STEREOTYPING: REPRESENTATION OF WOMEN IN PRINT MEDIA IN SOUTH EAST EUROPE

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MEDIACENTAR
SARAJEVO

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MEDIACENTAR SARAJEVO

Sarajevo, September 2006

Title: STEREOTYPING: REPRESENTATION OF WOMEN IN PRINT MEDIA IN SOUTH EAST EUROPE
The project is a joint endeavour of the South East European Network for the Professionalization of The Media (SEENPM) and the Balkan Human Rights Network (BHRN), funded by SEENPM, Open Society Foundation Bosnia and Herzegovina (OSFBiH) and the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs Neighbourhood Programme (NAB).
Publisher: MEDIACENTAR Sarajevo, Kolodvorska 3, 71 000 Sarajevo, Bosnia and Hercegovina, www.media.ba
For Publisher: Boro KONTIĆ
Edited by: Nirman MORANJAK-BAMBURAĆ, Tarik JUSIĆ, Adla ISANOVIĆ
Authors: Tarik JUSIĆ, Nirman MORANJAK- BAMBURAĆ, Adla ISANOVIĆ, Danijela MAJSTOROVIĆ & Vladimir TURJAČANIN, Madeline DANOVA, Ilda LONDO, Mima SIMIĆ, Ivana KRONJA, Bobi BADAREVSKI, Sanja SARNAVKA & Suzana KUNAC
External Reviewer: Dr. Marina BLAGOJEVIĆ, Director of the "Altera MB" Research Center on Gender and Ethnicity in Budapest, senior researcher at the Institute for Criminological and Sociological Research, Belgrade.
English translation: Kanita HALILOVIĆ, Damir ARSENIJEVIĆ, Milena MARIĆ - VOGEL
Proofreading: Michael MEHEN
Design: Samira SALIHBEGOVIĆ
Printing: Bemust, Sarajevo
Circulation: 1000 copies

The views and opinions presented in the book are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views and opinions of the Mediacenter Sarajevo or of the donors.

CIP - Katalogizacija u publikaciji
Nacionalna i univerzitetska biblioteka
Bosne i Hercegovine, Sarajevo

305-055.2:070.11] (4-14) (082)

STEREOTYPING : representation of women inprint media in South East Europe / [authors Tarik Jusić … [et al.] ; English translation Kanita Halilović, Damir Arsenijević, MIlena Marić-Vogel] . - Sarajevo : Mediacentar, 2006. - 285 str. ; 17 x 17 cm

Biographies: str. 280-285. - Bibliografija i bilješke uz tekst

ISBN 9958-9417-4-0
1. Jusić, Tarik
COBISS.BH-ID 15355398

The project is supported by

The South East European Network for the
Professionalization of The Media (SEENPM)
www.seenpm.org

The Balkan Human Rights Network (BHRN)
www.balkan-rights.net

The Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs Neighbourhood Programme (NAB)
http://www.um.dk/

and

The Open Society Foundation Bosnia and Herzegovina (OSFBiH)
http://www.soros.org.ba/

Acknowledgements

Mediacentar Sarajevo would like to extend its gratitude to all those who recognized the importance of this project and generously supported its realization and the publishing of this book.

Special thanks go to the Balkan Human Rights Network (BHRN), Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs Neighborhood Program (NAB), Open Society Fund Bosnia and Herzegovina (OSFBiH) and South East European Network for the Professionalization of the Media (SEENPM), who provided necessary financial and administrative support for the project.

Furthermore, we express our sincere gratitude to our partners who provided vital help in the process of implementation of the project: Albanian Media Institute (Tirana, Albania), B.a.b.e - Women's Human Rights Group (Zagreb, Croatia), Bulgarian Development Center (Sofia, Bulgaria), Macedonian Institute for Media (Skopje, Macedonia) and Media Centar Beograd (Belgrade, Serbia).

Thanks.

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institutions, at least today, no longer self-explanatory, and questioned the "male economy" of values and social meanings throughout the world. However, it should be clear that without this history the abovementioned definition of democracy could never have been articulated. I mention this because I find highly symptomatic the way that the term feminism has lately popped up at times in Bosnian media.[3] Even this would basically be enough to justify my feminist urge to attach media images of women and their social relational context to prejudices that concern prevailing attitudes toward the history of feminist policies. Although I will leave this for some other occasion, one should bear in mind that stereotypes about feminism and the stereotypical image of that "horrendous" figure of a feminist ("ugly", "frustrated", "unfeminine", "lesbian", "militant") are certainly pieces in the puzzle of our multivalent research on the stereotypical media portrayal of women in regional print media. It would be worthwhile to give due attention to the issue of the fear of the **political emancipation of women,** because this is precisely what makes feminism here so terribly unacceptable for this dominant male-centered culture: it is the political emancipation of women that instills real fear into the bones of Balkan men rather than the mere image of an educated, emancipated woman (who can, after all, still nicely support the valid norm demanded by manhood and properly play the role of wife and mother).

As this publication focuses on an examination of roles that gender stereotypes play in media's construction of social reality, and as all of the articles included here constitute a critical analysis of the correlation between stereotypical representations which fix conventional presuppositions or concepts of social engagement of individuals (e.g. the correlations between stereotyping and violence, inequality and discrimination) one should remember that our analyses cover only part of the picture, one reconstructed from existing regional configurations of gender differences, culture

3 Indicative, for example, is an article by Midhat Riđanović, which will be analyzed in further text.

and media presentation. These relations between media representation policy, ideology, power and their socio-cultural suppositions, in the research carried out by Mediacentar Sarajevo, are identified as an important segment of transitional discourse.

> "Over the last fifteen years all of South East Europe - especially the former Yugoslav republics - was marked by turbulent political, economical and cultural transformations. The transitions of these societies were characterized by wars, post-conflict crises, transitions from socialist to market economies, and more recently, the new challenges of joining the European Union. During this period, political transformation was also accompanied by an interest and need for the redefinition of cultural and national values.
> (…)
> For example, in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia and Serbia (…) gender issues were sidelined while national and international attention was focused on the importance of ethnic, regional and religious equality. Issues such as the representation of women and their positions in society had to wait until the issues of nationhood were resolved. In the many former-Yugoslav wars over the past decades, gender identities/roles were extremely polarized, with men perceived as warriors and women as mothers and victims, reinforcing traditional power relations and social and cultural roles and norms."[4]

Proceeding from this set of issues, Mediacentar Sarajevo, within the project *Gender Stereotypes in Media: Representation of Women in Print Media in South East Europe*, conducted comprehensive research, focusing on the stereotyping of gender roles, the ways in which media portray women, and methods and strategies of discrimination. The starting assumption of this project, as with other similar projects

4 Isanović, Adla: "Media Discourse as a Male Domain: Gender Representation in Daily Newspapers of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia and Serbia", in this collection.

across the world, was that media not only reflected, but also produced and reinforced hegemonic cultural beliefs on gender roles, strongly affecting the overall **social relational context**. "Social relational context" refers to any situation in which individuals define themselves in relation to others with the aim of taking an active part in developmental social processes. Within the overall social relational context, gender prejudice plays a fundamental role. As many studies and research projects in the world have shown, and as our research confirms, fixed hegemonic gender hierarchies constantly generate multiple discriminatory practices which involve gender regimes in polyvalent relations with generational, racial, ethnic, class and religious antagonisms, weakening and obstructing genuinely democratic processes.

At this point I would like to refer my readers' attention for a minute to an important, global change brought about by the second half of the 20th century. This change has to do with the order of human rights discourse, whose specific segment consists of distinct human rights of women (so-called "positive discrimination", motivated by historical, as well as contemporary reasons, as a form of compensation for a long history of exclusion). The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW, 1979, UN General Assembly) in its preamble and 30 paragraphs defines the meaning of discrimination against women and lays down a national action plan for the signatory countries aimed at eliminating it. Bosnia-Herzegovina joined the action plan (as all countries in the region) and this document is binding for the state. In this sense the Law on Gender Equality in Bosnia-Herzegovina, passed by the Parliamentary Assembly of Bosnia-Herzegovina (by the House of Representatives in a session on 22 April 2003 and the House of Peoples in a session on 21 May 2003, published in the Official Gazette of BiH, no. 16, June 16, 2003) provided all the preconditions for truly eliminating discrimination based on sexual/gender differences and sexual orientation. However, as in many other walks of social life, it seems that the sole acceptance of the obligation to respect human rights, not just declaratively or ideologically, but also as legally prescribed and standardized

in harmony with international conventions, will not be sufficient for a long time to come for discriminatory/exclusivist practices to truly and finally become a thing of the past. Quite the contrary, the chances are that discrimination, hegemony, suppression, silencing, symbolic annihilation and violence will remain an important, if not the most important, aspect of globalization - these seem to be increasing by the day. For our context, however, it is important to first answer the question of how stereotypes, prejudice and discrimination function in the media and what consequences these have for our society, culture and the immediate cultural environment.

In public life and in media, the issue is the "implementation of the law," which is just a euphemism behind which it is crucial to recognize and deconstruct the hegemonic relations of ideology and institutional power to the culturally valid gender regime. The perpetuation of gender prejudice, re-traditionalization, conservatism and the strengthening and spreading of patriarchal ideology, in other words the weakening of democratization and the institutional reproduction of a hierarchy of discourse within which human rights are addressed solely within an ethnic, largely nationalistic context, all can be blamed not on disrespect of the Law (for this cannot be "blamed", only punished) but rather the historically configured incommensurability of the logic of transition and the logic in accumulating those democratic values and principles which essentially constitute human rights discourse[5]. Admittedly, this is not the only law in Bosnia-Herzegovina which is implemented with difficulty, if at all; in a particular way, it again concerns *ethnos* and "transitional cultures," the interweaving and mutually

5 That, despite existing prejudice on accumulated democratic values and developed human rights discourse, in western democracies in the 90s there has also been a deterioration in the fair and non-stereotypical representation of women in media, and that the enormously expanded study of the role of stereotypes in media, social life and psychology hasn't prevented increasingly glaring examples of the manipulation of prejudices among the mass audience, is a fact outside the focus of this introduction, although I myself would by no means want to underestimate it.

inextricable effect of local and global processes. Yet associated with it as well is a whole set of alarming symptoms: the metastasizing of all possible discriminatory practices related to axes of power, such as by sex/gender, race, nation, class or generation, as well as the actual invisibility of women in politics and public life, an increase in domestic violence, bans on education for female children, discrimination at school on all of these grounds… Most of these symptoms, as readers will be able to recognize in the articles presented in this collection, concern not only the context of Bosnia-Herzegovina; they are a part of the social reality in other countries in the region, which the authors generally interpret as symptoms of transition. It is interesting how the increase in the number of gender research projects of different kinds in Bosnia-Herzegovina and the whole region (such as our project), as well as the very institutionalization of the culture of gender equality (which is labeled by the language of international documents as *gender mainstreaming*, and which is very clearly dependent on the more or less forced acceptance of European standards) can represent an index of change. It seems that in the majority of serious studies in this region, cultural contexts have already been identified which represent masculine economy, a pronouncedly male-centered lifestyle and the "Balkan male ethos". This is perhaps why it was essential to rename the region South East Europe, thus removing it from the dominant "blood and soil" narrative.[6]

As Adla Isanović - as well as other authors represented in this collection - argues in her article, "Media Discourse as a Male Domain: Gender Representation in the Daily Newspapers of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia and Serbia", media can be

6 "Balkanism" as male-centered discourse was first written about by Maria Todorova (*Imagining the Balkans*, Oxford University Press, 1997). Today, this is an accepted topic of numerous conferences, studies and collected papers. In 2002, in London at the UCL, for example, a conference was held under the name *Balkan Masculinities Conference*, and the number of articles devoted to this issue increases by the day.

understood both as social technologies for the generation of gender and as institutions of power which, secretly espousing the ruling ideologies, daily fabricate effective matrices that legitimize themselves and maintain the status quo. The stereotyping and petrifaction of their prejudices in melding representations of social reality, ideology and power is a strategy which most directly and most efficiently achieves a near total suppression of alternative modes of social life. What is paradoxical in media production and the use of stereotypes and the explicit and/or implicit dissemination of prejudices is primarily the discourse of the news profession itself, which establishes its authority, as is well known, by providing "objective" information and by a code that requires "equal treatment of all persons by eliminating all forms of discrimination.[7] Another paradox is that the news profession, especially in countries in transition, is feminized to a great degree, from which it follows that the stereotypical representation of women in media is often the fault of women themselves. Yet one should not forget that journalism is the oldest media profession and that the founding myths and skills which bring journalistic glory usually affirm a patriarchal culture of masculinity, and that, consequently, the socialization of women and their education can by no means be neglected. It was hard initially for women to enter journalism and they made slow progress. It was only because of broader education opportunities that the profession became feminized. The structure of media ownership is also relevant to understanding these complicated processes and inter-dependencies.

Patriarchal exclusivism is the foundation of all exclusivism familiarized and transmitted as norms. Stereotype and prejudice, besides being tools of exclusivist hegemonic practices, are based at the same time on cognitive patterns which enable us to recognize reality in the easiest and fastest way. This is precisely why it is so hard

7 Korni, Daniel . *Etika informisanja.* Belgrade: Clio, 1999, quoted from the article by Sarnavka, S., Kunac, S., "Interpretation of Newspaper Interpretations of a Murder", in this book of collected papers.

to recognize how dangerous they can be, when it is taken for granted that the process of simplified categorizations is a self-sufficient method of cognition. Stereotypes are simplified and generalized mental images or views which distort our concepts of reality. They are resistant to change, because we tend to "economize" our cognitive capacities and "recognize" persons and phenomena using the shortest route. Art, for example, is believed to be an important form of resistance to clichés and stereotypes, because it doesn't make our perception "easier", rather it makes it "harder". By analogy, instead of approaching reality mechanically and uncritically by resorting to stereotypes, it is possible to find different techniques of recognition, especially for subtler forms of prejudice and stereotype and through this, hopefully, to bring about their disappearance.

Given the history of the term "stereotyping", if we consider the role of media in creating prejudices and stereotypes, and hence discrimination, it is possible to accomplish something similar to that of the well-known chief from California, who landing in Rome in 1973 with an Indian chief's insignia, declared Italy his own on the basis of the "right to discovery". The New York Times characterized it as a bizarre incident, but this only served to underline the chief's standpoint: if Columbus had the right to discover a land inhabited by other people for centuries, then he had the same right in relation to Italy. The term "stereotype" was first used in 1798 by the French printer Didot, referring to the printing plate which enables reproduction in the printing process. In 1923 the journalist Lipmann associated the process of reproduction in printing with the reproduction of reality, and coined the term stereotype as a "referential mental image". Contemporary research on stereotypes, prejudices and discriminatory practices in media today seems to envelop an interesting and instructive story: from the development of the press as an important ally of the idea of democracy, to the dangerous reduction of print media to an essential material prop for unrestricted circulation of "handy mental images", from the origin of the term, its metaphorical redefinition, to media (ab)use.

In this sense, the story told by the research papers presented here is actually an appeal to "discover" the other perspective of the widespread techniques used in the stereotypical representation of women, sexism and misogynistic culture in media: from this perspective one can understand that the myth of "freedom of speech," which media wholeheartedly support, is just part of the game in which the "society of discourse," as Michel Foucault would put it, defends itself from unlawful intrusions and the violation of existing order. Speaking in terms of Bourdieu's sociology, the critical deconstruction of the social sphere created by the discourse of "transitology" even allows us to examine media in transition as simultaneous producers, transmitters and reflectors of ideological matrices constituent to the given cultures. Namely, we must ask ourselves what it is that allows media participation and complicity in the current social struggles and disputes, and where and when we lose trust in the romantic narrative of media as guardians of democratic values and "mirrors of reality"? Media representation (and interpretation) of reality occurs on a certain social plane and is historicized within indicative changes of what is understood as the currently **valid public sphere**. Therefore, the story of the consequences of stereotypical representation, prejudice and discrimination in media should be told in relation to that public sphere, to specific relations of media discourse.

Power relations, according to Foucault[8], permeate all spheres of social life and are a productive force, implying not only the repression, but the production of social subjects. Power relations, according to this author, create regimes of visibility and expressiveness; they allow something, in precisely determined historical circumstances, to be seen and said, and thus included in scientific study. If we accept Foucault's description of discourse as immediately placed under control, selected, organized and redistributed according to a certain number of procedures, the genealogy of media discourse demonstrates that it is only our retrospective illusion that the achieved status of controller of all other "official

8 Foucault, Michel. *Volja za znanjem.* Zagreb, 1994.

discourses" is the source of its influence. Quite the reverse, the so-called "freedom of press" was paid for by the persistent and increasingly drastic narrowing of individual room for intellectual action in favor of a professionally normative "objectivity", which, paradoxically, does not mean and never did mean the automatic inclusion of all citizens as relevant sources of information or as protagonists of media events.

According to contemporary studies of norm discourse (Ewald, Foucault, Mascheray, Butler), norms should be understood as forms of action which, through ritual iterations, add reality while constituting themselves. Thus, the norm of "objective information" does not acquire its magical efficiency by directly applying the rules of "truthfulness", but rather by ritually repeating prescribed procedures in selecting what will be considered news. Media report on the basis of a given structural framework: criteria for novelty, the existing hierarchy of credibility, journalistic routine and dominant cultural presuppositions. All of these entail simplification and generalization, i.e. the conscious or unconscious use of stereotypes and the manipulation of the prejudices that characterize the given culture.

As many sociologists and psychologists assert, stereotypes in themselves are not harmful, because they are the result of a cognitive process of simplification and generalization which we cannot completely discard as a rational approach to complicated situations. They are harmful because they are related to prejudice (biased and usually incorrect valuations of persons or social groups, made into a general position, adopted in advance and groundlessly as a "true" assertion of what the particular person or social group is like) and discrimination (the practice of distinguishing, excluding and denying the rights of one group in favor of another). Once discussions on gender stereotypes are accepted and open, it will be easier to recognize and accept social differences. In this sense, the collection of papers here is structured as a comparative approach to analyzing gender stereotypes in the regional press, with reference to the ideological backgrounds of their manifested content. As readers will be able to see for themselves, the analyses were based both on quantitative and qualitative gender research of selected daily press. The authors

also combined other useful conceptual tools (feminist critique, discursive analysis, power theory, cultural, ethnic and media studies) to better illuminate the local and historical contexts which frame the ideological meaning of material in which stereotypical gender roles are (re)produced.

If our gender identity is identified by our language and culture, we might say that someone's character, identity and existence are determined by the story they live in. It can be concluded from this that if we want to change social relations, we must first change the stories that identify us. In the context of this research and the articles collected here under the indicative title *Stereotyping*, as well as the stories told in such a way that we understand they immediately constitute us by simplifying and reducing both our identities and the narrative capacities of our cultural contexts, it seems that media portrayal of women is thematically established at least in three interpretative frames: in the context in which the research was initiated and in which these collected papers are published, in a regional context, and in a context in line with contemporary globalization theory, which may be called glocalization.

Local context: "While 50 *hojrat* are beating their women…"[9]

The Sarajevo daily "Oslobodjenje", in the Saturday supplement "Pogledi" (22 July 2006, p. 15), published an article by Prof. Mithat Riđanović with the headline "*Svi*

9 This sub-headline is actually the editorial title of a text box - the extracted point of an article by Midhat Riđanovic, which will be spoken about in a later text. According to Dževad Jahić's School Dictionary of the Bosnian Language (*Školski rječnik bosanskog jezika*), hojrat is a word of Greek origin and means boor, brute. (Sarajevo, 1999, p. 259).

normalni Bosanci[10] *govore najljepši jezik na svijetu*" (All normal Bosnians speak the most beautiful language in the world), with the superscript headline "*Jezik i žene: Iz ugla muškog lingviste*" (Language and women: from the angle of a male linguist). Two of the author's sentences are extracted in the sub-headline and obviously should be understood as crucial for the viewpoint that the "male linguist" expresses in the article: "But as soon as they step in front of the camera, they forget the language they learned from their mother (i.e. mother tongue) and start speaking a 'sensitive' one. I especially resent my feminist colleagues - why do they need this? They are neither ugly, nor stupid enough to follow the example of politicians." We will see from the article that the first sentence alluded to "Bosnians", the "normal" speakers of the "most beautiful language in the world," unless they are politicians and until they "step in front of the camera," while the second singled out feminists as specific representatives of "sensitive language", one of whom had previously been "caught" saying in front of the camera, "*Mi se borimo za džender senzibilni jezik*" (we are fighting for gender-sensitive language.)

The article is accompanied by a photograph showing a group of girls in a public area who are tying themselves, or are "tied" with rope. The photograph, in relation to the position ("view") of the "male linguist", judging by the headline, represents the opposite "feminist position". The caption under the photograph "claims" that it represents "feminists" who are committing "injustice even in language". This indicates an editorial intervention and, coupled with the superscript headline marker, "from the angle of a male linguist", it enables the critical reader, while reading the article, not to completely forget the meaning of the latter, genderized position of understanding the concept of "gender sensitive language". Although it's unclear where the photograph came from and what it really represents, influenced by the caption under the photograph, we can "read" it as a

10 Translator's note: Bosanci is the plural form of the masculine noun Bosanac (male Bosnian) and it is also the plural form denoting Bosnians in general (both male and female).

feminist performance of the way that symbolic imprisonment of female bodies is carried out on the "language plane". The rhetoric of the photograph ("silent tying up with rope") and the rhetoric stunts of the "male linguist", every one of them mobilized in the article to clearly portray and convince the readership, either male, female, or, to quote the author's discriminating and unfair expression, of "motley" sex, that feminists are just "flogging a dead horse", are in direct opposition. It remains unclear if this is a subversive editorial intervention or an effect produced on a sublimated level. In contrast to this lack of clarity, customary journalistic routine remains entirely recognizable in the piece's textual highlighting: the point of the article is stressed twice - once by the author, once by the editor by extracting Riđanovic's appeal to feminists in the text box and titling it with the rhetorically effective start of the author's closing sentence:

> "So, dear feminist colleagues, drop the long, fruitless and inexpert discussions on the injustice of our language toward women, and remember that, while you are flogging a dead horse, at least fifty *hojrat* in Sarajevo alone are beating the crap out of their wives!"

The dilemma of whether by using the photograph the editor consciously and unexpectedly intervened in the discourse of presenting "male views" is interesting in several ways. First, because it allows us to speculate on a potential "silent" subversion of the authoritarian position of the author ("the male linguist"), and second, because to express this kind of dilemma would by no means be appropriate in another cultural context, especially a western one, untouched by the controversies of transitional societies. However, the "local" public scene, in which status, ethnic consciousness, nationalism and masculinity are strongly and self-evidently correlated (in the sense of these relations being free of scrutiny, with no concern among the current ideological regime and power relations for the symbolic legitimization of norms and values), is characteristic in that the "other" - the feminine, the unclearly ethnically coded, the "sexually mottled" - is simply reduced to the most basic and general stereotypes, inspired by a constant post-conflict fueling of fear of the other and the different. In this kind of context, regardless of how

far-fetched it seems, the dilemma of whether the introduction of a subversive photograph constitutes a conscious or unconscious action is of crucial importance, because it allows us to think not merely of the possibilities of using transformational potentials of imaginative projects (such as the presented feminist performance, or projects which promote gender-awareness policies such as this collection of papers); it also allows us to subject the business ideology of media to criticism from the viewpoint of its squandered dream of the creative imagination of journalists and editors.

Why might an introduction to a collection of papers devoted to researching gender stereotypes in print media in South East Europe start with an analysis of this specific article? It is to be assumed that the Mediacentar Sarajevo project did not take as its starting premise the "flogging of a dead horse" (a feminist one or any other). Also, it is true that the abovementioned article does not belong to the analyzed body of texts, because it appeared after the monitoring process was completed and the results of quantitative analysis already completed. And it is entirely certain that we collected enough material in the research process to structure the introduction in line with standard conventions, i.e. with reference to the theoretical framework of the research, which is equivalent to similar projects elsewhere in the world and involves examining stereotypes in the following terms: a) definition of theme, b) elaboration of the methodology used, c) issues opened by the research, and d) final remarks. However, the "intrusion of a case", such as the appearance of an article of this kind, is significant for the context in which the research was implemented and allows the theoretical and methodological framework to be expanded and enriched in a highly precise sense. An article of this kind can be understood as a scene which establishes, in an exemplary way, the existing configurations of the gender regime - cultural context - power relations and ideologies in Bosnia-Herzegovina. In other words, it is as if the article underscored the very theme of our research, its importance in considering the role of media in perpetuating social prejudice and stereotypes, the relation of media presentation toward social context, (un)conscious complicity in discrimination and the hegemonic cultural matrix. The position of the entire

research team, as discursive analysis has taught us, is also part of the research theme, so in this sense we stand to win if we have an opportunity to use an analysis of an article - which is related in the most direct way to the representation of women in media as it develops a subtle game of status, authority, gender difference, language, discourse and stereotypes - to build a theoretical matrix essential for understanding gender differences in transitional societies, as well as the media cultures in these societies which reproduce social relations and symbolic values while generating them as their own results.

If we return to the "normal Bosnians" and "sensitive language" controversy, which Mithat Riđanović's article concerns, and look behind its superscript headline (language, women and male linguists), I believe it will be possible to a certain extent to recognize some of the broader contextual background, in which relations of knowledge, power, sexuality, presentation, representation, language and expressiveness (all of them key aspects involving the story of prejudice and stereotypes and their gender regimes) are regulated. What is particularly interesting in this article is the way the author denies the very possibility of "gender sensitive language", but does this by using various rhetorical maneuvers to present the matter as an opposition to the "sound barrier of words," such as those borrowed from other languages (*implementacija*, meaning implementation; *involviranje*, meaning involvement; *edukacija*, meaning education; *transparentnost*, meaning transparency; rekonstruckija meaning reconstruction…), by which politicians distance themselves from their audiences, and now feminists use through the literally translated English term "gender sensitive language". The author puts a lot of effort into using intimate forms of address (he calls feminists "my female colleagues", he "resents them" for following the example of politicians), as well as his own feigned "pro-feminist" stand[11], as a means of masking the

11 "Why am I a feminist? Among other things, because I am firmly convinced that women (on average) not only are more beautiful than men, they are also better than us in almost everything except in muscles and aggressiveness. Women bring life to the world, with a little cooperation from men (you can keep this 'cooperation' in the fridge today and the human race could wonderfully continue without men, but certainly not without women!)."

misogynistic content of the message. This message boils down to an inability to imagine, among these abstract feminists, the existence of a potential female linguist who might know something about the nature of language, and that these feminists, in light of the knowledge generally denied them, by suggesting the adoption of gender sensitive language, are just "flogging a dead horse". Hence, knowledge should nicely be left to the male experts, while they (the feminists) should just focus on the "*hojrat* who beat their wives"!

According to research carried out by the Women's Human Rights Group B.a.B.e[12], women in Croatia, Serbia and the Federation of Bosnia-Herzegovina (especially the last) consider interpersonal communication (talking to family, friends, at work) a very important source of information. In this sense, I won't hesitate here to present some information received by talking to friends and colleagues: this article met with quite a lot of "public" approval. Why? If we leave aside the typically Bosnian formations of authority, the reason is largely the article's numerous stereotypes, which make it difficult to recognize its rhetorical effort to neutralize the potential consequences of emancipation and resistance. The article is teeming with stereotypes, but they are mostly expressed through opposed allegations, such as that female feminists are "neither ugly, nor stupid", although "if they had just used their pretty little heads, they would have seen that president and director don't necessarily refer to men only and that they have another meaning, president/director as a class of people regardless of sex". Although the professor explains in a very popular way De Saussure's thesis on the arbitrary relationship between the signifier and the signified ("Does the word *horse* 'look like' what it signifies"), he won't consider it his

12 Kunac Suzana, Sarnavka Sanja. *Nevinost bez zaštite: "ženska" percepcija medijskih sadržaja.* Zagreb, 2006. In the Federation of Bosnia-Herzegovina as many as 43% female respondents exchanged opinions with family and 39% with friends (in Croatia these percentages are 26% and 23% and in Serbia they are 34% and 27%). This data is not unimportant for the social relational context in general, because the fact that interpersonal communication continues to hold such an important place deeply concerns relations between global and local processes in the given cultures.

professorial duty to inform the "ignorant" female readers of contemporary critical discourse analysis and critical studies of language (partly relying on the thesis of arbitrariness of the language sign), which consider language, discourse, ideology and power related and crucial for understanding social relations. However, what we do know is that language is one of the most important factors of power, that it is completely permeated with ideology, as is the author's article: stereotypes, sexism, paternalism, a feigned friendly tone used to conceal personal discrimination and misogyny, all this is at the service of the "most beautiful language in the world", the "normal" one, the people's (the author points out our gems, such as "*Ma ne mere se ovo više durati*"[13]), which is learned "from the mother", i.e. not from linguists, but rather, so to speak, "suckled with mother's milk" and therefore should not be spoiled with anyone else's (for example, with English, although I suppose we adopted "hojrat" long ago as our own).

Socio-cognitive research of gender stereotypes[14] shows that the relationship between stereotyping and ideology can be explained by an aspiration to maintain status quo. But more than this, the analyzed article will allow us to illuminate all the ways in which stereotypes can be expressed and how we must consider not just the most obvious forms of sexism, but the subtler ones as well. Such articles represent a modern ambivalent form of sexism, sexism in "velvet gloves" (Jackman) which

13 Translator's note: The sentence '*Ma ne mere se ovo više durati*' is an example of improper grammar used in colloquial language (meaning "This can't be endured any longer"). The verb *mere* is the improper form of the verb *može*. The verb *durati* is the colloquial equivalent of the verb *izdržati*.

14 E.g.: Conway, M., Pizzamiglio, M.T, Mount, L. "Status, communality and agency: Implications for stereotypes of gender and other groups". *Journals of Personality and Social Psychology*, 71, 1996, 25-38; Jackman, M. R. (1994) *The velvet glove: Paternalism and conflict in gender, class, and gender relations*. University of California Press: Berkeley.

consists of two components: benevolent sexism based on protective paternalism and chauvinism involving negative emotions and views toward women. Far from it that benevolent sexism is less dangerous: precisely this form is the easiest for women to adopt, for it seems to positively support "women's" values, not prejudices. It appears that benevolent sexism is prevalent in the normative cultural values of the ethnic groups in Bosnia-Herzegovina, as in our regional surroundings. Negative stereotypes here, logically, are easiest to attribute to women from another ethnic group.

This then is the relational context in which national and socio-culturally established structural limitations concern the active intention of the very project of researching gender stereotypes. The question arises as to whom our research is intended to reach: who might use its conclusions. and how great is the risk that instead of resistance to hegemonic practices, we might generate an even stronger conservative counter-reaction? It does not hurt to remember that limitations are not merely a problem; they are also a challenge for critical reflection, and one should consider their relation to the diversely articulated resistance and reactions from the socio-cultural environment (more or less formulated in conservative, reactionary or patronizing discourse). On the other hand, within the framework of critical reflection, we should also take into account the analytical methodology and the risk that the method and analytical technique which promise an "objective description" may themselves imperceptibly transform into a construction dependent on the prejudices and the ideological position of the researcher. What can be learned from the articles presented in this collection is most probably the paradoxical fact that stereotyping equally eases our cognition as much as it unbearably aggravates our active inclusion in social life, particularly in civil practices which we assume belong to the convertible notion of democracy. Hence the title of this introduction, whose tendency, like that well-known novel by Kundera, is to rhetorically establish the same tight spot where gender stereotypes and prejudices equally place men and women, or anyone who might try to avoid this magistral distinction and its deterministic forces.

Regional context: (de)construction of group identities & 'mainstream' gender issues[15]

As P. Bois once asserted, space doesn't make up a region, time and history do. In this collection, each article explores different aspects of stereotypical portrayals of "women"[16] in print media, with reference both to their specific national contexts and their common region (South East Europe). As the cultural and political meaning of studying the stereotypical representation of women in media is generally associated

15 The concept of "gender mainstreaming" was developed by the UN and the national government signatories to international documents on the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women. This process of institutional building of gender equality in member states is defined by the UN as: "process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies or programmes, in any area and at all levels. It is a strategy for making women's as well as men's concerns and experiences an integral dimension in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes in all political, economic and societal spheres so that women and men benefit equally and inequality is not perpetuated. The ultimate goal is to achieve gender equality." (UNRISD, Gender Mainstreaming: A Study of Efforts by the UNDP, the World Bank and the ILO to Institutional Gender Issues available at www.undp.org/gender.) I deliberately leave the English term here (translator's note: the English term 'gender mainstreaming' is left in the Bosnian version of this paper), because through our project and other similar projects in the region, and even broader, a dilemma cannot be eliminated (and maybe it shouldn't be eliminated completely) which Stanimir Panayotov defined as the question "Can the relationship between gender and sexuality be translated into Eastern European conditions?" (Panayotov, S. "Rodna paradagma kao manjak lokalnog objekta" in *Žene i politika: Seksualnost između lokalnog i globalnog*. Ženska infoteka: Zagreb, 2004, pp. 11-24).

16 It's really high time to start putting this noun - woman - in quotation marks, as so many people and empirical studies show the justification of accepting the concept of "symbolic annihilation" of women by media (Grebner, G)!

with current reflections on the issue of gender equality[17] as an international program to develop human resources, the regional component brings new disputes and ambivalence to programs for gender policy. But instead of immediately relating our issue to discourse on Balkanism mentioned at the beginning of this introduction, perhaps we might first contextualize our project through the contemplations of Katarina Kolozova on positive investments in a new political project - the construction of South East Europe ("the rebirth of Europe in the Balkans"):

> "This big project (geo/historic-political changing of names) is at the same time an appeal to unify Balkan identities into one - not necessarily a unitary, uniform identity, the identity of the region which will be called South East Europe. Donna Haraway's concept of "non-generic" unity, contained in the unifying name (of her post-human, non-generic) "humanity", constitutes the theoretical background for my proclamation of hope in the good chances for all of us to submit to a single and general identity (whose name I suggest be South East Europe). Therefore, what is questioned here is not the idea of uniting under one identity (which is built into the concept of globalization), but rather the name that this identity should bear, i.e. what it should be."[18]

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17 The following are considered the infrastructural foundation of gender equality: gender policies particularly developed by each organization; technical training for subjects in institutions to ensure equal participation of women; developing gender training and creating tools for gender sensitivity; policies that provide conditions for women to achieve a suitable balance between career and family life; increasing the number of women on responsible and managerial positions; expanding resources for women's programs, etc.

18 Kolozova, Katarina "Identitet (jedinstva) u izgradnji: o smrti "Balkana" i rođenju "Jugoistočne Evrope" , in: *Balkan kao metafora: Između globalizacije i fragmentacije*. Beogradski krug: Belgrade, 2003, pp. 295-306.

As Kolozova[19] says later on in the quoted article, the internationally declared policy of stabilization and reconstruction of the region is an appeal for regional cooperation, for the effective construction of a regional identity. Along with political investment in cooperation, I myself believe that projects such as gender studies in general may really be understood as an effort to use investments in women's capacities as active agents to redefine and transform the existing ethnic policies of perpetual antagonism. Regions (similar to "woman"), as Pierre Bourdieu points out, are "mental images", i.e. objects generated as "acts of perception and appreciation, of cognition and recognition, in which agents invest their interests and their presuppositions.[20] Therefore, if the theoretical framework of our analyses entails selecting gender stereotypes as a conceptual frame for the perception, appreciation and recognition of the effects of media's generation of social reality on social interaction and power relations in South East European countries, the regional aspect entails not merely scholarly cooperation; it must have the ambition to create opportunities for the potential restructuring of the prevailing (both internal and

19 Kolozova writes in her article about materializations of the name-giving policy and, opposing the total denial of the "Balkan Subject", i.e. the "name execution", she offers a critique of the symbolic re-Europeanization of the region (South East Europe) in the form of a classic semi-peripheral resentment: "It's incorrectly assumed that the 'Balkans' must die in order for this new identity to be born which promises a brighter future, not just for the region, but for all of Europe. This was an unjust execution, because regionalism has been a great "Balkan" dream for quite some time, from back when Europe wasn't even thinking of it. Instead of the old Balkan dream coming true, now the European dream is coming true." (ibid, 301). It is precisely this "great Balkan dream" that immediately starts to concern you seriously when you are involved in gender studies. All the "great Balkan dreams" that I am aware of so far produced only wars, killing and not just symbolic annihilation of women, but also bricking them up into the foundations of big edifices and mass rapes.

20 Bourdieu, Pierre. *Language & Symbolic Power*. Polity Press: Cambrigde, 2005, p. 220.

external) perceptions of regional identity. To be precise, a diagnosis for the gender culture in print media should be understood as an *index of democratic change*.

Unfortunately, the development at present of gender culture in South East Europe, in spite of changes in legislation, the acceptance of international conventions and institutional changes, remains, according to indicators, examples and analyses presented here, a failure. What is demonstrated by the overall picture provided in this publication indicates very unambiguously that media discourse in countries of the region -mirroring all of the social controversies of transition, as an ideological state apparatus[21] - participates in the reproduction of very retrograde patriarchal ideological matrices. We can understand projects such as ours, on the other hand, as attempts to consider to what degree critical reflection can be placed further at the service of undermining common sense, primarily in the sense of its misogynic matrix[22] (the belief that media are only "mirrors of society" rather than active generators of intolerance, discrimination and prejudice).

In light of the role of gender prejudice in social power structures, which we must now clearly identify as *ethnoses* (Bourdieu believes that contemporary debates on regionalism and in a broader sense on "ethnic groups" and "ethnicity" hide behind the latter terms a modern euphemism for "race"[23]), the research gathered in this

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21 L. Althusser defines ideological state apparatuses, in contrast to repressive apparatuses, as those which do not act by force, but rather by interpellation. Ideology here is understood as essential for representing meanings through which we can experience reality. Through interpellation we become subjects, actually ideology constitutes us through language and images as subjects.

22 See Blagojević, Marina (ed.) *Mapiranje mizoginije u Srbiji: diskursi i prakse*. I and II. ARŽIN: Belgrade. 2002, 2005.

