

There are at least two sides to every equation, the physical and the mediated. The realm of the physical includes materials, the body and their cultures; it thus implies history. The realm of mediation produces history, through its distribution of narratives, ideologies and politics based on those same bodies and cultures. For better or worse, mediation is about change, and while physical history can be mediated, so too does mediation produce new histories of its own.

And yet, physical history must be met by present capacity. Having built up a certain repertoire, played at a certain level and in a certain league, one's worth can be translated into a system of equivalences based on validating previous experience.

'presenting the player as a public project both opens a social space and is self-incriminating'.

After the standard military service, he was conscripted to the Yugoslav People's Army. To be discharged, he allegedly plead insanity, by way of self-inflicted injuries. It is not known what these injuries were, but it is clear the desire to play football and escape war was stronger than that of fighting for the Serb nationalist cause or remaining in Yugoslavia, and was worth contending with the presumable shame the label of 'insanity' brought. To do oneself harm, as a way of moving forward, is a way of negatively constituting life.

1 Lachlan Petras in conversation with Eleanor Ivory Weber, 19th August 2017

1



Left to right: Angela Denham, Maria Petkovic, Bobby Despotovski and Sofia Angelidakis
Photographed at a gala night in 2001.

2

He would never again return to Yugoslavia.

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A process of reversal. One mirrors the other's "return" to a place he has never known. For the former: the escape from war and poverty and the continuation of his professional football career. For the latter: a return to football having not played for some years and the continuation of his professional art career. A testament to a physical ability they share. On both sides, before and after, *Gala Day* is the ongoing mediation and literal embodiment of physical "performance".



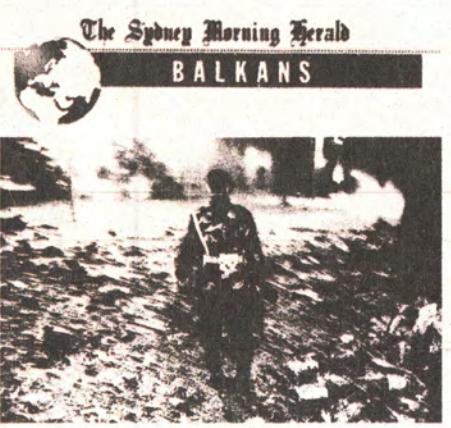
A boy dribbles during a coaching session in Zvezdara



Coaching juniors with Cika Vlada in Zvezdara, Belgrade / December 2014 / Photos: Dejan Balan

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Gala Day / with FK Zvezdara, Belgrade + Dynamo Pancevo, Vojvodina / Photos: Dejan Balan / Text by Eleanor Ivory Weber / Translation Sandra Stojanovic



A military policeman at the Yugoslav Army headquarters after NATO strikes yesterday morning killed at least three people / Photo by AP

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Gala Day mediates moments of identification forming where it "shouldn't". The "return" is a technique (performance) for defining this identification. And thus, *Gala Day* redefines a moment in Australian soccer when the former's ethnically motivated gesture provided the pretext for mainstream Australian media, notably Channel 7, to eventually squash the National Soccer League – a league shaped by ethnic affiliations, offering a socio-political space for non-Anglo-Saxon Australians – and replace it with the resolutely non-ethnically aligned A-League. This was an ideological move to neutralise spaces outside the Anglo-Saxon frame of reference, in the name of depoliticising sport.

The latter has gone so far as to create an icon for this conundrum. Referencing the 'T' in the middle of both his and the former's names, and appropriating 7's logo, the symbol is also reminiscent of the Orthodox cross.

The season-long performance, which none but the latter were fully conscious of nor privy to, embodies what is latent here, and exemplifies a process of subtraction that negatively defines the performance. To complete such a feat and not make one's own effort the centre of attention is to describe one's constitutive lack in the eyes of dominant media and history. It speaks of self-inflicted, self-incriminating gestures, and makes sense of writer and independence politician Vuk Drašković's line in the novel *The Dagger* (1982):

'Each act of revenge is a suicide'.

