

In Defense of Identity and Freedom

Serbia's Geopolitika's Interview with Slobodan Erić

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The Serbian magazine Geopolitika, specialized in geopolitics, political, scientific, cultural, historical and spiritual issues, celebrates the 20th anniversary of its existence. On that occasion, on Global Research, we are publishing an interview with the founder and editor-in-chief of the magazine Geopolitika, Mr. Slobodan Erić, interviewed by Biljana Đorović, PhD in Media Philosophy from Belgrade.

Dr. Biljana Đorović: Serbian magazine *Geopolitika* celebrated its 20th anniversary this year. What we have before us is a quality newspaper which has been publishing texts and interviews with some of the most eminent intellectuals from around the world for the past two decades. Mr. Slobodan Erić, what is a basic concept of the magazine *Geopolitika*?

Slobodan Eric: *Geopolitika* is an independent analytical magazine which is not only concerned with local issues that are related to Serbia and the Balkan region, but also to the broader global problems and issues which are of essential importance to the world that we live in. Our guiding idea is that we cherish free thought. During the past two decades we have published interviews with some of the most eminent intellectuals from around the world who, in a certain sense, represent the conscience of the world. We will just mention some of the many free-thinking individuals who have spoken for our newspaper: Edward Herman, Robert MacChesney, William Engdahl, Michel Chossudovsky, Aleksandar Dugin, Thierry Meyssan, Michael Parenti, Alexander Solbucci, Jürgen Elsässer, Serge Trifkovic, General Jean-Pierre Gallois, Diana Johnstone... As for the direction of our editorial policy, we can say that *Geopolitika* takes an anti-globalist stance, while strongly supporting the idea of freedom, for which we have our foundation in the Serbian libertarian tradition.

DBD: How was the idea for establishing *Geopolitika* born?

SE: The idea to establish a newspaper which would publish the truth and attempt to gather on its pages the most eminent people in the world, not just in terms of their professionalism but also in terms of their ethics, was born during the NATO aggression on Serbia in 1999. That was the apogee of unipolarity in international relations, when Russia was still enchained by the neoliberal economic model and China, despite its strong economic growth, had still not had enough political self-confidence. Serbia was left to fend for itself in these

circumstances and it suffered the brunt of NATO alliance's terrible strike, since it had to be appropriately punished as an exemplar to other countries due to its resistance to the New World Order. Only free-thinking individuals from around the globe remained by Serbia's side and their support was of immense importance to us. It was a difficult but honorable time for Serbia and I am proud to have a small part of that great resistance.

DBD: The world has, it seems, been occupied by another topic and another issue - namely, the COVID-19 virus. What is your view on the impact of this virus, not only in terms of its impact on healthcare, but on other aspects of life as well?

SE: Of course, those who have fallen sick and those who are helping them convalesce should have the attention and support of not just the healthcare system, but also of the whole of society. Great social traumas are often the result of mass diseases, but there is also a lot of empathy and solidarity amongst people. Even in this obviously estranged and egoistic world of ours there have been examples of laying down yourself for others ever since the outbreak of COVID-19, which should be lauded. However, despite the official narrative that is given to us by the world health establishment, there is a lot of contradictory information and unresolved questions regarding COVID-19 which demand answers that are based on science. It seems that fear has undermined the self-confidence of many people, primarily within Western civilization which has, especially since the second half of the 20th century, had a triumphant stance vis-à-vis the rest of the world. Epidemics are a suitable testing ground for certain social experiments. The World Health Organization has asserted itself as an authority which pretends to be in charge of managing this health crisis. The WHO has, through its incoherent announcements, demonstrated skepticism towards the use of medications in the fight against COVID-19, starting with hydrochloroquine, insisting primarily on isolation measures, i.e. on lockdowns. Locking down a majority of the population has meant that a lot of working positions have been closed down, especially in the sectors of aviation and tourism, but it has affected other sectors as well. Social peace has been paid for by massive state debt. And states which are in debt are not only economically, but also politically dependent.

DBD: What can be done to extricate ourselves from this situation that our world is currently contending with?