23 It's useful to keep in mind that in international coordinates the study of stereotype to the greatest possible degree insists on the issue of gender and racial stereotype, and that major crises, socio-historically, are not always necessary for their activation on both the individually psychological level and the social level to generate indicative intersections of racial and gender codes and vectors of power.

collection of papers uses tools of discursive analysis whose common characteristic is that each one is associated with certain constructivist theories of society. In terms of a common foundation, critical discursive analysis of the media content of the Bosnian-Herzegovinian, Croatian, Serbian, Macedonian, Bulgarian and Albanian press is integrated in principle on the basis of four clear characteristics: 1) all of the research took a critical and subversive stand on conventional (accepted) perceptions of the world; 2) all of the authors considered the historic and cultural context in which the facts were gathered and interpellation carried out, 3) all of the authors maintained that theoretical expertise and understanding of the analyzed phenomena (the presence of women in media content, how they were represented, stereotyping and prejudice, types of print media and genres, specific cases) should be strictly related to social interactive practices in everyday life, and 4) they all agreed, at least implicitly, that the view of the world which the media offers us in correspondence with the given patterns of social action, and in relation to the potentials based on which the media might support a different, truly democratic communication structure, must generally be assessed negatively.

The selection, accentuation and presentation of the social reality of South East European countries through its media representation is subjected in this publication to critical analysis, proceeding from the basic idea that the specification of the influence of gender-stereotyped cultural beliefs within the social relational context allows for the perception and prevention of the negative effects of media fixation and petrifaction not merely of gender portrayal, but the overall system of ethnic values and norms as well. The emblems and stigmas of these demonstrate a highly paradoxical game of manipulation, maintaining women's "invisibility" on one hand, and excessive "visibility" on the other. It hardly goes without saying that this is a specific characteristic of the countries included in the project; similar research in developed countries has also demonstrated the surprising stubbornness of cultural prejudice and an almost equal prevalence of discriminatory practices (despite the international community's

"millennium goals").[24] From the studies included here one might conclude that, with other global tendencies, the rigid gender regimes of countries in transition acquire additional immunity because of the priority of ethnic identities.

While working on this project, applying the technique of "writing reading" and *close reading* of the final versions of the papers which I now attempt to recommend to the attention of the audience (as has developed within cultural studies), I tried to think about the possibilities of a comparatively conceived *supra paper* in relation to the interpretative constructs of the culturally separate social relational contexts (in the region). As the authors gathered in this collection of papers (Adla Isanović, Danijela Majstorović and Vladimir Turjačanin - Bosnia-Herzegovina, Madeline Danova - Bulgaria, Ilda Londo - Albania, Mima Simić - Croatia, Ivana Kronja - Serbia, Bobi Badarevski - Macedonia, and Sanja Sarnavka and Suzana Kunac - Croatia) presented unusually good and interesting research and analysis, it is possible, in my belief, to derive a common (regional) story to all. However, this is by no means a linear narrative with a fixed ending. Quite the contrary, it is a polyphonic story with an open ending, dramatizing the recognition of cultural gender stereotypes as a foundation upon which stereotypical media images are produced. At every moment, new developments arise, potential sources of strife or compromise among ethnic and regional identities whose symbolic attempts to draw from conflicts over classifications senses of legitimacy reflect the ruling principles behind the beliefs of humanity.

This kind of reading requires a certain dramatization of the order of papers in front of us. Adla Isanović's article "Media Discourse as a Male Domain: Gender

24 If we compare the quantitative indicators of daily press monitoring in different countries and at different times with those that we have in this publication, we will have to agree that they are surprisingly similar, regardless of the degree of protection of human rights in the individual countries. This only demonstrates that quantitative analyses are never enough and that only contextual and discursive content analysis allows this controversy to be understood.

Representation in the Daily Newspapers of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia and Serbia", based on extensive prior research carried out by the Mediacentar Sarajevo team, and displaying the principles and results of quantitative and qualitative analysis on a very impressive sample (8,241 articles from nine dailies: "Dnevni avaz", "Oslobođenje", "Glas Srpske" from Bosnia-Herzegovina, "Jutarnji list", "Večernji list", "Slobodna Dalmacija" from Croatia, and "Politika", "Večernje novosti", "Blic" from Serbia) serves as an appropriate introduction, in which the choice of a regional, rather than a national analysis framework is justified by the belief that gender is a category transnational in scope and that, despite different sociopolitical circumstances, the modes and patterns of presentation of gender roles and identities remain similar in all three countries. Quantitative indicators and the consistent framework matrix of analysis (composed of six categories - markers of gender presentation: presence/absence, themes, voices/sources, profession, photographs, gender (in)sensitive language) show the absence of significant differences in media presentation of gender differences, and only confirm the "unbearable lightness" of gender stereotypes regardless of cultural differences. It's extremely important to reexamine this conclusion through the lenses of the articles that follow. We will see that we must accept media at the level of a technology for generating genderism, while the reproduction of an ideology of cultural differences would subtly vary among the individual examined dailies. This paradox of quantitative analyses, which many theoreticians have written on, corresponds in a way to the very nature of opinion (and political dominance) behind these representations: it must encompass simultaneously both the universal and the particular.

However, that stereotype, prejudice and discrimination are culturally conditioned and that "referential mental images" in different contexts do not completely coincide with their literal meanings will become clear to us already from the next paper. Danijela Majstorović and Vladimir Turjačanin ("The Representation of Women in Bosnian- Herzegovinian Dailies: Gender and Ethnic Separations in Society") offer in their research an interpretation of gender and ethnic divisions through images offered

in "Dnevni avaz" and "Glas Srpske" (these papers, as we have seen, were also part of the sample in the previous study, but this time the framework is different: selection was not made just based on circulations, but primarily based on the ethnic significance of the two papers). But one shouldn't think that Adla Isanovic's interpretation, restrainedly focused in this regard to the greatest possible degree, hasn't itself implicitly raised the issue of the relationship between gender and ethnos: the media image of stereotyping of women delivered to us seemingly ethnically unbranded is a dimension of shrewd stereotyping. It is very important to keep pointing this out when arguing for a new communications structure more in harmony with the still politically viable ideal of human rights.

Both Bosnian-Herzegovinian papers demonstrate that media exclude women as active protagonists of public life and deliver a pronouncedly masculine model of political and social activity. One of the explanations for this is the generally misogynic matrix of society which is detected in the discourse of Balkanism. Majstorović and Turjačanin conclude that ethnic ideologies reduce women to a very limited number of representations - victim, mother, wife, showbiz star - which are repeated in other articles. If all articles are read carefully, it becomes apparent that the most significant division in women portraits in region is between "ethnically ideal women" and "women from show business". The former are presented as symbolic guarantors of patriarchal ethnic ideology, the latter as guarantors of masculinity itself. But on both sides of this division there is some confusion in the media with regard to the transition into a market-driven economy. The failure to recognize the significance of this market may be because "ethnically conscious men"- as Majstorović and Turjačanin call this ideal of masculinity- are not, or will not always be, a sufficiently attractive figure for good newspaper sales.

Madeline Danova, in the article "Women in Politics in Bulgarian Newspapers: Post-Feminism in a Post-Totalitarian Society", directs our story further to a clash of two ideological discourses - nationalism and globalization, using the example of two

newspapers, "Trud" (in the author's opinion representing globalization processes) and "Ataka" (representing extreme nationalistic ideology). The article presents stereotyping as a means of serving nationalistic rhetoric, while also serving the game of gender representation under the rules of "glocal"[25] phenomena, combining serious political issues with sensationalism. While in nationalistic newspapers women are presented in the usual stereotypical gender roles, with special emphasis on female politicians from other ethnic groups, the Bulgarian "Trud" seems to prefer a post-feminist style of representation. This entails media promotion of a private consumerist lifestyle for women, which many recent theoreticians claim to be one of the most perfidious means of depoliticizing women.

Ilda Londo's paper "Career, Beauty and Motherhood: Representation of Gender Role in Women Magazines in Albania" continues in this vein. Specialized women's magazines, such as the Albanian "Jeta", in correspondence with existing social trends and cultural norms, customarily mythologize female beauty and family life and thus perpetuate stereotypes, missing the opportunity to bring to their business ideology a little more creativity and a little less prejudice about their female audience.

Glocalization: Commodification of People, Trafficking in Humans, Crime Pages

"The male discursive machine", which seems to condition even the production of magazines for women, while producing the female/feminine in its full cultural

25 In contemporary cultural theory the term glocalization means at the same time embracing global phenomena and negating them by localization.

meaning, cannot simply be dismantled and abandoned. In order to fully understand the issue, it is essential to understand the contradictions that drive the complex mechanism of mutuality of media images and social realities. Mima Simić in the article "Sex and Globalization of Female Teenagehood: Croatian and Serbian Teen Magazines of the New Era" now redirects our attention from the roles of traditional norms and values of closed national/ethnic identities to the "sudden entrance of capitalism on the territory of former Yugoslav republics in the 1990s." If discourse on regionalism is performative, creating and legitimizing new borders, then the previous articles provided us with pieces to the puzzle for their recognition: the stereotyping of gender roles in media is a symptom and an index of the regional ideological confusion which characterizes the internal and regional antagonisms of transitional societies. The media policy behind a genderized representation of social life is provided by patriarchal ideology and symbolically allows only the figure of the victim and mother to be worthy of absolute respect. Amid political, economic and cultural turbulence, when it appears that only national, ethnic, religious and regional divisions are of crucial importance, the media in all countries enact the symbolic annihilation of women, as if the fueling of a misogynic atmosphere is an essential precondition for articulating national identity. Otherwise, it seems, women would simply be allowed to be public and outspoken, thus upsetting social relationships and beliefs. On the other hand, all countries in the region face the challenge of Europeanization. This occasionally, in truly peculiar ways, manifests itself through the hybridization of human rights discourses and nationalistic or Balkanistic discourses. And as with all other countries, those of South East Europe have also been subjected to globalization processes. With the transition to a market-driven economy, local media fell into a crevice between insular policies of identity and the essential futility of returning to traditional communities and values which have long since succumbed to commodification and the hegemonic aspirations of capitalism.

The consequences of these globalizing processes also affect the ways in which media portray women. This is not just about the increasing prevalence of the "beauty myth," but also about the way that different media outlets and media contents socialize for inequality. Mima Simić, in her analysis of teen magazines as typical phenomena of the marketing of media production, observes very well how the transformation from socialist to capitalist society is especially painful for teenage girls for whom teen magazines are often the only source of information on sexuality, and which, under the guise of advice given by female experts, implement the technology of genderizing girls in line with the existing patriarchal heterosexual matrix. This too is certainly a glocalization phenomenon; it is well known that globalization capitalism is no longer necessarily related to heterosexual patriarchy. It is adept at turning into commodities even post-modern fluid identities (such as queer identity), which were thought to be an efficient form of resistance to rigid policies of identity.

However, not only teen magazines reflect the marketing of communication structures in a post-socialist context. Many male and female authors in transitional countries and elsewhere in the world have already observed that a characteristic phenomenon in the region is an intensive tabloidization of media. This phenomenon certainly deserves a broader explanation and critical analysis, but from the viewpoint of gender portrayal and stereotyping, nothing too unexpected is happening here. If, according to contemporary power theories, the relationship between prohibition and desire is a revolving one, it shouldn't be surprising that the tabloidization of serious press makes pornography a form of rapid satisfaction. Tabloids, as a significant product of the entrance of capitalism into the markets of transitional countries, should be examined against the background of ethnonationalistic policies which emphasize the gender patriarchal norm as the only possible behavior for girls and women. Ivana Kronja's analysis ("Politics as Porn: the pornographic representation of women in Serbian tabloids and its role in politics") relates with the utmost precision political and misogynic hate speech with the intensive pornographization of Serbian tabloids. The

combination of the political and the pornographic on an ideological plane confirms both the values and norms of authoritarian patriarchy and glocalization itself. The acceptance of the media industry's global conviction that only sex sells products well, blended with radical nationalistic political belief, logically manifests itself as trash, pornography, misogyny.

The last two articles add another dimension to the political "eros" of countries in transition: crime pages and human trafficking. Bobi Badarevski analyzes the discursive reality of trafficking in women and from this extremely important current issue tries to demonstrate the paradoxes of stereotyping, which affect equally the issue's local and global dimensions:

> "It is possible now to pose a question on the production of gender stereotypes, in particular stereotypes of women in the context of media production. If the production of stereotypes is a composite part of human cognitive capacities, and such can be avoided, what remains to be understood is the working of all available representations along power relations as a process that produces asymmetric representations of referents. This mechanism of redistribution of representation and stereotypes as a type of cognition is paradoxical: the production of stereotypes cannot be avoided, and stereotypes have negative social impact. This paradox is obvious in stereotype analyses: although the production of stereotypes is something natural, there are no 'natural' stereotypes since they are signifying representations under a particular power interpretation."

Stereotyping as a technology of social subordination in discourse on trafficking in women, as Badarevski's critical analysis demonstrates, acts in several ways through at least three vectors of power: a) through a prohibition perspective it brings ambiguity into discourse on trafficking in women between prostitution and trafficking; b) the language of Western-style international campaigns gives this perspective the dimension of a concealed message through which wealthy countries,

shifting the problem into someone else's backyard (e.g. former eastern bloc countries) and stereotypically portraying victims of trafficking, are implicitly saying that poor women in the Third World shouldn't even be dreaming of a better life in the West and that the best they can do is to stay home; feminization of migration is thus added to this discourse; and c) in the language of Macedonian press (and those of other South East European countries as well), by adopting the legal discourse of internationally defined trafficking in humans, there follows an ethnicization of both victims and traffickers.

The last case analysis, in which the victim is not a woman, but a man, is essentially an excellent point for a broad spectrum of precisely determined feminizations and masculinizations of media in transition. Sanja Sarnavka and Suzana Kunac ("Interpretation of Newspaper Interpretations of a Murder") researched and interpreted how newspapers interpret an uncommon murder (murders are always "uncommon" in our understanding, but cases of the husband being murdered by the wife are much rarer than the other way around)! This is a very concrete analysis of how the news discourse of crime pages functions when manipulated. The paper is important not only as an even more concrete penetration into the functioning of media discourse in conditions which were described, fragment by fragment, by all of our other critical analyses of gender discourse in print media, but also as a breakdown of glocalization processes with reference to another interesting regional phenomenon - local tycoons. This figure of masculinity is also considerably adjusted to the local conditions and is portrayed as the *pater familias* and, along with economic and business power, at the same time advertises the most local values of family and local respectability.

Thus the circle closes: the professional norm of "objective information" definitely remains suspicious. The sidelining of women from social happenings, the media promotion of male authorities only (exclusively - male politicians, male criminals, male local tycoons, so that newspapers sometimes suggest mafia newsletters), the

patriarchal ideology of motherhood, objectification, pornography and violence, all together gives sufficient reason to raise the issue of the real potentials of democratic change. The task of this collection of papers in this sense is to try and help in understanding, explaining, and also changing the hegemonic hierarchy of gender regimes and creating a foundation for changes in media programs and business policy. But this will require the readiness of the media themselves to reexamine their roles.

The diagnosis made for the media images of gender roles and the attribution of responsibility to media for the contrived processes of democratization in society are at the same time a public appeal for us to imagine a different democratic structure of public communication- for all of us together to imagine the potential of an emancipated media. The development of widespread, genuine media literacy might contribute to the evolution from a commercially-driven media to one with an ideal above all to uphold human rights.

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UNRISD, Gender Mainstreaming: A Study of Efforts by the UNDP, the World Bank and the ILO to Institutional Gender Issues available at www.undp.org/gender

Translated into English by Kanita Halilović

MEDIA DISCOURSE AS A MALE DOMAIN: GENDER REPRESENTATION IN THE DAILY NEWSPAPERS OF BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA, CROATIA AND SERBIA

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Abstract

Media can be seen as "(social) technologies of gender" that are, as Liesbet van Zoonen says, "central sites at which discursive negotiation over gender takes place.[1]" The choice of a regional and not a national framework for this research on media discourse on gender is driven by a belief that gender is transnational in scope, the representational modes and patterns being used are similar in the three countries and that despite different socio-political environments, there is no significant differences in their media discourses on gender. This research tries to analyze (dis)similarities, gender (in) sensitivity, old or new modes of gender representation in daily newspapers in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia and Serbia, whether each provides a balanced portrayal of the diverse lives of women and their contribution to today's dynamic societies, and the politics of representation that drive decisions to reinforce or challenge stereotyped images of women and gender roles. The questions this paper tries to answer are: How are gender messages being encoded in the daily newspapers of these three countries? What kind of stereotyped and alternative meanings of gender or gender representation can be found in these texts?

Keywords:

media discourse on gender, daily newspapers, content analysis, representation, diversity of gender roles, women, marginalization, silencing, sidelining

1 Van Zoonen, Liesbet "A 'New' Paradigm?", in: *McQuail, Denis (ed.), McQuail's Reader in Mass Communication Theory*, SAGE Publications, 2002, p. 57.

Introduction

Over the last fifteen years, all of South East Europe- especially the former Yugoslav republics- was marked by turbulent political, economic and cultural transformations. The transitions of these societies were characterized by wars, post-conflict crises, transitions from socialist to market economies, and more recently, new challenges in joining the European Union. During this period, political transformation was also followed by an interest and need for the redefinitions of cultural and national values. However, as the political theorist Vlasta Jalušić[2] recognizes, common to the countries of Central and Eastern Europe is an "*absence of the topic of gender and gender politics from the theories of transformation*". For example, in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia and Serbia (the three countries that are the focus of our research) gender issues were sidelined, while national and international attention was focused on the importance of ethnic, regional and religious equality.[3] Issues such as the representation of women and

2 Jalušić, Vlasta "*Gender and Political Transformation in Central and Eastern Europe*", in: *Losers of the 'Wende' winners of the EU:participation of women:chances and effects of the transformation process*, Vienna, 1998, p. 1.

3 See for example BH Report to CEDAW; source: Bakšić Muftić, Jasna, Cooperation with Global Rights "Social context for the enjoyment of women's human rights in B&H" in: *NGO's Shadow Report On The Implementation of CEDAW And Women's Human Rights In Bosnia and Herzegovina Presented to the UN CADAW Committee*, Global Rights Partners for Justice, 2004, p. 64.

their position in society had to wait until the issues of nationhood were resolved.[4] In the many former-Yugoslav wars over the past decades, gender identities/roles were extremely polarized, with men perceived as warriors and women as mothers and victims, reinforcing traditional power relations and social and cultural roles and norms.

In periods of major upheaval, as in the post-war transitional societies of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia and Serbia, the status of women is further undermined:

> *"Indeed, the experience of other countries in transition demonstrates that in any massive economic transformation, including the transition to a market economy, the social position of women almost always deteriorates, while discrimination against women generally increases".*[5]

In the former socialist Yugoslavia, from 1945 to 1990, the emancipation of women was perceived within a general socialist framework as a part of the emancipation of the working class. Many of the economic and social rights of women were related to their status as workers.[6] In Bosnia and Herzegovina, for example,

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4 For example, "The gender dimension of the conflict in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the differential impact the conflict has on women and men was not a political priority and therefore not a part of the political analysis or of the final peace settlement. These are serious missed opportunities to readress gender inequalities and ensure sustainable human development." Many questions remain unresolved: rape as a war crime, women and increased violence during and after the war, the rights of refuges (the majority of whom are women, elderly and children), women's rights and property and return issues, and the trafficking of women, in Lithander, Anna (ed.). *Entering the Peace: A Gender Perspective to Dayton- and Beyond.* Kvina Till Kvinna Foundation, 2000, p. 26.

5 NGO's Shadow Report On the Implementation of CEDAW and Women's Human Rights in Bosnia and Herzegovina, presented to the UN CADAW Committee , Global Rights Partners for Justice, 2004, p. 69.

6 See more on this subject in Lithander, Anna (ed.). *Entering the Peace: A Gender Perspective to Dayton- and Beyond.* Kvina Till Kvinna Foundation, 2000, pp. 17-18; also see *Policy Frames and Implementation Problems: The Case of Gender Mainstreaming* (State of Art and Mapping of Competencies in Slovenia), MAGEEQ, Peace Institute, Ljubljana, 2003, p. 5. http://www.mageq.net/docs/slovenia.pdf, last visited July 2006.

women made important progress (in the 1970s the percentage of female delegates in governments increased to 30%, women made up only 40% of the unemployed, and they were free to plan their families, etc.). As has been recognized in various studies,[7] the first free elections in 1990 in ex-Yugoslav republics brought to power nationalistic political parties with conservative policies and strong religious influences which advocated traditional patriarchal values in which the place of women was "at home". This was immediately visible in the decrease in the number of female government representatives (from 24% in 1986 to 3% in 1990). Some feminists recognized this as the formation of a new role and task for women: "to regenerate nations through motherhood"[8]

Hence, despite the rapid advancement of 'democratization' and growing 'civil society' in the region the last decade and a half, women remain underrepresented in parliaments, and absent in decision-making bodies and leadership positions. Like in many post-conflict societies, political, social and economic reconstruction strategies have become the domains of men.

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7 Lithander, Anna (ed.) *Entering the Peace: A Gender Perspective to Dayton- and Beyond*. Kvina Till Kvinna Foundation, 2000, p. 18

8 Cynthia, Cockburn. (from "The Space between Us", 1998) quoted in Lithander, Anna (ed.) *Entering the Peace: A Gender Perspective to Dayton- and Beyond*, Kvina Till Kvinna Foundation, 2000, p. 18.

For more on media discourse and the production of glorified motherhood in Croatia, the concepts of "Mother Nurturer", "Mother Earth", etc. see also Trejić, Esma. *Representation of Croatian Women in the Media*. RUS Workshop, Centre for Russian and East European Studies, 2002, http://www.media-diversity.org/resource%20categories/gender%20and%20sexuality.htm, last visited July 2006,

Some information can be found for the Serbian context in Minić, Danica "Nacija i pol u patriotskom spotu BK televizije" in *Genero*, (special issue Milivojević, Snježana (ed.) "Women and Medias"), Centar za ženske studije, Beograd, 2004

The traditional polarization of gender roles and identities has been reinforced by still dominant gender stereotypes, also reflected in the media. The purpose of this study was to try to provide a systematic analysis and description of the prevailing modes of representation and construction of gender identities, roles and relationships in daily newspapers in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia and Serbia.[9] In other words, we wanted to discover the dominant models, mechanisms and strategies of media representation and construction of gender in these three countries. Additionally, the goal was to investigate any similarities or differences in gender representation in the daily newspapers of the three countries.

In Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia and Serbia, comprehensive research projects on gender and media issues are rare, although there are some exceptions.[10] Systematic content analysis research projects are generally lacking - we were able to identify only a handful while preparing for this study. It is exactly this general lack of systematic and comprehensive research on gender representation in the media in these societies, and especially in Bosnia and Herzegovina, that has made us conduct this study, hoping that it will at least partly fill the existing gap.[11]

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9 For information on the general media landscape of these three countries see: *Media Sustainability Index*; IREX, 2005; *Media Landscape of South East Europe*, ACCESS-Sofia Foundation, 2003; Malović, Stjepan & Vilović, Gordana "Tabloidisation Conquers Quality Press", in: Spassov, Orlin (ed.). *Quality Press in South East Europe*, Sofia 2004, pp. 93-107; Matić, Jovanka. "Problems facing Quality Press Development in Serbia", in: Spassov, Orlin (ed.) *Quality Press in South East Europe*, Sofia 2004, pp. 254-276.

10 For example an NGO B.a.b.e from Zagreb is coordinating (since 2004) a regional project "EQWIVA", - regional action for Equal visibility whose aim is to establish professional gender sensitized media environment (in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Serbia and Montenegro).

11 For Bosnia and Herzegovina we only found these reports: *Gender jednakost i ravnopravnost u BiH*, (Gender Media Watch 2002 -Bosnia and Herzegovina), Gender Centers of FBiH and RS Governments, IBHI-B&H, 2002 and *Monitoring printanih medija u BiH* (*Zastupljenost i način predstavljanja žena u medijima*), Udruženje BH novinari, July 2005.

This also means that our study is purely descriptive in it nature and its goal, and we make no attempt and hold no ambition to make any inferences about the causes or potential consequences of certain modes of gender representation in the analyzed newspapers. At this early stage of the development of media and gender studies in the region, we believe that offering a systematic insight into the nature of media content in relation to gender representation is a worthwhile effort. We leave future studies to focus on relationships, causes and consequences, and hope that this study will be of some use for such subsequent research projects.

Why media and why gender?

Monitoring the media's portrayal of women and finding strategies to challenge gender stereotyping in the media have been long standing concerns of gender and media activists throughout the world. The common agreement among these two groups is that the dominant notions about gender (as well as about race, or ethnicity, and other factors of differentiations among people) are strongly dependent on the media, since the process of representation is central to the media itself. While the media represents topics, events, situations, persons and groups it attributes to them a certain meaning. In relation to the process of representation, stereotyping (whether gender based, racial or ethnical) is precisely an attempt to fix 'the preferred' meaning. Although potentially having an important role to play in challenging the fixed meanings, the media has more often been part of the problem rather than the solution.

Gender as a social category is a social construct, which suggests that the creation of gender discourse is not completed or fixed, but a process, and one in which the

media play an important role. Nevertheless we do not presume media distortion of reality because we accept gender to be socially constructed, which entails renouncing the media's distortion of either the "real" gender or the "real" meaning of gender[12] that exists "out there." We don't come from the reflective approach, in which language functions like a mirror, reflecting true meaning as it already exists in the world. Nor do we adopt intentionalism, which postulates that the speaker, author or subject imposes his/her own unique meaning on the world through language with words that mean what the author intends them to mean. We espouse instead the constructivist approach and recognize the social character of language operating as a representational system central to the processes by which meaning is produced[13] and as such offering a preferred reading or meaning. In the ongoing construction of gender discourse, media can be seen as "*(social) technologies of gender*"[14] that are, as Liesbet van Zoonen says, "*central sites at which discursive negotiation over gender takes place*".[15]

Fairclough, for example, posits three areas of analysis of media texts to understand the relation of communication processes to socio-cultural environments - *representations*, *identities*, and *relations* - which have to do with the following:

1. *How is the world (events, relationships, etc.) represented?*
2. *What identities are set up for those involved in the programme of the story (reporters, audiences, 'third parties' referred to or interviewed)?*

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12 Van Zoonen, Liesbet "A žNew' Paradigm?" in: *McQuail, Denis (ed.) McQuail's Reader in Mass Communication Theory*, SAGE Publications, 2002, p.51.

13 See Hall, Stuart "Representation, Meaning and Language" in: Hall, Stuart (ed.). *Representation: Cultural Representations and Signifying Practicies*, London: Sage Publications, 1997, pp. 15-29.

14 Van Zoonen, Liesbet "A 'New' Paradigm?" in: McQuail, Denis (ed.) *McQuail's Reader in Mass Communication Theory*, SAGE Publications, 2002, p. 57.

15 Van Zoonen, Liesbet "A 'New' Paradigm?" in: McQuail, Denis (ed.) *McQuail's Reader in Mass Communication Theory*, SAGE Publications, 2002, p. 57.

Dosta, who transforms debts into shares and protects company assets, doesn't say anything while softly smiling from the page, and is denied the chance to speak about her own success.

Along with Dosta, in these two dailies we have other local women who appear in professional capacities, such as Gordana Dukić, President of the RTRS Steering Board, Jasmila Žbanić, Film Director, and BiH Ambassador to USA Bisera Turković. Yet the articles in which they appear are smaller than articles featuring Susan Johnson, Condoleezza Rice or Carla del Ponte. Although Bisera Turković (*Avaz*, March 24) establishes cooperation with the Mexican President, Žbanić appeals to citizens not to buy pirate copies of the movie "Grbavica" and destroy the BiH movie industry (*Avaz*, March 27), and Dukić announces a new law on radio and television (*Glas*, March 25 and 26), it seems that these women's professional engagement is neither on the front pages of newspapers, nor is it given too much attention. It doesn't address state or ethnic/entity issues, and the photographs of these women are small and inconspicuous, with the optimism radiating from the photographs of foreign professional women missing entirely.

If we compare the photograph of Ambassador Turković, which is so small that you almost can't see her, and the photograph of Rosemary di Carlo, Deputy State Under-Secretary (*Avaz*, March 21), or that of Susan Johnson who "issues an order", "bans" and "reminds" and using these directives imposes herself as a woman who possesses power and strength, we observe a vast difference. Rosemary is slightly frowning, which indicates deep thinking and concern, and in the picture we see that she has raised a determined index finger, and her mouth is in a grimace as if she is speaking. In the article she "states", "assesses", "agrees", and these typically and traditionally "male" acts of speech, i.e. assertions, reflect her equality in the male world. Just one article above, in the same issue of *Avaz*, we also see the smiling Ursula Plasnik, head of Austrian diplomacy, portraying a self-confident Austrian politician although she isn't quoted directly.

With regard to Carla Del Ponte, who appears often in both dailies, along with always being discursively positioned as a powerful woman, to some extent she is also shrouded in secrecy. The job of Del Ponte, Chief Prosecutor of the Hague Tribunal, is to actively seek war crimes suspects and give conditions to the governments of former Yugoslav countries for their entry into Europe. In the article "Del Ponte coming to Belgrade today for Ratko Mladić" (Avaz, March 29), there is an interesting photograph in which we see Del Ponte, or more precisely her profile, with short blonde hair and dark glasses in the right half of the photograph, while in the left half one can see a huge shadow of her head. The mystery surrounding Carla Del Ponte has to do with her job of pursuing Ratko Mladić and Radovan Karadžić, which is also reflected metaphorically in the analysis article[26].

Western women politicians have little in common with our women politicians, as far as the journalists, photographers and public relations experts are concerned who package their statements in a frame of optimism and self-confidence. In terms of the representation of women in media, rather than their real existences, it seems that female politicians in both BiH entities for different reasons are the most marginally and poorly presented, and as such don't pose a threat to the sovereignty and primacy of "ethnically conscious" male colleagues whose arrogance, greasy lapels, fatness and unwashed hair are forgiven much more easily.

Rather slowly and still marginally, stories about women who are neither politicians nor prosecutors, but who project their strength through what they have, are entering BiH discourse. Examples of such kinds of hybrid discourse are reflected in an article about Mejra Šiljdedić, "the only woman driving instructor in Una-Sana Canton". Mejra is positioned as the protagonist; she "successfully trained 25

26 Characteristic metaphors that indicate mystery in this article are "the noose is tightening", "strong pressure on official Belgrade", "circle of movement being narrowed down", as well as phrases such as "part of conclusions from the secret report", "exposed network", etc.

candidates in the last seven months", from early childhood she has had a rather unusual "love for automobiles and driving", "she trains candidates" and "does her job well", but in the last paragraph of the article we have her unavoidable family situation. Mejra, along with everything mentioned, has "a lot of support from her husband and two daughters" and "it means a lot to her that they have understanding for her specific job". This means that along with their professionally successful side, media like to put BiH women in a family context, however irrelevant that may be for the initial purpose of the article's message.

Hybridization of rural and urban discourse was interesting in the article "Both a three-legged-stool and an armchair" (*Glas*, March 27), which sends a specific message. The article title is questionable, as a three-legged-stool is a metaphor for village, passiveness, sitting low, while an armchair is related to management, power, sitting on a higher level, even urban life. The article talks about the work of the association "Naša žena" (Our Woman), whose purpose is "to draw the woman, after heavy farming work and household chores, out of the house and to teach her to be involved in contemporary social currents". This is a rare article in which the agentive and undisputed role of the woman as the subject is reflected. Although the article contains numerous presuppositions (e.g. a village woman is not involved in contemporary social currents, a woman is constantly tied to the house, she is unemployed…), they pave the way for the positioning of different declarative actions and the presence of active verbs- semantically speaking, verbs that denote activity.

Women from the village are positioned in this article as protagonists who firmly hold the destinies of their families in their hands. Despite hard work, unambiguously articulated using expressive modality as the modality of the speaker's evaluation of truth[27], one sentence says that the woman knows she "must" work, but she "can" also

27 Fairclough, N. *Language and Power*. Longman, London, 1989.

do other things, help others, and work on her own emancipation by developing relationships of solidarity and togetherness with other women in the community.

The role of starlet and showbiz star is extremely complex to interpret. If we only take the body and if we reduce the woman and how she expresses herself to the superficial expression of her body we risk accepting a misogynistic view; for the woman in the Balkans the body has been the primary way of expressing herself and drawing attention in some jobs in show business. Therefore, bearing in mind our context, in a broader analysis of representation of women through their bodily attributes, we mustn't neglect the fact that women have most certainly used this to gain some power, to impose themselves, to prove and show themselves, simply because they were denied other means. If we look at the entertainment section of Glas on March 21, we see headlines such as "Nude on table", "World's most beautiful breasts", two application forms for the contests Miss Intercontinental BiH, Miss Barbie and Miss Teen, and "Girl who made her dreams come true". The article "Nude on table" is interesting in that the author alleges that these "shots will additionally delight Siena's (Siena Miller) fans when they see the actress in a lesbian embrace with a model".

On the same page we have stories about other famous people, who are spoken about positively, in the context of family and motherhood (Katie Holmes, Reese Witherspoon, Angelina Jolie), and negatively, in the context of eccentricity, lesbianism and as being man-eaters (Sienna Miller, Rebecca Loos and Paris Hilton). In the show business section of the *Glas* of March 27 we have issues such as marriages of actresses from the show "Desperate Housewives" ("Wedding three times"), Susan Sarandon's wish "to enlarge her breasts" ("Hollywood gives, but it also takes") and the "shocking" behavior of Kate Moss "who started drinking at six in the afternoon and finished at three in the afternoon the next day" ("Binge shocks eye-witnesses"). Marriage and breast enlargement are accepted matter-of-factly, but the "improper" behavior of Kate Moss, who "shocks the public by her unrestrained and childish behavior", is problematic and according to the male/female journalist, it's inappropriate for women.

Showbiz pages in *Avaz* don't lag behind in nude women and messages in article headlines such as "Look at me, I'm a woman without hips" and "Pamela loves and hates her breasts" (*Avaz*, March 24).

Such a large number of women on pages of this kind, accompanied by articles which break them up into body parts or prescribe moral norms of conduct, suggests these sections facilitate their readers' general belief that they will have more prominence if they are beautiful and provocative. It additionally reinforces belief in the primacy and inviolability of the family, which are all characteristics of a conservative society. It's noteworthy that practically only foreign stars are presented in this context, while local stars, with the exception of some folk stars or Severina, are presented more in the context of their work, talent, and less in the context of an explicitly nude or seductive body. Bearing in mind the tendency of any conservative discourse to have double standards, we see that it's desirable for foreign stars to be nude and sexually explicit, while the sexuality of local stars is somewhat suppressed and implicit.

The position of the old woman in the Balkans is more powerful than the position of the young woman because of her status as mother and pillar of the family, as women often outlive men in Bosnian villages. Such Bosnian women are interesting for newspaper articles because they possess longevity, knowledge and experience, but they are never presented as explicitly subversive and, conditionally speaking, by conveying traditional values, they perpetuate the status quo. A typical example of a story of this kind is the article "They married off Šaha Skopljak when she was 15 to the honorable Fehim" (*Avaz*, April 3). This kind of use of passive tense is interesting because it says that someone married off Šaha without consulting her, which was customary in Bosnian society in the early 20th century, and even before that, to which numerous love-songs testify. The occasion for the story is Šaha's 102nd birthday, but in the foreground is her narrative of a woman who didn't go to public school but rather a Muslim primary school, who had a good marriage and never "fenced words

with her husband", who remembers the war and the involvement of the partisans, and gave birth to 10 children. These memories of Šaha's are presented in indirect speech, conveyed by the journalist. Šaha speaks directly when she talks about her birth and education, but also when she sends a message to young women "that she likes to see a young girl nicely dressed up and smart, because women should be tidy". Šaha, with her lifetime of memories and activities, who could give young girls some other message besides looking nice, presuming that a lot of experience has accumulated in her 100 years, doesn't say anything else because the male or female journalist doesn't ask her. Instead of positioning Šaha as a powerful and strong Bosnian woman, the journalist, as a result of learned practice, ideologically places her in a passive frame of a woman "who still sees to thread a needle", without mentioning some other segments from "her chest full of enlightening life stories". Although such articles presuppose wisdom, the household and family situation is the primary pattern for stories about old women. No one asks these women about important issues such as socialization, growing up, feeding the family while the husband is off at war, heading the household or some other agentive positioning. Once again we find confirmation of the ethno-patriarchal pattern of behavior.

Concluding remarks

Based on the results of this study, we can see that the representation of women in the top dailies in Bosnia-Herzegovina is very poor. This is clear even from a cursory examination of *Dnevni Avaz* and *Glas Srpske*, while an empirical analysis produced really devastating results - we found the largest percentage of women as protagonists in pictures on the last newspaper pages and in sections about

entertainment and show business. The results unambiguously showed that the woman is almost entirely ignored in most socially relevant categories of public life. Ethnicity and gender are also in a relationship which is not exclusive, but rather symptomatic: the woman almost doesn't exist in public ethnic discourse. She is given a minor place in the specific role of a victim or of ensuring the renewal of the ethnic body. Therefore, when we look at ethnic gender presentation in the framework of the general media situation, we see a picture that confirms an unequal distribution of importance and influence. In practice this means that women in the context of a dominant ethnic ideology occupied positions on crime pages, as victims of war crimes or other crimes.

Moreover, since the role of mother is crucial for the continuation of the species, there is a tendency to show the woman as a mother of children, usually as part of the "battle against the white plague", with an implicit quantitative comparison among ethnic groups. Patriarchal division of gender roles in BiH existed long before ethnic conflicts, but an additional problem that we now have is that in an atmosphere of constant fear (which underlies all ethnic conflicts) emphasis is placed on ethnic dogmatic ideology, which results in additional emphasis on conservative gender values. Ethnic ideology, which generally lacks any notions real democracy or tolerance, and here especially is saturated with conservative norms, definitely doesn't provide a possible way out of pre-defined gender roles; it offers the woman only the position of mother, and the man the position of bearer and defender of the value system of the ethnic society.

The nature of the interrelation between ethnicity and patriarchy is such that it only increases over time, and it's clear that none of the acute problems facing women can be solved without truly breaking this circle. Addressing the issue of gender roles and redefining them in Bosnian-Herzegovinian society will probably be slow and difficult; the same can be said of the issue of ethnic relations. It's certain that these mutually dependent processes will have to occur in parallel.