6



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Negating the tactic of revenge through a process of repetition (rehearsal), his gesture is made legible, not through valorising victimhood, or neutralising politics, but through recognising the multifaceted reality of such gestures, some of which cannot be mediated. Negative vitality, not revenge.

Beamed through the media without context, without a body of experience, symbols become facile to apply, and meaningless to interpret. However, what is most important to this story, and what mainstream media consistently disavows by repressing, is that conflict (being "struck together") is constitutive not only of history, but also of identity itself.

To take another line from Drašković: "You are certainly not what you are, nevertheless, you are what you are not."

Eleanor Ivory Weber
October 2017

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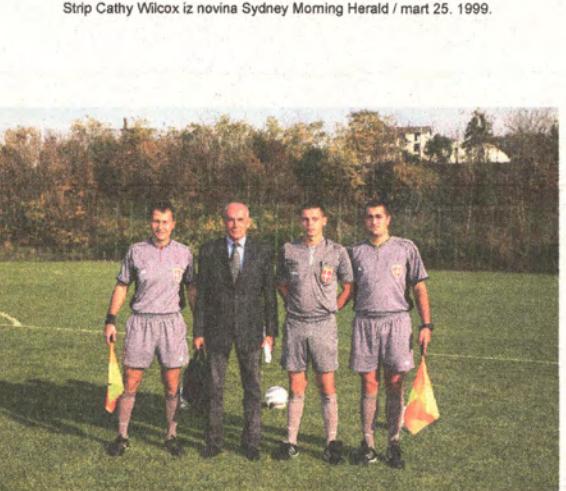
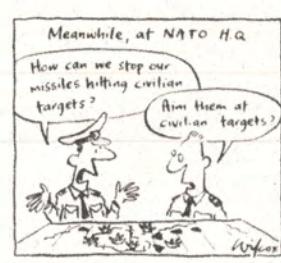
Međutim, fizička istorija mora odgovarati kapacitetu sadašnjosti. Nakon što ostvari određeni repertoar, koji se odvija na izvesnom nivou, vrednost se može prevesti u sistem jednakosti uslovima prednjim iskustvom.

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Nakon služenja standardnog vojnog roka, dodeljena mu je služba u Jugoslovenskoj narodnoj armiji. U nameru da dobije otpust otpuste, navodno se sebi naneo povrede i pozvao se na ugroženo mentalno zdravlje. Nije poznata priroda ovih povreda, ali jasno je da je njegova želja za fudbalom i begom od borbe za srpski nacionalizam u okviru razjedljene Jugoslavije prevazilažila strah i sram od društvene stigme kakvu nosi etička duševnog oboljenja.

1 Lachlan Petras u razgovoru sa Eleanor Ivory Weber / avgust 19 2017

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Sudje poziraju za fotografiju pred utakmicu FK Zvezdara - Dinamo Pančevo / oktobar 11. 2014.

2

Nikada se više nije vratio da živi u Jugoslaviji.

Svoj život u to doba opisuje kao proizvod vremena, relativan i kao performativnu osnovu za *Gala dan*. Igrao je za reprezentacije bivšeg. Ovo je bio način da ostvari priznanja koja su mu bila potrebna, a sezonska pobeda je bila minimum kako bi udovoljio drugima. Njegov uspeh u fudbalu postao je postupak facilizacije, time praveći pun krug do prvobitnog samoinkrinacije postupka.

Proces preokreta. Bivši reflektuje „povratak“ onog nakon na mesto koje mu nije poznato. Bivši: beži od rata, siromaštva i nastavlja profesionalnu fudbalsku karijeru. Onaj nakon: povratak fudbalu nakon nekoliko godina i nastavak profesionalne umetničke karijere. Svedok fizičkog kapaciteta koju dele. I za bivšeg i onog nakon, *Gala dan* predstavlja aktivno posredovanje i bukvalno otkrivanje fizičkog „performatansa“.



Dečak iz Bosne i Hercegovine lutira fudbalu loptu, 2001. / Foto: Simon Lamdon



Dečaci iz Bosne i Hercegovine lutira fudbalu loptu, 2001. / Foto: Simon Lamdon

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Gala dan / FK Zvezdara, Beograd + Dinamo Pančevo, Vojvodina / Foto: Dejan Balan / Tekst: Eleanor Ajvori Veber / Prevod Sandra Stojanović

Šta znači „stati na stranu neprijatelja“.