SE: The logical answer would be if there was an open and sincere dialogue to resolve this healthcare crisis. However, the impression is that the WHO, which is just a visible part of the global structure of power, will be setting the course with regards to this pandemic. A majority of people still view international relations within the context of opposing or Great Powers, i.e. the United States, Russia, China, the EU countries... For a long time, however, power has been shifting from formal to informal centers, which do not have a clear legal identity nor was their legitimacy confirmed through elections, i.e. they are not subject to parliamentary or legislative oversight. The Soviet dissident Alexander Zinoviev called this phenomenon "super-society". The contemporary Russian thinker Andrey Fursov called it "supranational groups of global consensus and management". Even behind the façade of democratic institutions there existed informal centers of power; the problem here is that this global power structure has not only its own political and economic interests, but also its own vision of the world which a majority of the inhabitants of this planet do not share. There is much that is problematic in their vision and their care for other people's health, which is symbolically best represented by Bill Gates idea to blot out the sun - the star which is the source of life for our planet. According to his statements and of those who share his vision, the world is entering a phase of uncertainty which will be characterized by such challenges

as epidemics and climate change. This concept will have its support base in the United States, which is for the first time in its history encountering an internal political crisis. To be more precise, it will receive its support from the new American administration – from president Joe Biden and his associates, who have shown great enthusiasm for these ideas, by signing multiple decrees at the beginning of his mandate which are supposed to contribute to the fight against climate change.

Alastair Crooke wrote that the “myth of democracy” has been spent and that the “climate myth” will follow it. This has to do with the reorganization of the global economy known as the “Great Reset” or “UN Agenda 2030”, as William Engdahl pointed out.

DBD: Will this “green economy”, which will be based on clean renewable sources of energy bring ecological and economic stability to the world or will it cause a new economic and social stratification that will further deepen the gap between the rich and the poor?

SE: In 2010, Dr. Ottmar Edenhofer, chief of Work Group No. 3 of the Intergovernmental Panel for Climate Change of the United Nations said: “We should openly proclaim that we are de facto redistributing global wealth through climate change policy. We should liberate ourselves from this illusion that international climate policy is also an ecological policy...” William Engdahl quoted this in one of his books.

DBD: Does that mean that this prognosis of how the world will develop has no alternative and should we and can we actually discuss this topic?

SE: I think that alternatives always exist. This epidemic represents a challenge but also an opportunity to seek answers to essential problems with which the modern world is facing. I hope and want to believe that a public discourse about everything with everyone can be held, including with the creators of the aforementioned concept of “green economy”. Our planet is in fact a wondrous place to live in, in which there is enough space for all peoples and their ideas.

DBD: What should be done to stabilize international relations, especially amongst the Great Powers?

SE: I must confess that I found the idea that Charles A. Kupchan and Richard N. Haass had put forth to be especially intriguing, in which they pointed out the necessity of regulating international relations in the world based on the model of the Concert of European Nations from the 19th century. I think that the revitalization of such a concept in the current milieu of the multipolar world is sensible. I would like to remind our readers that the Concert of European Powers, which came into existence after the victory of the Holy Alliance (consisting of Russia, Prussia, Austria and Great Britain) against Napoléon’s France (which also became a member of the Concert) brought to Europe not only political stability through the balance of power, but also one hundred years of peace and unseen economic, social and cultural progress, not taking into consideration some minor local conflicts. Kupchan and Haass suggest that new actors be included in a Concert of Powers, which would serve as a consultative body, that would consist of the United States, China, the European Union, Russia, Japan, and India, according to the current constellation of international relations. They see this model as the “best means for the promotion of stability in the 21st century.” Every solution that reflects this new reality – the new multipolar world and which offers dialogue instead of conflict, is a good solution. This dialogue should be qualitatively

broadened to encompass not only countries with their political and economic relations, but also the cultural milieus in which they exist or towards which they gravitate. The title of the famous and excellent book by Samuel Huntington “The Clash of Civilizations” should be reformulated into “The Cooperation of Civilizations”; this new title should be represented as the political goal in international relations.

DBD: This is a suggestion to regulate the relations amongst states on an external plan; however, on the internal level, political parties are still the main channel through which civil society exerts its influence on the state in all countries. Many deem that modern-day parties have forsaken their original political programs and that the difference between the right and the left is increasingly disappearing.

