU countries – 39 % [17]. Besides, a year earlier, the same center conducted a CAPI study on a sample of 1500 people (data on the sampling error are missing), from which it can be concluded that the Serbian political culture has many similarities with the Russian one. These include:

- Significant support given to the leader of a "strong hand" (while speaking about the current situation, the Serbs note that only such a person can change the situation in the country);
- Disenchantment in democracy, which is manifested in supporting the following opinions: that the economy can not function effectively in a democratic state; distrust to political parties, which, in the opinion of the respondents, serve only as an instrument for solving the problems of their leaders and are constantly in conflict with each other that does not lead to constructive results. At the same

time, it should be noted that the Serbs do not see an alternative to democracy: even though democracy has its shortcomings, almost half of the respondents (48 %) agree that it is the best form of government and only 15 % hold the opposite opinion;

- The huge respect of people of great authority can be considered as another similar feature of the Russian and Serbian political cultures. 73 % of the polled believe that one of the most important things that children should learn is respect for such authorities [14].

Finally, a clear trend has been observed over the past 5 years, indicating a decline in support for Serbia's accession to the European Union. Despite the fact that in 2017 the supporters of this decision were still in the majority (about half – 49 %), this number has significantly decreased since 2009, when they accounted for about 70 % of the respondents. At the same time, during this period, the number of opponents of the country's accession to the EU increased from 14 to 27 %. Among the reasons for this phenomenon, scientists first of all note the lack of confidence that the country will ever be accepted into the EU. In addition, among the negative aspects of this decision the recognition of Kosovo's independence, as well as the loss of Serbia's sovereignty were named [10].

Conclusion. Thus, the current Serbian political discourse is filled with contradictory components: the notion of Russia as the best friend and at the same time not the best place to live. While Europe, as the best place to live, continues to be unattainable. The current situation, according to scientists, leads to a certain conclusion: the model of Russian-Serbian relations does not meet the realities of the modern world, since it operates with old and stereotyped concepts. Facing rising international risks, increasing uncertainty and unpredictability in world politics and shifting the balance of power in the Balkan region towards Atlantic structures, a new model of relations between Russia and Serbia is of high significance. Russia and Serbia need a formula for cooperation that would be a combination of traditional and "innovative" or "modernist" elements [1].

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«ВЛАСТЬ-СОБСТВЕННОСТЬ» В РОССИИ И КИТАЕ НА ПРИМЕРЕ НЕФТЕГАЗОВОГО КОМПЛЕКСА

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Представлен обзор концепции «власти-собственности» и связанных с ней подходов к оценке трансформационных процессов в нефтегазовой отрасли. Автором подчеркивается, что экономики и политические режимы России и Китая чувствительны к процессам, происходящим в энергетике, и для правительств обеих стран особое значение имеет поддержание энергетической безопасности. Большое внимание уделяется условиям транзита от социалистической экономики к рыночной. Поднимается вопрос распределения активов нефтегазового комплекса среди членов политической элиты, бывших политических деятелей, чиновников, либо аффилированных лиц и уполномоченных. Результаты анализа показали, что частую структуру собственности отрасли является отражением конвертации символического капитала в активы ТЭК, а также неформального курирования отрасли. Определено, что характер и особенности конвертации власти в собственность определяются как национальной социокультурной спецификой, так и методологическими и идеологическими особенностями перехода к новым экономико-политическим системам. Показано, что не менее важную роль играют стимулы влиятельных акторов. Отмечено, что формирование групп интересов нефтегазового сектора и процессы распределения собственности сопровождаются неформальными практиками, нетранспарентностью выработки государственных решений и исключительностью общества.

Ключевые слова: власть-собственность, государственный капитализм, символический капитал, нефтегазовые компании, реформы, транзитивные экономики, группы интересов, энергетическая политика, Россия, Китай, нефтегазовые активы

“POWER-PROPERTY” IN RUSSIA AND CHINA: OIL AND GAS INDUSTRY EXAMPLE

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Article provides an overview of the “power-property” concept and related theories which are closely describing industry business and authorities’ relations in transformation processes assessments. The author underlines sensitivity and dependency Russia and China in terms of their energy policy. The great attention is paid to the conditions of the transition from the socialist to the market economy in Russia and China. The issue of distribution of assets of the oil and gas complex among members of the political elite, former politicians and officials, or affiliated with them persons and commissioners was raised. The research results show current allocation of energy assets and are represented as consequences of stakeholders’ symbolic power. The features of the transition directly connected with ideological, methodological and socio-cultural specificities. Nevertheless,