Gala Dan posreduje trenucima formiranja identifikacije gde „ne bi trebalo“. „Povratak“ je tehnika (performans) definisanja identifikacije. Stoga, *Gala dan* novi određuje trenutak u australijskom fudbalu, kada je etnički motivisan potez bivšeg omogućio izgovor za australijske mainstream medije, među njima najistaknutiji Channel 7, da unište Nacionalnu fudbalsku ligu. Ovi ligu su oblikovali etničiteti i predstavljala je prostor za ne-anglosaksonske Australijance. Zamjenjena je etnički neizbalansiranim A-ligom. U pitanju je ideološki postupak sa namerom da neutrališe prostor anglosaksonskog delovanja u svrhu novodne depoliticizacije sporta.

Ovaj događaj se razvio do tere da je dobio i sopstvenu ikonu. Referišući na slovo T u njegovom i imenu bivšeg i aprirođujući Channel 7 logotip, dobijeni simbol podseća na pravoslavni krt.

Performans cele jedne sezone, koga niko nije bio svestan, otežavaju ono što je latentno i predstavlja primer procesa oduzimanja koji negativno uslovljava performans. Završiti ovu nameru i ne postaviti sopstveni trud u centar pažnje jednako je opisivanju sopstvenog izostanka u očima dominantanih medijskih i istorijskih diskursa. Tema samopovredivačkih i samoinkrinućih postupaka opisana je u romanu Nož iz 1982. godine, pisca i nezavisnog političara Vuka Draškovića: „Svaki čin osvetne je čin samoubitstva“.



Vuk Drašković na velikom mitingu Srpskog pokreta obnove / mart 9. 1991.

Pregovaranjem taktike osvete kroz proces ponavljanja (probanja), postupak postaje legitim; ne kroz potvrđivanje pozicije žrtve ili neutralizovanjem politike, već kroz prepoznavanje više slojne stvarnosti takvih postupaka, od kojih neki ni ne mogu biti posredovani. Negativno življene, a ne osvete. Projektovano kroz medije bez konteksta, bez isteka, simbole teško možemo upotrebiti, a besmisleni ih je interpretirati. Međutim, ono što je najvažnije za narav i što mainstream mediji dosledno potiskuju, predstavlja konflikt (biti prisiljen na zajednicu) koji je konstitutivan ne samo za istoriju, već i sam pojam identiteta.

Da citiram još jednu Draškovićevu misao: „Svakako nisi ono što jesu, međutim jesu ono što nisi.“

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Prevod: Sandra Stojanović
oktobar 2017

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Lachlan pred treningom u Dinamu iz Pančeva / decembar 2015. / Foto: Dejan Balan

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'presenting the player as a public project both opens a social space and is self-incriminating'.¹

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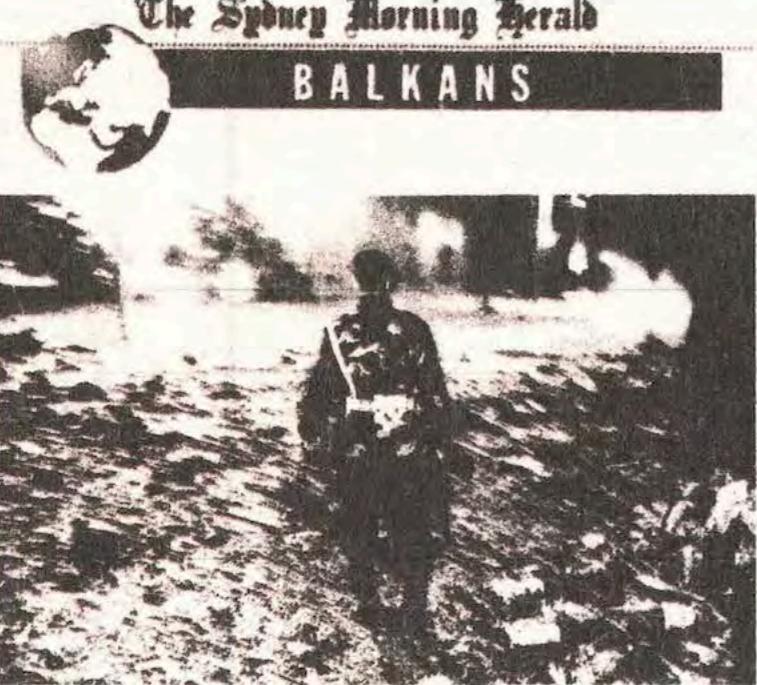
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A military policeman at the Yugoslav Army headquarters after NATO strikes yesterday morning killed at least three people / Photo by AP

