

Attitudes toward Bosniak Muslims and Kosovar Albanians and historical revisionism in the Serbian media: Reaffirming the Greater Serbia project¹

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Abstract

For this paper, we monitored three daily newspapers in Serbia, *Politika*, *Novosti* and *Informer*, for issues of direct relevance to the lives of Balkan Muslims. We identified three dominant topics: 1. Undermining the statehood of Bosnia and Herzegovina and (re)affirming the expansionist politics of Serbian nationalism; 2. “Kosovo is the heart of Serbia” and (Kosovar) Albanians are consequently an existential threat; and 3. Ideological treatment of the politics of remembrance and historical revisionism of crimes committed by Serb forces during the 1990s in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kosovo in order to reaffirm the Greater Serbia project.

Key words: Media, Islam, Muslims, Bosniak Muslims, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovar Albanians, Kosovo, Greater Serbia

1 This paper presents the second part of a joint research project on perceptions of Islam and Muslims in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbian daily newspapers. The first part of this study was published as H. Karčić (2019), “Constructing the Internal Enemy: A Discourse Analysis of The Representation of Islam and Muslims in Bosnian Media”, in *Context: Journal of Interdisciplinary Studies*, Vol.6, No. 2. An integrated study will be published separately.

Introduction

For this paper, we monitored three daily newspapers in Serbia, *Politika*, *Novosti* and *Informer*, from August 1, 2018, to August 31, 2019. Over the period, the three papers printed a total of 1,020 daily issues. Given the significant amount of data involved, we selected only newspaper articles that featured the Serbian words for “Islam,” “Muslim/s,” “Bosnia,” “Bosniak,” “Bosnian Muslims,” “Kosovo,” “Kosovar Albanians” and “Albanians”. All articles containing these keywords were then further filtered for ones on Bosnia and Herzegovina (B&H), Kosovo, or Serbia. For our paper, we randomly selected 38 articles from each newspaper for critical discourse analysis, hoping to disclose the ideological assumptions implicit in written text or oral speech.² It aims to explore systematically the often opaque relationships between discursive practices, texts, and events and wider social and cultural structures, (power) relations, and processes. The number 38 yields an average of approximately three articles per month. Cumulatively, we have analyzed 115 articles, including opinion pieces, editorials, interviews, feature articles, and news reports. Our research has disclosed three dominant topics in the Serbian media: 1. Undermining the statehood of Bosnia and Herzegovina and (re)affirming the expansionist politics of Serbian nationalism; 2. “Kosovo is the heart of Serbia” and (Kosovar) Albanians are consequently an existential threat; and 3. The politics of remembrance and crimes committed by Serb forces during the 1990s in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kosovo. The first two topics are reminiscent of narratives and the aspirations of Serbian nationalist politics from the early 1990s, which led to genocide and ethnic cleansing of the Bosniak population in B&H and the Albanian population in Kosovo. The third clearly indicates that a process of (self-reflexive) confrontation with crimes from the past has yet to begin in Serbia, where historical facts remain distorted by a continuing historical revisionism that avoids responsibility for crimes and cherishes the idea of Greater Serbia as a legitimate aim and the aspirations of Serbian nationalist politics as something to be accomplished in either the near or distant future. In such a socio-political atmosphere, created and fostered in the media, Bosniak Muslims, Albanians, and other Muslim members of ethnic minorities in Serbia feel extremely unsafe, more or less second-class citizens.