When we speak about what is specifically ethnic and gender-related in our discourse, we may refer to research done in America which says that "papers give women more attention in ethnically diverse communities"[28]. The fact is that because BiH is separated along ethnic lines, it is not an ethnically diverse society, and that one can definitely feel the insufficient representation of one-half of its population. Even when women are represented, we have seen what subjective positions they occupy. Perhaps if BiH became a truly ethnically diverse and more tolerant society, some things would change. In this sense, the situation at the level of media of representation is discouraging. However we cannot forget other levels, such as the non-governmental sector, the involvement of women in politics and business, and the growing number of educated women.

We come to the conclusion that in our daily papers women are dominant only on the last page, which is symbolic of their position in society. How can one expect women to maintain their self-confidence if they are told that this is where they belong? Such stereotyping of a woman's character is not just an objective observation of her characteristics, but rather a rationalization of the current state of affairs in a society where the woman is supported in her "feminine form" based on her "innate" qualities, while everything else is considered superfluous.

There is nothing in new in stating that in our society male dominance in all relevant fields is maintained through a conservative and patriarchal set of values, whose bearers are not just men, but women as well. Yet how can we overcome this? While it may seem that even women themselves are not doing enough to exercise their rights, the matter is hardly so simple: from positions of social power, the only messages sent present the man as defender of the social and cultural values of the community.

28 Armstrong, C. "Papers Give Women More Attention in Ethnically Diverse Communities", *Newspaper Research Journal*, 23(4), 2002, pp.81-85.

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WOMEN IN POLITICS IN BULGARIAN NEWSPAPERS: POST- FEMINISM IN A POST-TOTALITARIAN SOCIETY

By Madeline DANOVA

Abstract

The present paper explores the ways in which post-feminist media representations of women in politics as private consumers rather than public figures with a mission have appeared in Bulgarian newspapers during the first decade of the twenty-first century. The paper claims, however, that these do not reflect a backlash against second-wave/academic feminism- which never took root in post-totalitarian Bulgarian society- but rather dominant post-modern globalizing discourse. Moreover, in the politics of representation, it can be viewed as opposed to the emerging neo-nationalist media discourse of right-wing nationalism. It is in this sense the article claims that post-feminism in post-totalitarian societies can be seen as being redefined to embrace simultaneously two opposing tendencies. On one hand, it can be interpreted as the reshifting of feminism to face the immediate realities of a deep-rooted patriarchal value system of society and on the other, as a discourse promoted mostly by the right-wing entrepreneurship of developing capitalism, in turn supported vigorously by the corporate media, for a society with more strictly defined gender boundaries. The analysed material comes from two Bulgarian newspapers, Ataka, a paper published by the recently founded nationalistic party in Bulgaria and Trud, the paper with the largest readership in the country. An attempt is made to throw additional light on the clash between the two ideological discourses of nationalism and globalization, which seem to underwrite the media politics of the two newspapers. This reveals how gender can serve as a dividing line between the "homogenous empty time of the nation" and the "global village" of post-modernity. The article searches also for a possible explanation of the uneasy spread of democracy in Eastern Europe and tries to shed more light on the surviving modes of identity in the Balkans.

Keywords:

women in politics, post-feminism, representational politics, mass media images of women, gender and nationalism, feminism and post-totalitarian societies, feminism and globalization, women in Bulgarian newspapers

Introduction

Though of an essentially ambiguous nature, the 1989 revolutions in Eastern Europe have undoubtedly brought about radical transformations in the political and cultural spaces of the region. One of the most prominent changes seems to have been the re-defining of gender roles in these fledgling civil societies, together with the re-formulation of existing myths about women. The society of developed socialism denied the existence of gender divisions and proclaimed women as its "equal members", a position which both challenged the traditional patriarchal structures and at the same time strengthened them further by imposing totalitarian ideological mechanisms that denied the civil rights of all citizens. This situation has very paradoxically been continued in the new democratic societies, where feminism in its Western form of a civil rights movement, with its emancipatory politics and ideal of a common sisterhood for all women, has been discredited exactly because by nature it appears another totalizing discourse. Instead, these societies seem to find themselves in a "postfeminist" moment. It is an era when women, although given the possibility to choose from a larger set of role models and identities, have paradoxically withdrawn from an activist social position into a position that seems to have reinstated some of the most persistent myths and stereotypes of patriarchy. That, of course, may seem to embrace the stance of "retrograde post-feminists" who are in favour of the traditional feminine identity. But as the present paper will try to show post-feminism as promoted by the mass

media can also serve as an antidote to the rising nationalistic discourse in post-totalitarian societies.

Another unexpected result of the end of the Cold War and the spread of democracy and the global market economy in the post-totalitarian societies after 1989 was that instead of seeing a move beyond nationalism and the parochialism of ethnic identities, in the words of Michael Ignatieff, "the repressed has returned, and its name is nationalism,"[1] or what can be called neo-nationalism or ethno-nationalism.[2] The resurgence of extreme neo- and ethno-nationalisms in some of the post-totalitarian societies, especially in South-Eastern Europe has further eroded the place of women in public life, since nationalism in general does not recognize the right of women to participate in public life. As Yuval-Davis claims, within the project of nationalism women are usually prescribed the role of birth-givers to good citizens[3], which hardly leaves any possibility for them to become part of the public sphere.

For a decade or so Bulgaria seemed exempt from the evils of neo or right-wing nationalism until the last parliamentary elections of 2005, when a party calling itself "Ataka" (Attack), with a clearly expressed nationalistic platform, became the fourth major force in Bulgarian politics. Moreover, after the first three parties established a coalition and formed a government, it has become the party with the largest group of opposition parliamentary members (MPs) in the Bulgarian Parliament.

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1 Ignatieff, Michael. *Blood and Belonging: Journeys into the New Nationalism.* London: Chatto & Windus, 1993, p.5.

2 The major name among the scholars who have tried to define ethno-nationalism is Walker Connor who pointed the sharp difference between this type of nationalism and the more traditional one as early as the 1970s; his definition has been enlarged nowadays to include neo-nationalism as well. See Connor, Walker. *Ethnonationalism: The Quest for Understanding.* Princeton University Press, Princeton, 1993 as well as Conversi, Daniele (ed.) *Ethnonationalism in the Contemporary World: Walker Connor and the Study of Nationalism.* Routledge, New York, 2002

3 See Yuval-Davis, N. *Gender and Nation.* SAGE, London, 1997, p. 7-8.

The present paper will explore whether these political developments have led to a further strengthening of gender stereotypes in Bulgarian society, especially in relation to women in politics, and how they have been reflected and perpetuated by the mass media and in particular by the press. To answer these questions it will look closer at the way women in politics have been portrayed in the mass media in Bulgaria. More particularly, it will examine how two Bulgarian newspapers, the newspaper of the new party, *Ataka*, and one of the most popular newspapers in the country, *Trud*, have portrayed them since the last elections.

There is no doubt that today the mass media are the "major cultural and ideological force standing in a dominant position with respect to the way in which social relations and political problems are defined and the production and transformation of popular ideologies in the audience addressed."[4] In this sense media discourse is often viewed as in an intermediate relation to ideology and power in society. Therefore, it is natural to expect that the members of society who want to enter the field of social power will rely on the media for generating and maintaining discourses that will place them firmly within the sphere of politics. To reveal the way this has been done in Bulgaria, the present study uses media content analysis as developed by Gerbner within the theoretical frame of Van Dijk's discourse theory. The findings are then analysed within the framework of the ideological and symbolic uses of gender, the gender stereotypes upheld by society and the gender myths used in the construction and re-formulation of social identities. Of major importance in this analysis are the theoretical findings of gender studies concerning the role of women as key participants in the ideological reproduction of the community and as transmitters of its culture. Culture here is seen not as a homogeneous and fixed one but as "a rich resource, usually full of internal contradictions, which is used selectively

4 See Hall, Stuart *The Hard Road to Renewal*. Verso, London, 1988, p.118.

by different social agents in various social projects within specific power relations and political discourse in and outside the collectivity."[5]

Women in Power and the Media

It is obvious then that the media discourse will be of immediate relation to the current political and socio-cultural situation in the country both as a shaper and reflector of it. Therefore, before we take a closer look at the two newspapers and offer a detailed content analysis, a broader outline of the situation of women in power in Bulgaria is necessary. The issue is multi-faceted but it seems that for the purposes of the present study the most important aspect is whether there is an equal access of women to positions of power in Bulgarian politics. The second focus of attention for the present study is the way women who have gained such access, not only in Bulgaria but worldwide, are portrayed in the Bulgarian media.

Women and Bulgarian Politics

In order to answer the first question I have used statistical data. The survey that seems most relevant to the present topic is the UN Human Development Report for 2005, which compares the Human Development Index (HDI)[6] in 177

5 See Yuval-Davis, N. *Gender and Nation.* SAGE, London, 1997, p. 43

6 HDI measures the enlargement of people's choices to lead a long and healthy life, to acquire knowledge, and to have access to the resources needed for a decent standard of living while preserving them for the future generations.

countries. In this report Bulgaria ranks 55. In comparison to the HDI from the previous reports there is a steady overall improvement in the life of people all over the world, but the countries from the regions outside Europe are clearly legging behind. A very interesting development was observed in the countries of Eastern Europe. After a dramatic drop of the HDI in 1989, which continued up to 1995, there has since been a steady rise. These countries have reached the level of 1989 in 2003, a trend that has no analogue in the other countries surveyed, where neither a rise nor steady development was observed.

One of the components in the measurement of human development is the so-called Gender-Related Development Index (GRDI). The smaller the GRDI is in comparison to the HDI, the greater the inequality between the sexes in the country is.

For Bulgaria the ratio between the two is 0.806 to 0.807, which puts the country in 45th place in the world. The most important measurement in this component is the Gender Empowerment Measure (GEM), which shows how actively women participate in the political and the economic life of the country. Bulgaria ranks 29 according to GEM. The most important components of GEM are the percentage of women in Parliament, the percentage of female legislators, senior officials and managers, the percentage of female professional and technical workers as well as the ratio of estimated female to male-earned income. The Report gives figures based on the general elections in Bulgaria held in 2001, which put an unprecedented number of women in positions of power. In the previous Parliament 26.3% of the MPs were women, the highest number of women MPs in the overall history of Bulgaria, which according to the Report puts the country in 25th place in the world. The 2005 elections, however, decreased that percentage to 21.2%. What is interesting is that in comparison to the previous elections the number of women who were on the election ballots increased dramatically (see Table 1).

***Table 1.* - Men and women in Bulgarian Parliament**[7]

Political Parties	2001				2005			
	Men on election ballots	Women on election ballots	Members elected	Women elected	Men on election ballots	Women on election ballots	Members elected	Women elected
Bulgarian Socialist Party	372	67	47	7	360	101	82	16
National Movement Simeon II	241	79	97	37	296	193	53	22
United Democratic Forces	405	84	15	2	347	70	20	4
Movement for Rights and Freedoms	108	13	21	1	347	87	34	3
Democrats for a Strong Bulgaria			27	7	293	121	17	4
Bulgarian National Union			11	2	324	103	13	1
"The New Time" Movement			11	3				
Independent			11	4				
Ataka Movement					212	38	21	1
Total			240	63 (26.3%)			240	51 (21.2%)

Some of the analysts explain the drop in the number of women MPs by the fact that the party of the ex-monarch Simeon Sax-Coburg-Gotha won fewer places in this Parliament. I, however, think that the reason is rather that the Ataka Movement won 21 seats to become the forth force in the political life of the country.

Another indicator for the participation of women in the political process is their participation in government. Out of the 18 ministers (including the Prime Minister) in the Bulgarian Government only three are women, including one of the three Deputy Prime Ministers. There are three Deputy Prime Ministers due to the fact that there are

7 UN Human Development Report for 2005

three parties within the ruling coalition. Out of the 15 ministries (there is one minister without a ministry, the Minister for European Questions, who is a woman, Meglena Kuneva, and the Deputy Prime Minister Emel Etem, who has no political cabinet) and their 64 Deputy Ministers only 23 are women, with three ministries entirely without women in their political cabinets.

Media Discourses and Representations of Women - An Overview

After this summarized picture of the participation of women in politics in Bulgaria it is time to look at the way the media represent women leaders. The attempt on the part of the ex-monarch Simon Sax-Kobur-Gotha, who won the 2001 elections and became Prime Minister, to put Bulgaria more in line with the global tendency to give more and more power to women[8] led, in fact, to the media's adoption of representational politics favouring the consumer lifestyle of women in power. Just one of the many examples from this period was an interview published in the 23-rd issue of one of the weekly broadsheets in Bulgaria, the newspaper Cash. The topic of the interview of two female MPs was…fashion. The headline reads, "Beautiful doesn't always mean stupid" and is about two females MPs at the time, Juliana Doncheva, an ex-model and Eugenia Zhivkova, a fashion designer.[9]

This kind of representation suggests that a similar process in post-feminism that has emerged in Western democracies in the last decade or so has taken root in Bulgaria. The term 'post-feminism' was, in fact, coined in the 1980s by the *New York Times Magazine*, which featured an article entitled "Voices from the Post-Feminist

8 According to the European standards the percentage of women in power should be around 30%, which was almost reached with the 26.3% of women MPs in the previous Parliament.

9 See в-к "Кеш", бр. 23, 2001, "Сблъсък: Юлияна Дончева: Красива невинаги значи глупава; Евгения Живкова: Стига сме се мразили".

Generation," in its October 17, 1982 issue[10]. It was during the 1990s and the first years of the twenty-first century, however, that the term enjoyed growing popularity. Since this first use of the term the media- especially in the US- have ceaselessly insisted that the world has entered a postfeminist age.While some of the current readings of post-feminism construct it as a marginal or subversive discourse, it can also be used against women. August Tarrier observes in her article "Bare-Naked Ladies: The Bad Girls of the Postfeminist Nineties" that "in some instances the 'postfeminist' identity offered to women simply perpetuates patriarchy's dehumanization of them"[11]. In one of the most thorough examinations of the different facets of contemporary post-feminism Sarah Projansky delineates five interrelated categories of postfeminist discourse: linear postfeminism, backlash postfeminism, equality and choice postfeminism, (hetero)sex-positive postfeminism, and finally male postfeminism, all of which are defined against feminism, which is seen by post-feminists as monolithic, archaic, binary, antisexual and most significantly unproductive within the experience of contemporary women[12].

More interesting for the purposes of the present paper are the studies which investigate the very close relationship between post-feminism and the media. Scholars such as Mary Douglas Vavrus define post-feminism as a new form of feminism promoted by the media. In her book *Postfeminist News* she states, "Media representation of political women in the 1990s promotes a form of post-feminism: a revision of feminism that encourages women's private, consumer lifestyles rather than

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10 See Bolotin, Susan. "Voices from the Post-Feminist Generation", *New York Times Magazine*, October 17, 1982, Sunday Late City Final Edition, Section 6, Page 29, Column 1.

11 *See Electronic Book Review: Writing Post-Feminism*, Issue 3, 1 September, 1996, guest edited by Elisabeth Joyce and Gay Lynn Crossley.

12 See Projansky, Sarah. *Watching Rape: Film and Television in Postfeminist Culture*. New York: NYU P, 2001.

cultivating a desire for public life and political activism."[13] This is in fact an argument about "representational politics - the politics that govern how discourses about particular women are constituted on television and on the pages of newspapers, magazines, and books."[14] The present study accepts this hypothesis and tries to investigate whether things have changed in the representation of women in power in the Bulgarian media after the new parliamentary elections in 2005.

The media culture in Bulgaria is very diverse but I have chosen to look closer at the two newspapers *Trud* and *Ataka* because these newspapers remain major forces in shaping public opinion and are two of the most accessible sources of information. My choice was also party determined by my belief that with the advent of the extreme nationalistic party "Ataka" the carefully wrought balance in Bulgarian society among different ethnic groups has been tilted. This, in turn, has significantly influenced the chances of women for equal access to power. Moreover, there is a marked difference in the two types of newspapers. The two newspapers have been chosen as standing in clear opposition as far as their readership is concerned. *Ataka* is a strictly partisan one, representative of the party politics of a nationalistic movement. On the other hand, *Trud*, the newspaper with the largest circulation in Bulgaria, is not explicitly affiliated to any of the governing parties in Bulgaria and because it is foreign-owned can be seen as part of the current processes of globalization. *Trud* represents also a very interesting "glocal" event, combining the characteristics of a serious broad-sheet with the features of a sensational paper; very serious features and newsroom work appear alongside a barely dressed beauty on its 32nd page.

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13 See Vavrus, Mary Douglas. *Postfeminist News: Political Women in Media Culture*. SUNY Press, Albany, 2002, p. 2.

14 Vavrus, opt. cit., p. 2.

The content analysis of the issues of the two newspapers from 13 March to 17 April 2006 has opened serious grounds for debate. I have studied both the front-page contents of the comparable issues looking at the same time for features, news and interviews of women in politics. I have paid closer attention to the visual materials related to female politicians as well.

The front-page agenda of the two newspapers reveal very clearly the partisan nature of *Ataka* and the more neutral and objective coverage of events of *Trud*. The layout of the former's front page displays a repetitive pattern of selectivity and a one-man cult. In each of the thirty issues studied, there are four major topics:

A. Domestic issues

1. The members of the Movement for Rights and Freedoms (MRF, the party of the ethnic Turks in Bulgaria) as the embodiment of government corruption and ethnic discrimination against the Bulgarians:
   - out of the thirty issues analyzed the front pages of twenty-six contain headlines in which MRF is accused of political crimes and crimes against the Bulgarian nation
   - one of the leaders of MRF, Emel Etem, who is also one of the three Deputy Prime Ministers, is often used as the most appropriate target for criticism and ridicule, a question that will be discussed in details further down.
2. The Roma people as criminals:
   - there are eighteen front-page headlines accusing gypsies of rape, theft, mugging, homicide, etc.

B. Foreign issues

1. The USA as the major force of evil in world affairs and the US 'invasion' of Bulgaria resulting from the agreement for the use of Bulgarian military bases by the US army:
   - sixteen headlines are devoted to US foreign policy in the Balkans and throughout the world.

- the name that is used as the symbol of that policy and the country as a whole is, quite expectedly, the name of the Secretary of State, Condoleezza Rice. She is ridiculed and personally held responsible for the supposed loss of national sovereignty of Bulgarians. These articles and cartoons will be analyzed separately.

2. The Party-leader's, Volen Siderov, ascendance to power:
   - Signaled by the militant voice of his editorial comments appearing in each of the issues analysed.

The front pages of the thirty issues of *Trud* show a marked difference compared to those of *Ataka*. They are extremely diverse, following daily events without any clear priorities in terms of thematic organization. There is a balance between a domestic and foreign focus and although there is a tendency towards more sensational headlines, there are no apparent obsessions with any of the day's topics.

Moreover, when read side by side with *Ataka*'s front pages they underline even more strongly the ultimate bias of the latter. The fact that *Ataka* stays focused on four clear-cut nationalistic/party topics becomes obvious when compared to the news agenda of *Trud*. Although an event happened 60 days ago, *Ataka* will not let go of it if it serves its ideological bias. A clear example of this is a horrendous murder case in Bulgaria from mid-February in which two teenage sisters were brutally raped and even more brutally killed afterwards. Although it is a great tragedy that shocked the nation, the papers will return to this unsolved murder only when new evidence has resurfaced. *Ataka* keeps a running tally of the number of days the murder has remained unsolved because of the possibility hinted at by some official sources that the murderers were either minorities or connected in one way or another to the ruling parties.

Against this broader background revealed by the content analysis of the front pages of the two papers, I have carried out an in-depth analysis of the way women and particularly women in politics have been represented in the two newspapers.

Very generally the pieces about women found in the two newspapers can be grouped in at least four pairs according to formal criteria:

1. Pieces about women in power and pieces about celebrities and ordinary women.
2. Pieces about Bulgarian women in power and women in power from foreign countries.
3. Pieces that are neutral and objective in tone and pieces with strong negative connotations.
4. Long interviews or features and short news items

It is obvious that although I looked at any piece about women, my primary interest was towards those devoted to women in politics. I can say that as a whole in both newspapers there were very few feature articles and news pieces about women politicians, female legislators, senior women officials and managers, while the pieces about celebrities and even ordinary women well outnumbered them. That stands in clear contrast to the boom of articles about female politicians after the previous elections, partly due to the unprecedented number of women who entered politics in 2001.

As I already mentioned, the "Ataka" movement clearly does not favour women in public roles judging from its parliamentary representation- recently, the only woman MP from *Ataka* has left the group and become independent. In the pages of its newspaper, *Ataka*, women appear almost always on the last page, where they are the topic of about eighty per cent of the articles. There is a clear tendency on the pages of Ataka for all of these women to be cast in stereotypical roles:

1. either as the objects of the male gaze: "JLo, the woman with the sexiest butt", 6 April; "Audrey Hepburn, the most beautiful woman of all times", 8 April; The top list of Russian *Playboy*, 25 March;
2. or as wives and mothers: "Angelina Jolie considers giving birth in Africa", 10 April; "Slobo left Lepa Brena after thirty years of marriage", 6 April; "People

with higher education will make babies" accompanied by a photograph which reads, "A woman with higher education and her baby", 13 April;

3. or as violent and unruly persons: "Naomi arrested after beating up her housekeeper", 1 April; "Britney Spears is threatened with having her baby forcibly taken from her", 13 April; "Galka (a singer) from "Karizma" (one of the most successful duos in Bulgarian pop music) threatened to sue her roommates" (a reference to the singer's participation in the TV show "Big Brother"), 4 April.

If, however, a woman appears on the front page of the newspaper, it is again in a very stereotypical way. A very good example is in the 12 April issue of the newspaper, with two belly-dancers occupying half of the front page of the paper under a headline which reads, "Zlatograd is under the threat of turkifying". This is one of the most persistent myths in Bulgaria, as probably elsewhere in Europe: the myth of the Oriental woman as part of a harem of belly-dancing girls. *Ataka* uses it as a scarecrow held in front of the Bulgarian nation, a nation which appears to be under the threat of a new Ottoman yoke.

While the headlines of the articles in Trud devoted to women celebrities share many of these stereotypes, the impression is of a more balanced attitude because of the greater diversity of topics discussed in the newspaper. The visual material in *Trud*, however, is much more explicit in re-enforcing the stereotypes of women - topless girls, fashion models, etc.

The "Ataka" Newspaper and Women in Politics

The way in which women in power appear on the pages of the two newspapers can be seen as a counterpoint to the way celebrities are represented. In the thirty issues of *Ataka* there is only one long article about a woman in politics: in the 1 April issue of the newspaper there is a lengthy interview on two pages with Denitsa

Gadgeva, Deputy Head of the Youth Union of the Ataka Movement. Naturally, the image the interview builds is an entirely positive one, stressing moral principles in politics such as integrity, bravery, open-mindedness, compassion, devotion and belief in ideals. Unfortunately, this is the only time that a Bulgarian woman appears on the commentary page of the newspaper in the role of a moral guide and guardian for the rest of the people.

The other cases when Bulgarian female politicians are the objects of discussion are almost all negative. As has already been mentioned, the most conspicuous example is the case with Emel Etem, the Deputy Prime Minister from MRF. In the 16 March issue there is a caricature of Etem, who is also a Minister for disasters and catastrophes, blaming her for the disastrous situation after the spring floods. It represents her not as a political figure but casts her in one of the stereotypical roles of housewives- cleaning. The caption under the caricature reads, "Do I have to *clean* the rivers?"[15] So it seems that she is to be blamed for the refusal to perform her "home" duties rather than her public duties as a Deputy Prime Minister.

There are two large articles devoted to her in the 18th -of- March issue and the 14th-of- April issue which are entirely negative. This can be explained with the crusade Ataka has been leading against MRF, but what is more important for the present study is the fact that the MRF becomes represented entirely through the image of a woman, the Deputy Leader of the party, not its leader.

This pattern is repeated in the case of the other arch-enemy of Ataka, the US government. Condoleezza Rice, the State Secretary, has become a stock figure for the journalists on the paper. Her name appears in 10 headlines together with her picture. Thus in one-third of the issues she becomes the embodiment of the USA and the scapegoat for the anti-Americanists in Ataka. Moreover, there is always a negative

15 Italics are mine.

connotation in the pieces, even when it is to report that she had to sleep on the floor of her plane on her way to Baghdad (5 April, p.9). There is even a caricature of Rice in the 3 April issue. In that way both Etem and Rice become substitutes for the leaders of their parties and governments, relieving part of the negative pressure and almost suggesting that these governments are partly unsuccessful because they rely on women leaders. That stands in clear contrast to the female celebrities from the last page of the newspaper, who, as has already been discussed, appear in their stereotypical roles of lovers and mothers.

The exaggerated and evil image of Rice created on the pages of *Ataka* is countered by the materials in the *Trud* issues from the same dates. In them the American State Secretary does not occupy a center-stage as in *Ataka*. If her name is mentioned at all, it is strictly to the point, just elucidating the news event.

The same is valid for any of the other figures of women politicians from Europe. A case deserving mention is the scandal surrounding European MP Els de Groen, who in a lengthy article in the 4 April issue of *Ataka* is accused of connections with Albanian drug-dealers. Thus we can conclude that it matters little whether politicians are Bulgarian women or foreigners, the image created on the pages of the newspaper is predominantly negative, serving entirely the partisan ends of the editors/publishers, downplaying the role women have in public life and especially in politics. The paper clearly exaggerates the responsibilities of the female members of governments, vilifying them and denying them the opportunity to be respectable members of the polity.

One more case deserves mention from the pages of *Ataka*. This is the article devoted to the April Uprising from 1876 that led to the Liberation of Bulgaria from Ottoman rule. The newspaper published a series of pieces written by a witness to the events to commemorate the 130 anniversary of the uprising. One of the pieces described a memorable moment when a school-teacher, Raina Popgeorgieva, who had embroidered the flag for the uprising, joined the troops. She has remained in Bulgarian history as Raina, the Princess, a name given to her by her contemporaries who

marveled at her bravery and devotion to the cause of the revolution. The article the newspaper has decided to publish, however, presents her bravery as nothing more than a passionate infatuation with the leader of the uprising and denigrates her courage.

"Trud" Newspaper and Women in Politics

The case with *Trud* is different. Although there are not many long articles devoted to women in politics, women politicians have a very clear presence on the pages of the newspaper. Many more names of women politicians and women in power are mentioned in comparison to *Ataka*. Some of them are criticized, as is the case with Emel Etem, whose caricature appears in the 12th-of- April issue. Unlike the *Ataka* caricature, she is ridiculed for suspected corruption in dealing with the reconstruction funding as any politician in this position would be and not for refusing to fulfill her duties as a "housewife". The caption puns on the image of the sandbags used for reinforcing the dykes during the floods and the financial assistance offered by the different institutions and reads, "The bags with money - here, the bags with sand - there."

In most cases, however, women politicians are represented as competent leaders, engaged in important public activities. A good example is the 11th-of-April issue in which there is a whole page devoted to the image of Bulgaria in the European Union and the meeting of the Bulgarian Foreign Minister with our ambassadors in Europe. Out of the five ambassadors discussed two are women and both are praised for their work with the foreign media. Our ambassador to Germany, Meglena Plugchieva, is, in fact, the only one of the ambassadors interviewed at length about the questions discussed in the material.

Still, the only lengthy article about a woman politician shifts attention again to consumerism. In the 9-of-April issue there is a long article about the high school graduation proms of the daughters and sons of MPs. The set piece is about Nadezhda Mihailova, the ex-leader of the Union of Democratic Forces and her younger daughter.

The image created is that of a mother and a woman with taste who tries to set the fashion standards among the mothers of the graduates. The caption reads, "Nadezhda and her daughter Nina in fervour over the prom. All that's left is to buy the shoes and the purse for prom night". This suggests that the representational politics of the newspaper are strongly influenced by post-feminism, the representation of women of power as part of the consumer culture of the twenty-first century rather than as the nation-leaders and opinion-leaders they should be.

A fact that confirms this observation comes from the same issue of the paper. While one of the most distinguished women politicians of the country is cast into a role that is as far as possible from her political career, an ordinary woman, Grandma Nedyalka, from Plovdiv becomes the main character of the leading party news piece. The article about the party convention of the Union of Democratic Forces bears the headline: "Grandma Nedyalka reconciles party leaders."[16] The paradox is that the two pictures beneath this

headline are of the two rival leaders, Petar Stoyanov, the ex-President of Bulgaria and present leader of the party and Nadezhda Mihailova, the ex-leader of the party. The reason for choosing such a headline may be its sensationalism but the choice of photographs returns to the real subject of the highlighted news. The fact, however, that Nadezhda Mihailova is not mentioned in the headline can be seen as still further proof that women politicians are often denied a proper place in public life. It must be noted, however, that the tone of the article is gender-neutral and even favours Mihailova's readiness to support the leader of her party in his battle for the presidency.

Another example of the more objective tone of the *Trud* newspaper is their choice of a figure of a woman in politics from the past, which stands in clear contrast to that

16 Unlike the popular understanding, the term 'grandma' does not carry a negative connotation in Bulgarian, it is rather a term denoting reverence as is the case here.

of the *Ataka* newspaper. *Trud*'s choice is Luidmilla Zhivkova, the daughter of the former communist leader of Bulgaria, Todor Zhivkov. There is a series of articles devoted to her which represent her as a person less in favour with those who blindly followed domestic party politics than with dissenters to the communist regime. These were people who in one way or another tried to be part of the early globalising cultural tendencies of the 1970s and 1980s and who tried to go beyond the restricted political horizon of domestic communism. And there is no hint of any 'woman's' infatuation as in the case of Raina Popgeorgieva in the *Ataka* newspaper.

Comparing this attitude with that of the *Ataka* newspaper shows also how gender can become a dividing line between the closed space of the national context and the open, fluid space of the a global context. Women within the project of neo- or ethno-nationalism are denied access to the public sphere since nationalism relies on the revival of patriarchy as the glorious past of the *ethnie*[17], which forms the basis of the nation. Even when women do have a role in the political life of a country they are ridiculed or their achievements negated to such an extent that they stop being positive role models for their peers. Within the global context women in politics are accepted as equal to men but still fall prey to the myths of womanhood.

Final Remarks

In the mainstream publications in Bulgaria women politicians continue to be more often represented as beautiful, elegant women, devoted mothers and wives, favouring

17 I use Anthony Smith's term and his definition of ethno-nationalism in his *Nationalism and Modernism*.

their private images over their images as public figures. This kind of representational politics is very much in line with what in Western societies has become a core value of post-feminism. But although it denies some of the basic tenets of Western feminism, in post-totalitarian societies it does offer women a place in the public life of society since it quite often implies all the equality feminism is (wrongly) supposed to have brought to the "global village" of the twenty-first century. It insists, however, on the preservation of qualities explicitly connected to femininity, which do perpetuate gender stereotypes and cultural myths of patriarchy. Thus, in post-totalitarian societies, post-feminism becomes a complex, multi-layered phenomenon with often shifting connotations.

That multi-faceted nature of post-feminism is underwritten by the re-emergence of neo-nationalism in post-totalitarian societies as the analysis of *Ataka* newspaper has shown. In this nationalistic, partisan newspaper the role of women as politicians has strongly been downgraded, vilifying them as the major cause of the weakening of the national ideals of the country. In this sense reinstating patriarchal gender roles becomes one of the major objectives of the representational politics of the newspaper. This tendency can be seen as a major difference between the way Western democracies have developed and the uneasy spread of democracy in South-Eastern European societies, where gender has become the marker of true or false allegiances. An interesting parallel would be a comparison between the stereotypes conceived by the nationalistic press in Bulgaria and the publications of nationalist parties in other European countries. This, however, falls far beyond the scope of the present paper and remains a possible continuation of the present project in the future.

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CAREER, BEAUTY AND MOTHERHOOD: REPRESENTATION OF GENDER ROLE IN WOMEN MAGAZINES IN ALBANIA

By Ilda LONDO

Abstract

This paper examines the way women are portrayed in women magazines in Albania, focusing on three main elements: career, beauty, and motherhood. Assuming that the views, perceptions, and figures portrayed in the media reflect the existing trends, perceptions, and culture in society on gender roles, the analysis tries to identify the ways in which media discourses and representations of women and gender roles and relations correspond to wider social norms, stereotypes and practices. The article claims that the portrayal of women in these magazines underlies the importance of achieving femininity, and consequently self-esteem, mainly through beauty, while downplaying other important aspects in a woman's life, such as professional achievements or the struggle for gender equality. Not only does beauty appear to be a typical feminine value and aim;, motherhood is also upheld as an ultimate goal, without which a woman's life would be incomplete. The portrayal of family life and roles with regard to motherhood explores no other possibility than the values of the traditional family model, thus reinforcing existing societal norms and stereotypes. Hence, the combination of the myths of beauty and the family confines the models of successful women in these magazines, and consequently their readers, to the pursuit of beautification and motherhood. This leaves careers and other social achievements an option rather than an necessity for one's self-actualization, thus reflecting and reinforcing existing social norms and stereotypes.

Keywords:

Women representation, women in society, gender roles, women and career, beauty myth, consumerism, beautification, motherhood, women and family

Introduction

The transition of Albania from communism to the present political system brought about profound social, economic, political, and cultural changes. The re-definition of a woman's role in society and her identity has inevitably been part of these overall changes. However, in spite of women having reassuming the femininity previously denied them during communism, progress in gender equality in the country is not particularly significant. Gender inequality is evident in government, employment, income, domestic violence, human trafficking, and career opportunities.[1] The prevailing mentality and existing stereotypes in society have certainly had their own roles in this overall trend.

The ways in which media covers gender-related issues reflects the existing social mentality and stereotypes, and can either reinforce or transform them. Actually, the media is one of the most efficient ways of raising awareness of the need for achieving gender equality and improving women's position in society. In this context, analyzing the discourse produced by the media on the portrayal of women in society, and comparing it to that of males, can reveal the way in which media contributes to the public opinion on women. In order to be able to draw some conclusions in this regard an analysis on the texts produced in a women's magazine was carried out, identifying the main trends in its portrayals of women. These trends were compared to those in

1 SEDA& UNDP, *Human Development Report on Albania: Policies and Development for the poor and women in Albania*, 2005, p.15.

the portrayals of men. The discourse used in these cases was viewed in terms of its language, thematic content and visual elements. The main questions that the analysis attempted to answer were: (1) How do these texts depict women? (2) How are gender roles represented? (3) What is the general mood described in women's magazines? (4) How could specific forms of women and gender representation contribute to the overall mentality towards women in Albania?

The importance of this article lies in the almost total lack of similar studies on gender and women representation in Albanian media. Studies of this nature so far have focused either on the general situation of women or quantitative analyses of their media coverage, but rarely on both. There is no in-depth analysis of the discourse used by the media when it comes to women, their representations, and gender roles. In this regard, this paper will attempt to explore only a small part of the discourse produced about women, aiming to see how media discourses, representations of women and gender roles and relations correspond with wider social norms, stereotypes and practices.

In order to provide a wider picture, the analysis starts with a description of the present overall situation of women in Albanian society, the main problems they face and the efforts that have been made to address these problems. The paper then follows with a detailed textual analysis of the discourse used in a women's magazine, focusing on three prevailing aspects: women and career, women and beauty, and women and family, all in the hope of describing the image offered by specialized women magazines.

Women in Albanian society

After 1990 Albanian society has experienced dramatic economic, political, cultural, and social changes. Women's education, emancipation, and employment ranked among the priorities of the Communist regime. This system, however, neither

made any efforts to relieve women of some of their responsibilities in the family, nor fought against gender stereotypes. In addition, the emphasis on equal membership rather than recognition of gender divisions resulted in a weakening of gender definitions and the loss of a sense of what being a woman means.[2]

The advent of the new political system brought a redefinition of gender roles and consequently changes to the situation of women. Although women were able to rediscover their sense of femininity and redefine a part of their identity they had lost, the social guarantees they had enjoyed before vanished. One of the most illustrative aspects is the comparison of present employment to that before 1990. The employment rate of women during the communist regime was almost 100%. The implementation of economic reforms affected the entire society, yet women were more vulnerable in this regard, given that many of them worked in factories and enterprises that were shut down due to inefficiency[3]. Although women represent 51% of the economically active population[4], their participation in the labour market comprises only 39%.[5]

These stark gender-based differences in the labour market not only pertain to the employment rate, but also to wages, positions, and entrepreneurship. More specifically, statistics show that women's salaries in the non-agriculture sector were 27% lower than those of men[6]. In addition, a UNICEF report in 2000 revealed that 60% of employers preferred to employ males over females.[7] Even in those cases

2 *Ibid*, p.75.

3 *Ibid*, p.67.

4 INSTAT,"Femra dhe meshkuj," quoted in *Social Watch Report 2005: Roars and Whispers: Gender and Poverty, promises versus action*, p. 153.

5 *Ibid.*

6 SEDA& UNDP, Human Development Report on Albania: Policies and Development for the poor and women in Albania, 2005, p. 67.

7 UNICEF, MICS Report, 2000, quoted in SEDA& UNDP, *Human Development Report on Albania: Policies and Development for the poor and women in Albania*, 2005, p. 68.

where women are employed, they experience greater difficulties in reaching high positions compared to their male counterparts. For example, women have a rather satisfactory level of employment in ministries and other state institutions, almost 40%; however, few of them occupy high-ranking positions. Similarly, when it comes to the private sector, the presence of women is very low: only 17% of registered businesses are managed by females.

The situation of women is somewhat better when it comes to education. Women in Albania are among the most significant contributors to education: they constitute 64% of elementary education staff, more than half of secondary education staff, and 40% of university staff.[10] The most disturbing trend in this regard is the school dropout rate, which is significantly higher for girls than boys. The ratio of dropout rate between girls and boys is 9 to 1, and 90% of the dropout cases among girls occur because their families consider it inappropriate or dangerous for girls to continue their education.[11]

Existing gender stereotypes and their reinforcement are also part of the reason why women have limited participation and representation in the sphere of politics. When looking at the comparative data of female members of parliament from the first parliament mandate, it is interesting to note that female participation in 2002 was comparable to that of 1945, while the highest representation occurred under socialism,

8 Ibid.

9 SEDA& UNDP, *Human Development Report on Albania: Policies and Development for the poor and women in Albania*, 2005, p. 69.

10 INSTAT,"Femra dhe meshkuj", quoted in SEDA& UNDP, *Human Development Report on Albania: Policies and Development for the poor and women in Albania*, 2005, p. 73.