The Sydney Morning Herald

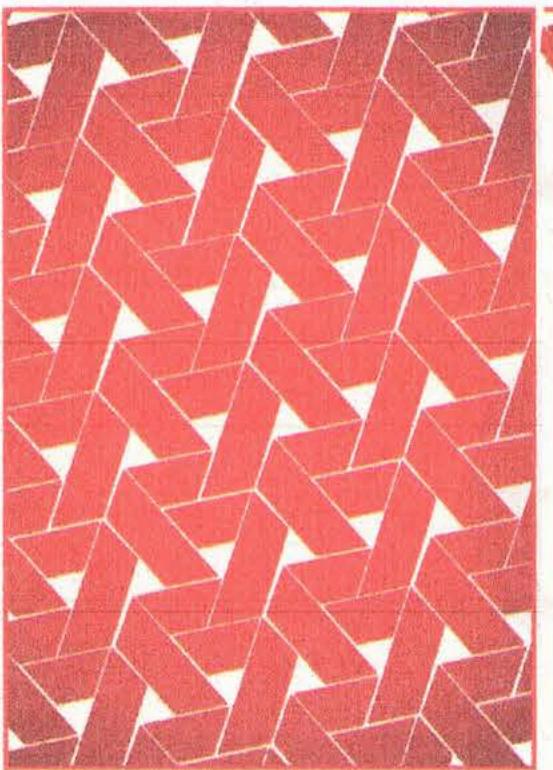
BALKANS

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Strip Cathy Wilcox iz novina Sydney Morning Herald / mart 25. 1999.



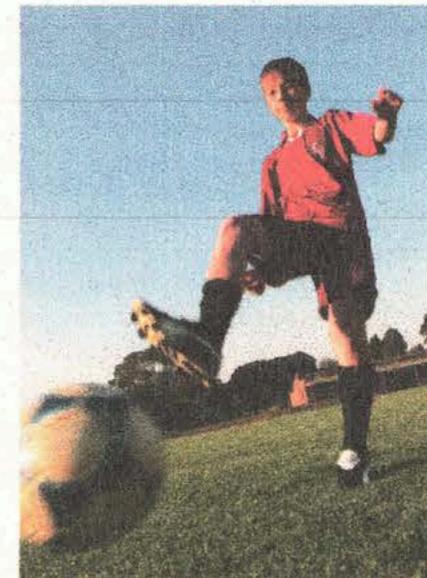
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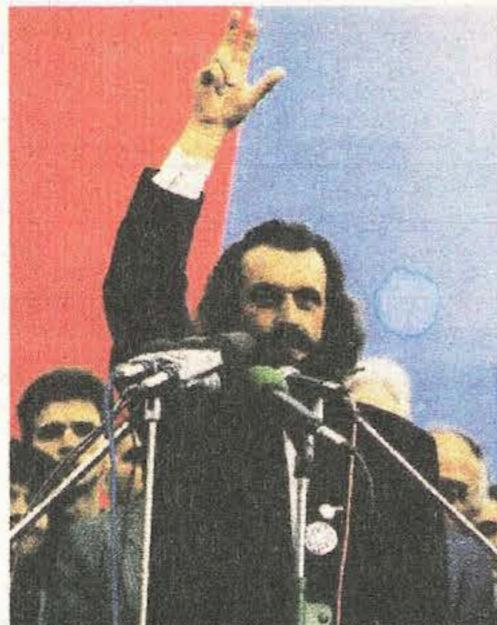
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