SE: To a great extent, that is correct, due to how technological development has changed the class and social structure of modern society. However, we still need parties of the classical right and left. The right is there to defend identity and traditional values, which have been under severe assault through the process of globalization, while on the other hand, the left should be there to defend traditional social and workers’ rights. The contemporary “beaubourg” left (a term which originates from France) is increasingly concerning itself with the rights of migrants and sexual minorities, i.e. the imperative demands of the LGBT community, while neglecting the maintenance of workers’ positions, the increase of salaries and everything related to workers’ unions’ rights. As some political commentators have noticed, what we need now is a new alliance – of a right of values and a workers’ left.

DBD: However, these suggestions in the field of international relations will not resolve a series of other urgent questions which face the modern world?

SE: That is correct. These suggestions must go in the direction of securing peace and political stability within a framework that will permit for a dialogue to be established, not just among states, but also within the framework of what we call global society. The world has entered into a phase of, not just fear and uncertainty, but also of a lack of ideas. What we need are fresh, new and creative ideas. Maybe a platform for open public discourse could be established where people could discuss how they see the world in the 21st century, where they could express their opinions and plans on how to resolve global problems, ranging from the aforementioned climate changes, through world poverty, global healthcare, the protection of freedom and human rights, to the new technological revolution and a vision of outer space. Everyone should be invited to this forum, so we could extract quality out of quantity (7 billion inhabitants on Earth). You never know, there just might crop up some good ideas about progress, not from some scientific institute in the United States or Europe, but from some lonely and misunderstood researcher in Russia or a programmer in India... In any case, our civilization has a wealth of experience. When we are talking about democracy, we should return to its place of origin in Ancient Greece, where they postulated some of the essential questions about man and the purpose of his existence. I told some of my German friends that it is good that Germany is producing the best cars, but that it is not good that they are not advancing at all in the field of philosophy. We have new models of Mercedes and BMW but, to my knowledge, we do not have any new Hegels or Kants. Russian industry is not on the same level as that of Germany’s, but modern Russia still maintains a traditional conception of culture. I am absolutely convinced that, even though we live in societies that are becoming increasingly secular (especially in Europe and North America), the solutions to many of our problems cannot be found without God, i.e. it will be much easier to do so with His help. The central idea of Christianity – Christ said “I am the

Way, the Truth and Life" – is salvation, i.e. eternal life in the afterlife. But in order to attain that goal, we must work in this world, to take care of others apart from taking care of ourselves. "Ours is only what we can give to others," said one monk from Mount Athos. If we give ourselves emotionally and materially to others, then we enrich ourselves in the Lord. And if we love God as our Creator then we cannot but love His creature, Man, and nature as God's creation – plants and animals, which the ecological movement claims to be protecting. Of course, this is much more difficult in practice, since spiritual life, ethics and relations amongst people have become more complex and the temptations have become greater. But as a start we should have healthy thoughts, which will lead to healthy deeds. As one Serbian Orthodox monk, Father Tadej, said: "Your life is as your thoughts are." God is not in strength but in truth and justice.

DBD: Whenever Serbia is mentioned in the world, it is usually within the context of the Kosovo and Metohija issue. Why is the West persistently asking Serbia to renounce Kosovo, after having bombed it in 1999 under the pretext that it was committing ethnic cleansing there?

SE: This is a good and difficult question, one which cannot be answered just within the domain of geopolitical and economic interests, but within the spiritual realm. Kosovo is the spiritual and historic heart of the Serbian people, which is a region within modern Serbia that has a broad autonomy granted to the Albanians, who have their own provincial government, parliament, as well as their own University, Academy of Sciences and national broadcasting corporation in the Albanian language. However, there does exist an indirect prehistory of conflict between the West and Serbia in modern history.

We should not forget that socialist Yugoslavia (where the Serbs were a majority) was not a member of any of the Cold War coalitions, was one of the founding members of the Non-Aligned Movement, and that it had caused the ire of global capitalists because it had espoused an idea and practice which they considered to be heretical – namely, workers' self-management in the factories.