11 Shoqata Zhvillimi i Arsimit - Brakstisja e shkolles, shkaqet rekomandime, 2001, quoted in SEDA& UNDP, *Human Development Report on Albania: Policies and Development for the poor and women in Albania*, 2005, p.73.

between 1970 and 1990[12]. The present Parliament counts 10 women out of 140 MPS, including the Speaker of the Parliament. However, the few cases of public debate on this issue have revealed an inauspicious atmosphere for women seeking to enter politics.[13] These reasons include the lack of any specific legislation on quota or representation in politics, awareness or public debate in Albanian society, a patriarchal mentality, and a lack of awareness and desire on the part of women themselves.

Civil society has been particularly concerned with improving female participation. Among the nearly 100 NGOs presently working in this area, coordination and communication between organizations has improved[14]. Apart from civil society, the government and parliament have also shown good will in improving women's situation and increasing their participation. So far legislation that addresses women includes the new Family Code, which brought some fundamental changes, the Constitution of Albania, which forbids any kind of discrimination in this regard, the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women, ratified in 1993, some articles in both the Civil and Penal Codes, and the Labour Code. In addition, the law on Gender Equality was approved, which grants equal access and opportunities in every area to both genders[15].

In addition to legislation, government, and civil society, media also plays a crucial role in improving the perception, representation, and participation of women

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12 INSTAT,"Femra dhe meshkuj", quoted in SEDA& UNDP, *Human Development Report on Albania: Policies and Development for the poor and women in Albania*, 2005, p. 67

13 "Politikisht indiferente apo te frikesuara nga politika", Tema, July 9, 2004.

14 OSF, 90+10 Gruaja ne tranzicionin post komunist, national conference, 2001, quoted in SEDA& UNDP, *Human Development Report on Albania: Policies and Development for the poor and women in Albania*, 2005, p.83

15 SEDA& UNDP, *Human Development Report on Albania: Policies and Development for the poor and women in Albania*, 2005, pp. 62-63.

in society and decision-making. However, it has not fulfilled its role in a satisfactory manner. For example, one of the most severe problems affecting women is domestic violence, and research has found that sensational coverage of this category of news often has the opposite effect of justifying and supporting violence. "In the Albanian press the victim is punished, while the offender is set free."[16] By its own nature, media will reflect (and can even reinforce) the existing stereotypes in a society. The present media context counts a high number of female journalists, but only a negligible percentage occupies leading positions. Consequently, it is essential to understand how the media influences the position of women in Albanian society. Although Albania has an extravagant number of print and electronic media, no publications of an academic, scientific or theoretical nature on women and/or the feminist movement have ever been published in the country. The only publications that target women are entertainments, and rarely, if at all, address the social role and position of women.

Women in Women's Magazines

In order to better understand the portrayal of women in the media, and, consequently, deconstruct the existing context that brought the emergence of these portrayals, I will focus my analysis on the three latest issues of "Jeta" magazine. Given the lack of publications of a "serious" nature, it becomes even more important to see what the existing media has to offer in this regard. There are very few publications

16 Grupi Shqiptar i Grave ne Media,"Media dhe trafiku", Ilar, Tirana, 2002, p.12.

clearly aimed exclusively at women, be they of a mixed nature, including various topics, like "Jeta", or niche publications, devoted to decoration, wedding arrangements, fashion, hair, etc. Some of the titles include "Femra Moderne" (Modern Female), "Shtepia Ideale" (Ideal Home,) "Hair," "Familja," (Family), etc. A slightly different version of the same category includes publications targeted at teenagers, mainly female teenagers, such as "Trendy," "Stil," etc. While there is a lack of regular documentation of existing publications in this area, these kinds of publications are hardly numerous.

"Jeta"[17] ("Life" in Albanian) is one of these; it is a monthly publication covering what supposedly interests women, namely fashion, beauty, women and careers, family, relations, etc. The magazine comes in a package with two smaller supplements, focusing on kitchen and decorating, respectively. Although it cannot be said this is among the most widespread and popular magazines[18] (or that its views are the most widespread and popular), it is one of the few magazines of its kind and one of the few publications whose entire staff is female. Because of this all-female perspective, it possibly yields more interesting findings. Even though this is magazine seeks more to entertain than inform its readers, it is interesting to examine its thematic content, how women are portrayed, the way gender roles permeate the text, and

17 "Jeta" is a monthly publication that first appeared in 2000. A glossy, 110-page magazine, the publication boasts a well-known photographer as its photo director and according to the last survey of media carried out by the Albanian Media Institute in 2002 had a circulation of 14,000 copies per issue, one of the highest among magazines of ang kind in the country. The magazine also claims that it is distributed abroad in Greece, Italy, Kosovo, Macedonia, Switzerland, USA, and Canada, targeting the Albanian diaspora present in these countries.

18 There are no exact data on the circulation of publications in the country and in the absence of legal requirements for their public declaration, there is no authority that monitors the copies they publish and sell.

through this how the texts reflect the social status and perception of gender issues and roles in Albanian society. The analysis consisted mainly of textual analysis within the theoretical framework of Van Dijk´s discourse theory. This method places an emphasis on ideology and cognition and their effect on the structure of the text as presented to the reader. In this framework, Van Dijk maintains that "the traditional study of media "effects" needs to be reformulated in terms of cognitive processes and representations."[19] Given the ability of media to reach vast numbers of people, specific attention should be paid to the discourse it produces, since this affects the mental models[20] of media users. "Through generalization and abstraction, however, such models at the same time may be the basis for the indirect control of social knowledge and attitudes shared by many or most group members."[21]

From this follows that a detailed analysis of the media discourse in women's magazines would provide an insight into the mental models that indirectly influence attitudes and ideologies. Having also in mind Bignell´s argument that a magazine is just a collection of signs[22] I will attempt to analyze the portrayal of women in this magazine, claiming that the manner in which this is done reveals the existing perceptions and stereotypes of women in society and further shapes their development and transformation.

The magazine in question has a rather definite structure in terms of sections and layout, with no radical transformation from one issue to the next. Some of its regular

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19 Van Dijk, Teun A. "The mass media today: discourses of domination or diversity", p. 31, available at http://www.discourses.org/OldArticles/The%20mass%20media%20today.pdf

20 I am using the term as used by Van Dijk: a representation of an experience, of an event observed, participated in, or read/heard by a social actor, Ibid, p. 31.

21 Ibid, p. 32.

22 Bignell, Jonathan "Media Semiotics: An introduction," p.78, quoted in Davies, Sian "Semiotic Analysis of Teenage Magazine Front Covers," available at http://www.aber.ac.uk/media/students/sid9901.html

sections cover a famous character, usually a female one, fashion, beauty, advice on relations, health, history, family, career, and tests. At first sight, it could be considered a distant cousin of Cosmopolitan due to similar thematic content. The monitoring included every article in the last three issues of the magazine, except for the sections on tests, fashion collections styled as an article but consisting mainly of photos, and horoscopes. Because the aim of the analysis was to pin down the main trends in portraying women using textual analysis, quantitative analysis was not central to this paper.

Rather, the content of the articles was analyzed in terms of the ways women and men were portrayed and the roles the magazine ascribed to each of through the language, chosen themes and quotes, and visual elements. Although it is difficult to describe the dominant topics in quantitative terms, and articles do not necessarily cover only one topic, the analysis will be divided into three sections, describing the way the magazine portrays women along three main lines: women and careers, women and beauty, and women as mothers.

Women and Careers

As expected from most publications of this nature, the pages of the magazine are filled with its own models of female success. This is evident both in the sections on career and those depicting famous personalities. Here successful women have the opportunity to showcase their careers and inspire readers with their looks, professionalism, lifestyle, and philosophy. After repeatedly reading these articles there is one recurring theme: more often than not, these characters are not only professional: above all they are beautiful. In fact, most of the leads in these articles start by extolling their good looks and emphasizing that if it were not for their

appearance we might never have heard of them in the first place. For example, an article on Ornela Bregu, a TV presenter, starts: "Once upon a time she was selected just because she was beautiful."[23] A bit further the same line of thought is more explanatory: "She was selected to stay side by side with Adi Krasta[24]. It was clear: she would just be a beautiful girl that had to smile sweetly and to recite what she had learnt by heart from the script from time to time".[25] This sentence is relevant not only to the case at hand, but rather presents the general perception of the role reserved for Albanian females in show business: that of beautiful dolls whose main job is to look good beside their male colleagues.

For the sake of fairness, the articles, being success stories, also describe the transformation of these "TV dolls" into more independent and self-made characters. However, their good looks and their indebtedness to them is ever-present and indelible. After the same person had succeeded she then fell out of favor, or better yet, out of shape: "Her looks would once more make important decisions for her. Ornela Bregu would no longer be part of the weekly show, because she had gained weight and was no longer fit for the camera."

In fact, beauty and successful career, with a few exceptions, are almost always the defining characteristics of the women portrayed in this magazine, suggesting that it is difficult to become famous and successful if you are not blessed with at least acceptable looks. "Being just beautiful is not sufficient to reach success. However, being a beautiful girl is certainly advantageous."[27] Apart from this almost causal relationship between appearance and success, it is also interesting to note that references to luck are also common. For example, a story on the career of a female

23 Skenderasi, Klaudeta "Ornela Bregu ne pole position", Jeta, September 2006, p. 13.

24 Adi Krasta is one of the most famous male TV/radio presenters in the country, who has hosted many well-known shows.

25 *Ibid.*

comedian attributes her first dramatic appearance in a film to the decision of the director rather than her own merits: "It was thanks to the eyes of a master like Anagnosti[28] that the tragic inherent in her comical characters was discovered."[29] The same actress stresses this as well, repeating the same words and expressing her gratitude for the good luck that befell her. In the same vein, a story on a ballerina who became a well-known showgirl describes her achievements as an established TV person as "built thanks to fate, toil, but also fragility."[30] This rather curious combination mentions first fate - a determination independent of the person -, her fatigue, and what would normally be a weakness in a person trying to make a career- yet one of the qualities usually associated with the female sex- her fragility. Apart from the little power left to her in determining her career, the mention of fate, or fortune, is indicative of existing perceptions of the sources of female success..

In addition, the accounts of the careers of successful women are surrounded by an air of suspicion, a lack of confidence both in themselves and from others, and insecurity, emanating above all from the subject's self-portrayal. "Nobody had believed that an article on a Serb restaurant opened in Tirana would have earned her the prize; she was the incredulous one at first."[31] Similarly: "Young, beautiful, and talented, she managed to convince everyone, including herself, that starting a TV adventure can be a coincidence, but continuing it and becoming its main figure, is not."[32]

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26 *Ibid.*

27 Drita Loshi,"Nje 24-vjecare ne kerkim te botes", Jeta, July 2006, p. 20.

28 Dhimiter Anagnosti is a very well-known movie director in Albania, who has won significant awards.

29 Arta Cano,"Kur te sfidon Marjana Kondi", Jeta, July 2006, p.56.

30 Arta Cano,"Sfida e re e Amit", Jeta, August 2006, p.15.

31 Fatjona Mejdini, "Briseida Mema, me teper se pasion" Jeta, September 2006, p. 22.

32 Arta Cano,"Sfida e re e Amit", Jeta, August 2006, p.13.

By contrast, the depictions of the few male characters and their careers in the magazine focus neither on their looks nor their fate. Rather than depending on *force majeure* or some divine intervention such as fortune, or carefully watching their weight in order to preserve their jobs, the males in this magazine go through spiritual crises, emerging stronger and more famous than before. In other cases, they have a very clear plan for their career, calculating every moment and factor that could affect their future.

More specifically, one of the stories is about a young singer, who started his career in a group and then went on as a solo act after some soul-searching that eventually transformed his music. His numerous quotes include reminiscences from this difficult period: "It was like I had delved into darkness and had lost any hopes of ever coming out. Nothing could ever relax me. It was impossible to seek peace, because I had no place to go to look for that."[33] His spiritual crisis and the way he overcame it and emerged as a different singer, and, arguably, a new man, is a rather long one; in fact, although quantitative analysis was not part of this paper, it can be said it was almost as long as the descriptions of weight changes, hair colour and styles, or wardrobe inventories of famous females. However, it is a very difficult to find in any of the articles on females something resembling a spiritual experience of this kind; or at least not of this length and depth. Consequently, the logical deduction after comparing these articles, although a somewhat extreme and oversimplified one, would be that women are locked within a materialistic world, where beauty and looks rule, with it never occurring to them there are other things in life.

The impression above is given again when comparing and contrasting two other stories: one on a female singer that used to be a model and the other on a male singer and composer. The occasion of the articles is the same: both are releasing a new song

33 Klaudeta Skenderasi,"Nje Sajmir tjeter", Jeta, August 2006, p.18.

and album. Hence, there would be no reason to think the content of these articles would differ substantially. However, the practice is rather different. The article on the male singer, married to a world-famous soprano and the son of famous lyric singers, reveals his plans to build his own identity and reveal his originality, in order to have the career he thinks he has sacrificed in the past for different reasons; his new album would be the first step. In order to succeed, the artist has been thinking and planning and calculating every detail, such as the timing of his return visits in the country, his appearances on stage, etc. The article is replete with such expressions as: "He had calculated everything," or "The plan would be so detailed that there would be no chance of failure."[34] As the article goes on, not only does the hero have a plan: he is an artist with a message: "His art should first of all have what he means to tell the world: a hidden message, but which is not too difficult to perceive."[35] In a few words, the article covers an interesting phase and comeback in the life of an artist, focusing solely on his art and his ambition to be part of the Albanian art scene again.

A female fellow recording artist also issued a new song, although not as meaningful and symbolic for her career. However, the article, constructed as an interview, apart from the first couple of initial questions on the song, shifts to the appearance of the singer, who also used to model, focusing on the change of her body shape. The first of a number of questions on the same topic is: "You have shot your video in a swimsuit. Did the weight gain bother you?" Sceptical of the singer´s confidence in her song, the journalist asks again "It means you feel at ease with your body, even though you´re not skinny as you used to be?", and then further investigates her gym habits, food preferences, and eventually returns to the issue with questions on her lost silhouette and past wardrobe.[36]

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34 Klaudeta Skenderasi, "Revolucioni alla Pirro," Jeta, July 2006, p.17.

35 *Ibid.*

36 Klaudeta Skenderasi, "Jek e jek me Ingridin" Jeta, August 2006, p. 29.

The contrast with the male singer is obvious: his process of maturing as an artist is offered to the reader in great detail. When it comes to the female singer, however, her change of body shape, eating habits, and wardrobe style is all the reader gets. Admittedly, these articles deal with two different kinds of singers and music, and artists that are at different stages of their careers: however, the stark contrast in thematic content is impossible to miss.

Albeit with the good intention of describing successful women, the articles fail to shift attention from the women's appearances to their careers: the good looks are the blessing and curse of females, something they cannot escape or live without. By contrast, the articles on males are totally free of any reference to their looks, leaving space for their professional life, occasionally mixed with some details from their private lives.

The Beauty Myth

In this context, the women in the magazine are not only constantly asked to be beautiful and seduce, they are also given standards of beauty they must meet in order to be considered worthy. As Greer points out: "Every woman knows that, regardless of all her other achievements, she is a failure if she is not beautiful."[37] In fact, it is difficult to find an article in the magazine that does not refer to a woman's look, be it her body, hair, make-up, dress, etc. By constant repetition and stressing of the necessity to look good and the benefits it has for women, the magazine is not in any way exempt from the notion of the beauty myth as articulated by Naomi Wolf:

37 Greer, Germaine "The Whole Woman," quoted in http://www.thefword.org.uk/features/2001/04/the_beauty_myth

> "We are in the midst of a violent backlash against feminism that uses images of female beauty as a political weapon against women's advancement: the beauty myth(...) As women released themselves from the feminine mystique of domesticity, the beauty myth took over its lost ground, expanding as it wanted to carry on its work of social control(...) The beauty myth tells a story: the quality called 'beauty' objectively and universally exists. Women must want to embody it and men must want to posses women who embody it"[38](...)

More specifically, the magazine has regular and lengthy sections covering beauty issues, offering advice and tips that might help any woman live up to the standards that comprise the beauty myth, such as defying ageing, achieving a sun-kissed look, putting on the right perfume and make-up, achieving the perfect body and hair, plastic surgery, having beautiful legs, etc. In this context, the magazine articles assume the authority of identifying what constitutes a beautiful woman and to reveal the secrets for becoming one. For example:

> "In order for female legs to be beautiful, they have to be fleshy, white, and slimmer on the lower part. The knee articulation should not be too protruding and the transition from the leg to the thigh must be a light, continuous arch."[39]

Hence, any woman whose legs do not fit the description is in real trouble. In fact, the same article suggests that any worry of lacking perfect legs according to this definition is more than legitimate: "Large and heavy calves are not beautiful and for this reason the worries of many women in this regard are fair."[40] In this way, the magazine's message is quite clear: there are specific standards you have to fulfil in

38 The author of this article cites authors mentioned in the book. Author's note.Wolf, Naomi "The Beauty Myth," quoted in http://www.thefword.org.uk/features/2001/04/the_beauty_myth

39 "Per kembe me te bukura," Jeta, September 2006, p. 60.

40 Ibid, p.61.

order to be considered a beautiful woman, and if you are not in this group, then you ought to try to be.

Any guide, tip, or article on what constitutes beauty and methods to achieve it is has the underlying assumption that women owe it to themselves to go through these routines, as this is the only way that a woman can like herself and be liked by others in turn. This trend is evident in the catch phrases, titles, or lines that are frequently found in most articles. For example, very often the reader comes across phrases of the type: "a full guide that fulfils the desire to be liked",[41] "what you ought to know to understand the invisible language of desire,"[42] "what's the secret of Victoria Beckham's body?"[43] "ABCs of sun"[44] "diva-like hands,"[45] "Feet to admire,"[46] etc. In short, every body part is analyzed and classified according to the pre-established beauty scheme, while women are promised the achievement of perfection if the guides are followed.

This perfection is not only worth achieving *per se*: its importance lies in the assumption that once achieved, not only will a woman feel better about herself; most importantly, males will be more interested in her. As Berger put it: "[A woman has]...to survey everything she is and everything she does, because how she appears to others, and ultimately how she appears to men, is of crucial importance for what is normally thought of as the success of her life."[47]

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41 "Magjia qe vjen nga hunda," Jeta, September, p. 62.

42 "Seksi? Eshte ceshtje kimie", Jeta, August, p 46.

43 "Me yjet ne tavoline", Jeta, August, p. 52.

44 "ABC e diellit", Jeta, August, p. 68.

45 "E bukur nga koka te kembet", Jeta, July, p. 76.

46 Ibid.

47 Berger, John "Ways of seeing," quoted in Bourne, Amy "Gender and the Social Codes of Looking," available at http://www.aber.ac.uk/media/Students/aeb0301.doc

Seduction is the keyword and ultimate promise made in the pages of the magazine, lending the impression that in the end that is the goal that the readers of these pages are striving for. "Silk for you and me: most of all you are sensual, elegant, in order to experience the pleasure of freshness and soft touch. Not only for you... also for the one standing by your side!!!"[48] This is an implicit promise made to all women that will buy silk: their relationship will improve instantly in a significant manner.

The methods offered to fulfil women's desires very often are phrased in an imperative mode: "Go glossy,", "go high,," "go blonde," "go mini," "dress to impress," lending the impression that it is essential to follow this guide if women want to impress their men. And this is precisely what they should do, at all costs: "You can't walk in high heels? Sorry, but this is no excuse, they are in fashion this year."[49] As Naomi Wolf puts it: "the more legal and material hindrances women have broken through, the more strictly and heavily and cruelly images of female beauty have come to weigh upon us."[50] The dictates of these guides and methods is clear and they are not debatable.

The unavoidable eventual effect is women striving for perfection according to the standards of the beauty myth, and hence towards consumerism: if women want higher self-esteem and more male admirers around them, then there are some products they must buy in order for this dream to come true. "If women's magazines are fantasy-like shop windows that 'show you how your life can be', the products they display are of course also meant to be purchased - in real shops."[51]

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48 "Mendafsh per ty dhe per mua," Jeta, July, p. 96.

49 "Buzeqeshi veres," Jeta, July, p.78.

50 Wolf, Naomi "The Beauty Myth," quoted in http://homestar.org/bryannan/wolf.html

51 Gallagher, Margaret "Lipstick imperialism and the new world order: women and media at the close of the twentieth century," Paper prepared for Division for the Advancement of Women Department for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development, United Nations, December 1995, available at http://www.un.org/documents/ecosoc/cn6/1996/media/gallagh.htm

Shopping is a woman's sacred duty: not only does her standard of life depend on it, but a woman is designed by nature to experience a unique pleasure in the process. All sorts of phrases and wording manners in several articles lead to the indisputable generalization that shopping is a woman's favourite sport.[52] Here is how this female fantasy is described:

> "It is every woman's favourite moment. Being able to spend endless hours roaming every possible shop. Trying on every outfit you see and having fun by buying the ones you like. Returning home draped with shopping bags, especially when there are discounts."[53]

The language used is clearly a call, establishing an atmosphere that would make any female reader spring up from her seat and embark immediately on the sacred experience of shopping. However, this being the ultimate experience, it involves a set of rules that every woman has to keep in mind, including dressing up in order for the salespersons to take the customer seriously, never going shopping with a guy, and, hard to believe, going alone then with friends. Why? This way you can avoid losing time in shops you're not interested in, or having a friend buy the same thing as you, or even getting bad advice in order for her to get the outfit for herself.[54] The final impression you get is that you cannot afford any risks when shopping, even if this means leaving out the persons you cherish. Efficiency in shopping is what counts: it is a sacred experience for every woman and nothing or no one should be allowed to spoil its pleasure.

The importance of the topic becomes even more evident when one notices the article not only offers advice- it gives orders, if you want it all to go smoothly. For

52 "Sporti i preferuar qe quhet shopping," Jeta, August, p. 38.
53 Ibid.
54 Ibid.

example, some of the subsections read[55]: "Take mercy on yourself!," "Never underestimate your look!," "Never with your boyfriend!," "Make the right choice!" and "Smile!" Similarly, the photos that accompany the article depict smiling women pointing at shop windows, a woman trying on a pair of glasses and smiling widely, as a clear sign of amusement, smiling women holding plenty of shopping bags and so on. Everything in the article points to the happiness associated with shopping as a unique pleasure in every woman's life, each bit of which should be enjoyed to the maximum.

The inevitability of motherhood

"In western culture in particular, motherhood seems to represent that inevitability of 'anatomy' which in some way or another affects every woman."[56] On first sight, this inevitable notion has not affected the pages of Jeta magazine. Women with careers, beautiful, successful women and fashion icons scream from of the magazine. It seems the image of women is interesting to the magazine´s readers only in terms of their beauty, success, sensationalism- not their motherhood. However, closer attention testifies to the opposite. Although it looks like children are not the focus of magazine, and hence of its readers, the ways in which the issue comes up and the phrasing used in several cases reveal the "inevitable" nature of motherhood as a part of woman´s life that is not only important, but is a natural expectation of

55 Ibid.

56 H. Vidmar, Ksenija "Nasa zena and the image of the mother: contradictions and oppositions, 1991-2000", quoted in Peace Institute, "Mediawatch: Making her up," p.34.

their role in society. "Becoming a parent is undoubtedly one of the most important things in life, maybe *the* most important one, at least for a female."[57]

One of the most illustrative cases of this constant underlying, seemingly marginal theme is an article on a successful Albanian athlete, who has the higher number of medals among both male and female athletes in the country. As the article unfolds the reader is acquainted with her professional achievements, her future plans, her life partner and trainer, and so on. The article closes by describing the athlete´s aspirations for the next Olympic Games, the highest competition an athlete of this sport can dream. Right after this, the very last sentences of the story read:

> "This large number of activities has postponed the wedding of the two young people, who are missing a celebration with him as the groom and where she will be dressed in white. In fact, they have thought about this often, as well as when they will have children. After the Olympic Games Klodiana is thinking about becoming a mother."[58]

Although this is a more than natural decision and way of thinking, the way it is presented after extolling all the professional merits of the athlete suggests that the runner´s life, no matter how many medals she wins, could never be complete unless she is married and becomes a mother.

Another case illustrating the same line of thought is that of an interview with a married couple from Kosovo, who compose and sing together. Viewed as rather non-conformist and extravagant in their music and appearance in general, the interview with the couple is titled "The two of us against the world," from the beginning giving the impression that these people cannot be identified with "our world" as defined by

57 "Ai do nje bebe," Jeta, July, p.44.

58 Arta Cano, "Me shpejtesine e Klodianes," Jeta, August, p. 22.

the magazine, and possibly the reader. Even before one reads through the interview, the subtitle readily explains the reasons why these people belong to "the Others": "They are individualists and in love to the point that they have chosen not to have any children."[59] The same is repeated in the question asked to the wife: "Meanwhile you can be considered an exemplification of something else: a solid marriage without children."[60] While expressing a note of admiration for the strong bond that keeps together the two spouses, the above extracts from the article reveal the persistence of the notion that deciding not to have children would be understandable only if you are an alien. As Judith Butler puts it:

> "Why shouldn't it be that a woman who wants to have some part in child-rearing, but doesn't want to have a part in child-bearing, or who wants to have nothing to do with either, can inhabit her gender without an implicit sense of failure or inadequacy? When people ask the question "Aren't these biological differences?" they're not really asking a question about the materiality of the body. They're actually asking whether or not the social institution of reproduction is the most salient one for thinking about gender. In that sense, there is a discursive enforcement of a norm" [61].

In fact, the discourse produced in the magazine in this regard fits "the norm," that it would be difficult for a woman to be happy unless she is part of a traditional family. On the other hand, everybody who has been lucky enough to achieve this has little to worry about. Another story deserves mention in this regard. The story is about a Turkish couple: the wife, in a banking career in Turkey, left her job and

59 Drita Loshi, "Ne te dy kunder botes" Jeta, September, p.46.

60 Ibid, p.47.

61 "Extracts from Gender as Performance: An Interview with Judith Butler". Interview by Peter Osborne and Lynne Segal, London, 1993. available at http://www.theory.org.uk/but-int1.htm

moved to Albania with her husband when he was offered a job in Albania. Although she quit her career and turned into a housewife, while her husband quickly made a career, she regrets nothing:

> "The man that took her to Albania, Seyhan Pencapligi, is General Director and Board Member of BKT, as well as head of the Banking Association of Albania, while Melda has become a good housewife. This makes her happy, because she takes care of her children and her Albanian neighbours keep make her life easier. Bringing up her children is her priority, in spite of the difficulties of an unknown country."[62]

This quote reveals the serenity and security that surrounds such a seemingly difficult decision for a woman wishing to have a career: she gave up every dream of having a career, but she gained a family, and they lived happily ever after.

The images are even more indicative than the quote in this case. The article features two photos, both of them featuring a smiling Melda. In the first shot she is portrayed alone, while the other one depicts the complete family. The pose would be considered a classical one in the semiotic analysis of pictures: both spouses are smiling, while the husband, taller, has his arm on her shoulder and holds their daughter by the hand on the other side. Melda, is evidently leaning against him, with her head tilted against his shoulder. In this picture the husband, wearing a suit, is evidently a reference point, offering support for his wife and children, and they all look quite happy with this.

And it cannot be otherwise, if we assume that this is what any woman wants in the end. At least the story on the comedy actress confirms that this is her dream and she will do anything to defend it, stressing that "family obligations come first, then I

62 Arta Cano, "Kur nje turke dashuron Tiranen," Jeta, July, p.32.

think about art."[63] Interestingly, the story features similar visual elements with that of the story on the Turkish couple: Marjana Kondi, the actress, is featured in a photo with her husband, leaning against him, with her arm wrapped around his. The pattern of women needing and seeking their husband´s support is evident, in view of their fragility, at least visually speaking.

Final Remarks

The statistics and overall trends in the situation of women in Albania have shown little progress in the struggle for gender equality and for the recognition of the special role of women in society. Women face significant problems in several areas, such as employment, education and participation in decision-making, while suffering domestic violence and the existence of stereotypes and a patriarchal mentality.

While media could play a pivotal role in changing this situation, little is being done to show such a commitment. In the absence of mainstream media's special coverage of these issues and with a vacuum of serious periodicals covering important issues on gender equality and global developments in this regard, the only option that remains are entertainment-themed women's magazines. However, this realm, rather than aiding in raising awareness and improving their struggle for gender equality, only serves to soothe and entertain women, providing an escape from everyday struggles, and confirming socially dominant roles and gender relations. There is no attempt to cover any socially relevant issues, such as equal

63 Arta Cano, "Kur te sfidon Marjana Kondi", Jeta, July, p.56.

opportunities, trafficking, rape, single mothers, domestic violence, or any other gender-related issue.

The portrayal of women in these magazines places a disproportionate emphasis on beauty, leading to a view of women above all as sexual objects, and not as complex human beings with a variety of features other than physical beauty. In addition, the stress on beauty as essential to femininity also seems to burden women with the achievement of this ideal at any cost, shifting attention from other important aspects of women in society and veering them towards consumerism.

Apart from the beauty myth, women are also offered the myth of family and motherhood, leading them to believe that self-actualization is impossible for a woman if she lacks a family or is not a mother. The value of the traditional family is upheld and reinforced, while the discourse produced is blind or rejects any other alternatives. In view of women's need to achieve beauty and motherhood, career is the last priority as portrayed in women's lives in the magazine. Unlike the case of men, the career success of women is seen rather as a result of her physical features or of some divine intervention, while her talents, skills, intelligence and persistence are downplayed or completely ignored.

In this context, further research on media coverage and discourse produced in this area and the trends that will follow would provide valuable insight on the reinforcement or transformation of stereotypes in society, hopefully providing a means of improving this situation.

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SEX AND THE GLOBALIZATION OF FEMALE TEENAGEHOOD: CROATIAN AND SERBIAN TEEN MAGAZINES OF THE NEW ERA

By Mima SIMIĆ

Abstract

In an analysis of the phenomenon of the most popular "new" teenage magazines which arrived to the Croatian and Serbian pop cultural arena with the disintegration of Yugoslavia (Croatia: Teen, OK!, Serbia: Bravo, Bravo Girl, Cool Girl), the author establishes in which ways the ideo-economic transition from socialism to capitalism influenced the creation of teenage (female) gender and sexual identities. Examining the role of magazines as ideological tools in the process of education, enculturation and the gender/sexual molding of girls, the author pays special attention to potentially disruptive (lesbian, transgender, politically potent) elements of text, coming to the depressing conclusion that in "post-modern," "post-feminist" (i. e. "post-patriarchal") globalizing capitalism, any attempt at subversion and resistance is neutralized by commodification.

Keywords:
popular culture, teenage magazines, gender stereotypes, media and sex education, sexuality, consumerism, post-socialism.

The economic needs of the cultural industries are (…) perfectly in line with the disciplinary and ideological requirements of the existing social order, and all cultural commodities must therefore, to a greater or lesser extent, bear the forces that we can call centralizing, disciplinary, hegemonic, massifying, commodifying... (the adjectives proliferate almost endlessly)

John Fiske[1]

Introduction

Cultural studies won their place in Croatian academia only in the second half of the 1990s so it comes as no surprise that a large portion of Croatian pop cultural production territory is still theoretically unexplored. However, when sharpening their focus on popular culture, its critics showed a marked penchant for feminist and gender theory, which helped produce notable (textual, activist and analytical) works on womanhood, femininity and female identity in Croatian media.[2] Whilst younger forces around literary (theory) magazines have thus far been engaged in academically-oriented feminist analysis of products of popular culture, women's human rights groups, such as Zagreb's B.a.b.e., carried out complementary research

1 Fiske, John. *Understanding Popular Culture.* Unwin Hyman, London, 1989, p. 28.

2 The editorial board of K, students' magazine for literature and literary and cultural theory of the Zagreb Faculty of Philosophy, was even reproached that "the issue is dominated exclusively by feminist themes" and that it "should (…) change its name to F." (the magazine is available in PDF format at: http://k.ffzg.hr/zines/k2.pdf, and a forum discussion on it can be found at http://forum.ffzg.hr/viewtopic.php?t=5264&postdays=0&postorder)

projects in the field of women's participation in media, as well as "women's" perception of media content.[3] It is also interesting to observe that feminist critique has not remained framed by magazines and handbooks; on several occasions billboards showing denuded beauty queens advertising meat industry products found themselves subjected to the subversive aerosol of activists - street gender theoreticians.

The multi-layered, diverse, even exuberant quality of feminist/gender critique in Croatia points to positive changes in its academia - an acceptance of less traditional (even potentially subversive) theoretical trends, equipping students, future academic citizens, with tools for exploration and deconstruction of everyday ideologies - as well as a stifling patriarchally saturated (pop) cultural atmosphere that needs to be aired.

Why teen magazines?

While Croatian women's magazines as representatives of pop-cultural production par excellence have already been written about[4], so far (women's) teenage magazines haven't turned out to be particularly interesting material for Croatian feminist theoreticians

3 B.a.b.e. "Survey of Daily Papers", Zagreb, 1997; Sanja Sarnavka *Put do vlastitog pogleda - kako čitati, slušati, razumjeti medijske tekstove i medijsku kulturu*, B.a.b.e., Zagreb, 2006; Suzana Kunac & Sanja Sarnavka *Nevinost bez zaštite - "ženska" percepcija medijskih sadržaja*, B.a.b.e., Zagreb, 2006.

4 See Grdešić, Maša "*Cosmopolitan* - premalo feminizma za 25 kuna", Libra libera, no. 011, 2002, pp. 9-25; "Viva - ima li života na tržištu ženskih časopisa?", Zarez VI/141, 2004; "Budi vedra, budi smjela: teorijski i aktivistički diskurz hrvatskoga Cosmopolitana", Quorum no. 6, 2004, and Radat, Iva "*Spletke i čarolije*: nasilje nad lezbijkama u popularnoj kulturi", *Zarez*, no. 125, March 11, 2004.

of media and popular culture[5]. This lack of critical attention is truly surprising since the factor of media influence in the process of shaping women's identities is certainly higher when it comes to teen publications, precisely due to the relative "cultural innocence" of their consumers. The audience targeted by these products comes from the ranks of a social group undergoing a process of intense "genderization," socialization and (sexual) enculturation, and as such is extremely sensitive to media messages, society's most vocal mouthpieces and a "mirror" of the particular culture. Although teen magazines bear most resemblance to magazines like *Cosmopolitan*[6], in contrast to *Cosmo's* readership - "adult" (with a more stable identity, culturally/sexually "networked") female population, somewhat aware of fiction codes in women's magazines, a readership for whom the pleasure[7] of consumption/fantasy comes first, while the "instructive"[8] aspect of their

5 Except for my analysis on the role of Teen magazine in the process of creation of female identity published in the already mentioned issue of K. magazine and in *Quorum* no. 6 (2004), I am not aware of any other research.

6 Being equally preoccupied with sex, sexuality, glamour and consumerism.

7 Janice Winship has an apropriate expression for this - "mental chocolate"; in *Inside Women's Magazines*, Pandora, London & New York, 1987, p.160.

8 Whether it be "secrets of the sex goddess" or "spa treatments for those in love" - see http://www.cosmopolitan-scg.com/topic.php?id=129 and http://www.cosmopolitan-scg.com/lifestyle.php. The bombastic headline itself, "Secrets of the sex goddess" self-ironizes *Cosmo's* sex-educative function, and a spa treatment for those in love sounds equally unreal. Young businesswomen, the alleged audience of the Croatian and Serbian *Cosmo*, probably make up the smallest percentage of its readership (because of their social underrepresentation), while for its real audience, the average female citizen, a spa treatment usually falls in the category of the unavailable, i.e. consumerist fantasy. Because of all this *Cosmo* is offered for reading more as a fictional/escapist genre, rather than an educational one. Teen magazines, on the other hand, rarely ironize their instructive function and are "recognised as the single most effective means of communicating advice on contraception and safe sex to young girls" (McRobbie, Angela. *Feminism and Youth Culture*. Macmillan Press, London, 2000, p. 209).

favorite magazine will hardly affect their everyday lives - the teenage consumers of these magazines will approach them, in some respects, as instructive, possessing an almost "documentary" quality. This is due to an alarming lack of available information on teenage sexuality - both because of an unadjusted educational system which deals with this issue in an insufficient/inadequate manner[9], and the shyness of a culture in which a detailed, frank discussion of sex in the family is as yet generally unthinkable - making teen magazines the most relevant source of information about sexuality. But it is not just a lack of information about sexuality that makes teenagers gulp down information from magazines- the educational system contains far more serious structural flaws, lacking courses which would, rather than insisting on the regurgitation of facts, teach students to think critically and deconstruct all types of texts, particularly media "offerings."[10]

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9 15 years since the publication of the first issue of *OK!* magazine, the Croatian Ministry of Science, Education and Sport still hasn't adequately solved the problem of sex education. As an extracurricular activity, schools offer a program called "Teen Star", backed by the Catholic Church, which teaches elementary school students that contraception doesn't protect one from sexually transmitted diseases and that it violates the essence of the sexual act, which can be fully realized only within marriage. In the Serbian paper *Vreme* we find an appeal indicating an identical problem: "One of the basic human rights is the right to information, the right to availability of all options to fulfil one's wishes and achieve one's goals. Sex education in schools would be one of the solutions. Society must become directly involved in solving this problem systematically." http://www.vreme.com/cms/view.php?id=314712

10 Disturbingly low levels of media literacy among *adult* women (in Croatia, then Serbia & Montenegro, and Bosnia-Herzegovina) were confirmed in a recent research carried out by B.a.B.e. on how women perceive female representation in the media, and media influence on women. As many as 50% of respondents alleged that men and women were equally represented in media, although according to research carried out in 76 countries as part of the study 'The Global Media Monitoring Project' it turns out that women are on average protagonists in just 21% of all news. That media messages can take rather strong root on the subliminal level is also shown by the fact that out of several hundred respondents, only 5% women admitted that media have great influence on creating their self-image, yet as many as 44% Croat women were on a diet!

This double deprivation - both in information and in methods of in-depth analysis - makes teenagers potentially the most vulnerable group when it comes to media influence on their perception of the world and the formation of gender/sexual identity.

Commodification of nations/gender

Facilitating the process of a girl's sexuality, teen magazines also catalyze the process of her engendering: issue after issue, tirelessly, they "keep in circulation established stereotypes and uncontroversial notions of what it is to be feminine and teenaged."[11] Instructing readers (directly or indirectly) on what it means to be a woman and how to be one, these magazines simultaneously ensure that the "centrality and privileging of heterosexuality"[12] is always assumed.