2 S.L.T. McGregor, *Critical Discourse Analysis: A Primer* (Halifax: Mount Saint Vincent University, 2010).

I. Bosnia and Herzegovina and the (Re)Affirmation of the Expansionist Politics of Serbian Nationalism

Attempts to undermine B&H and see part of its territory secede and ultimately be annexed by Serbia have historically had serious repercussions for the Muslim population of B&H and the Sandžak region. Since the mid-19th century, the Serbian national idea of a Greater Serbia, which seeks to integrate all territories inhabited by Serbs (part of Croatia, B&H and Kosovo) within a single state, has led to mass casualties and the expulsion of Muslim populations. When the Serbian national identity was being formed, Serbian national ideology was not yet fully focused on expelling and physically eliminating all Muslims, seeking rather to assimilate them in line with Herder's principle of "culture and language". In the years that followed, however, and in particular during the Balkan Wars and World War II, the idea of assimilation was largely replaced by brutal killing campaigns carried out by Orthodox Serbs against Muslim population in eastern B&H, the Sandžak and Kosovo. This was when the first tracts and books were written openly advocating the physical elimination of Muslims from territories that the Serbian national ideology held belonged to Serbia. Striking examples of the promotion of such ideas include *The Expulsion of the Arnauts* by Vaso Čubrilović,³ which exhibited a pathological intolerance of Albanians, and *Homogeneous Serbia* by Stevan Moljević, ideologist of the Chetnik movement, a tract admired by Dragoljub Draža Mihailović, leader of the Yugoslav Army in the Homeland during World War II.⁴

The Greater Serbia idea was only partially realized during the Balkan Wars and World War II, but it reappeared with the disintegration of Yugoslavia under the populist and nationalist regime of Slobodan Milošević, which came to power in Serbia in 1989. Under Milošević's regime, Serbia decided to launch military strikes and attack the internationally recognized states of Slovenia, Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina. In B&H, the Bosnian Serbs, led by Radovan Karadžić, since convicted for war crimes, and with the assistance of the Serbian regime in Belgrade, decided to employ the same methods of ethnic cleansing and genocide

3 Vaso Čubrilović, *Isterivanje Arnauta* (1937). Čubrilović wrote this pamphlet as a memorandum in the form of a proposal for a solution of the Albanian question in southern Serbia and Kosovo for the Government of Milan Stojadinović.

4 For a detailed account of crimes against Muslims by the Chetnik movement led by Draža Mihailović during World War II in eastern B&H and the Sandžak, see V. Dedijer and A. Miletić, *Genocid nad muslimanima, 1941–1945, zbornik dokumenata i svjedočenja* (Sarajevo: Svjetlost, 1990), and M. Radanović, *Kazna i zločin: snage kolaboracije u Srbiji: odgovornost za ratne zločine (1941–1944) i vojni gubici (1944–1945)* (Belgrade, Rosa Luxemburg Stiftung, Regional Office for Southeast Europe, 2015).

against the Muslim population as had been used during the Balkan Wars and World War II.

It is this context of the 1990s that must be borne in mind as we seek to understand and interpret the present-day post-conflict condition in Serbia now, as (ultra)nationalist ideology, once again the dominant political force, reaffirms itself in full vigour, especially since 2012, when power was taken by many of the same political players as had held it during the 1990s. Serbian political elites today hope to achieve the decades-old goal of securing a part of B&H and annexing it to Serbia “peacefully”. To put it in other words, their idea has been to “consolidate” the reality achieved on the ground by ethnic cleansing and genocidal politics during the wars of the 1990s and to finalize matters in a “peaceful manner”. Needless to say, such political aspirations inevitably affect the lives of ghettoized Muslims in Serbia and across the wider region, who live with a constant feeling of physical endangerment. A major role in pursuing these nationalist pretensions is played by the media, which dispute the very existence of B&H in many ways, while presenting Bosniak Muslims as essentially opposed to the identity and interests of Orthodox Serbs, as the texts selected for our qualitative discourse analysis clearly show (Table 1).

Selected Articles from the daily newspapers, *Politika*, *Novosti* and *Informer*

<i>Politika</i>	<i>Novosti</i>	<i>Informer</i>
Weekly Interview: Milorad Dodik, Chair And Serb Member Of B&H Presidency – Serbs Have Never Got Anything From Bosnia	Chair Of B&H Presidency Projects His Idea On The Map– Dodik ‘Unites’ Territories Of Serbia And Srpska	Heavy Blow For Serbia – Naser Orić Released In Sarajevo In Spite Of Evidence He Personally Slaughtered Serbs And Gouged Out Their Eyes
Weekly Interview: Mladen Ivanić, Member Of B&H Presidency From RS –Bosniaks Need A Leader To Take Historical Step Forward	National Holiday Of Republika Srpska Threatened – Bosniaks And Croats Strike At Republika Srpska	Steven Meyer, Former Head Of CIA, Supports Serbs – RS Has Right To Unite With Serbia
Last Night In Belgrade: Festival Of The Republika Srpska	SDA Demand Ordered By The West – Undermining Srpska To Cut Off Russian Influence	Russian Beasts Coming To Bijeljina
Serb People Disappearing From B&H Federation	SDA Initiative – Bosniaks Want To Undo Republika Srpska	Sabre-Rattling In Sarajevo: Naser Orić’s Follower Calls For A New War Against Serbs