We can really wonder as to why the United States and the whole globalist structure is so obsessed with a small piece of land belonging to Serbia in Southeastern Europe, where the famous Battle of Kosovo happened in 1389. What differentiates this battle between the Serbian and Ottoman Turkish armies is that, for the Serbs, the spiritual-moral result of the battle is much more important than the military consequences. On the eve of the battle, Prince Lazar held a feast where he had gathered all of his voivodes, the military and political elite, which was so reminiscent of Christ's Last Supper; they and the rest of the army received Holy Communion before the battle, where Prince Lazar exhorted them to sacrifice themselves for freedom and to choose the "Heavenly Kingdom", proclaiming a thought which would become a motto for future generations of Serbs: "The earthly kingdom lasts only for a brief time, but the Heavenly Kingdom always and forever."

The sacrifice, ethics and mystique of the heroes of Kosovo have had a strong influence on Serbs, by creating a spiritual and heroic vertical axis which helped them to always choose justice and higher spiritual ideals over earthly interests and which gave them the strength to resist much stronger enemies, such as Austria-Hungary and Germany in 1914, Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy in 1941, and the NATO alliance in 1999. That is how what the West calls the "Kosovo myth" came into being among the Serbs, but what we call the "Kosovo testament". Those globalist structures which are both politically and spiritually intent on shaping the world in their image are aware and know that the spiritual DNA of the

Serbs lies within the “Kosovo myth”; they think that by taking Kosovo away from Serbia they will be able to destroy this pivotal point of Serbian being and resistance, because this “myth” is one of the rare, living Christian myths in today’s Europe.

DBD: In more recent times, you have been encountering serious threats to your own safety and we would like to inform the international public. What is happening exactly?

SE: It is a great challenge to manage a truly independent newspaper which publishes the opinions of free intellectuals from around the world, especially when it is done in Serbia. Not that long ago, my vehicle was sabotaged by having the bolts on its tires unscrewed which, due to circumstances – I would say through God’s intercession – had been uncovered beforehand and there were no consequences. During the past two months I have been subjected to intense physical stalking by foreign citizens – it is irrelevant whether they are from the Middle East, Central Asia, or the Caucasus region. I have a good reason to suspect that this physical stalking is just a preparation for my physical liquidation which will lead to the shutting down of the informational project Geopolitika. I think that they are just agents while the clients are from abroad. In any case, there are powerful structures behind this. Of course, if the clients are from abroad, they are dependent upon local structures, especially from the criminal milieu. Political assassinations and the murder of journalists are not always committed with firearms, but through kidnappings and burglary, so that the violent death of the victim is then presented as from natural causes or that it happened “under unclear circumstances”. I have already informed the police and attorney-general’s office about these events; I have also informed by letter the President of the Republic Mr. Aleksandar Vučić and the Minister of Internal Affairs Aleksandar Vulin about my suspicions that I am being physically stalked. Even despite this, I am still being followed, whether it is in the center of Belgrade, in front of the offices of Geopolitika on Nikola Pašić Square, by suspicious individuals. I have also informed the Committee for the Protection of Journalists (New York), Reporters Without Borders (Paris) International Press Institute

(Vienna)... I hope for and want to believe that Serbia security will undertake all measures to stop the worst possible outcome, because I have informed them on time about this threat to my security and I have given to them photographic evidence. However, smaller countries such as Serbia are easily subjected to pressure by Great Western Powers and their security services, whom I am purposefully not mentioning here. Since this is an operation which surpasses the boundaries of Serbia and has a deeper, international background, I would like to use the opportunity to call upon all independent and free organizations which are involved in the protection of human rights and freedoms to share any information that they might have with regards to these events by sending an email to us (geopolitika@sbb.rs) or, better yet, to publicly publish it, if they are willing to and have the means. If anyone has any doubts or reservations with regards to my statements, I will suggest to them and investigative organs in Serbia that during the past two months the security footage from the area around Nikola Pašić Square and the National Assembly of Serbia has been reviewed and location data has been accessed through mobile base stations. Everything will be crystal clear from this. In the name of the editor’s office of Geopolitika, I would like to thank in advance for any sort of help or solidarity that will be offered.

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