Insistence on firm gender categories and heterosexuality seems to be the foundation of all commercial mainstream teenage magazines in the western capitalist world - which, if we refer back to Angela McRobbie's analysis of the British teen magazine *Jackie*, hasn't changed much in the last forty years or so.[13] This consistency isn't hard to understand if we understand the pact between capital(ism) and patriarchy. While the media is one of the ideological state apparatuses[14] whose aim is to

11 Hudson, Barbara "Femininity and adolescence" in: McRobbie, Angela & Nava, Mica (eds.) *Gender and generation*, Macmillan Press, London, 1984, p. 51.

12 Winship, Janice. *Inside Women's Magazines*. Pandora, London & New York, 1987, p. 41.

13 See McRobbie, p. 69.

14 See Althusser, Louis "Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses" in: *'Lenin and Philosophy' and Other Essays*, New Left Books, London, 1977.

reproduce the dominant ideology, i. e. patriarchy (entrenched in the gender divide), the main strategy of capitalism is commodification; thus, the nurturing of a culture of "femininity/womanhood" (with all its indispensable industries - cosmetic, fashion, etc.) is an ideal strategy for maintaining the capitalist system - by selling products, i.e. advertising space, by selling magazines and, to close the circle, by "selling" the capitalist system of values.

The sudden entrance of capitalism into the territory of former Yugoslav republics in the 1990s led to an explosion of "new" teen magazines, creating an unusually good opportunity for a comprehensive chronological analysis of this pop cultural phenomenon from its infancy and parallel development in two new states with a common (and thus practically identical) (pop) cultural history, as well as an analysis of its gender requirements for Croatian and Serbian consumers.

For the purpose of this analysis, I will examine the most popular Croatian teenage magazines (*Teen, OK!*) and their Serbian counterparts (*Bravo, Bravo Girl!, Cool Girl*), and their strategies of engendering girls into the new patriarchal-consumerist cultures of post-socialism.[15] This ideo-political transition also triggered a sudden (legal) sexualization of young women's (and girls') bodies, making the center of my analysis precisely the construction of a "new" post-socialist, hyper-commodified female sexuality.

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15 For the purpose of this paper, I analyzed some 30 issues of the following magazines - Croatian Teen (archive available at www.teen.revije.hr) and OK!, and Serbian magazines Bravo!, Bravo Girl and Cool Girl. In order to gain insight into the development of the analyzed phenomenon, I studied editions from different periods: from the mid-90's to the latest issues for the Croatian magazines, and from the beginning of 2000 till today for Serbian magazines. Magazines were chosen on the basis of their popularity and longevity on the market (several other magazines were published in Serbia in the 1990s, but they have been discontinued since). The basic method used in the article is the method of close reading of articles from a feminist theoretical and critical viewpoint.

In reading these pop-cultural textual products, I will try to avoid what Thompson calls the fallacy of internalism[16] - the supposition that the effects of a text on a reader can be derived solely from a semiotic analysis of the texts themselves. Like Frazer (in her critique of Angela McRobbie)[17], I understand that readers are not complete cultural dupes and victims of the text, and that they won't automatically accept everything they are served… *as long as* (elsewhere in culture and in "real" life) alternative models of behavior are available, from which they can/are allowed to choose freely.[18] Therefore, also important for this analysis is what magazines (as the loudest mouthpieces of the dominant culture) *don't* offer - because, when culture persistently avoids to *represent*, i.e. to *name* certain forms of alternative (sexual, cultural) practices, it denies their existence, making the process of identification and self-realization harder for members of the unnamed minorities.[19]

Context

At the very end of the 1980s, around the time when inter-state borders in Yugoslavia were starting to fall apart at the seams, the process of market colonization

16 See Thompson, John B. *Ideology and Modern Culture - critical social theory in the Era of Mass Communication.* US: Stanford University Press, 1990.

17 See Frazer, Elizabeth "Teenage girls reading Jackie", Media, Culture and Society, 9, 1987, pp. 407-25.

18 This is why I give most attention to the taboo area of sexuality, which is generally less available to teenagers.

19 A fine example for this would be typical accounts (even mine!) of people for whom the process of (homo)sexual self-realization was greatly complicated by the lack of identification material in the media. The importance of *visibility* and *designation* (as well as re-appropriation of language) is best reflected in Pride and queer movements worldwide, poorly covered on the pages of teen magazines.

began, in which the former state monopoly on the media, especially the press, was taken over by private (and foreign) investors, i. e. commercial interest groups. Changes in Serbian media started some ten or so years after Croatia, but soon after Milošević's fall in October 2000 foreign capital drenched Serbian media. One of the first results of this change was seen in Croatia in the early 1990s, in the glossy shape of *OK!* teen magazine, opening the hunting season on Croatian teenage readership; scenting profit, soon it was joined by *Teen*. In early 2002 the Serbian teen-mag market was taken over by the licensed German magazine *Bravo* and the home-grown *Cool Girl*. That this market is not saturated even a decade later is indicated by the regular launching of new teen magazines[20], all of which try to concoct a new, exotic cellulose treat using the same few simple and very limited ingredients.

What was so revolutionary about the "new" post-socialist teen magazines for them to deserve such popularity and constant demand among teenagers? Although socialist Yugoslavia boasted a fruitful production of women's magazines (*Žena*, *Bazar*, *Svijet*, etc), what are known today as teen magazines at the time practically did not exist. Magazines that covered the adolescent population's fields of interest were mostly of an educational type, such as *Modra lasta*[21], or the crossword and general entertainment Serbian magazines *Politikin zabavnik*, *Cao* or *Huper*. Little or no space in these magazines was dedicated to teen sexuality (in the declaratively didactic *Modra lasta* there was a section called "Reserved for girls"[22], which took up approximately half a page) - perhaps because of the threat that a more open and liberal approach would pose to the myth of children's and youth (a)sexuality, a myth that was directly opposed to "western" values of unlimited commodification, consumption and psycho-

20 *Chica, Joy, TOTP* in Croatia; *Joy*, Croatian *OK!, Bravo Girl, Girl Talk* in Serbia.

21 Which was and still is published by Školska knjiga, Zagreb.

22 Boys, one presumes, learned about their own sexuality from *Start* or *Erotika*.

physical corruption.[23] And, as has been know to happen with deprivation of any kind, those condemned to it will often create a fixation on the forbidden subject; the revolutionary emergence of these magazines is therefore not the least surprising, as they accompanied and symbolized the sudden lifting of a double veto - on teenage sexuality, and on the phenomenon and practice of hyper-consumption.

Though I reluctantly include this in my CV, I myself am quite good material for a case study on a teen magazine reader, precisely because I was one of the first, actively witnessing their breakthrough in the freshly privatized Croatian media market. Born in 1976, I was part of the first generation of teenagers, in the transition from communism to capitalism, who had an opportunity to encounter the first bright and colorful issues of *OK!* and *Teen*. From my present anti-globalist perspective, I find it slightly uncomfortable to confess this, but I clearly remember the enthusiasm with which I leafed through the smooth pages of teen magazines and the indescribable pleasure that accompanied this process. Apart from their astounding and unheard of standards of paper quality and visual layout, the crucial factor was that these magazines covered an issue that wouldn't be taken up either by family or by school education - *sexuality*[24]. Despite the certain amount of shame that I felt (both because of my declared elitist contempt for pop culture and the sexual matters magazines covered), I practically devoured these magazines - more or less secretly, whereas in the street, holding my head high, I walked with a Kafka or a Dostoevsky under my arm. Explaining in detail and in understandable language the physiological and emotional side-effects of puberty, the magazines answered questions I didn't even

23 On the other hand, commodification of the adult female body never seemed to pose a threat to the dominant ideology.

24 When the time came for a lesson on human reproduction, our high-school biology teacher asked us: "Do you know what an erection is?" As the class sat silent in confusion, she just added: "If you don't, look it up in the dictionary."

know how to ask.[25] Thanks to this quality, teen magazines automatically gained the status of sex education manuals, which they have, by and large, kept to this day.

Text

Definition of teenage girl

Monique Wittig explains her anthological allegation that "lesbians are not women" with the argument that the category 'woman' has meaning only in heterosexual systems of thought and heterosexual economic systems.[26] In this sense, teen magazines are women's magazines in the purest form, as the common denominator of their main topics is the heterosexual, strongly sexualized (consumerist) romance.

If we take the two most popular Croatian teen magazines, *Teen* and *OK!*, we will notice that they cover a handful of themes, which they alternate and combine, creating the magazine's textual body. These are: love, sex, beauty/fashion and stars, but the main focus is on love, as testified by the biggest cover headlines: "Spring school of kissing," "Love encyclopedia!", "Perfect love plan!", inevitably complemented by "8 sex lessons you must know," "11 truths and lies about sex!", "First sex," etc. However, if we also study articles about beauty/fashion and stars, we'll notice that they, too, gravitate towards a single theme, i.e. active heterosexuality.

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25 The author of this article cites authors mentioned in the book. Author's note.A tragicomic, yet very exemplary episode of my (lack of) sexual information in puberty was the dreadful depression when I started menstruating, as I had thought the term 'the monthlies' implied that it lasted a month.

26 Wittig, Monique. The Straight Mind and Other Essays. Beacon Press, Boston, 1992, p. 32.

The ultimate goal of being beautiful and caring about one's looks is to attract (and keep) the attention of the opposite sex, which is confirmed by street polls among teenagers. To the question "Sexy clothes, yes or no?"[27], teenagers (girls) answered: "boys are *definitely* fond of mini skirts," "what I hate *about the male sex* is that for some of them clothes are the most important thing by which they judge the girl wearing them," "mini skirts and tight jeans are *universal things that all boys like*" (my italics). Although it's clear from the second statement that some girls aren't too thrilled about being exposed to the male gaze, they certainly accept it as fact. Polled boys confirmed this, one of them unflinchingly assuming the role of spokesmen for the entire male sex, saying: "We like it when girls wear mini skirts, but we don't like it when everyone is looking at our girls."

Beauty pages, too, as is typical for a culture in which the beauty myth comprises the most important reading[28], don't have much purpose except to teach girls how to get boys to like them. In "18 first date tips" the girl is taught how to "emphasize *natural* beauty and hide slight *flaws*." Her first "close" encounter with a boy, therefore, involves a "natural" mask, symbolically underlining the difference between boys and girls and carving another deep line into the gender divide. The paradoxical term "natural beauty" naturalizes the ritual of applying make-up, and this "invisible" phase, in a way, symbolizes the gradual maturing into a woman (the amount of make-up is usually interpreted as proportional to sexual appetite, availability, and experience of the person wearing it). Girls for whom a higher amount of make-up is acceptable are actually stars - in them, along with red eye make-up (!), an aggressive approach will be tolerated, as well as transgendered behavior (Pink, Avril Lavigne); and all transgression will be defused by reports on their upcoming weddings. Even those who are so obviously emancipated avoid stereotyping and have built their image on rebellion will not dare rebel (in word or in deed) against that highest social instance - heteromance.

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27 *OK!*, no. 162, July 2005.

28 See Wolf, Naomi. *The Beauty Myth*. Vintage Books: A division of Random House, Toronto, 1990.

Just like fashion and beauty, celebrity pages, too, center on the heterolove/sex lives of celebrities, focusing on what readers can identify with the most: stars' first loves and sexual experiences, their past *teenage* problems. The problem with these experiences, obviously, is that celebrities, in order to save their stardom and not alienate themselves from their fans, must answer such questions in line with the hetero-patriarchal culture to which they subscribed in exchange for a place in the star system.[29] Correspondingly, we will find countless examples (both in Serbian and Croatian, licensed or indigenous editions) of local and foreign stars reacting (often with disgust) to rumors of their own homosexuality.[30] As for the few stars who are *out anyway* (Elton John, George Michael, *Pet Shop Boys,* etc.) - no one asks them about their "first" experiences.

Let's Talk About Sex

Hunting for Serbian teen magazines at Belgrade's newspaper stands, I questioned vendors about the most popular titles, and the first answer was always *Bravo*. This is why I decided to include it in the analysis, although I would initially much sooner include it in the category of music magazine. The earliest issues of the magazine's Serbian editions were indeed more oriented toward music (and the world of music stars), focusing on the

29 It's enough to recall the example of George Michael, who, for years, (in part) built his career on his apparent heterosexuality, and probably wouldn't have revealed his homosexuality to the media had he not been *forced* to do so.

30 Colin Farrell in Bravo: "I would rather lift weights for an hour than kiss a man for two minutes! *Gross*!"; Benjamin McKenzie in *OK!* (the title of the article is "Both girls and boys like me"): "I got a letter from a boy… He wrote that he would crush anyone who touched me. He even sent me a photo of himself driving a truck. *Terrible*…"; Zoran Pribicevic, actor, when asked if he had ever kissed a boy, in *OK!*: "No, *thank god*. I doubt I could do it even for a movie", etc (my italics everywhere).

lives of celebrities; and much more on their professional than sexual achievements. The two pages of a section called "Love Check"[31] were equally divided between a male and a female Bravo reader - here they talked about their "first times". Only one page was dedicated to fashion and it was completely free of human models - it was actually a semi-concealed advertisement for Doc Martens products. With some horoscope, some video game articles, a lot of posters of stars, a quiz or two, and nothing on fashion or beauty, the former *Bravo* reflected the "mixed" or unisex interests of its teen readership. Two years later[32], Bravo had doubled in pages ("From now on 80 pages!"), which meant that the number of advertisements increased considerably, while certain sections were expanded and new ones introduced. Needless to say, it was the sexual content that expanded; thus in these new issues we find a (Q&A) section called "Let's talk about sex" and a special intimate guide for young men ("How do I tell my girlfriend…"). Recognizing this need for sex-related information, in 2003 a license was purchased for another *Bravo* offspring, *Bravo Girl!*, in which all of those five themes, with an emphasis on sex, finally got their rightfully deserved space and girls could get answers to questions such as: "I noticed two bits of skin protruding from my vagina. Is this normal?"[33]

Croatian readers are just as well-informed; their helplessness and complete bewilderment in their secret garden is best reflect by recent questions to *Teen*: "I'm afraid I punctured my hymen with toilet paper (…) can something happen to me?", "when they are cold, [my nipples] become wrinkled… please, don't send me to a gynecologist. Is it possible I have cancer?!"[34] Further, a 14-year-old girl asks "what is HIV?" (after a boy she slept with "without protection" told her he was HIV positive)[35],

31 *Bravo* issue no. 3, January 2003.
32 *Bravo* issue no. 52, December 2004.
33 *Bravo Girl!* Issue no. 30, April 2006.
34 *Teen*, March 2005. issue no. 3, year XI, pp. 32 and 33.
35 *Teen*, November 2005, issue no. 11, year XI, p. 31.

while a reader of the same age, feeling premenstrual breast pains, is in terror, calling for help because she thinks she has " some horrible disease!"[36] Alongside the second, highly dramatic and tragic (if authentic) example of lack of information about STDs, the other girls' problems show that any bodily change has the potential to drive the adolescent population to panic, urging them to inspect how/if they fit, if they are "normal" - physically as well as mentally.

And it's probably here that the extremely problematic aspect of counsel offered by magazines comes in, *Teen* being an extreme example. The illusion of complete authority in the area of sex, sexuality and the workings of the human mind, ensured by Ph.D. titles of (as many as) two of *Teen's* expert advisers - Dr. Jasenka Grujić Koračin, specializing in women's diseases and obstetrics, and the psychiatrist Dr. Sanja Boban[37] - remove all responsibility from the editorial board for potentially "wrong" advice, since, after all, medical science knows what's best/healthiest for girls. That's why it's most disturbing when we notice experts who (should) provide information and advice on how the world and human body function, generously offer advice on depilation[38], even suggest esthetic surgery[39], thus supporting cosmetic and "beauty" industries, instead of facilitating *true* health, i.e. the deep building of girls' self-confidence - the lack of which, along with lack of information, is certainly one of the causes of their fear and sexual insecurities.

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36 *Teen*, May 2006, issue no. 5, year XIII, p. 42.

37 Neither *OK!* nor Bravo Girl! have such heavyweight experts on board; their answers to readers are composed by an anonymous newsroom member.

38 Dr. Grujić Koračin's answers to a reader's question in issue no. 22: "Excessive hair can be successfully cured. It's better to remove arm hair by waxing or to permanently remove it by laser".

39 In an earlier detailed analysis of Teen (December 2002, issue no. 12, year VIII), I quote the example of a 17-year-old girl who "practically has no breasts" and whom Dr. Grujic Koracin counsels as follows: "if your breasts are too small (…) *you can get them enlarged surgically*".

Doctoral practice, as all familiar with the person and professional career of Dr. Jozef Mengele will know, is also a part of the ideological state machinery, which weighs a lot more than the Hippocratic Oath and its principle "I will work to the benefit of the patient." Having cosmetic treatments prescribed as medication, therefore, shouldn't come as a surprise - after all, both experts, in order to get a job in Teen in the first place, had to adopt its ideology and adjust their arguments to it. The same principle which in a capitalist print product makes advertisers equal (and unquoted) authors of magazine contents, conditions the fact that discouraging girls from feminine activities would constitute a violation of the business agreement between the doctors and *Teen*. And it wouldn't be hard to replace them anyway - who wouldn't be eager to compose a few pages of stereotypical advice each month for good money? Achieving women's ultimate health, i.e. self-confidence, would require the rejection of "women's" magazines. As Naomi Wolf says: "Women's magazines "need" to ensure that their readers would not liberate themselves out of their interest in women's magazines."[40]

Politics of *teen* magazines

The content of glossy women's (and teen) magazines may urge some to declare an ultimate victory for feminism, because in the "new hedonistic culture" the state of your bank account is far more important than what you have between your legs. But it's precisely this "free market feminism," as McRobbie dubs it, that demonstrates "how far a version of feminism can be pulled in the direction of the political right, where the values of brutal individualism and the pursuit of wealth and success turn all personal and social relations into an extension of the market economy."[41] This "depoliticizing

40 See Wolf, p. 43.
41 See McRobbie, pp. 210-211.

and reindividualizing of the terrain of sexual politics"[42] is exceptionally and clearly reflected in girls' magazines. In the thirty or so magazines which I read closely for the purpose of this article, the word feminism was nowhere to be spotted, although this is what/whom teenage girls have to thank for enjoying any rights as women today. The absolute ahistorical and timeless quality of the magazines is achieved not just by "outlawing" certain issues and words, but also by constantly rotating the same examples of success, wealth and fame; insisting on *rags to riches* anecdotes in line with the famous truism that anyone can become the American president.[43]

The world of politics, however, cannot always be shunned; in almost all of these magazines one can lately find references to the burning political issues of today. The critique of US policy, admittedly, we will hear only from the mouths of a limited number of stars, those who built their image on rebellion (*Green Day*, Pink). Even when they talk about politics, this will be reduced to general statements such as "People hate Bush and no one is really happy… I'm against war"[44] - phrases that don't bother, much like the magazines themselves, to even try to explain the complexity of American/world politics and political interests. Regardless, it is expected that a punk band such as *Green Day* and "a freaky party-goer with a sharp tongue" such as Pink would rebel constantly, and any political agitation will be assimilated as part of their image; "*provocation* the Pink way", as *Teen* writes. Punk *style*, rather than its original political affiliations, is what boosts sales.

A section which well exemplifies support for the myth of individualizing problems, rather than exploring their structural root, is the section on "real life." The lack of political and social awareness (on part of the articles' authors) is truly astounding. None of the stories' heroines who had been subjected to violence (one

42 *Ibid.*

43 Indeed.

44 Billie Joe Armstrong in *Bravo* issue no. 52.

was raped by a young man from school, another was sexually abused by "mom's boyfriend") turn to the police, and in the latter case even the girl's *mother* doesn't do it when she finds out![45] Sexual injuries are accepted as one's own shame - the girls "horribly injured and humiliated (…) walk, grieve, and will never, never in their lives feel completely safe."[46] Even if we take into account the fact that some mothers/girls would indeed behave this way and that the stories are "realistic" in this sense, why isn't there an "expert" comment accompanying the article, giving specific advice to girls in similar situations on what to do in such cases, instead of just reinforcing stereotypes about female exposure and psychophysical helplessness in the world?

The only "authentic" and indicatively contextualized reference to activism I found in a reader's letter, entitled "Intolerant friend."[47] The reader complains about a friend who is lesbian ("this doesn't bother me at all"), going on to explain that this friend "became involved in an organization for homosexual rights and even attended some protests. However, what does bother [her] is that she has become somewhat *rude to people who don't think the same way she does*. She calls them primitive, small-minded, homophobic…" Unsurprisingly, *OK!* automatically sides with the author of the letter, explaining that "anger made [the lesbian] intolerant, *just like* those who had condemned her." This ridiculous maneuver of equating the anger of the persecuted and the persecutor is a classic rhetorical move, too familiar to feminists whose hairy backs it sought to break on countless occasions. The stereotype of a lesbian as a frustrated and aggressive hater of a "different" (it doesn't say oppressive) opinion is identical to the stereotype of a feminist, still popular in media (those that venture to

45 Although she "even (…) threatened him with the police, if he ever came close to us." (*OK!* Serbian edition no. 1, Nov. 2004).

46 *OK!* issue no. 148, May 2004.

47 *OK!* issue no. 158, March 2005.

utter the word). Therefore activism, i. e. *collective* protest, is something aversive and those inclined to it are actually those who aren't able, in a civilized and "tolerant" way, to sort out their own *individual* lives.

Politics of representation - *Cool Girl*

In Croatian teen magazines one can notice an almost complete lack of any ethnic, racial, sexual and corporal diversity[48], and even the names of the characters in so-called photo stories are always recognizably urban Croatian. As for diversity in sexual orientation, lesbianism will be found only on problem pages, although it could very well be integrated into articles entitled "Why don't I have a boyfriend yet?", the likes of which we can find in both Croatian and Serbian magazines. Although the advice-givers' discourse strives to be politically correct, attraction to the same sex is somehow always reduced to an adolescent "phase," an experiment.

The example of the abovementioned article, "Why don't I have a boyfriend" (in which lesbianism is the *unpronounceable* answer), is especially interesting in *Cool Girl* because *in the same issue, on a good two pages*, Dr. Mirjana Milović-Tatarević explains homosexuality to a reader who found herself attracted to her "best friend." What surprises one the most is how the doctor, from the very beginning, categorically establishes that "homosexualism (sic!) is neither a disease, nor a perversity." In addition, further on she refers to a society where "this kind of love" is not received

48 Except when it comes to stars - who can be black, and fat, and short-haired, if necessary. Even very explicit and disturbing gender transgression (the singer of the band *Tokio Hotel*, whose sex even I couldn't determine) is tolerated for stars, because for them violation of norms is interpreted as a matter of image, part of the spectacle, rather than an authentic lifestyle. (This way Madonna and Britney may kiss, but we all know that they're both married, *really* heterosexual and that this is part of show business… Which, of course, confirms the stereotype of lesbianism as an apolitical spectacle for a voyeuristic eye).

"too eagerly."[49] However, although she lays her analysis on sound foundations, at the end of her extensive advice to the girl, the same as in OK!, the doctor will advise her to be "tolerant," to "accept others' rejection and others' diversity". Unfortunately, one should read between the lines that the diversity that should be accepted is actually - homophobia.[50]

But the very fact that *Cool Girl* gives lesbianism this much space (which I didn't notice in any of the Croatian magazines) brings attention to its *existence* in the world off stage, which certainly shouldn't be disregarded. Also, as opposed to the Croatian press - monolithic in matters of ethnicity, class, politics etc., in *Cool Girl* we can also find a story (probably made up) about an adopted Belgrade woman who went to Africa and adopted a *black child*, an interview with two teenage girls from Novi Sad who actively practice *boxing*, a poll among teenagers (three boys and one girl) "If I were the minister of education, I would…", an article entitled "Couple hair-cuts" where a M/F couple is taught how to cut each other's hair[51], etc. One should also make special mention of an article about an SOS help line, which girls not only can call, but where they can also "become involved in an activity" - such a rarely constructive and informative article I haven't been able to dig out from any issues of *Teen* or *OK!*.

Although *Cool Girl* covers the same standard five themes, and by doing so relentlessly stereotypes women's interests, it seems that the editorial board partly succeeds in avoiding cloning and offers a somewhat more complex picture of the (teenage) world. A large contribution to this are numerous authored, i.e. signed articles[52], where one can even read ironic treatments of popular culture, and

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49 This statement in Serbia is a euphemism *par excellence*, if we recall the bloody Belgrade Pride of five years ago.

50 *Cool Girl*, issue no. 12, 2002.

51 *Cool Girl*, issue no. 34, 2004.

52 In teen magazines it is common practice not to mark the authorship of articles.

encounter self-irony. In an article entitled "Having fun as on film," author Dragana Karadžić juxtaposes Hollywood scripts and real life. "Shall we first remind ourselves of where we live? (…) Let's see how you can have fun (…) and not suffer the misery of everyday life…"[53] This is the *only* reference to the (real) social status of the reader, sealed with the following words: "And if you have a few extra pennies, treat yourself to a little something, take your friend out for coffee (of juice), and you will see that you'll have a better time than Julia Roberts in 'Pretty Woman.'[54] Buying coffee or juice explains the purchasing power of a teenage girl much better than countless advertisements for cell phones or overpriced sneakers and shoes, which abound in *Teen* and *OK!*.

Subversions, conclusions, perspectives

Although all of the analyzed magazines, in their own measure, combine stereotypical women's themes, as we have seen, this doesn't mean that their products will necessarily end up identical. In the forest of sex, love, fashion and stars, local, more realistic reportage will manage to push its way in (there is no doubt that the article about boxing girls smashed a prejudice or two). Although teen magazines certainly tend to sell fantasy, it does no harm to sporadically mock this practice, which can be found in *Cool Girl*. *Cool Girl's* transgression may be due to its practice of publishing explicitly authored articles (more ambitious and diverse in terms of style), which imply a level of journalism somewhat higher than mere preparation/copy-pasting, greater authorial effort and ambition, where it's easier to

53 Ibid.

54 *Pretty Woman* is a paradigmatic fairytale for post-socialism. A poor woman, forced to self-commodification in a world of absolute consumerism, thanks to successful heteromance succeeds in staying morally unblemished (although not *innocent*) - while going on a shopping spree at the same time!

overcome the monotony of cloned styles and themes, the foundation of other magazines' production. Also, being independent from licenses gives journalists greater editorial and authorial freedom. Further, the extensive and thorough engagement of the *Cool Girl* expert doctor (although not too aware of problems faced by the LGBT population), with a decisive stand opposed to that cherished by the majority, shows that even within the bounds of a capitalist magazine there is some space for maneuvering, where creation above all depends on the journalists' and contributors' own awareness.

As for strategies of resistance, subversive readings, etc., I have to agree with Kellner who warns that "there is a tendency in cultural studies to celebrate resistance *per se* without distinguishing between types and forms of resistance."[55] Besides, I have always found it hard to believe that someone who was able to truly read media messages would continue to participate in their production. The only actual resistance would be to *disengage* from the capitalist process, and in this sense it's actually impossible to find particularly efficient ways to resist the new capitalist culture in these magazines. What is also rather discouraging is the fact that the divorce of hetero-patriarchy and capitalism has not resulted in the collapse, but rather in the strengthening of the latter, since, paradoxically, it's started making use of the same artillery as its most bitter enemies - gender, cultural and/or queer theory. Namely, the unstable, fluid identities which in these theories have the potential to disclose, subvert, and even tear down dominant ideologies and ideological apparatuses, in the hands of "postmodern" capitalism become - a *commodity*.

As one can see at the micro-level of teen magazines, any act of resistance (symbolized by some stars' statements, behavior and appearance) is easily

55 Kellner, Douglas "Communications vs. Cultural Studies, Overcoming the Divide" http://www.gseis.ucla.edu/faculty/kellner/Illumina%20Folder/kell4.htm

commodified and turned into a style, neutralizing the effect. This mechanism threatens to devour any articulated effort of subversion, any kind of diversity, because, as Kellner says,

> "Difference sells. Capitalism must constantly multiply markets, styles, fads, and artefacts to keep absorbing consumers into its practices and lifestyles. The mere valorisation of 'difference' as a mark of opposition can simply help market new styles and artefacts if the difference in question and its effects are not adequately appraised."[56]

This offers a rather bleak picture of a completely deflated activist future, where what is now sexually subversive, teenage lesbianism, will get its own dress style, fashion and cosmetic line. For everything that now appears to be resistance is actually just a "phase" on the road to commodification.

56 See Kellner, Douglas. *Media Culture: Cultural Studies, identity and politics between the modern and the postmodern.* Routledge, London, 1995, p. 40.

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Translated into English by Kanita Halilović

POLITICS AS PORN: THE PORNOGRAPHIC REPRESENTATION OF WOMEN IN SERBIAN TABLOIDS AND ITS ROLE IN POLITICS

By Ivana KRONJA

Abstract

This paper discusses the key notion and feminist critique of pornography, which forms part of the political struggle against the discrimination and exploitation of women on a wide scale. Exploring the content of Serbian tabloids in the period since 2000, dominated by interpretative journalism, messages of political extremism and the pornographic representation of women, the author also analyses the role of pornography in the tabloid press in the context of the promotion of anti-democratic values. These papers deploy soft- and hard-core porn photographs on their cover pages, at the same time assuming an authoritarian/patriarchal and anti-democratic stance through the glorification of the strategies, military leaders and political actors of the Milošević regime. Proceeding from the assumption that misogynistic pornographic elements confirm the ideological values and gender identities of the authoritarian patriarchate, this study shows that the two forms of representation mentioned above - tabloid journalism and pornography - emerge in a common misogynistic, patriarchal, hyper-masculine and politically radical tone.

Key words:
pornography, misogyny, feminist critique of pornography, tabloid journalism, Serbia, transition, media representation of women, political extremism.

Introduction

This study discusses the principles and nature of the link between the political and misogynistic hate speech currently dominant in Serbian tabloids, asserting that an authoritarian political order and mind-set are deeply rooted in a misogynistic understanding of gender roles in society. The Serbian tabloid press juxtaposes different political and cultural tendencies, favouring "warrior Serb manhood" and a conservative patriarchate, political extremism and undemocratic arrangements. This is achieved through the time-honoured techniques of combining political and pornographic elements. These misogynistic pornographic elements confirm the ideological values and gender identities of the authoritarian patriarchate through an almost perfect correspondence and symbiosis of pornography and radical political tendencies.

In other words, this paper seeks to answer the following question: *What are the origins of the evident fascination with pornography in the Serbian tabloid press and the pairing of pornographic elements with news and interpretations from the sphere of political extremism?*

In order to prove the premises presented and answer the question stated, the paper opens with a theoretical framework in an attempt to define the principles of production and consumption of inequality through pornography. This is followed by an overview of the development of the media and tabloid press since the fall of Milošević in 2000, and a detailed discussion of the tabloid culture in today's Serbia.

All this leads us to a qualitative content analysis of the cover pages of three major Serbian tabloid dailies which frequently use soft-porn photography paired with political topics. The study concludes with a discussion of the nature, principles and ideological foundation of the link between political extremism and pornography in the Serbian tabloid press.

The notion and feminist critique of pornography: the production and consumption of inequality

In the contemporary world, pornography is above all represented through "mass-marketed heterosexual pornography."[1] To a smaller extent, gay and lesbian pornography also exists. Annette Kuhn believes that the contemporary proliferation of pornography may be seen as "part of that tendency to promote privatized forms of rapid gratification which characterizes late capitalism."[2] According to Kuhn, in today's mass media, the term pornography implies pornography both as a commodity, as an industry and as a system of representation, thus as a form of symbolic and cultural exchange.

The production and consumption of pornography in today's world are constantly growing. Notable recently is the contribution of the information revolution

1 Jensen, Robert "Introduction: Pornographic Dodges and Distortions", in: Gail Dines et al., *Pornography: The Production and Consumption of Inequality*, Routledge, New York and London, 1998, p.7.

2 Kuhn, Annette. *The Power of The Image: Essays on Representation and Sexuality.* Routledge, London - NY, 1985, p. 22.

and the emergence and development of the Internet. As Isabel Tang wittily observes, "it seems that for the first time in history pornography has found its own space - in non-space, i.e. *cyber-space*. Before, pornography was always homeless."[3] Pornography has, however, always needed bans, oversight and censorship in order to remain attractive.[4]

The term *pornography* itself is of modern origin and goes back to the mid-nineteenth century, when it was coined in Victorian England from the Greek words *porne* and *graphos* to denote "graphic depiction of the lowest whores."[5] In its narrative, porn is a Utopian project,[6] an expression of the unrealizable aspiration to liberate oneself from the constrictions of culture and civilization and attain absolute pleasure. As a visual and auditory product of the mass media, it is an expression of banality and kitsch, of the "frenzy of the visible."[7] Ideologically, it can be interpreted as a pillar of the patriarchate,[8] or at least as the most explicit expression of its set-up.

Theoretical approaches to the phenomenon of pornography include the critical, cultural, psychoanalytical, anthropological and ontological. Central to our analysis is the *feminist approach*. Pornography appears today in three basic media: the press; film

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3 Tang, Isabel. *Pornography: The Secret History of Civilization*. Channel 4 Books, Macmillan Publishers, London, 1999, p. 168.

4 Kuhn, Annette. *The Power of The Image: Essays on Representation and Sexuality*. Routledge, London - NY, 1985, p.20.

5 Tang, Isabel. op. cit., p. 24; Dworkin, Andrea "Pornography" in: Kemp, Sandra & Squires, Judith, *FEMINISMS*, Oxford UP, Oxford - New York, 1997, p. 325.

6 Gocić, Goran "Pornocratia: Sex/Pleasure in Art/Media," unpublished manuscript, 2006, p. 12.

7 Williams, Linda. *HARD CORE: Power, Pleasure and the 'Frenzy of the Visible'*. Pandora Press, London, 1990, pp. 34 - 57.

8 Dworkin, Andrea "Pornography", in: Kemp, Sandra & Squires, Judith, *FEMINISMS*, Oxford UP, Oxford - New York, 1997, pp. 325 - 6.

(ranging from cinema screenings to various formats appropriate for use at home, such as VHS and DVD); and the Internet. As an element of the mass media and popular culture, pornography is the most striking expression of *misogyny*, which is "manifest in institutional and everyday practices, in public discourses and in private, intimate relationships. (...) It is an emotive/affective treatment of women based on ambivalence - on love and hate at once."[9] Many feminist authors have, therefore, offered a radical critique of pornography as a direct means of exploitation, subordination and humiliation of women.

In her book *Pornography* (1981), Andrea Dworkin states that the women called *porneia* in ancient Greece were sexual slaves, prostitutes of the lowest price and rank, who did not have, as we would call it today, even fundamental human rights. She notes that the women used and represented in today's porn industry have an identical status and value.[10] Dworkin explains the fact that pornography is widely believed to consist of 'sexual representations' or 'depictions of sex' as just another confirmation that the valuation of women as 'low whores' is widespread and that the sexuality of women is perceived as low and 'whorish' in itself.[11] Dworkin's analysis understands pornography as the quintessence of social misogyny, deeply rooted in Western culture. In their book *Pornography: The Production and Consumption of Inequality* (1998), authors Gail Dines, Robert Jensen and Ann Russo explain how the feminist critique of pornography "focuses on the role of pornography in a system of sexual subordination and oppression of women."[12]

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9 Blagojević, Marina "Mizoginija: kontekstualna i/ili univerzalna?", in: Blagojević, Marina (ed.). *Mapiranje Mizoginije u Srbiji: Diskursi i prakse (II Tom).* AŽIN, Beograd, 2005, p. 22.

10 Dworkin, Andrea "Pornography" in: Kemp, Sandra & Squires, Judith, *FEMINISMS*, Oxford UP, Oxford - New York, 1997, p. 325.

11 Dworkin, Andrea "Pornography" in: Kemp, Sandra & Squires, Judith, *FEMINISMS*, Oxford UP, Oxford - New York, 1997, p. 326.

12 Jensen, Robert "Introduction: Pornographic Dodges and Distortions", in: Gail Dines et al., *Pornography: The Production and Consumption of Inequality*, Routledge, New York and London, 1998, p. 5.

The media and misogyny

Misogyny in the public media space appears in several forms, ranging from the very obvious to the very sophisticated. Contained both in visual representation as well as in discourse, which are as a rule complementary, misogyny is manifest in the discrimination of women by beauty or age; in the negation or diminishment of women's professional achievements; in the stereotypes of females as inferior in intelligence and ability; in the representation of the conquests of men and elimination of female competition as the only meaning in life for women; in the persistent and widespread reduction of women's importance to their physical appearance; and in the assignment of the role of sex objects to women.

The tabloid press, which owe their high print runs to sensationalism, politically exclusionary messages, racy news from the entertainment industry and various forms of hate speech use pornography and misogyny as an indispensable part of their content. Images of the female body accompanied by gender-stereotypical comments are here combined with a market ideology, representing the woman and her sexuality as yet another available commodity.

The print media use the genre of "porn photography", ranging from 'soft' or less drastic photography, to be found in tabloids, to the so-called 'hard core' porn photography, to be found in porn magazines.[13] A definition of porn photography would imply a frame showing a naked or half-naked female body (detail; medium close up; full shot), reduced to sexuality on display for the male spectator.[14] It is based on a set of

13 According to Kuhn, 'hard core' pornography that depicts the sexual act itself fragments first of all the feminine body, reducing it to "signifiers of sexual difference and sexuality: genitals, breasts, buttocks... it constructs human beings as sexual bodies" - Kuhn, Annette. *The Power of The Image: Essays on Representation and Sexuality.* Routledge, London - NY, 1985, p. 37.

14 Kuhn, Annette. *The Power of The Image: Essays on Representation and Sexuality.* Routledge, London - NY, 1985, p. 42.

conventions and sub-genres, such as 'caught unawares' or 'the invitation', and in the case of 'hard core', various views of the sexual act,[15] including the male figure and male intimate parts.[16]

Tabloids and transition in the Serbian media

After 5 October 2000 and the fall of the Milošević regime in Serbia, no financial, ownership or ideological transition in the media took place automatically. In the first years following the fall of the regime, the introduction of higher professional standards and of freedom of the press and other media, the reduction of hate speech in the local media and the establishment of the state-owned media as a 'public service' happened only in a piecemeal fashion and with great difficulty.[17]

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15 *Ibid.*, pp. 29 - 43.

16 The male figure and sexual organ are portrayed in a context of domination. We have discussed here heterosexual pornography as the most influential form; gay and lesbian pornography have some specific features (their analysis would go beyond the scope of this paper).