Izetbegović: B&H Must Arm Itself	Novosti Exclusive –Sarajevo Makes Blacklist Of Serbs	Bakir Threatens Dodik: B&H Will Join Nato Or US Will Destroy You
Dodik: Izetbegović Must Come To His Senses Quickly Or Regret It For Long Time	Three Serbs Tortured – Brutally Beaten By Sarajevo Police	Serbs In Srpska United Thanks To NATO: Bosniaks Risking Biggest Crisis In B&H With No Way Out!
Kitarović: B&H Unstable, Controlled By Militant Isla	Dodik Tells Novosti – Džafirović Watched Executions Of Dozens Of Serbs	Bosnian Serb Leader At Gunpoint: Plan To Assassinate Dodik
Person Suspected Of Assault On US Mission In Sarajevo Arrested	RS Police File On Former Official Of So-Called Republic Of B&H Sent To B&H War Crimes Prosecutor’s Office – Haris Silajdžić Suspected Of Link To Concentration Camps	Bosniaks Erect Monument To Honour Turkish Conquest Of Bosnia! Descendants Of Turkish Slaves Celebrate Invaders Of Their Land
Bosniaks Celebrate Turkish Victory At Gallipoli	Dodik Comments On Presidency Session: Rights Of Serbs Being Usurped By Bosniaks	Galijašević: Bin Laden And Gang Granted Citizenship By Advocates Of Unitary Bosnia
19% Of Young People In B&H Have Never Read A Single Book	Exclusive – B&H Chief Intelligence Officer Murdered Serbs For Fun	SDA President’s Diabolical Plan: Bakir Sends Afghanis To Settle In Serbian Municipalities And Chase Serbs Out Of B&H
Jihadi Families Waiting For Housing Solution In Mostar	Rajko Petrov Nogo–Darkness Over Sarajevo	Dževad Galijašević – New York Attackers Were Citizens Of B&H
23 Years After War Still Segregation Among Schoolchildren	Our Neighbours Are Getting Us Involved In The New Zealand Massacre	Bosnia On Alert! Two Hard-Boiled ISIS Terrorists Coming Back From Syria!
Bosniaks In Mostar Infuriated By <i>Prosvjeta</i> “Stepa Stepanović” Book Award	B&H Held Hostage By Bosniaks!	Smells Like The 1990s! U.S. Infiltrating Jihadists Into B&H And Preparing Alija Izetbegović’s Scenario

Table no. 1

Undermining the Statehood of Bosnia and Herzegovina

As already mentioned, the dominant narrative on B&H in the Serbian media monitored for this study consists largely of undermining the country's statehood and insisting on the goal of unifying the Republika Srpska and the Republic of Serbia at some point in the near future. In an interview for *Politika* on Sunday, June 30, 2019, Milorad Dodik, Chair and Serb member of the B&H Presidency, stated unequivocally that "Serbs have never got anything from Bosnia" which was established on "idealistic and ideological grounds" and so "can never succeed". In other words, "B&H has in fact already collapsed due to the fact that it is unfeasible as a state". Dodik also stressed that the overriding task of politicians from the Republika Srpska was to "strengthen [the entity's] sovereignty" and that "it would have been best for B&H to have split up in 1995" after the end of the war. In the same interview, Dodik referred to crimes committed in the 1990s as "myths and lies". Of the crimes that have been turned into myth, Dodik singled out the genocide in Srebrenica, which he stated was never proved at the Hague Tribunal. According to Dodik, the Srebrenica myth was created with the political purpose of "tarnishing the Serbian people" and using it as needed to provide a rationale and legitimacy for attacking Serbia, as with the NATO bombing campaign in 1999.⁵ In an interview a year earlier, Mladen Ivanić, the then Serb member of the B&H Presidency, said Serbs had to follow the example of the Kosovar Albanians "who enjoyed the status of an autonomous province for decades, while the Republika Srpska has existed for barely two decades". According to him, that is precisely where potential solutions for the future are to be found, because "what is currently unrealistic will not necessarily remain so for ever". Ivanić was of course alluding unequivocally to the secession of Kosovo from the Republic of Serbia as an example for the Serbs in the Republika Srpska to imitate patiently.⁶ An article