17 A slow and less than successful transition and democratization of the mass media are the rule in post-communist countries. In his paper *Postcomunist media in transition*, Colin Sparks notes that "in even the best cases, like Slovenia and the Czech Republic, the new political elite has made vigorous efforts to ensure that as much of the media as possible represent channels of communication through which they address the populace. Those parts of the media system which they do not control are in the grip of the market..." Sparks, Colin "Post-Communist Media in Transition", in: Corner, John et al. *International Media Research*: A Critical Survey, Routledge, London and New York, 1997, p. 115.

At the same time, the Serbian daily press has been exposed to a strong process of tabloidization[18]. The unclear ownership of daily and weekly tabloids points to structures of the previous regime which, judging by the political line taken by these tabloids, have been exerting a decisive influence on their editorial policy. As journalist Draga Božinović notes,[19] in a situation where laws are lacking or being inadequately implemented, the sensationalist media disseminate unconfirmed and inaccurate news, thus exerting a considerable influence on public opinion and even more drastically reducing the responsibility for public speech in Serbia.

"Currently, 14 dailies are published in Belgrade, (...) but only two of these, *Politika* and *Danas*, are serious papers, and the rest are tabloids of the worst kind," Grujica Spasović, the long-time editor of the independent daily *Danas* told the Croatian paper *Novi list* in 2001. Describing the situation in the Serbian media space in the wake of 5 October as disastrously bad, Spasović notes that "hatred and negative energy" are still commodities that "sell very well", which is demonstrated by the success of Serbian tabloids. A 2004 survey conducted by Đoković *et. al.* identifies *Blic*, *Politika* and *Večernje novosti* as Serbia's three largest dailies,[20] privatized with a considerable share of foreign capital. However, dailies

18 Dr Milivojević, Snježana, investigative team Šolović,Ana and Staletović, Veliborka. *Tabloidizacija dnevne štampe u Srbiji: rezultati istraživanja.* IREX, Beograd, June 2004, p. 1.

19 Božinović, Draga "SRBIJA: Ekonomski pritisci na nezavisnost medija - U TRAŽENJU PRAVE MERE", in: R. Udovičić (ed.), *Medijska spoticanja u vremenu tranzicije: Albanija, BiH, Hrvatska, Makedonija, Srbija i Crna Gora*, Media plan institut, Sarajevo, 2005, pp. 79 - 80.

20 Đoković, Dragan "Vlasništva medija i njihov uticaj na nezavisnost i pluralizam medija u Srbiji", in: Dragan Đoković (ed.), *Istraživanje: Vlasništva medija i njihov uticaj na nezavisnost i pluralizam medija u Srbiji i regionu*, Medija centar, Beograd, 2004, p. 22.

such as *Kurir*, *Nacional* and *Press* have very high print runs, comparable to those of the major papers.[21]

A reporting style that tends to be biased and serves the purposes of daily politics of the ruling parties, as well as the failure to bring about a lustration of the propagandists of the previous, autocratic regime, have been prominent features of Serbia's state-owned media after 5 October. At the same time, "the commercialization of independent media has led to their adjustment to the ruling public opinion, which is conservative and reactionary since it has been swamped with the propaganda of the regime-controlled media for over ten years."[22]

This conservative streak in the media and the public is evident in the representation of women in the Serbian daily press. The findings of a mini-survey of the visual representation of women in Serbian dailies (in which the author took part) conducted by the Belgrade-based Centre for Female Studies in 2001 confirmed the validity of the premise that the local media exhibit gender inequality in their depiction of women. In daily papers, women are depicted in only around one-fifth of all the photographs; "their number is considerably smaller in serious papers and rises conspicuously with the increasing number of entertainment pages and in evening papers."[23] An analysis of the social roles of women in the photographs revealed a

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21 Exact print run figures are a business secret; according to unofficial estimates (from interviews with media professionals), Serbia's most widely-read daily is *Večernje novosti* with a print run of around 300,000. *Blic* has a print run of around 180,000; *Politika* around 200,000; *Kurir* over 180,000; *Press*, with a constantly growing print run, around 80,000; and *Nacional* around 50,000. By contrast, the *Danas* daily has a print run of around 30,000, and *Glas javnosti* of around 50,000.

22 Spaić, Tamara "Jezik mržnje u srpskoj štampi - HRANJENJE INCIDENTIMA", in: Udovičić R. (ed.), *Medijska spoticanja u vremenu tranzicije:Albanija, BiH, Hrvatska, Makedonija, Srbija i Crna Gora*, Media plan institut, Sarajevo, 2005, p. 226.

23 Jovović, Ksenija "Šta govore fotografije", in *GENERO*, CŽS, Beograd, 2004, p.40.

tendency to stereotype female roles and to discriminate against women: "The social roles of persons shown in the photographs bear witness to a consistently selective approach by the media. Women in the photographs most often have the entertainment roles of models, TV personalities and singers. A second large group includes roles related to the private sphere: mothers, housewives, wives."[24] The researchers also had to add to the list of 'social roles' the categories 'without a role' and 'body as object,' for women shown outside any social context, anonymously and with an exclusively 'decorative' function, which had no equivalent among the male photographs.

The gender inequality, sexism and misogyny observed on the cover pages of the Serbian press and in the contents of tabloid dailies also result in the frequent pornographic representation of women.

Tabloid culture and 'porno-nationalism'

The emergence of a sensationalist press goes back to the very beginning of the development of the press as a mass medium. The first U.S. daily, published by formerly London-based publisher Benjamin Harris, *Public Occurrences Both Foreign and Domestick*, printed in Boston on 25 September 1690 (!), includes two basic features of the sensationalist press, i.e. tabloids: 'mud-slinging' at political opponents, often at the official authorities, and 'titillating' sexual scandals involving public figures.[25]

24 Jovović, Ksenija "Šta govore fotografije", in *GENERO*, CŽS, Beograd, 2004, p.45.

25 The paper was promptly banned by the authorities, because it contained negative comments about Indians close to the British Crown, as well as about the French king who had reportedly seduced his own sister-in-law. (in: Stan Le Roy Wilson,MASS *MEDIA/MASS CULTURE: An Introduction*, Mc Graw-Hill Inc., New York, Updated 1993 Edition, p. 151).

The cover page as the main expressive and communicative vehicle uses *headlines*, which constitute a "unique type of text."[26] In papers, and particularly in tabloids, the use of language, the design of the headlines, and the relationship of the image and the text are meant to excite, shock and grab the attention of the readers. In addition, headlines are visually attractive and often acquire their full meaning only when combined with photographs.

Tabloids can be said to combine the following two principles: attractive photographs and appealing text graphics, as well as sensationalist word choice and a concentrated discourse, on the one hand, and political messages summarized in *headlines*, on the other. Serbian tabloids too use these strategies to attract the buyer's attention. Resolute in their intention to influence public opinion, they notably deploy the strategies for political purposes. This is shown by the findings of the survey "Tabloidizacija dnevne štampe u Srbiji" (Tabloidization of the Serbian daily press), conducted by Dr Snježana Milivojević and her female collaborators in 2004:

> "In *Kurir* and *Centar*, all the headlines and photographs are unequivocally clear, direct, and - even in a heated situation - very affective, mobilizing and often openly discriminatory. (...) the overall message of the *Kurir* and *Centar* cover pages is upsetting, exclusionary, intimidating and threatening. In the context of a heated event, the tabloid tendency towards an affective, simplified and sensationalist treatment of the event does not contribute to rational insights into the crisis, its dimensions or possible solutions. To the contrary, it always serves as a basis for advocating quick, direct and exclusionary moves."[27]

26 Reah, Danuta. *The Language of Newspapers*. Routledge, London and New York, 1998, p. 13.

27 Dr Milivojević, Snježana, investigative team Šolović,Ana and Staletović, Veliborka *Tabloidizacija dnevne štampe u Srbiji: rezultati istraživanja*, IREX, Beograd, June 2004, p. 7.

It is important to stress that in Milošević's Serbia of the 1990s political content in the media was fully subordinated to the regime propaganda, with the exception of several independent media outlets which were subject to oppression. The interpretations of political developments in Serbian tabloids are manifestations of political extremism and undemocratic tendencies.

> "Characteristic of political extremism is the fanatic belief that its own policy is the only proper policy, while the others are false; the champions of other political ideas should be cajoled with all means available to accept the one and only ideologically genuine idea, or, in the name of an elevated goal (Nation, Class, Party, or the like), erased from the face of the Earth."[28]

This is also shown by a parallel analysis of the reporting in *Politika* and *Danas*, on the one hand, and in tabloids, on the other, of the formation of the Serbian government in December 2003 and the violence in Kosovo of March 2004.[29] While the former take a rational and balanced view, with *Danas* also mentioning peaceful solutions to the Kosovo conflict, tabloids take a sensationalist approach and present exclusionary views.[30]

In addition, popular culture has been largely used as an instrument in support of the system of values championed by the new war-profiteering elite and of the policy of the ruling regime, which is based on war, looting, nationalism and isolationism. Turbo folk music; shows featuring criminals and people from the social

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28 Trebješanin, Žarko "Psihologija političkog ekstremizma", speech delivered at conference "Politički ekstremizam u Srbiji," Zrenjanin, June 2006, forthcoming, p. 1.

29 Đoković, Dragan "Vlasništva medija i njihov uticaj na nezavisnost i pluralizam medija u Srbiji", in: Đoković, Dragan (ed.) *Istraživanje: Vlasništva medija i njihov uticaj na nezavisnost i pluralizam medija u Srbiji i regionu*, Medija centar, Beograd, 2004.

30 Ibid.

margins; false prophets, clairvoyants and healers; TV Pink quizzes; glamorous fashion; U.S. TV series and films full of violence as a manifestation of power; kitsch Latin American soap operas; and the like, have been complementing the political messages on paramilitary criminals/heroes, nationalism and xenophobia, and the collapse of moral values in a 'porno-nationalism' culture of sorts.[31]

Since 5 October 2000, this culture has largely lived on in the content of local tabloids and TV Pink programming.[32] TV Pink, a company also engaging in record producing, radio and satellite programming and other business activities, "has been spreading in the Balkans, broadcasting very commercial programmes known in the public as 'turbo-folk' culture."[33] An identical cultural pattern is also represented by local tabloid weeklies such as *Svet, Skandal, Glamur*, and the like. Local editors of franchise magazines with tabloid elements, such as *Story*, promote the same local celebrities and system of values to be observed on the pages of local tabloid weeklies and in TV Pink talk shows and music programming, which are emulated by almost all local TV stations. This system of values, dubbed 'Pink culture', is based on a trivial understanding of human, and especially male-female, relations; low cultural aspirations and kitsch culture; provincialism; misogyny; fascination with fashion, the entertainment industry and the body cult; and, indirectly, on a non-progressive and extremist rather than democratic political orientation.[34] Given the above, it comes as

31 Monroe, Alexei "Balkan Hardcore: Pop culture and paramilitarism", in *Central Europe Review*, Vol. 2, No. 24, 19 June 2000, available at: www.ce-review.org/00/24/monroe24.html , unpaginated.

32 Kronja, Ivana "Naknadna razmatranja o turbo-folku", in *KULTURA*, Issue 102, Zavod za proučavanje kult. razvitka, Beograd, 2002, pp. 8 - 9.

33 Đoković, Dragan "Vlasništva medija i njihov uticaj na nezavisnost i pluralizam medija u Srbiji", in: Đoković, Dragan (ed.), *Istraživanje: Vlasništva medija i njihov uticaj na nezavisnost i pluralizam medija u Srbiji i regionu*, Medija centar, Beograd, 2004. p.32.

no surprise that the sections of Serbian tabloid weeklies devoted to the entertainment industry should be dominated by misogyny as the key form of 'hate speech.' The entire discourse of these papers rests on sexist stereotypes, vulgar - and largely misogynistic - sexual allusions, as well as gossip, and even direct insults of public figures and celebrity couples.[35] The visual representation of entertainment stars is either sexist - woman as a body/object or a vehicle promoting fashion industry products, with appearance as the supreme value and preoccupation - or pornographic. Moreover, a good deal of the visual and written content consists of

34 This orientation is evident in the overall discourse and the simplified representation of complex political issues, with frequent and, as it were, systematically intolerant, national-chauvinistic, misogynistic, homophobic and similar excesses in entertainment/political (!) shows such as "Zamka" (Snare), "Klopka" (Trap), "Piramida," etc., to be observed not only on TV Pink, as well as in comments by presenters, discourse of the guests, song lyrics and the entire visual representation in terms of set design, costumes, dance numbers, and the appearances by male and female singers in entertainment shows such as "Grand šou," "Zvezde Granda" and "Svet plus". Similar messages could be observed analysing the news programmes of many media outlets in the country.

35 To quote but a few examples: a photograph of singer Mina Kostić shot while she was putting on her outfit behind the stage - the skirt is lifted revealing her garters and underwear - is accompanied by a comment of the makeup artist in a speech bubble: "A kol'ko vidim, drvnoprerađivačka industrija ti je u punom pogonu - posekla si svu šumu na venerinom bregu!" (Well, as far as I can see, your wood-processing industry is working big time - you have cut down the entire forest on your Mound of Venus!) - *Scandal*, Issue 101, 27 April 2006, p. 35; a beach photograph of singer Ana Kokić wearing a bikini, with the comment "100% meso" (100% meat) - *Scandal*, Issue 109, 22 June 2006, cover page; the rubric "Modni žiri" (Fashion Jury) offers comments on photographs of celebrities - a photograph of singer Maja Nikolić is accompanied by the comment of a certain Stefan Naumovski: " Zašto ste je slikali iz donjeg ugla, reklo bi se da umesto potkolenica ima balvane?! Dopada mi se njena haljina, ali ne i kako joj stoji" (Why did you take a shot of her from below, one would think she has logs for shins?! I like her dress, but not the way it looks on her). - Svet, Issue 463, 4 May 2006, p. 41; etc.

pornographic photo reports by paparazzi depicting the underwear and the crotches of female singers and presenters and other obscenities,[36] as well as 'comic' photo cartoons full of vulgar comments featuring performing artists.[37] The back pages of some of these papers include fashion rubrics and international showbiz reports.

Content analysis of Serbian tabloids: Pornography, politics and hate speech

For the purposes of a content analysis of current tabloid dailies in Serbia, we decided to carry out a mini-survey on a sample taken from the Serbian tabloid

36 The cover page of Svet, Issue 216, of as long ago as 11 September 2000 offers three photographs of pop singer Ksenija Pajčin taken during a show in an extremely short skirt and in black underwear, shot from below. Svet, Issue 472 of 2006, presents a photograph of folk singer Jelena Karleuša with naked buttocks and the caption "Gola guza" (Naked Butt), while Svet, Issue 474, contains a photograph of a topless girl with a transparent veil captioned "Topless - Tina Ivanović" (folk singer). One single issue of *Scandal*, Issue 102 of 4 May 2006, includes three paparazzi reports with scenes of kissing, sexual foreplay and erotic dance involving celebrities, accompanied by vulgar comments.

37 See, for instance, Svet, Issue 462 of 27 April 2006, with a cover page and a separate article on the visit of folk singer Jelena Karleuša to the U.S., who is depicted surrounded by four Afro-American bodyguards in a photograph with the lascivious caption "Bela mačka & Crni mačori" (White Cat & Black Tomcats) and a corresponding accompanying text. *Svet*, Issue 463,of 4 May 2006, presents photographs of an encounter between pop singer Vlado Georgiev and a lady, the "*Porsche* PR manager," in the form of a photo strip entitled "Old sea hand throwing his net!", with an extremely misogynistic view of the personality of the businesswoman, who allegedly "rejected" Vlado's advances.

dailies *Kurir*, *Nacional* and *Press*[38] published in the week of 29 April-5 May 2006. The survey examines the contents of the papers with a focus on their cover pages, which, as has been explained above, provide the basic and most important communication with the reader and reflect the content of the paper's inner pages. The intention of our study was to examine more closely the extent to which the pornographic representation of women is to be found in these papers and what their overall representation of women is like. We were also interested in the relationship between political news, the representation of women on the cover pages and the content of these tabloids in light of our premise that there exists an ideological link between misogyny, pornography and political extremism in the Serbian tabloid press.

The content of the tabloid dailies in the surveyed period confirms the findings of other authors presented above regarding the tabloids' primary interest in political issues, which are treated in an affective way and with a strong dose of exclusion. Among the political news, the central, or at least a prominent, report every day was related to the search for the chief Hague indictee Ratko Mladić.[39] Out of the five issues of *Kurir* published in the period 29 April-5 May, four show a picture of Ratko Mladić on the cover page. He is the central figure in all the issues, and the issue which does not include his picture offers photographs of the soldiers killed in a military barracks because (it is suggested) they were witnesses of his hiding.[40] All the issues of *Press* in the above period also include Mladić pictures and texts as the

38 Representative in terms of high print runs and the general popularity and influence on public opinion.

39 A former high-ranking JNA officer and retired Yugoslav Army officer, commander of the Bosnian Serb forces during the war in Bosnia-Herzegovina, today a Hague fugitive, whose indictment includes the 1995 mass crime against civilians in Srebrenica, Bosnia-Herzegovina.

40 *Kurir*, 29 April, 1 - 2 May 2006, cover page.

central news: in one issue, this is done in a very dramatic fashion, across the entire cover page with a big photograph and the headline "Dramatično - EU prekinula pregovore sa SCG: Mladić trese Srbiju" (Dramatic - EU has broken off negotiations with SCG: Mladić rocks Serbia).[41] *Nacional*, on the other hand, offers a general report related to Mladić on the cover page of only one of the four issues, however without his photograph: "Šokantno - Ratko Mladić pisao Karli del Ponte" (Shocking - Ratko Mladić wrote to Carla del Ponte).[42] Out of a total of 14 cover pages of the three tabloid dailies in the period 29 April-5 May 2006, 10 include a report on Ratko Mladić and his photograph as the central news, while two refer to him indirectly. The period surveyed evidently saw an intensification of the systematic anti-Hague campaign and the defence and glorification of Ratko Mladić (!) on a daily basis, since this was the point when the EU negotiators issued an ultimatum to Serbia asking for his handover. Mladić here becomes the symbol of the warrior and patriotism, of invincible and just Serbian manhood, and, naturally, of the continued rule of the criminal and political structures close to Milošević that emerged from the war.

Other topics appearing on the cover pages of the tabloid dailies in the period surveyed include: political scandals; religious hostility ("Mudžahedin okupirao bogosloviju u Sarajevu"[43] - Mujahedeen occupies Sarajevo's divinity school); the local entertainment industry; homosexuality; plastic surgery of male star singers; disaster and crime reports: suicide over dismissal from work, a stuntman's death, a family's accident death, brutal murders; celebrity romance: the wedding of a local TV presenter, the love of the local journalist Marijana Matthaeus and the famous football coach Lothar Matthaeus[44]; pornography: porn fair, porn stars;

41 *Press*, 4 May 2006, cover page.

42 *Nacional*, 5 May 2006, cover page.

43 *Kurir*, 29 April, 1 - 2 May 2006, cover page.

44 *Press*, 29 April 2006.

misogyny towards women in politics and in the entertainment industry; prestigious national products (e.g. wine brandy); football.

Examples of misogyny on tabloid cover pages in the sample are numerous. Any porn photograph or the placing of women in a pornographic context in text with or without a photograph is misogynistic in itself. Other forms of representation of women in the survey sample are also almost exclusively based on misogynistic messages. The politician Danica Drašković is shown in a photograph in a posture of domination over the SPS politician Baki Anđelković asking "Kako je Bakijeva majka dobila frekvenciju?" (How has Baki's mother got a frequency), which ridicules her political power.[45] Glaring ageism is manifested in a report on the ex-wife of a political and military official; a photograph of her wearing an erotic outfit is accompanied by the comment: "Glorija voli 'piletinu'! Bivša žena generala Nebojše Pavkovića u vezi sa 15 godina mlađim muškarcem" (Glorija likes 'spring chicken'! Ex-wife of General Nebojša Pavković in a relationship with a man 15 years her junior).[46] Also frequent is misogyny towards women in the entertainment industry, which invariably represents them as sex objects. Thus, for instance, a text on the murder of a witness of Arkan's assassination is accompanied by a photograph of his singer wife Ceca with superimposed crosshairs below the ambiguous headline "Ceca na nišanu" (Ceca in the crosshairs).[47]

In the sample of 14 cover pages from the period surveyed women are represented through porn photographs and/or comments placing them in a pornographic context a total of nine times, of which two times without comment and seven times with a misogynistic comment accompanying the photograph. In

45 Press, 29 April 2006.

46 Kurir, 4 May 2006, cover page.

47 Kurir, 29 April 2006, cover page.

one case, the picture of a blonde with naked breasts that dominates half a page is given without any comment or context, as if it were self-explanatory and 'natural' for her to be there.[48] Pornographic elements are present on six cover pages, while in three cases two different pornographic topics are to be found on one and the same cover page.

In the five issues surveyed, *Kurir* does not offer pornographic photographs, but does include misogynistic comments accompanied by photographs of the women commented on (see the examples above).

Out of the five *Press* issues, two cover pages include texts with pornographic elements, accompanied by photographs of scantily-clad women. A photograph of the stripper Branka Black Rose in a sleeveless top with exposed cleavage is captioned "Baš nju briga - Branka Blek Rouz ugradila silikonske grudi od 1.100 kubika" (She doesn't give a damn - Branka Black Rose has got silicon breast implants of 1,100 cc) and "Pamela br. 2... Srpska striptizeta izjednačila rekord koji drži famozna Pamela Anderson" (Pamela No. 2... Serbian stripper ties the record held by the famous Pamela Anderson).[49] A further example is the news on the Croatian pop singer Severina, consisting of her photograph in a red dress with a deep cleavage next to a misogynistic comment reporting that Germany's *Bild* has asked for her to be thrown out of the Eurovision Song Contest over a porn scandal.[50] Other local performing artists as well are often subjected to this type of representation, with news including pornographic elements even in cases where the female singer in the picture has her clothes on. Such is the news on the folk singer Marta Savić, with a photograph of her face and the comment: "Bugarska zečica - pozirala u kristalnim gaćama" (Bulgarian Bunny has posed in crystal

48 *Nacional*, 3 May 2006, cover page.

49 *Ibid.*

50 *Press*, 3 May 2006, cover page.

underpants).[51] This type of representation also degrades or deprives the women of their profession, seeking to reduce them to objects of the porn industry.

In the given sample, *Nacional* has photographs of naked women on each cover page: in two issues this is the central, big photograph dominating the page, and in the other two a big photograph spreading over half the page. Unidentified women in nude photographs in *Nacional* are shown with an 'aroused' look on their face, their upper body (from the waist or the thighs up) and naked breasts visible. On one cover page of this paper, a female photograph is given with no comment (see preceding paragraph). Another blonde is described with a misogynistic/pornographic stereotypical qualification - a combination of opposites in the perception of woman, which form the basis of misogyny - "nevaljali anđeo BB" (naughty angel BB), an allusion to the sexy 1960s actress Brigitte Bardot, of whom the girl in the photograph is a 'porn' doppelgänger.[52] Yet another very widespread pornographic stereotype is to be found on the cover page of one of the *Nacional* issues,[53] dominated by a photograph of two unidentified blondes with naked torsos wearing black underwear: one girl stands behind the other with her hands on the girl's breasts; the girl in the foreground has longer hair and a piercing on her navel. Here we also have the motif of homophobia, 'tamed' through the misogynistic/homophobic comment: "Srbi vole lezbejke: Mačo trip - kad bi naišla na pravog mužjaka, svaka lezba bi postala nimfomanka" (Serbs love lesbians: Macho trip - if she would encounter a real male, every lesbian would become a nymphomaniac). The photograph of the naked women is here used to encourage Serbian machismo (with nationalist overtones).

Photographs of naked (7 x) and half-naked (14 x) women are also to be seen on the back pages of the tabloid dailies in six out of the 14 issues - in four *Nacional* and two

51 *Nacional*, 29 April - 3 May 2006, cover page.
52 *Nacional*, 29 April - 3 May 2006, cover page.
53 *Nacional*, 5 May 2006, cover page.

Kurir issues. Together with the cover pages, the back pages are the only colour pages. Two back pages with naked women also include two small photographs of naked men (one frontal and one taken from the back, showing naked buttocks). Misogynistic comments abound in these representations as well.[54] Interestingly, the remaining eight back pages in the sample (including a half-page picture of a half-naked woman) are devoted to sport. This shows that the contents of the back pages are seen as more relaxed, as a section on entertainment, which is, in turn, understood as pornography and sport.

In lieu of a conclusion: politics as porn

These insights into the way in which tabloids combine pornography and politics confirm our basic premise that a link exists between political and misogynistic hate speech, and, moreover, that an authoritarian political order, whose mouthpieces in this case are the Serbian tabloids, fundamentally rests on a misogynistic perception of gender roles in society.

From the above analyses we can conclude that Serbian tabloids create plain narratives and use simple propaganda techniques. In addition to the sensationalist discourse and Manichean, black-and-white dichotomies, they express themselves in

54 These include: "Narkomanka" (Drug addict); Borba "zečice" za novac pokojnog muža ("Bunny" fights for her late husband's money); "Okršaj divljih zveri" (Wild beasts clash) - one actress has stolen the other one's boyfriend; "Bogata jahačica" (Rich rider); "Džordan simulira oralni seks" (Jordan simulates oral sex); "Golišavi hokej" (Naked hockey), with the photograph of a naked TV actress; "Superdeka" (Supergrandpa), an elderly rich man goes through a list with crossed-off names of fashion models he has possessed.

a considerable measure through photography. Numerous photographs of politicians have been selected which invariably contain a specific grimace that will support the meaning of the accompanying text. The title "Izvisio!" (Left high and dry!) accompanies a picture of Miroljub Labus with a 'sad' expression on his face (he obviously made the face by accident during long Assembly sessions and was caught by a vigilant photo-reporter). Here is an opposite example: the title "General koristi mrežu: uhvaćen Mladićev SMS" (General uses the network: Mladić's text message caught)[55] accompanies a photograph of a smiling Ratko Mladić in full military uniform raising his hand in military salute; in local and some other cultures, however, the gesture also has a vulgar meaning of "not give a fig", i.e. you have got nothing from me, all you can do is "hold me by my 'male pride'."[56]

Porn photographs on the covers and back pages of tabloids also serve as carriers of propaganda. Out of a total of 14 cover pages in the sample, the representation of women through photographs and text or, in one case, only a photograph, is to be found on 11 cover pages. Out of this number, nine times on six cover pages women are represented through porn photographs and/or comments placing them in a pornographic context. This type of representation of women always goes hand in hand with political news with nationalist or undemocratic overtones, often including attacks on the current, pro-reform government. Next to a photograph of two naked blondes spreading over an entire page and the caption "Srbi vole lezbejke" (Serbs fancy lesbians) stands a huge headline "Koštunica odlučio: VLADA PADA U JULU" (Koštunica has decided: GOVERNMENT TO FALL IN JULY) and a small photograph of the prime minister[57]; next to a half-page photograph of two heavily made-up girls with naked

55 *Press*, 29 April 2006.

56 See the interpretation of this gesture in: Morris, Desmond "Otkrivanje čoveka: vodič kroz govor tela", Zograf, Niš, 2005, p. 105.

57 Nacional, 5 May 2006.

breasts, identified as porn stars,[58] stands a huge headline "OSVETA IZDAJNIKU" (REVENGE ON THE TRAITOR), followed by the subheading "Koštunica: Rade, otvori Labusov dosije, neka pršte afere" (Koštunica: Rade, open up Labus' dossier, let affairs frizzle) and small photographs of Koštunica and Miroljub Labus.[59] This is directed against the former, pro-democratic deputy prime minister Labus, who had just resigned over a failed hunt for Mladić. Below a full-page photograph of Ratko Mladić and the headline "Dramatično - EU prekinula pregovore sa SCG: Mladić trese Srbiju" (Dramatic - EU breaks off negotiations with SCG: MLADIĆ ROCKS SERBIA) is a small photograph of the stripper Branka Black Rose wearing a blouse with a deep cleavage and the title: "Baš nju briga - Branka Blek Rouz ugradila silikonske grudi od 1.100 kubika" (She doesn't give a damn: Branka Black Rose has got silicon breast implants of 1,100 cc)[60]; etc.

Here we turn again to our initial study question: What are the origins of this fascination with pornography, and the need and intention to deploy pornographic elements together with the news and interpretations from the sphere of political extremism, identified in the surveyed - and very popular - Serbian tabloid dailies?

In his essay *Bordel ratnika* (The Brothel of the Warrior) published in the eponymous book, the ethnologist Ivan Čolović discusses the relationship between sex and war, a well-known stereotype. "War is sexy! This extravagant notion became unusually popular during the war in Croatia and turned into a commonplace of portrayals and interpretations of the war…*An army's job is banging and killing.*"[61] Čolović notes that the idea perfectly suits war propaganda as well, which "gladly portrays" participation in war "as male validation"[62] using erotic arguments as an

58 *Nacional*, 4 May 2006.
59 *Nacional*, 4 May 2006.
60 *Press*, 4 May 2006.
61 Ivan Čolović, "Bordel ratnika", XX vek, Beograd, 1994, pp. 71 - 72.
62 Ibid, op. cit., p. 72.

additional appeal to join the battle. "Erotic and war folklore inspired by the Croatian war has provided an opportunity for us … to watch a rough but clear picture of the national-patriotic idea today. Its elements have emerged clearly: nationalism, populism, patriarchate, crime and war,"[63] concluded Čolović in 1994. The link between pornography and the notion of warrior-like manhood has evidently continued to live on in the tabloid culture in Serbia and, for that matter, in the entire region to this day. The role of pornography is twofold: it supports the ideology of the warrior and machismo, on the one hand, and the conservative ideology which distinguishes between the family and 'honest' women belonging to the patriarchal order and the other, 'immoral' women, to be 'consumed' exclusively as sex objects, on the other.

At the same time, the interpretation of political developments and the way in which political leaders are represented point to a political showdown in which Serbian tabloids have sought to discredit the new, largely pro-reform political elite and to promote the militarist/nationalist ideology of the 1990s. Characteristic of post-socialist countries, and thus of Serbia, is that "conflicts between the ruling and non-ruling political elites occur almost exclusively on the 'turf' of the take-over (and preservation) of power and of the redistribution of power and wealth, and not primarily on the 'turf' of modernization in its comprehensive sense, the search for optimal solutions to the ever more difficult issues of social development."[64]

The pornographic approach to women and the militant-sadist and 'mafia' type of narrative in Serbian tabloid dailies have also shaped the interpretation of all other social and political issues, by means of which, owing to the deployment of the above-

63 *Ibid.*, pp. 80 - 81.

64 Vidojević, Zoran. *Tranzicija, restauracija i neototalitarizam.* Centar za sociološka istraživanja, Institut društveih nauka, BU, Beograd, 1997, p. 186.

mentioned populist discourse over many years, this system of values 'spills' into the entire public sphere. This link rests on the common ideological platform of misogyny and pornography, on the one hand, and of tendentious interpretative journalism and messages of political extremism on the other. These papers do not wish to be mere tabloids: their political discourse wants to mobilize the nation around serious political issues. But, although pretending to be serious political dailies, they reduce the complex political reality to simple black-and-white dichotomies, intelligible for a half-literate audience, by 'reporting' in pictures and text. The latter shows that their purpose is exclusively one of propaganda.

Looking at the Serbian political scene since 5 October 2000, we can observe a conflict between two core male political elites, which are, unfortunately, both deeply rooted in the authoritarian tradition,[65] as the political analyst Jovica Trkulja notes. These are the power structures of the previous regime and the emerging power structures of the new, pro-democratic order, which is encountering numerous difficulties as it seeks to become stronger and better functioning. This situation may be said to correspond to the distinction between two types of patriarchate drawn by the feminist theoretician Carol Pateman: the conservative, warrior, authoritarian patriarchate, on the one hand, and the new, democratic "fraternal patriarchate," dominant in Western democracies.[66] But the tabloids construct these two types of patriarchate in a simplified and revised form on a daily basis, creating a conflict between two types of manhood, inherent to the division into real and false manhood and into the friends and traitors of Serbhood: the men close to the Milošević regime, who fought in the national war and adhere to a right-wing ideology, stand for 'real' manhood, while those who have now taken power in order to carry out reform and

65 Trkulja, Jovica. *Kroz bespuće 2*. Dosije, Beograd, 2002, p. 90.

66 Pejtmen, Kerol. *Polni ugovor*. Feministička 94, Beograd, 2001, translated by Ranko Mastilović.

to be "servants of the West" stand for the other, weak and 'traitorous' manhood. We do not wish to idealize the new Serbian political elite here, which - in a situation where the old oligarchy still commands enormous economic, political, and as we can see, media influence - has been applying the principles of democracy and a just society in a way that is far from ideal. However, the tabloids juxtapose these different political and cultural tendencies by using time-honoured techniques: favouring the "warrior-like Serb manhood" and conservative patriarchate, political extremism and undemocratic arrangements through utterly simplified narratives - resembling those in porn films - and frequently deploying pornography as strong affective support for pre-rational thinking, raw instincts and the discrimination and control of women as part of a violent, exclusionary, warrior patriarchal culture. In this way, the tabloids seek to achieve their goal of destabilizing the civil order, with its wider spectrum of political pluralism, civil liberties and human rights and its policy of realism, negotiation and peaceful solutions, which aims to pacify the 'warrior' manhood.

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Translated into English by Marina Marić - Vogel

CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS OF THE TRAFFICKING IN WOMEN IN PRINT MEDIA IN MACEDONIA: A GENDER PERSPECTIVE

By Bobi BADAREVSKI

Abstract

The discourse on trafficking in women in print media in Macedonia, apart from explicit, also contains implicit discriminatory discursive (semiotic, ideological, epistemic) implications and outcomes in the representation of women: the aim of the critical discourse analysis is to identify mechanisms and modes of implicit discriminatory practice in the discourse on trafficking in women in print media, primarily focusing on print materials in Macedonian and Albanian.

Key words:
trafficking in women, gender perspective, discourse, critical discourse analysis, media discourse analysis, stereotypes, representation

Discourse on trafficking in women and the gender perspective

Trafficking in women is of a dual nature: one is concrete, its actual practice and effects on real people, while other is the discourse on such a phenomenon. The discourse on trafficking in women is not a mere discourse ***on*** the phenomenon, but this discourse on trafficking in women also partly constructs the very phenomenon: vocabularies (legal, political, security, and media), their semantic and pragmatic structures, and lexical definitions construct the discursive reality of trafficking[1].

Although represented as neutral and objective in relation to the discrimination of women, the media discourse in Macedonia is greatly burdened by negative discrimination. Given that trafficking in women encompasses the issue of illegal migration, smuggling and/or prostitution, the lack of gender awareness in the discourse also relates to these topics. Discursive discrimination is both implicit and explicit in the texts treating this phenomenon.

The implicit media discrimination entails non-critical acceptance of the representation of trafficking in women and the accompanying phenomena, and is characterised in particular by a lack of gender sensitivity in representations, particularly those coming from the police and security sources. The other aspect of

1 See Doezema, Jo "Loose Women Or Lost Women? The Re-Emergence Of The Myth Of White Slavery In Contemporary Discourses Of Trafficking In Women", Gender Issues, Vol. 18, Issue 11098092X, Winter 2000.

the implicit media discursive discrimination is the shift in and the production of new stereotypes about women at the point when the author of the discourse (a written text, a newspaper article) explicitly undoes or deconstructs certain stereotypes. The example of this phenomenon can be gleaned in the descriptions of immigrant men as possessing an active, courageous, and adventurous spirit, while immigrant women are portrayed as innocent, passive, irrational and who, precisely for being so, become victims of trafficking.

Contrasted to the approach based on security and investigative perspectives, which focus on state security, the gender perspective focuses on the phenomenon of trafficking in women as an issue of gender and sexual discrimination and gender-based violence. The issues of human rights violations are placed as the source of this type of criminal activity in the gender perspective: the approach based on human rights is gender sensitive. The discrimination of women based on gender is primarily an infringement of human rights.

A gender-studies perspective in relation to gender research, media, and trafficking in women is a basic methodological and theoretical framework in shedding light on these phenomena and their interrelation.[2] The starting point of the gender perspective is that gender categories should be viewed as relational concepts, whereby a certain centre of power simultaneously constitutes both categories. The notion that gender is a construct is central to the gender perspective. The theory of discursive formation of gender and sex, which explains their symmetry and dialectics, is the theoretical principle of this text.[3] The implication of such an understanding of gender difference is multifaceted. Since we can no longer speak of objective and metaphysical differences of a unified gender subject-women or men-this means that gender identities are discursively constructed and depend on context. Secondly, language cannot be viewed as transparent in representations in relation to reality and the one who uses it. Thirdly, language is a medium and means of producing and maintaining power.

The aim of this study is to identify mechanisms and modes of implicit discriminatory practice in the discourse on the trafficking of women in the print media in Macedonia. The aim of the gender perspective, as a wider theoretical framework, is to contextualise research material (print media) and to identify gender-relevant topics and issues. The gender analysis will analyse, chart, and assess the implications and results of media discursive discrimination in the construction of representational images of women and men. The critical discourse analysis will identify the ideological and cultural premises of the textual practice of the representation of women in the context of trafficking, which are presented as naturalized positions and knowledge. The semiotic analysis will examine the multimedia relationship in the media discourse of trafficking in women. The aim will be to examine the relationship among different semiotic representational systems as a unified discourse.

The discourse analysis of the media

How is research into the media and the media production of women's stereotypes impacted by such gendered perspectives? The representational theory of communication and language would not be appropriate, since it presupposes the existence of an objective reality which can be re-presented correctly and faithfully.[4] If this were the case, then the

2 See, Badarevski Bobi (ed.). *Rodova perspektiva na trgovijata so lugje*. Evro Balkan, Skopje, 2004.

3 See, Butler, Judith. *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*. New York: Routledge,1990; see, Butler, Judith. *Bodies That Matter*. New York and London: Routledge, 1993.

4 Kukla, Andrâe. *Social Constructivism and the Philosophy of Science*. Routledge, Taylor & Francis e-Library, 2001; Fairclough, Norman, *Media discourse*, E. Arnold London, New York, 1995.

issue of media representation is reduced to removing those factors that impact the ideal of transparent and faithful communication and representation. Media analyses often presuppose that 'non-authentic' meanings, messages, and information produced by the media are the results of external or internal factors which, at the same time, deform the purity of the communication channel.[5] In this context, the critique of media would relate to social influences which can be objective, such as the wider social or cultural context, as well as to how the particular social elite has been used.[6] On the other hand, the very media as an institution is a centre of power. The notion of the freedom of media is nothing but a power struggle carried out in the name of the ideal of freedom of expression and thought. Finally, the ideal of transparent and unmediated communication may be said to remain as the last metanarrative of the modernist understanding of communication and rationality.[7]

What do we get if we abandon the representational model of transparent communication and accept a different model of meaning and communication? What would be the relationship between the message, media, and society? We have already seen that the gender perspective accepts discourse as constitutive, as the process of the construction of identities, relationships and power in gender relations.[8] Discourse becomes the possible logic of the relationship between the message, media and society by being composed of a triad: a transparent message carries with it an interpretation because it is anchored in the context of a society that is mediated by

5 Macnamara, J. R. *Mass Media Effects A Review of 50 Years of Media Effects Research*. 2003, www.masscom.com.au/book/papers/mass_media.html

6 For a concise overview of theory see, Lye, John. *Critical Media Theory*. http://www.brocku.ca/english/jlye/criticaltheories.html

7 Habermas, Jürgen. *Filozofski diskurs moderne*. Globus, Zagreb, 1988.

8 Sunderland, Jane. Gendered Discourses. Palgrave, London, 2004; Holmes, Janet and Meyerhoff, Miriam. *The handbook of language and gender*. Malden, MA, Blackwell Pub, 2003.

communications. This means that society is no longer something that is removed from communication, or media, and vice versa. In order for such an understanding not be a truism, let us try to imagine linguistic communication, texts, or symbols of any sort, no longer as sites that re-present reality and social relationships, but rather as sites from which are produced identities in actuality and social relationships. This does not mean that identities are fictions[9], as would be interpreted from the perspective of the transparent communication model, but rather this is the way in which reality is revealed to be discursive reality. If meanings and reality exist that cannot be accessed through a discursive medium, these would be, as Umberto Eco says, understandable only to angels and no one else.[10] The discursive position in media analysis, the autonomy of the media and society, is viewed only as a conditional autonomy, since it does not have the theoretical categories of unmediated communication. The analytic categories of the media and society in discursive analysis are heuristic, covering an abstract spectrum of meanings that denote their power relations.

Critical discourse analysis: methodology

In addition to these general theoretical considerations, the issues in media analysis in the context of the relationship between the media and gender entail the possibility of working out a theory, an approach and a methodology of discourse

9 See Hamley, Katherine "Media Use in Identity Construction", http://www.aber.ac.uk/media/Students/klh9802.html

10 Eko Umberto "Glose i druga ogledala", Treci program Radio Beograd, no.80,81, 1989.

analysis in tune with the principles of the gender perspective. The extant practice of discourse analysis, within the context of linguistic disciplines, offers such a possibility[11]. The remaining question is how to link media research analysis and discourse analysis and to conceptualise the subject of research.

The theoretical starting point of critical discourse analysis can be defined as a complex communication event, as a chain of discursive events, in a particular field or a topic.[12] This term refers to the multidimensional character of a discursive event that entails a semiotic production, a text as a semiotic result, which can be empirically determined, and the textual production, textual reception, and socio-cultural context within which a discursive event is anchored. The central category of a complex communication event is the category of discourse.[13] The difficulties arising from defining this category stem from disciplines having different theoretical interests in discourse. However, what these positions share is the constructive trait of discursive practice as social activity in any given socio-cultural context.

Discourse can be set against the structuralist concept of language as an abstract structure by locating the process of signifying and reception within a particular socio-cultural context.[14] In this respect, discourse can be defined as the use of language or a semiotic process as a particular form of social practice. However, within the category of discourse, there are wider and narrower senses of discourse. The

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11 Lazar, Michelle (ed.). *Feminist Critical Discourse Analysis: Gender, Power and Ideology In Discourse*. Palgrave, London, 2005; Kristeva, Julija "Ekspanzija semiologije", Treci program Radio Beograda, no. 4, 1974.

12 Van Dijk, Teun A. "Principles of critical discourse analysis", *Discourse & Society*, vol. 4(2), Sage, London, 1993, pp. 249-283

13 Blommaert, J, *Discourse*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005.

14 De Sosir, Ferdinand. *Opšta lingvistika*. Nolit, Beograd, 1989; Fairclough, N. *Critical discourse analysis. The critical study of language*. London: Longman, 1995.

narrower sense of discourse refers to the semiotic practice of the production of units of meaning such as individual newspaper articles, political speeches, symbolic scientific structures, or all sites of the production and interpretation of knowledge. The wider sense of discourse refers to a particular use of language and semiotics from a certain social position or socio-cultural position. A complex communication event is also constituted by an order of discourse that includes a wide range of discourses. The relationships among discourses can be structured differently: hierarchic, complementary, fragmentary, and so on, depending on the pragmatics of a socio-cultural moment and the intention of communication.

Critical discourse analysis is not determined by any one theory or a discipline of research. In addition to a generally accepted position on the constructed nature of discursive practice as a social activity in any given socio-cultural context, the critical dimension of such an analysis is its core and its purpose. Critical discourse analysis, alongside other approaches to the critique of social inequality, focuses on discourse and its role in the production of social domination. More precisely, critical discourse analysis examines the ways in which semiotic strategies, structures, characteristics, text, and communication participate in the reproduction of power and domination in social interactions.[15] It is precisely this role of critical discourse analysis, in its revealing of the mechanisms of power and domination, which makes it an explicit political position siding with the subordinated. Domination, defined in terms of control of access to discourse, social context and semiotic practice, includes the category of control of social cognition understood as links between semiotic textual production and symptoms of inequality and subordination.

It is possible now to pose a question on the production of gender stereotypes, in particular stereotypes of women in the context of media production. If the production of

15 Van Dijk, "Structures of Discourse and Structures of Power", in: Anderson, J.A. (ed.) *Communication Yearbook 12*. Sage, Newbury Park, CA, 1989, pp. 18-59.

stereotypes is a composite part of human cognitive capacities, and as such can be avoided, what remains to be understood is the working of all available representations along power relations as a process that produces asymmetric representations of referents. This mechanism of redistribution of representation and stereotypes as a type of cognition is paradoxical: the production of stereotypes cannot be avoided, and stereotypes have negative social impact. This paradox is obvious in stereotype analyses: although the production of stereotypes is something natural, there are no 'natural' stereotypes since they are signifying representations under a particular power interpretation. A mistake made by usual social stereotype analyses is that they unjustifiably identify simplified stereotypes with a negative connotation. Simplification is an active aspect of the production of stereotypes as a process of representation; yet as a composite part of a discursive practice of power redistribution, it is interpreted as something that can and must be avoided. Quite the opposite, simplification cannot be avoided but can be revealed under which conditions it becomes significant in terms of determining a representation as a stereotype.

The very possibility of changing stereotypes in time, place, and social context draws attention to the existence of a correlation between the production of stereotypes as a cognitive capacity and stereotypes as instances of social subordination.[16] As we have already mentioned, such a correlation is a relationship of power and domination. Changes in power relations will result in changes in stereotypes, or, more precisely, in changes in interpretive perspectives towards representations in any given society. This means that we could not have a given list of stereotypes in advance. The identification of stereotypes can only be negative: stereotypes are all representations that in a given socio-cultural context have the effect of discursive power redistribution. Therefore, the identification of stereotype representations depends on the context-not only in terms

16 Van Dijk, T.A. "Social Cognition and Discourse" , in: Giles, H. and Robinson, R.P. (eds.)*Handbook of Social Psychology and Language*, Chichester: Wiley. 1989, pp. 163-83.

of the context of interpretation, but also in terms of the interpreter. The discursive character of social processes leaves no room for an outer position for an interpretation of discourse: the very interpretation is part of the discourse as the object of analysis.

Trafficking in women and critical discourse analysis

As we have already seen, critical discourse analysis does not have an established theory, approach, or methodology. Therefore, the application of critical discourse analysis varies depending on the choice of the object of analysis, the topic, or some wider theoretical framework. Different authors develop different methodologies. A literature review shows several levels of analysis:[17]

1. Object of analysis - oral, written or semiotic text (a narrower sense of discourse)
2. Intertextual and interdiscursive relationships among utterance, propositions, genres and media
3. Extra-linguistic context, institutional frameworks, cognitive processes
4. Wider social context which anchors discursive practices

The technique of analysis and reading entails the examination of micro-structures of a narrower sense of discourse, text, and textual production as factors

17 Wodak, R. & Meyer, M. (eds.). *Methods of critical discourse analysis*. London: Sage, 2001; Fairclough, N. *Critical discourse analysis. The critical study of language*. London: Longman, 1995; Weiss, Gilbert & Wodak, Ruth (eds.). *Critical Discourse Analysis: Theory and Interdisciplinarity in Critical Discourse Analysis*. Palgrave, London, 2003.

and the media of social processes and power redistribution, and, conversely, the examination of how macro extra-linguistic structures impact continuously on the use of the micro-structure of discourse. It is important to note that the aspects of analysis do not impact on one another according to an established understanding of causal effect: the aspects of critical discourse analysis are all parts of the same totality.

Trafficking in women - wider discursive context

The contemporary discourse on trafficking in women is based on the UN Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime[18], signed by eighty member states including Macedonia at a conference in Palermo in 2000. Pursuant to the Protocol to the Convention (Article 3):

(a) "Trafficking in persons" shall mean the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation. Exploitation shall include, at a minimum, the exploitation of the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labour or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs;

18 *Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime.* Nov. 2, 2000; *Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children.* 40 I.L.M. 353, 377, United Nations, 2000.

(b) The consent of a victim of trafficking in persons to the intended exploitation set forth in subparagraph (a) of this article shall be irrelevant where any of the means set forth in subparagraph (a) have been used;
(c) The recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of a child for the purpose of exploitation shall be considered "trafficking in persons" even if this does not involve any of the means set forth in subparagraph (a) of this article;
(d) "Child" shall mean any person under eighteen years of age.

The UN Convention from 1949[19] for the suppression of the traffic in persons and of the exploitation of the prostitution of others stems from a prohibition perspective aiming at criminalizing all effects of prostitution, but not prostitution itself. The UN Special Rapporteur for Violence against Women, Radhika Coomaraswamy, supported the position[20] that this convention does not view women as independent persons possessing reason and rights, but rather it views them as vulnerable, who need to be protected from the evil of prostitution. The 1949 Convention would only increase the marginalisation of women in relation to their human rights.

Historically analysed, the current term "trafficking in women" corresponds to the so-called trade in white slaves, a term that was used in political and media discourse by the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century. At that time, the term 'trade in white slaves' referred to 'trade in white women or girls' by means of force or by use of drugs. The feminist abolitionist movement by the end of 19th century

19 *Convention for the Suppression of the Traffic in Persons and of the Exploitation of the Prostitution of Others*. United Nations, 1950.

20 Pace *Razvoj na model za obuka na sudii i javni obviniteli vo oblasta na borbata protiv trgovijata so lugje*, Medjunarodoen centar za razvoj na migraciona politika. International Centre for Migration Policy Development-ICMPD

was against regarding prostitution as a necessary evil, creating the image of the prostitute as a victim of male sexual unruliness. The image of a woman as a helpless victim made a strong rhetorical impression, and which has stayed with us to this very day, can be seen in the Palermo protocol in the line 'The consent of a victim of trafficking in persons to the intended exploitation set forth in subparagraph (a) of this article shall be irrelevant'.[21]

The second aspect, belonging to the wider discursive context of trafficking in women, is the feminization of migration. The rhetoric of 'white slavery' occurs in the period of great migrations in the beginning of the 20th century. Today, we are in a similar situation. The International Organization for Migration (IOM) increasingly stresses in its reports the feminization of migration. However, as we know, the migration policies of Western societies are getting stricter. As Aleksandar Štulhofer noted, 'the fight against trafficking in women is a potentially elegant, or rather politically correct, way of regulating immigration. By defining trafficking in human beings too widely and by spreading the moral panic, both in the countries of origin and in the destination countries (in the latter for prevention purposes), the authorities actively discourage potential immigrants.'[22] The message addressed to women is simple: women should stay at home.

The third aspect of the wider context of trafficking in women is nationalism and potential racism. Different from the nationalist and racist right-wing rhetoric found in the term 'white slavery', the contemporary concept of trafficking in women seem to

21 *Convention against Transnational Organized Crime*, Nov. 2, 2000, *Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children.* 40 I.L.M. 353, 377

22 Štulhofer, Aleksandar "O pojmu i nekim aspektima trgovine ženama i djecom u svrhu seksualne eksploatacije", Paper delivered at the roundtable "Trafficking in Human Beings: Analysis of Definitions". (Skopje,2004.), www.ffzg.hr/socio/astulhof/tekstovi/SexTraffic_Skopje2004.pdf

be based on hardly refutable liberal discourse on the protection of human rights.[23] Just as the term 'white slavery' signals a racist position, the contemporary concept of trafficking in women connotes a similar position. These days victims of trafficking in women come from the Far East, Brazil, and, following the collapse of the USSR, from South-Eastern Europe.[24] They are portrayed as poor, uneducated, and of low moral standards.

Trafficking in women in Macedonia

Trafficking in women in Macedonia is often treated as a problem of illegal immigration, smuggling or prostitution despite the existence of legal provisions defining this phenomenon as a criminal activity. Around the beginning of the nineties of the last century, following the collapse of Yugoslavia and the USSR, state institutions and civil society managed to recognise the fragmentary symptoms of a new phenomenon; however, the available vocabulary and legislation could not define what was really taking place. Trafficking in human beings used to be described as 'the trade in white slaves' or as 'a phenomenon of modern-day slavery'.

A newly formed collection of international institutions and international organisations, with internal, operational definitions of trafficking, has shifted the understanding of human trafficking. The presence of international organisations such as the OSCE (the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe) and the IOM

23 *Ibid*, p.5.

24 *First Annual Report on Victims of Trafficking in South-Eastern Europe*. The regional clearing Point, Stability Pact Task Force on Trafficking in Human Beings (SPTF), 2003.

has pressed states and non-governmental organisations to redefine their attitudes to migration, smuggling, and prostitution.[25] By the end of the nineties, police took over operations aimed at discovering organised groups behind this criminal activity. The aim of their actions was to identify the organisational networks for trafficking, their internal structure, channels of illegal migration and the domestic and international connections of crime groups.

However, the Macedonian legal framework did not have provisions to care for the victims of trafficking. Traffickers could be established as mediators in the prostitution business, and victims as illegal immigrants. Given that Macedonian legislation does not deem prostitution a criminal act, female immigrants, who had a valid residence status in the country, but were involved in prostitution, were expelled from the country for violating the public order. Although the fight against trafficking in women has been carried out with all available means, these have been revealed as non-efficient and discriminatory. There was no appropriate distinction between trafficking in and smuggling human beings.

It was precisely this distinction that was made possible by the Palermo UN Convention against transnational organized crime (Palermo, 2000 god), and its Protocols- protocols on human trafficking and the smuggling of immigrants. The Republic of Macedonia, as a signatory of this Convention, has taken on the obligation to build on the wording of the Convention in its legislation, resulting in the passing of a special provision of the Criminal Code entitled Trafficking in human beings- Article 418a (2002 god)[26]. The national programme for the fight against human

25 Kartusch, Angelika. *Reference Guide For Anti-Trafficking Legislative Review, With Particular Emphasis On South Eastern Europe.* Ludwig Boltzmann Institute of Human Rights, Vienna, September 2001.

26 "Služben vesnik na R. Makedonija", no. 04/02

trafficking and illegal immigration (2002) is a document that conceptualises the phenomenon of trafficking in human beings by determining the priorities in a wide range of areas such as legislation, social policy, outlining various preventive measures in the fight against human trafficking. However, the approach to describing and fighting the phenomenon of human trafficking remains an exclusive issue of the fight against organised crime, and is still less an issue of human rights protection. The difficulties in the fight against trafficking in women result not only from the global approach, but are also of a conceptual nature. One of the key differences between smuggling and trafficking is that immigration can be a voluntary decision made by a person to leave a country of residence, while smuggling is illegal entry into a country, which is a crime against the state, rather than a crime against a person as well. Human trafficking is a crime against a person because, unlike smuggling, it excludes the principle of voluntary decision, although an element of acquiescence may be present. Coercion, exploitation, and abuse of powerlessness comprise the essence of trafficking in people regardless of the immigration status of a person - whether legal or illegal - and regardless of the motivation and activities of the immigrant, even if these entail prostitution.

These problems determine the situation of trafficking in women. There are no unified data on the number and scale of trafficked persons, especially women and children in Macedonia, broken down according to whether the country was entered in transit or the destination.[27] Based on the number of processed victims in the Shelter centre within the Ministry of Interior, formed in cooperation with the IOM, unofficial estimates reveal that over 5000 women are victims of trafficking in Macedonia. This estimate is also warranted by the information that, between 2003

27 *Trafficking In Human Beings In South Eastern Europe, annex i, Country situations*, OSCE, 2005.

and 2004, 12,000 people were deported from Macedonia to their countries of origin.[28] It is impossible to determine which of these were victims of human trafficking and which were illegal immigrants. A similar situation is present today: the authorities only report on the number of trafficked people and illegal immigrants identified by an internal methodology inaccessible to the wider public.

The successful fight against trafficking in women depends on meeting the legal requirements in the legislation covering this issue. Failure to meet this condition means not only that the fight against trafficking in women is inefficient in terms of starting justifiable pre-investigative and investigative processes that would result in passed sentences, but also in terms of redefining the central issues of trafficking in women. In this case, the campaign for the fight against trafficking in women is aimed at constitutive elements of trafficking which are not criminal acts per se or mere singled out phenomena. In this respect, trafficking in women in the context of sexual exploitation is represented as a problem of prostitution, of immigration, or of crime.

The results of such an approach are detrimental to the treatment of victims of human trafficking, to preventive activities and to legal aspects of the fight against trafficking. Conceptualised as a problem of prostitution, the logic of trafficking in women in the context of sexual exploitation identifies the victims of trafficking as accomplices in the phenomenon. The immigration of women who are aware that they are entering into sex industry in the territory of Macedonia is a stumbling block for experts and authorities in the assessment of their status as victims.[29] To the notion of an innocent victim that lies at the core of the concept of trafficking in women is now opposed the victim who enters into the system of trafficking in women, using

28 Interview with Guglielmo Schinina and Marie-Ange Goessens, IOM Skopje,27 January 2004, in *Trafficking in human beings in south eastern europe*, annex i, Country situations, OSCE, 2005.

29 Ljupco Arnaudovski and Trpe Stojanovski, *Trgovija so lugje - Kriminalitet*, Skenpoint, Skopje, 2002.

it for her own immigration or economic aims. This poses the question as to how to recognise the true victim of trafficking in women. The logic in unofficial discussions goes along the following lines: Unless in clear cases, some women may be more na'ive than others, but far from all are innocent victims. Incredulity in relation to the innocence of victims results in the conceptualisation of *aware* female immigrants and *aware* female sex workers.

In the context of the trafficking in women as an immigration issue, the conceptualisation remains similar. The logic at work here is that women cannot willingly immigrate or, if they do so, then they are solely and exclusively involved in the field of sexual exploitation, rather than in economic migration. Although the statistical figures on smuggling human beings reveal that women immigrate illegally due to a wide range of causes, this is not an issue for the Macedonian authorities. The prevention campaigns focus predominantly on immigration. If nobody seems to be what they truly are, meaning that a friend, a lover or relatives are all potential pimps involved in the trafficking net, then it is best to stay at home-such is the overall message of all these campaigns.[30]

In summarizing the wider Macedonian discourse on trafficking in women, we can map out a model: **it is about a vulnerable woman who is incapable of making rational decisions on her actions and behaviour. Her decisions and agreements can have no validity. Her independence from the household and family is not recommended because of male sexual unruliness. Any attempt she makes to alleviate poverty is through prostitution, which means that she does not even own her body. She is uneducated and immoral**. However, the very ability to understand this

30 Prevention campaigns are mostly organised by Non-governmental organisations, the IOM and the "Otvorena porta - La Strada" in partnership with the Ministry of Interior of the Republic of Maceodnia. The most visible campaign was "Otvorene porte", with posters reading "Ne dozvoluvaj da bideš izmamena ima način da si pomogneš"

discourse lies in its discriminatory and sexist premises. The established stereotypes about women are nothing more than this.

It is precisely these stereotypes that create the policies for fighting and preventing trafficking in women as well as the media discourse. 'Manuals for journalists'[31] are mere compendia of the wider discursive practices of these implied stereotypes. Their structure is no different from the structure of manuals for judges and prosecutors. The textual practice of writing news items, articles and reports on trafficking in women resemble one another, and there is no need to read all of them: what is portrayed is a helpless victim forced to enter prostitution by an organised group of traffickers in women.

Portrayals in the discourse on trafficking in women in Macedonian print media

The discursive textual practice in print media constructs the identity of a trafficked woman in accordance with the general understanding which 'coincides' with the expert profile of a trafficked woman: these are women seeking income because of desperate economic conditions. The portrait of a trafficked woman goes along the following lines:

- Victims are women and young girls aged 18 to 25
- They come from small rural areas or regions of great depravity in South-Eastern Europe
- They are unemployed
- They are poor
- They come from dysfunctional families
- They have little education

31 I consider 'Manuals for journalists' to be all materials distributed at roundtables and journalists' workshops to which I have had access; see"Izvestuvanje za trgovijata so lugje na Balkanot", trkalezna masa-Makedonski institut za mediumi i Ireks Promedia; see Bjelica, Jelena. *Priručnik za novinare-Trgovina ljudima na Balkanu.* Beograd, 2002, http://www.b92.net/doc/bjelica/

- They are discriminated against either in their families or professionally
- They speak no foreign languages

Now, let us turn to sections from the textual production I find typical of Macedonian journalism.[32]

Reporter, May 2003, Skopje

> "Many young women from countries in economic crisis, such as those in Eastern Europe, seeking employment abroad, end up in whore houses. They gullibly answer employment classifieds - for baby sitters, waiters, models or dancers - which are well-developed channels for trafficking in women. Persons offering jobs even visit the families of these women and girls, promising well-paid and easy jobs abroad and regular monthly payments to the families.'[33]

Lobi, July, 2003. Skopje

> "Sanja Ivanova, 16, from Štipa, returned home accompanied by police after 16 days. She was found in "Djezo Kompani", a café in Želin (Tetovo). This is not the first time that Sanja has gone missing. Three and a half months ago, her brother Nenad found Sanja in a café in Selce, a village near Tetovo, and took her back to their parents' in Štip at his own risk. (…) When Sanja was 4, she was hit by a car, leaving permanent damage to her nervous system. According to her parents, she is hard of hearing, suffers from memory loss and is not fit for making judgements and decisions on her own'[34]

32 These quotations come primarily from texts that entered the competition "Najdobra storija za sprečuvanje so lugje 2003" of the Makedonski Institut za Medijume. This is why I take them as representative of the media discourse on trafficking in women.

33 "Nekoi devojki uspevaat da gi ostvarat svoite soništa, za nekoi sonot se pretvara vo košmar", Reporter, May, 2003.

34 Stojanovska, Suncica "Ka ose jo tregti të brendshme gra", Lobi, 127, 2003.

Portrayals of traffickers in women are as follows:

- A man between 18 and 25, or between 36 and 40
- Little education
- Albanian
- Prior convictions
- Owns a night club

Lobi, November, 2003

"43-year old Leku (Dilaver Bojku) from Velešte, Struga, is the owner of the café Espereso, another bar registered as owned by his 20-year old son Beni, located in the same village, and the hotel Bern in Struga. Together with Mifita, his brother, and with Žana, he controlled several other bars in Struga and its vicinity (…) 22 criminal charges for over 25 criminal acts have been pressed against Dilavera Bojku Leku, but few have been seen through, although all the girls who fled the sex bars in Velešta, or were arrested in the police raids, testified against Bojko, claiming that he forced them into prostitution."[35]

Svedok, Skopje

"My parents raised and supported me and my older brother on their two working-class incomes. When we were little, we somehow managed. We were not deprived. But as years passed, we barely managed to survive. We lived in extreme poverty. My brother got work through a youth job centre in order to contribute to the household, choosing the hardest jobs, which were paid best. He worked day in and day out, but was weathering it with his head raised. I could not follow his example. I wanted comfort and enjoyment and could make such an effort and give up on 'nice things' as he did (…) I have always lived to have a good time. How long this will last, no one knows. It's either until I'm fed up with this job or until the "coppers" knock on my door"[36]

35 Dimevski, Saše "Leku, sinonim za prostitucijata vo Makedonija", Lobi, 143, November, Skopje,2003.
36 Kežarovski, Tomislav "Od delčevsko Aračinovo - vo svetot na sladostratieto", Svedok , Skopje

Micro-discursive structures: lexis and syntax of the media discourse on trafficking in women

The lexical use in the textual practice on trafficking in women is mainly politically correct. Trafficked women are called 'victims', which meets the regulations of global discourse. Since the context of prostitution is mostly about trafficking in women, traffickers in women are called 'macros'. The syntax is determined by the complexity of the event that is described and analysed. The text is occasionally burdened by long clauses, which indicates the effort by the author to define and reveal the problem.

'In courts, girls are usually 'the injured party'; in their society 'prostitutes', and in their families they bare first a 'trauma' and then a 'stigma'. They are rarely spoken about as victims of internal trafficking in human beings, because the police claim that such trafficking does not exist in Macedonia. Moreover, the girls themselves can barely accept and admit what has happened to them'[37]

Attributes such as 'na've', 'frightened', 'young', 'white slaves', 'tricked', 'innocent', though used to paraphrase the jargon and the context of trafficking in women, nonetheless implies a certain shared vocabulary. Such vocabulary becomes a meta language which constructs denotations and connotations of the trafficking terminology. Only through the use of certain textual approaches can sexist readings of sexist terminology be prevented.

Stylistic structures of the media discourse on trafficking in women

In the representation of the context of trafficking in women, stylistic features of the media discourse range from euphemism to irony. Depending on what the author wishes to represent, while at the same time denoting both context and text, euphemisms soften any possible judgement of the trafficked woman, who might be stereotypically

37 Stojanovska, Suncica "Ka ose jo tregti të brendshme gra", Lobi, 127, 2003.

understood by the recipient of the text. The 'victim' becomes a euphemism for a 'prostitute'. Although it is not possible to avoid an ironic reading of the 'victim', the text is revealed as self-referential in that it does not remove other possible interpretations. Irony mostly occurs in the context in which a discourse is taken or paraphrased by authors who are not convinced of its correct semantic identification. In these situations, inverted commas play a crucial role.

A common fallacy with journalists who are under the influence of non-governmental organisations involved in working on trafficking in women is that the term 'victim' is the only correct identification of trafficked women. In contrast, journalists who specialise in legal issues know that the Macedonian legal system recognizes the term 'injured' and it is only this way that the identified victim of trafficking can receive material compensation in litigation.[38]

Composition and structure of the text of the media discourse on trafficking in women

In addition to being determined by genre, the composition of texts, in semantic terms, is determined as a rule by the composition of meta-narration present in all guidelines for journalists treating the issue of trafficking in women. Investigative stories repeat the sequence of events in victims' cases: poor economic situation, travel, the selling of women and repatriation. In general, texts only confirm the commonplaces of trafficking in women, without paying much attention to specific circumstances. Texts are also characterised by limited sources of information.

Texts can serve the purpose of some politics, which may be, for instance, ethnic or nationalist. In such cases, the subject matter, source, context, and the

38 Mihajlova, Tatjana "Osvrt na problemite vo zastapuvanjeto na zrtvite na trgovijata so lugje vo pretkrivicnata I krivicnata postapka", in Badarevski and Karovska (ed.) *Rodova perspektiva na trgovijata so lugje*, Istrazuvacki centar za rodovi studii, Institut EvroBalkan, Skopje, 2004.

message of the text are structured in such a way that nationalist messages are channelled through the media discourse on trafficking in women. It is characteristic for the print media in Macedonian to point a finger at Albanians as the only guilty side in the existence of trafficking.

On the other hand, moderate or bilingual editions (Lobi- in Macedonian and Albanian) highlight that both Macedonians and Albanians take part in this matter equally. The stories which reveal that in east Macedonia, with an ethnically predominant Macedonian population, there are centres for trafficking in women, or that ethnic Macedonian women have been trafficked, have been accepted as sensationalist.[39] Such stories, however, become a means of justifying nationalism. Since the examples of internal trafficking in women relate to ethnic Macedonian women who have been trafficked in the bars owned by ethnic Albanians, this only aggravates inter-ethnic relations.

Cognitive scenarios in the media discourse on trafficking in women

As we have already mentioned, social cognition is a relationship between semiotic textual production and manifestations of inequality and subordination. On the one hand, the dominant discourse of trafficking in women constructs the representation of trafficking in women as victims, while at the same time producing implicit representations which maintain stereotypical sexist viewpoints. The public, determined by socio-cultural patterns of tradition, is defined by certain cognitive perspectives of expectations. The cognitive scenarios constructed by the media serve a double function: to represent an event and to appeal to the audience's expectations. Depending on the aim of the author of the text, affective connotations are used that are already present in the public discourse.

39 Stojanovska, Sunčica "Ženski za 50 evra", Lobi, 144, November, 2003.

Articles and stories on young women who have been beaten up by pimps will win public sympathy by appealing to solidarity with the victims of violence; however, showing a murdered, trafficked woman, who continued to be in nightclubs even after repatriation, will only case a negative reaction, in the sense that the opinion will be that it is the victim's fault. The production of cognitive scenarios seems unable to avoid the production of stereotypes due to the elliptical nature and understanding of the media message.

The negative reaction to female immigrants is supported by texts exemplified by an article entitled 'Makedonija - emigrantski kamp'[40] in which the author explains that the large number of immigrants in Macedonia has led to prostitution, has been involved in prostitution, and that a great number of pimps are immigrants who bring with them prostitutes who are then abused.

Semiotic structures of the media discourse on trafficking in women

The multimedia features of texts on trafficking in women distinguish them form other texts. Sensationalism provided by photos which depict women and men in erotic and pornographic contexts seems to be reserved and allowed only for the topic of trafficking. In addition to the illustrative and explicit functions of a photo, they confirm visual stereotypes of female sexuality. Instead of showing victimisation of trafficked women, photographs are used showing laughing girls in

40 *Utrinski Vesnik*, December, Skopje, 2000.

erotic contexts. In such cases, it is difficult to convey a message or persuade the recipient of the text that its representation of trafficking in women is correct.

On the other hand, photos accompanying the text and showing victimised women, while using iconography that eroticises the female body, result in the same negative stereotypical effect: depictions of the female body and female sexuality are subordinated to a sexist and sexual perspective. Such iconography also implies stereotypical representations of male sexuality because such photos, as a rule, depict the man as the 'client'-the user of sexual services provided by trafficked women.

In the last few years, the multimedia features and intertextuality of texts on trafficking in women have developed within the new coordinates of internet editions of dailies and weeklies. If the texts are not illustrated in print editions, they are illustrated in electronic ones. The internet versions, which in media terms are more powerful, add new connotations to the same texts as well as new ways of perceiving and understanding the texts. Not only is it possible to make the text more visual, it is possible to provide links to similar stories, thus enabling the recipient to come to know the wider context and form an opinion on a certain issue in a short time.

Critical discourse on trafficking in women as a way of overcoming gender stereotypes

The aim of this text has been to show that the theory of discursive construction of gender identities offers advantages over other approaches to solving the issues related to gender, such as the issues of representation and the production of stereotypes, as well as the relationship of these to media theories. Secondly, the thesis that trafficking in women is partly a discursive phenomenon

is complementary to the theoretical and methodological position of critical discourse analysis.

Revealing rhetorical structures or the rhetoric of structure in any given field entails revealing how certain logic, certain identities, regimes and their practices are constructed and constituted. Despite being dissatisfied with the vocabulary at their disposal as the only legitimate one for writing on the topic of trafficking in women, journalists in the print media in Macedonia remain uncritical towards the discourse on trafficking. Their dissatisfaction with the topic and their corresponding treatment of it, compared to what they see or discover about trafficking in women, are manifested as a specific media discourse which must be read carefully. This is not a self-aware discourse, one of complete self-control. Dissatisfaction with official vocabularies and discourses as sources of stereotypes are experienced as limiting and misleading, moving away from the true state of affairs of trafficking in women. The internal paradoxes of the discourse, such as the victim/immigrant, prostitution/exploitation of prostitution, morality/human rights, only limit the writing on trafficking, and force both the author and the reader to perpetuate the received stereotypes of women and men.

This does not mean that both the authors and the readers are unable to see which representations, within a given context of power relations, perform the function and role of gender stereotypes, or that they are unable to determine measures to alleviate the effects of such stereotypes. What remains as a source of hope at this moment is a constant and uncompromised struggle against discursive conditions that allow stereotypical representations within the discourse on trafficking in women. These stem from a wide range of sources, not only historical, political and cultural traditions or international and local institutions and subjects, but from our personal histories, most intimate thoughts, decisions, and feelings as well.

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INTERPRETATION OF NEWSPAPER INTERPRETATIONS OF A MURDER

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Abstract

By interpreting the interpretations in several newspaper articles writing of a homicide- Ana Magaš' murder of her husband in Zadar- we show how discourse functions in behalf of the powerful. In examining the articles, we follow the method of critical lingual analysis as defined by Normal Fairclough[1], meaning that we first describe the formal elements of the articles, then interpret the relationship between the articles and interactions, and finally explain the social conditioning of the production process and its potential social effects. We decided to use this type of analysis because we believe that clear links can be established between the use of language, power and ideology - in this case the economic power of a family, its potential influence on local newspaper reports, and the way the murder case was interpreted. By analyzing the attributes given the protagonists (wife/mother vs. husband/father), at the same time we illuminate how the female and male sexes/genders are defined and standardized within a (rigid) patriarchal ideology.

Keywords:
Discourse, ideology, patriarchy, power, murderess Ana Magaš, media ownership

1 Fairclough, N. *Language and Power*. Longman, London and New York, 1989.

A murderess who "slaughtered" her husband in cold blood or a victim made murderess by accident?

This paper was inspired by a trial in which a woman was suspected of murdering her husband. As we have been working with women's human rights for more than a decade- among these the right to lives without violence- news indicating the murder of a man by own his wife inevitably drew our interest. The remoteness of the city where it happened compelled us to seek information in the media. As we have also been dealing with media for quite some time, we were able to use this case to look more deeply into the mechanisms of contemporary media discourse. The event stirred public attention at a national level, but the trial and the newspaper articles that initially drew our attention were from the city of Zadar, where the crime occurred. Interpretations at the state level (Supreme Court) and in national newspapers did differ; in general, however they were both considerably different from those of the local community (newspapers and the County Court).

Agreeing with Douglas Kellner's assertion that "media culture is a battlefield for dominance of key social groups and opposed ideologies," and that individuals experience this battle "through the images, myths and performances of media culture"[2], we will try to show how this is done by analyzing newspaper articles (primarily in the Zadarski Regional, and partly in some local and national dailies and a weekly). At the same time, we want to study how economic and political power affects the creation and use of symbolic forms in order to influence the course of events in a specific social situation.

We approach the articles and the theme as feminists.[3] This naturally determines to a significant extent the starting point of our analysis and interpretation. In doing

2 Kellner, D. *Media Culture*. Clio, 2004, p. 7.

3 Without a precise definition, feminism as critique and deconstruction of the ideology of patriarchy.

so we will primarily follow the method of critical lingual analysis as defined by Normal Fairclough[4], which means first describing the formal elements of the articles, then interpreting the relationship between the articles and interactions, and finally trying to explain the social conditioning of the production/interpretation process and its social effects. We decided to use this type of analysis because we believe (and want to demonstrate) that clear links can be established in this case between the uses of language, power and ideology.

Earlier content analyses (both in our country and abroad)[5] showed that women appear in print media most frequently in the role of victims in crime sections. In this analysis we are interested in how the woman is depicted/represented when she is the likely perpetrator of a crime, how much an ideological foundation in judging protagonists can be gleaned from the description of the crime (and the murderer and victim), and to what extent the attributions of the female and male protagonists and their judgment are based on "common sense"- conventions that go without saying and require no explanation.

For us, social distinction between the two sexes[6] is unacceptable, and we do not believe that gender traits should "automatically" follow from biological determinants. Therefore, we maintain that a breakdown of attributes attached to the protagonists (wife/mother, husband/father) in the article can illuminate what is understood by the

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4 Fairclough, N. *Language and Power*. Longman, London and New York, 1989.

5 E.g. Samavka, S. "Analiza dnevnih novena", B.a.B.e., 1997; Jemrić, I. "Nasilje nad ženama", *Ženska infoteka*, 2004; Gallagher, M. *Who Makes the News?, Global Media Monitoring Project*. WACC, 2005.

6 For this issue it is interesting to read articles such as: A. Fausto-Sterling, "The Five Sexes: Why Male and Female Are Not Enough", The Sciences, 1993, or the article: Postić, J. "Transgresija roda", in: Bosanac, G., Jurić, H., Kodrnja, J. *Filozofija i rod*. Croatian Philosophical Society, Zagreb, 2005.

female and male sexes as social categories, whose understanding follows from the latent values of a society. In local media articles, the division between the male and female sex was presented as absolutely unquestionable, with clear distinctions made in what is admissible within each and what the community should mercilessly condemn and punish. Without any explanation, a woman was severely condemned primarily because she didn't behave in line with an unwritten (but evidently strictly prescribed) code for wives.

The media is certainly one of those institutions that have the role of creating social reality. As Moira Chimombo[7] asserts (1998), it does this, like the judiciary, education system or church, through discourse - sermons, textbooks, newspapers and advertisements (among others) legitimize the existing social structure, primarily serving an ideology that suits those in positions of power, while those over whom this power is practiced must be convinced this kind of relationship is "natural" and the only one possible.

In our case, we are interested at the same time in how much newspaper articles respect certain publicly and loudly proclaimed norms. As Daniel Cornu stated (1997), one of the six dominant professional principles contained in all journalistic declarations and codes is the principle of "equal treatment of all persons by eliminating all forms of discrimination".[8]

Teun van Dijk, the creator of critical discourse analysis, describes discourse as an interactive process resulting in a communication act and realized in an article. In studying articles, he is most interested in the dominating role of discourse which occurs whenever a protagonist uses language to dominate others. Discourse, says Van Dijk,[9] can be used to discriminate against children, women, minorities, workers, students, and

7 Chimombo, M. P.F. and Roseberry, R.L. *The Power of Discourse.* LEA Publishers, 1998, p. 11.

8 Korni, D. *Information Ethics.* Clio, 1999, p. 36.

9 Van Dijk, Teun A. *Discourse as Social Interaction.* SAGE Publications, London, 1997.

political, social and ethnic groups. They are most commonly seen with prejudice, and described with negative stereotypes built on a hierarchy of cultural categories: national background and/or appearance; socio-economic position; (typical) actions or interactions; attributed personal characteristics (intelligence, laziness, stinginess, immorality).

Articles in the Zadarski Regional, as we will demonstrate, serve as a textbook example of how this is done in practice.

Methodology

Since a spatially and temporally removed event can be learned about only indirectly, we will follow in chronological order articles on the murder that were published in local newspapers,[10] and in the end compare them to some of the data that we obtained through other channels.

The news of the murder stirred up a lot of media interest- dailies and radio and television programs carried the story, which quickly reached the front pages.[11] If we take into account the fact that the media likes unusual events ("it's not news when dog bites man, but when man bites dog"), and that women are rarely perpetrators of murder,[12] it was no surprise that a large part of important (and expensive) media

10 Articles from dailies were collected for us by Presscut agency, www.presscut.hr.

11 *Vjesnik, Večernji List, Jutarnji List, 24 Sata, Novi List,* HTV1 News, TV NOVA Evening News, Croatian Radio 1 program - central news (3 p.m.)...

12 According to Ministry of Interior data, in 2004 and 2005 women committed one murder (Ana Magaš) and men committed 25.

space was given to this story. Another reason for the attention was the social status of the family within which it occurred - the economic power of the *pater familias* Joso Magaš has given him close ties to numerous representatives of the political elite, including the president of the state.

The research sample is a basic one - articles carried in the Zadarski List and Zadarski Regional about the Magaš case (March 19 - June 29, 2005), and one piece from the national press - as a reference framework several articles were analyzed from national dailies and one weekly (1 from Jutarnji List; 1 from Vjesnik; 1 from Večernji List; 1 from Globus[13]) - to establish similarities and contrasts. We were especially interested in the question of when and why certain relevant facts were "passed over", or suppressed.

The analytical matrix, i.e. the content analysis protocol, is composed of a quantitative (formal) analysis and a content analysis. The elements of the quantitative analysis are the following: newspaper name, article publication date, newspaper page carrying the article, section in which it was published, article size, article position on the page, presence of visual material, number of appearances of individual protagonists in the article, article author.

The elements of the content analysis are the following: headline, sub-headline, superscript headline, leads, captions under photographs (as additional information), article topic, article protagonists, protagonist attributes (adjectives, nouns describing individual protagonists), value judgments about protagonists.

After defining the elements of the content analysis and noting down all attributes of the protagonists given by the article author, we started to analyze what are called "model creating" articles. As this method takes the article as a whole and treats it as

13 Thanks to the *Vjesnik* archive, we received 31 articles from all Croatian dailies, but without data regarding the page and article size. Thanks to the professional agency Presscut, we collected all articles from local Zadar media, with complete processing and original look of articles.

a case study, it is important to note that during the analysis we carefully examined suggestions, for instance, of how a good mother and/or wife should behave; in other words, those seemingly self-explanatory designations (naturalizations) on which ideological constructs are built.

Newspaper interpretations of the murder

Zadarski List

In an article published in the *Zadarski List* on March 21, 2005, signed by Luka Perić, the headline and superscript headline allege as an unquestionable fact that "*Tanker Navigation Inspector Lucijan Magaš, 33, was murdered by wife Ana*" (superscript headline), and that the "The murderer of the husband defends herself with silence" (headline), although it says later on in the article that "*Meanwhile, his wife was brought to the police station for criminal processing. Judging by everything, she is the prime suspect, because Magaš was killed when the two of them were alone in the apartment*".

Besides mentioning the names of the investigating judge and defense counsel, the only protagonists in the article are Ana and Lucijan Magaš. She is named a number of times as the wife (*wife Ana, his wife, wife, wife*), or the personal pronoun *she* is simply used instead. We learn that the "*27-year-old wife stabbed her husband Lucijan Magaš with a knife; prime suspect; that probably after a stormy night out in town she returned home at 3 o'clock; that she banged (on the door) for a long time asking him to open it; entered the apartment, chased Lucijan out of the apartment*" (quotations from the article in order of appearance).

We learn the victim was "*an inspector with Tankerska Plovidba; he was 33 years old; an ambulance transported him seriously injured to Zadar General Hospital,*

where he soon died of a knife stab wound in the back; initially the deceased didn't want to open the door; when the unfortunate husband gave in to persuasion; he accused her of irresponsible behavior, cheating…; Lucijan ran out of the apartment; Lucijan was left lying with a knife in his back; the injuries were too grave and Lucijan succumbed in the end; Lucijan Magaš was a successful marine officer, a descendent of a respectable Zadar marine family, employed with Tankerska Plovidba, where his father Joso had been Board President for some time; as a mechanical manager he had taken over the largest and most modern Croatian ship suezmax tanker 'Alan'; later he took the position of inspector of new construction with the Tankerska Plovidba Technical Department".

As part of the article there is a large photograph of Lucijan Magaš wearing a dark suit, white shirt and neat tie. He is smiling and confidently looking at the camera lens. We also learn from the article that: *the couple had a child while married who wasn't in the apartment at the time of the tragedy; we learned that the family situation had been disrupted earlier.*

What does one basically learn from this article? It is undisputed that a tragedy occurred and that a young, respectable and promising man lost his life. A knife in his back (*certainly, although it hasn't been proven yet*[14]) he was stabbed by his wife who came home early in the morning (*after a stormy night*). Who is she, what does she do, from what kind of family does she come? Can one use the abovementioned data to infer what hasn't been said and to conclude why family relations were disrupted, and whether there may have been certain reasons unknown to the journalist why this man was stabbed in the back?

According to statistics kept by women's non-government organizations and numerous associated experts, most murders committed by women occur after many

14 We quote statements found in article which are often contradictory or constitute personal judgments (author's note).

years of abuse, when the abused wife/partner crosses the threshold of resistance.[15] But we will return to this issue later on.

The next article was published on March 22, 2005. It was signed with the initials D.M. On the second page (with an announcement on the front page), under the headline *Thousands of Zadar residents attend funeral for Lucijan Magaš* with a photograph of a long line of people behind the coffin. The eulogies and appearance of the mourners are described in detail.

The reputation enjoyed by Lucijan Magaš (and his biological family), named already in the first article, is now confirmed irrevocably: "*a gun salute and last farewell by fellow-soldiers from the Croatian Army; touching words by marine colleagues from the Tankerska Plovidba, a Christian farewell by a brother in faith; thousands of Zadar residents in indescribably wordless grief, horrified by the sudden end of a life in its prime that wanted could have given so much more, passed in a long line to see Lucijan Magaš off to his final resting place*".

The rhythm of sentences and the words used by the article author are customary for poetic, not journalistic (informational) discourse. Some of the phrases we find in the article are characteristic of epic folk poetry and prose: "*brother in faith; wordless grief; final resting place; in his prime, broken green branch which should have yielded so much more fruit; prayer to God 'to take him into the heavenly port, after a difficult and stormy sea'; in a mixture of grief and disbelief*".

Other than the fact that there is a funeral, there is no information about the time of the burial, nor any other data.

Zadarski Regional

The Zadarski Regional first spoke up on March 23, 2005 with an article about this event taking up two pages (2 and 3), signed by Editor-in-Chief Marina Vlakić.

15 *The battered woman syndrome - BWT* has been introduced in judicial and medical practice.

Superscript headline: "*Regional exclusively publishes picture of woman whose monstrous act appalled all of Zadar*"; headline: "*Brutal murder of husband - culmination of Ana Magaš's dissolute life!*"

Within the article are four photographs with comments and two frames - Ana Magaš is in two of them: one is a "summer" photograph of a young woman in profile sitting at a café and dressed in something that might be a summer dress or bathing suit (only the top can be seen), under which it reads: "*Ana Magaš, murderess, as she is already called in Zadar, during the carefree days of her wanton life*"; the other is a picture of a woman posing for a photograph in an armchair under a picture in the corner of a room, next to a table with a large vase with flowers, under which it reads: "*In the apartment where she lived with her husband and son*".

The third is a photograph of Lucijan Magaš wearing a suit (identical to the one from the Zadarski List), and the fourth is a scene from the funeral showing a priest walking in front of the coffin next to which some 15 or so men in dark suits are marching, several of them with their heads bowed. Under Lucijan Magaš's photograph it says: "*Lucijan Magaš was known in his community as a hardworking and successful man*", and under the funeral photograph: "*Funeral for Lucijan Magaš, remembered in Zadar*".[16]

The first frame of Ana Magaš's café photograph includes a news item from Zadar County Court. The headline is large: "*Suspect still hasn't presented defense*", and smaller font is used to say that the newsroom learned "*from an investigating judge at Zadar County Court, Boris Babić*" that "*the autopsy report is still awaited and the suspect hasn't been questioned yet. A one-month detention was announced - contrary to some reports - she has yet to present her defense at the police station*".

16 This is probably a case of not knowing grammar rules. It should say "which", since the noun 'party' doesn't denote a living being. None of the articles that we analyzed in the Zadarski Regional were proofread, as there are many grammar and spelling errors and unpolished style.

The other, dark frame (on page 3), under the funeral photograph, with the headline "*Thousands of Zadar residents attend funeral*", contains the following text: "*All of Zadar was at Lucijan Magaš's funeral. Representatives of many companies, Zadar state institutions, colleagues and partners of the well-known retired Tankerska Plovidba Board President Joso Magaš, came to pay homage to his tragically deceased son. Along with the great contribution that the company headed by Lucijan's father gave to Zadar's development, the Magaš family was also known for participating in the homeland war, which is why his fellow-soldiers bid their final farewell to Lucijan with a gun salute this Monday*".

The text of the article itself starts right under a small frame giving the name of the female author (page 2): "*Although her lawyers will try to defend her with insanity, derangement, intoxication, disorientation caused by medication or some other legal ruse, Ana Magaš* (in bold like all other proper names- author's note) *will be remembered by many as a person who destroyed many lives - above all her son's! Zadar residents can't remember a murder committed so brutally on so defenseless a victim. This is a stigmat this woman will carry all her life*".

Two sub-headlines interrupt the course of the article: "*Café pet*" on page 2, and towards the very end (on page 3) "*Mother's 'instinct' in Gotham*".

In the first paragraph following the sub-headline "*Café pet*" the author concludes: "*Even in murders where a helpless person was attacked, Zadar doesn't remember the murderer being a - woman*".

If we separate all these designations, descriptions and attributes given to those written about in the article, we get the following sequence:

Ana Magaš - "*wanton life, Café pet; cruelly stabbed her husband with a knife; murderess; she gave her family a bloody Easter, most of all the family of Lucijan; frequent café-goer; she drew a knife at her husband; why did she commit such a bloody act; that something with her behavior, namely, is not right, is shown by the very fact that she stayed in a discotheque until late that night, where she was seen in the company of a man, although she knew that a nine-year-old child was waiting for her; from a woman who married into*

such a respectable family…at least to take care of the child; it will be interesting how her lawyers will justify her negligent behavior in court; she preferred a night life to the role of wife and mother; one can hear in Zadar that she was a frequent café- and discotheque-goer; mother's 'instinct' in Gotham; such 'mother's instinct' will probably weight against her in court; hard work awaits the murderess' defense in court; to present a picture of this monster of a woman; she defended herself with silence; she was allegedly in shock for days".

Lucijan Magaš - "*33-year-old Lucijan, mechanical inspector with Tankerska Plovidba, son of its former Director Joso Magaš; they saw Lucijan bloodied in front of the building; Lucijan didn't want to open (the door) for her; until he, probably out of fear of waking the neighbors, opened the door; it seems that this was fatal for him; her husband loved her so much and put up with her behavior; Lucijan Magaš was known in his community as a hardworking and successful man*".

The editor-in-chief of *Zadarski Regional*- who is still active[17] - generally took it upon herself to write large articles about the Magaš case.

Following protocol, we listed all the protagonists named by the articles in this weekly (photographs were taken as an integral part) along with their given attributes. To the abovementioned quotations, we may add the following from other articles:

Ana Magaš - "*Ana Magaš suddenly stabbed her husband with a kitchen knife in the back, supposedly piercing his liver; this woman was ready to kill, in cold-blood to pick up a knife and to stab; she decided to settle the argument with a knife; the unrepeatable murderess, Ana Magaš committed a brutal murder, she cruelly stabbed her husband with a knife; this woman - drew a knife, and committed a bloody act… and this is why she will carry a stigma all her life; brutal murder of husband - culmination of Ana Magaš's dissolute behavior; since she committed such a brutal murder; Ana Magaš's disco-virtue; Ana Magaš is no longer suffering depression - she*

17 The Supreme Court threw out the County Court verdict sentencing Ana Magaš to nine and a half years in prison and a retrial is being held with a new judge.

rented the 'Femina' parlor, but this time under a different name, in order to make money to pay off debts and a lawyer; she runs the parlor from prison and thus passes the long prison days; confessed to the crime; the hip chick returned from the discotheque, packed off her child to grandfather and grandmother, and sent her husband home earlier; Ana Magaš took a knife and stabbed her husband."

Lucijan Magaš - "*son of the well-known Joso Magaš, former Board President of Tankerska Plovidba; the late Lucijan, despite the fatal injury, managed to take a few more steps, emerging from the entrance; he came out of the apartment hurriedly; stabbed; unfortunate, he couldn't be saved*".

Interpretation of newspaper interpretations

If we carefully analyze the articles published by the *Zadarski Regional* at a linguistic level - lexis, grammar, sentence structures - bearing in mind that this is specific discourse, we will be able to start making interpretations and reach certain conclusions. As we are dealing with a number of articles, we will only indicate the main characteristics from which it is possible to discern the dominant patterns in word selection, phrase and sentence composition, and style.

We will start with the headlines. Out of six articles directly addressing the event before and during the trial[18], four contain the full name of the suspect, one uses the

18 One article speaks about the Zadar prison being full, but photographs of two female convicts and articles about them dominate (one is Ana Magaš and the other is Zorana Banić, convicted for war crimes - it's interesting that such placement of photographs puts an equality sign between them), and one is signed by the initials V.F.

term "*murderess*", while one, in third person singular (without giving the pronoun she or the name), says "*Confessed to murder of husband*". All articles carried a photograph of Ana Magaš - three times the same photograph in profile wearing summer clothes and sunglasses, and four times an enlarged detail from a photograph in her living room for which she is evidently posing, smiling and wearing make-up[19]. The seventh article discusses the Zadar prison being full, but two photographs are positioned in the center of the article - one of Ana Magaš and the other of the Serb woman Zorana Banić, who was convicted of committing and being an accomplice to war crimes against civilians in Skabrnja. One article is signed V.F. (July 6, 2005) and one V. Fuzul (December 28, 2005). The article design is certainly that of the newsroom. Five large articles taking up one or two pages each are signed by the editor-in-chief.

Four headlines are exclamatory sentences, clearly showing that the newsroom/editor-in-chief did not want to be neutral, nor lets the reader be, forcing emotional involvement in the case[20]. That the articles not only inform, but also judge, is confirmed by the choice of words: attached to nouns are adverbs, adjectives and nouns which demonstrate expressivity and undoubtedly qualify the main protagonist and her act. The murder is *brutal*, her life is dissolute, she is a *murderess*, the act is *monstrous*.

A phrase in the headline of an article published on June 29, 2005, *Disco-virtue of Ana Magaš*, by putting together words that certainly don't belong to the same rank - virtue is an ancient concept used in philosophy, literature, while the word disco is an imported one and belongs to colloquial speech- seeks to achieve an impression

19 Both photographs are described in more detail at the beginning of the article.

20 None of the other 30 articles from the other dailies have headlines and/or sub-headlines with exclamatory sentences. All provide some information, and in one the headline appears in the form of a question: "*Zadar: Wife murders husband with kitchen knife in back?*"

of astonishment and irony. The superscript headline says, *How to spruce up a murder*, which again, through an unusual combination of words, invokes an ironic distance and disbelief.

The articles are no different than the headlines: *a murder that happened so brutally, she brutally stabbed her husband with a knife, Easter is bloody, the murder was committed in cold blood, the argument was fierce, she committed a bloody act, her behavior is negligent, murderer woman, poor wife, even poorer mother, monster of a woman* (March 23, 2005); *brutal murder (2x), fierce argument, she moved in cold blood* (April 20, 2005); *her shock is alleged; the name is ill-fated* (May 19, 2005); *brutal murders; take a knife in cold blood; unrepeatable murderess; most brutal murders; murderess; will be remembered as one of the most brutal murders* (June 21, 2005); *harsh fact; this is devastating for Ana Magaš* (June 29, 2005)[21].

If we go back to the list of attributes attached to the murdered Lucijan Magaš, we will see that not a single negative one appears in the analyzed articles.

The author reinforces justification of this kind of illustration of protagonists and events by using constant generalizations - the views presented in the article are not her own arbitrary and personal judgments; they are the view of the majority or all fellow citizens: "*she will be* ***remembered by many*** *as a person who destroyed many lives;* ***Zadar residents don't remember*** *a murder committed so brutally; bloody Easter…* ***will be imprinted in the memories of all Zadar residents; all of Zadar*** *was at Lucijan Magaš's funeral* (March 23, 2005); ***Zadar residents remember*** *the brutal murder of the respectable Zadar officer of Tankerska Plovidba* (April 20, 2005); *understandable, then, the* ***expectation of the Zadar public*** *to see the murderess in the dock* (June 21, 2005).

Very often the author uses first person plural: *we remember, we recollect, we won't forget, we saw.*

21 All quotations are from articles written before the sentencing, which means that no one's guilt had been established yet, nor were all circumstances surrounding the murder known.

Included the article *Disco-virtue of Ana Magaš* (June 29, 2005), is a hand-written letter (in print, with a lot of underlining, untidy and illegible - but all the more authentic), signed by REVOLTED MOTHERS. It condemns other newspapers and demands the Regional to continue writing about the "wanton life", etc., of the CRIMINAL AND MURDERER ANA MAGAŠ…"

Often using exclamatory sentences which always pass judgment - sometimes expressing surprise or abhorrence, rhetorical questions, addressing Ana Magaš's lawyers (although it's known that there is only one lawyer, who is occasionally named in the article - Marko Marinović), through seemingly na'ive questions which unambiguously answer themselves, the effect of directness and complete sincerity is achieved, whose outbursts the author simply can't control.

The impression of naivety and harmlessness is built using phrases inserted into sentences and aimed at trying to alleviate personal responsibility for previous (and subsequent) judgments: "…*however, let's not be prejudicial…; … - judging by newspaper reports -…; …the investigation will reveal; at least that's what her lawyer alleged; according to the present information from the court…*".

Through the insertion of questions and different positions (of the public, lawyer, judge, female residents, public at large), giving several answers, using long subordinate compound clauses (and without proofreading the articles[22]), the style is more suitable for spoken rather than written discourse and thus, even more intensively, potentially has an emotional effect on readers who are invited to actively participate in the discussion.

As for subordinate compound clauses, the author very often uses concessive unreal clauses, again creating an impression of sincerity, as well as the doubtless correctness of her views (which, after all, are only appropriate since the *whole public,*

22 The articles contain a lot of spelling and grammar errors, crude style, and it's clear that none of the articles were proofread.

all of Zadar, etc., support them): "*Although her lawyers will try to use the insanity defense…, Ana Magaš in the memory of many…will remain a person who destroyed many lives…!; If anyone thought that Ana Magaš was still depressed, they were wrong…!*).

In order to understand the specific kind of writing and approach to the issue in the Zadarski List and Zadarski Regional, it is important to compare them to articles in other newspapers. Now we will look at national dailies and a weekly.

Jutarnji List

An article with news of the murder was published on page 9 (with an announcement on the front page). It is signed by Minja Gogić. The article takes up a large part of the page and contains two pictures:

a) Lucijan Magaš's obituary with a portrait of the deceased, signed by "The bereaved: father Josip, Mother Bruna, son Lovro, brother Kristijan, sisters Anastazija and Lidija, and other numerous grieving family and friends". The other parts are one of those standard texts appearing in obituaries. "With a sad heart we announce…" and "May he rest in God's peace!"

b) A photograph of a building with the caption: "Building on Put Pudarice Street in which Lucijan Magaš was mortally injured".

The superscript headline is: *Ana Magaš, 27, after an argument mortally injured with a knife husband Lucijan*, 33, and the headline is: *After a bash she stabbed and killed her husband*.

The beginning of the article is a textbook example of providing key information by answering the 5 questions (who, what, when, where, why): "*Lucijan Magaš, 33, a mechanical inspector with Zadar's well-known company Tankerska Plovidba, died yesterday around 5 a.m. in Zadar General Hospital as a result of a knife stab delivered, according to available information, by wife Ana, 27, an hour earlier in their joint apartment at 13 f Put Pudarice Street, in the Bili Brig part of town*."

The article, therefore, starts off by stating facts (death), and then gradually embarks upon a possible reconstruction of events - the female author on several occasions distances herself from giving possibly incorrect information by using the terms "as we have learned", "according to available information", "as we have found out". For all information the following sources are quoted: doctors at General Hospital, three neighbors with their full names, Zadar County Court investigating Judge Boris Babić.

We learn from the article that the stabbing was preceded by an argument, that Lucijan initially didn't want to let Ana into the apartment, that he then opened the door, which was followed by a long and loud argument, that at a certain point he shouted: "*I'll kill you, whore! You cheated on me! I love you, and you do this to me!*"

After describing the events in the apartment, based on neighbors' accounts, a short paragraph states that the conflict started at Gotham discotheque (the accuracy of this is questioned by inserting the adverb "*supposedly*").

We also learn from the article that Ana accompanied Lucijan "*during the whole trip both to the Emergency Room and to the hospital*" and that she herself "*was in hospital yesterday until the afternoon for processing*".

The article ends with the following information: "*By the way, as we have learned, Ana and Lucijan had been married for a long time and have a six-year-old son*".

Along with the main article, together with the pictures, which takes up most of the page, a narrow frame was added whose background is black and the letters are white (as a negative of the main article), with the headline: "*Respectable Zadar family*". The frame says that Lucijan "*comes from a respectable and well-known Zadar family*", followed right away by a brief outline of positions held by the father Joso at Tankerska Plovidba, and after that a brief description of the murdered Lucijan's professional career.

After stating that "*Ana owned the hair-dressing parlor Femina d.o.o.*", there is a sentence describing very briefly the relationship between the spouses, "*Along with*

being known as more or less quiet neighbors", but for the most part presents the character traits of the murdered man: "*Lucijan was known as very successful in his job, quiet and calm in character, and communicated with people without excessive words*".

Similar articles were generally repeated in other dailies, with or without pictures. Except for the names of the protagonists, their address (very often without stating the house number), information about Lucijan Magaš's job, his family's social status and the importance of his father Joso, some details differ from one article to the next: Ana *banged (rang) the door; they argued (shouting and banging was heard), the wife stabbed (in Croatian 'ubola'[23]) him with a knife in the back in the apartment (in the street, in the hall); he ran out with a knife lodged in his back (he was lying in the hall where a neighbor found him); he was taken to the hospital by strangers (in an ambulance; it's not known how he got to the hospital); the son was inside the apartment (at grandmother and grandfather's, brother's), he is 6 years old (5, eight and a half, nine years old[24])*, and so on.

Globus

The sequence of events can be reconstructed only from an article (5 pages long) by the journalist Darko Hudelist, published in Globus a full six months after Lucijan Magaš's murder (September 16, 2005). The article uses and compares several sources and could be called investigative journalism if the author didn't often assume the role of an all-knowing narrator, rather than just a transmitter of verified information. He

23 There is a very clear dictionary distinction between the verbs ubosti (to stab) and izbosti (to stab repeatedly): ***izbosti*** *- to stab repeatedly in several places, to inflict a number of injuries or to deliver a number of stabs in a large section or the entire surface*; ***ubosti***, *with a sharp, pointed object, etc., to inflict an injury, to injure, according to Anić, V. Dictionary of the Croatian Language.* Novi Liber, Zagreb, 1991.

24 We quote information found in different articles in daily newspapers.

often describes details and emotions that he had no way of learning from anyone (what the murdered man was feeling and thinking, what he said to whom, etc.).

We will cite only an insignificant part in order to show how the author insists on providing even the smallest details:

> *"Reconstruction of events - evening of March 18, 2005.*
> *That evening Ana went to a concert held at the Zadar theater, her partner for the occasion was supposed to be Sandra, wife of Lucijan's brother Kristijan. But Sandra cancelled at the last minute so Ana went to the concert in the company of her friend Matilda.*
> *That evening Lucijan scheduled an English language course.*
> *With her friend Matilda, Ana went on a tour of several of the most popular cafés in Zadar. During their walk they were joined by two young men: Ante Delija, a friend of Matilda's, and Antonio Vičinović. They even dropped by the apartment of one of them (Delija) in Bili Brig. Afterwards, with her new partner Vičinović, Ana went to Zadar's disco club Gotham. Sometime after two o'clock, he, Lucijan, dropped by the disco club Gotham with his crowd…*
> *She came perhaps 5 or 10 minutes after Lucijan. The door to the apartment was exceptionally locked. Ana rings the doorbell, Lucijan doesn't open, Ana bangs on the door, again nothing… Suddenly the door opens - an affray breaks out - the enraged husband starts beating his wife - mercilessly, uncontrollably, in whatever way he knew how. He drags her along the floor and hits her on the head, on the body, with his feet, he slaps her, she struggles to break free…"*

For discursive (critical lingual) analysis it's extremely important to try to understand the production and interpretation conditions. In the process of breakdown, it is important to bear in mind several levels: the immediate social environment in which discourse takes place, and the level of the social institution that creates the

broader pattern and society as a whole (Ferclough, 1998), for "pulling articles out of the social practice that creates them and the institutions in which they are developed is fetishism…conceals how a certain cultural order is produced and maintained: the circumstances and conditions of cultural reproduction which are considered by the effects of 'selective tradition' to be natural, taking them 'for granted.'"[25]

If we carefully read the previously cited articles, we must observe important differences which are not coincidental. We must keep in mind that we are discussing media discourse which, as handbooks usually say, should inform, educate, or entertain its consumers. As this is coverage of a murder case, to inform and possibly to educate (through commentary) are primary, while the element of entertainment should entirely be left out.

In terms of their responsibility to inform, one can observe already from the description of the circumstances and the murder itself that local newspapers did not bother trying to reconstruct events. Moreover, an article in the Zadarski Regional, published on April 20, 2005, i.e. a full month after the murder, states: "*The murder occurred in front of the building on Put Pudarica street in the Bili Brig area…after stabbing her husband with a knife…*", although until then other media had "uniformly" reported that the deceased was stabbed with a knife inside his own apartment. On the other hand, in this same weekly we find exceptional knowledge of other details: "*I heard that the Magaš family received more than a thousand telegrams of condolences from all parts of the world…*" (June 29, 2005).

While articles in national dailies generally follow the paradigm of informational writing by answering basic questions (who, what, when, where, why), the Zadarski List focuses on the deceased and his family, using pathos and a style of writing

25 Hall, Stuart "Encoding/Decoding" in: Durham, M.G. and Kellner, D.M. *Media and Cultural Studies*. Blackwell Publishers, 2001, p. 167.

inapprporiate for journalistic discourse[26]. In the weekly Globus the male author chooses extensive reporting and does not necessarily try to affect his readers, while a female author at the Zadarski Regional (June 21, 2005) reveals what her intentions are: "…**we are trying**[27] to make a cross-section profile of a murderess evidently unparalleled in Zadar…" She is obviously not interested in providing information.

It would be logical to expect journalists living and directly reporting from the place where the event happened to know more than others and to be able to provide comprehensive information. How can one explain why this is not the case?

In discriminatory discursive practices, as Van Dijke says[28], the most frequently used methods of style are: contrast (black and white presentation of opposed protagonists), generalization, exaggeration, emphasizing extremely negative views of one side in contrast to exceptionally positive ones about others.

Articles published in the Zadarski Regional show that this is the dominant pattern of approach to the protagonists. On the one hand we find a "*monster of a woman*" (March 22, 2005) and on the other is Lucijan Magaš who was "*known in his community as an extremely hardworking and successful man*", who was killed *without possibility of defense, without any chance for the attacked to defend himself.*" (March 22, 2005). Since we learn from a number of newspaper articles (*Jutarnji List, Večernji List, Vjesnik*), and especially from the one in the Globus, that the murder was preceded by a fierce argument and physical attack, it is impossible, if we are reporting objectively, to allege that Lucijan had no chance "*to defend himself*".

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26 We recall sections of an article published in the Zadarski List on March 22, 2005: "brother in faith; wordless grief; final resting place; in its prime, broken green branch which should have given so much more fruit; prayer to God 'to take him into the heavenly port, after a hard and stormy sea'; in a mixture of grief and disbelief".

27 Again use of first person plural - who is "we"?

28 Van Dijk, Teun A. *Discourse as Social Interaction.* SAGE Publications, London, 1997, p. 47.

Patriarchal ideology

Louis Althusser believes that establishing subjects is the essence of ideology - in every way ideology tries to fixate on it, not seeing it as a junction of numerous different social identities and opportunities. Ana Magaš in newspaper articles is primarily a wife and mother. All journalists mention her coming home late after having a good time in a disco - some do this entirely neutrally (*Jutarnji List*), others as one of the important facts that contribute to judging the suspect ("*Neighbors say that the spouses often argued about Ana's 'extramarital affairs*", *Vjesnik*, March 21, 2005), while the female author of articles in the Zadarski Regional mentions it as crucial confirmation of her destiny to become a murderer ("…*after being a poor wife and even poorer mother*…"). In our culture and civilization it is awful (except in war) for one human being to kill another, but it this case it remains unexplained how it is possible that a knife stabbing turns a woman without a prior criminal record into a "*murderess, a woman who is simply ready to kill*"[29] (*Zadarski Regional*).

The negative judgment on night outings for a married woman and mother, or at the least lack of understanding for such conduct, can be detected in a large number of the articles in all media, and most importantly, even in the Zadar County Court verdict[30].

29 It's interesting that in his extremely extensive article in Globus Darko Hudelist repeatedly uses the term murderer woman, although it follows from the description that the knife stab was an act of self-defense.

30 Parts of the Zadar County Court verdict, with Supreme Court comments: "…there is no doubt that by appearing with another man in a public place, where her husband was also present, the indictee showed that she does not respect the damaged party at all or at least to a sufficient degree, and thus she insulted him, that is to say attacked his honor and dignity…" (page 11, sub-paragraph 3); "…provocation…by the indictee does not end at the disco-club. She is…aware that she insulted the damaged party…goes to the apartment where she lives together with the damaged party and their child, then… "persistently bangs and rings the doorbell wanting to enter the apartment…", from which the court wrongly concludes that the indictee… "provoked the damaged party, actually looking for conflict…" (p. 16, sub-paragraph 4 of the overturned verdict), http://sudskapraksa.vsrh.hr/supra/SearchBrowsing.asp?View=&SortProperty=77&Sort=False&StartHits=1&UserDefinedHitsView=Normal&GodinaPredmeta=2005&NavigateToPage=11, June 20, 2006.

Darko Hudelist, in the Globus article, despite giving a thorough description which unambiguously shows that Ana Magaš was first roughly attacked, through constant repetition of the phrase *murderess* and occasional use of the verb to slaughter[31], unambiguously expresses his own judgment of the perpetrator and a lack of understanding for what was done.

What other articles hint at (how a good wife and parent behaves and what is absolutely forbidden) is explicitly defined in the Zadarski Regional:

> *"Where had she been that night when she came home and killed her husband? Doing the night shift at the Bagat? Behind a machine with a thousand poor women earning their miserable living? Over the bed of a sick child? Where was she? At a disco-club!... Saying that you had done the night shift and that your boss had screamed at you all night…that could even be taken as a mitigating circumstance. As it is, the hip chick came back from the disco, packed off the child to grandmother and grandfather, and sent the husband home early. She stayed out alone. Actually, not quite alone - at least that's what witnesses say… For, however much some may spruce up the indicted's biography, the matter of this case is clear, with journalists or without them - Ana Magaš took a knife and stabbed her husband!"* (June 29, 2005)

An article in the *Jutarnji List* mentions (as unverified), which was confirmed in *Globus*, that the whole conflict started at Gotham discotheque when the Magaš spouses unexpectedly ran into each other. However, none of the journalists, or witnesses, even think of reexamining the husband's night outings or calling his life

31 Namely, the verb *zaklati* (to slaughter) (someone, something), 1. to cut the throat, to kill by cutting the throat (usually of an animal) 2. to kill (a man) in this manner (according to Anić, Vladimir. *Dictionary of the Croatian Language*. Novi Liber, Zagreb, 1991), cannot in any case be used for the act of one knife stab to the back.

dissolute. The autopsy report, states *Globus*, showed, for example, that Lucijan Magaš had far more alcohol in his blood that night.

In what kind of community the murder took place is vividly shown by a piece of information found in the Globus article: "*However, Ana was supposed to fulfill three conditions in order for Lucijan to even let her go out alone (Ana Magaš's testimony during the trial) - she always had to ask him for permission and he had to give her the green light, second - she couldn't spend much money, and third, her company had to be exclusively female*".

While most articles only mention in passing that Ana Magaš owned a beauty parlor (the *Zadarski Regional* in a very negative context), meaning she was professionally active and financially independent, *Globus* is the only one that speaks about her family (as being insignificant compared to Magaš's, which also remains an unclarified allegation as Ana's father was an ocean navigation captain). Since the constantly repeated conclusion in newspaper articles that the Magaš family is "*respected*"[33] is not supported in any way, one must conclude that a sign of equality can be placed between the terms powerful and respected in Croatia today.[34]

"*Namely, a woman who married into such a respectable family, in which the husband loved her so much and put up with her behavior, is expected, if nothing else, at least to take care of the child*." (Zadarski Regional, March 23, 2005).

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32 "Ana Magaš's family is not even remotely as compact and homogenous, and even less such highly positioned in status …", *Globus*, September 16, 2005.

33 None of the articles in any of the analyzed newspapers list even a single act of charity, activity towards a common goal, or social engagement; rather they constantly repeat "respected Magaš family", which says a lot about the time we live in.

34 "Lucijan - he wasn't just anybody - was the youngest mechanical inspector in Croatia employed since February 2004 with the Tankerska Plovidba, without equal the strongest company in Zadar County, and even broader, actually one of five or at most 10 most powerful companies in all of Croatia (TP's revenue last year was $225 million and its net profits $86 million)" D. Hudelist, Globus, September 16, 2005.

Power

Local newspapers, in addition to agreeing to patriarchal ideology, probably have other "valid" reasons to decide to paint a black-and-white picture of the two sides in the case and thus visibly deviate in terms of style and content from articles in other media.

Namely, the *Zadarski List* is published by RTD d.o.o., whose founder is the Tankerska Plovidba[35], while Reno Sinovčić[36], whose connection with Joso Magaš was written about long before the murder of Lucijan Magaš[37], is mentioned as the exclusive owner of the *Zadarski Regional* (publisher Media Zadar).

It's certain, therefore, that local media, directly (*Zadarski List*) or indirectly (*Zadarski Regional*), are tied through their ownership structure to the Magaš family, actually to the *pater familias* (as the *Globus* author calls him) Joso.

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35 Data from the Court Register of Trading Companies in the Republic of Croatia, https://sudreg.pravosudje.hr/SUDREG3/SudregController?subMbs=060147156&act=predpos, June 15, 2006.

36 Data from the Court Register of Trading Companies in the Republic of Croatia, https://sudreg.pravosudje.hr/SUDREG3/SudregController?subMbs=060171428&act=osn, June 15, 2006.

37 Among others, the Slobodna Dalmacija on January 16, 2004, on page 3, published the following article: "RENO SINOVČIĆ ANNOUNCES BECOMING ZADAR MEDIA MAGNATE - Businessman who buys media out of love
ZADAR - Presented as a well-known Zadar businessman, Reno Sinovčić in the latest issue of the weekly Zadarski Regional announced the acquisition of the daily Zadarski List no later than April 1 this year and setting up a so-called media corporation. Namely, after integrating the Zadarski List and Zadarski Regional, whose ownership he publicly admitted for the first time, Sinovčić intends to buy some shares of the local television and one of the local radios, such as Davor Pekota's Novi Radio Zadar or Oliver Jović's Donat FM… Joso Magaš publicly confirmed several years ago his closeness with Reno Sinovčić, saying they had been friends since the Homeland War, which Sinovčić has also often emphasized in public."

Although retired, evidently he is still very powerful in the community, but in national media his influence is no longer felt to the same degree, although not a single article fails to mention him and his previous position of Tankerska Plovidba Board President.

Conclusion

A peculiarity of media communication is the fact that messages are created for absent readers, listeners or viewers. The power of producers is reflected in what they include and what they leave out, in how they present someone or something. Every article is assembled and is thus an interpretation of the world.

Unlike very subtle, highly professional articles which attempt to force their own view of the world on consumers of media articles as the only truth; in the case of the *Zadarski Regional* we find an example of obvious distortion of facts, failure to mention important information, and hatred against one of the protagonists. The patriarchal image of the world it presents doesn't allow for the possibility of thinking that a young woman (27 years old) could be a good wife and mother if she likes to (and does) dance in a disco sometimes; doesn't allow the idea that she might have the right to go out alone, and, most importantly, doesn't offer the possibility of understanding the problem of domestic violence, where the victim sometimes becomes the villain.

We tried to demonstrate what the interpretation of the murder committed by Ana Magaš looks like in the local press- and why- primarily in the *Zadarski Regional*, as compared to national newspapers. In another paper we will focus on an important question that we bypass here: why do women often unquestioningly agree to rigid

patriarchal ideology and become the sternest judges of women who deviate? At present we wanted only to show how much power media owners have and how important it is to be literate media-wise, to understand the production conditions in order to remove the possibility of manipulation and surrender to the mechanisms of hegemony[38].

38 Hall, Stuart "Encoding/Decoding" in: Durham, M.G. and Kellner, D.M. Media and Cultural Studies. Blackwell Publishers, 2001, p. 174.

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