5 Opinion pieces featured in *Politika* reflect their authors' views. Regular contributors include Prof. Nenad Kecmanović, PhD, formerly of the Faculty of Political Sciences in Belgrade and now Political Advisor to Milorad Dodik. In his opinion pieces, like Dodik, Professor Kecmanović insists on the impossibility of Serbs surviving within Bosnia and Herzegovina due to its "centralization, unitarization, i.e. Bosniak hegemony" (*Politika*, 4 December 2018). According to him, B&H is in a "terminal phase" just like the SFRY before its breakup (*Politika*, 2nd November 2018). Also like Dodik, he denies the Srebrenica genocide, which he says "places the Republika Srpska under international anathema, ignoring the context of local Serb casualties and the political causes of the outbreak of civil war (in B&H)". In the same article, Kecmanović accuses the Bosniak leadership of falsifying the recent census to make B&H a "Bosniak/Muslim" majority state. He holds that in this process of "demographic engineering" Bosniak political elites rely on "mujahideen and Salafis" and in future will also count on "migrants from Muslim countries" (*Politika*, 9 September 2019).

6 *Politika*, 26 August 2018.

entitled “Chair Of B&H Presidency Projects His Idea On Map – Dodik ‘Unites’ Territories of Serbia and Srpska”⁷ in *Novosti* provides probably the most glaring example of attempts to achieve the unification of the Republika Srpska with the Republic of Serbia. It referred to a recent interview given by Milorad Dodik to the Serbian newspaper *Espresso* in which he not only explicitly talked about his idea of unification but provided concrete maps depicting the future state. Interestingly the maps presented by Dodik also include parts of Montenegro. Like Ivanić, Dodik emphasized that it was unrealistic to expect the unification of Serbia and the Republika Srpska to happen immediately but that the goal would be achieved at some point in the 21st century, as something of the sort is only natural, since “Serbs in B&H have always looked to Belgrade not Sarajevo”. To support these efforts, *Informer*, a daily pro-regime tabloid, published a statement by Steven Meyer, former CIA deputy chief for the Balkans, who, it claims, said in a lecture at the Faculty of Security Sciences in Belgrade that “The Republika Srpska has the right to a referendum on self-determination and to unite with Serbia if that is what it wants”.⁸

Messages asserting the unity of the Republika Srpska and the Republic of Serbia in a similar vein were also to be heard at the “Festival of the Republika Srpska” held in Belgrade. Reporting on it, *Politika* quoted Milorad Dodik as saying:

There are those who are trying to show us we are small, not worthy of making decisions about our own lives. That is why it is important we are here now in Belgrade to show you that the Republika Srpska belongs to you and to tell you that Serbia belongs to us... [and that] The Serb people today need to gather around their state and national ideas and finish what was left unfinished in the past.

Milorad Dodik finished his speech with the exclamation: “Long live Serbia, long live the Republika Srpska, long live the Serb people and long live our Orthodox Church”.⁹ In addition to directly undermining the statehood and even the existence of B&H, such irredentist statements unequivocally affirm the notion that Serb national identity is synonymous with and tantamount to adherence to the Serbian Orthodox Church. It was precisely in this context that a PEW Research Center survey conducted in 2018 showed that Serbs ranked third among European nations in believing denominational adherence to be a necessary prerequisite to membership in a national-ethnic group.¹⁰

7 *Novosti*, 9 April 2019.

8 <https://www.serbianmonitor.com/en/former-cia-director-for-balkans-steven-meyer-america-accepts-border-change-in-balkans/> (accessed on 01/10/2019)

9 *Politika*, 4 September 2018.

10 <https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2018/12/05/how-do-european-countries-differ-in-religious-commitment/> (accessed on 01/10/2019)

Threats to the survival of the Republika Srpska and the systematic political and biological cleansing of Serbs from Bosnia

In addition to this constant undermining of B&H's statehood and promotion of the expansionist ideology of a Greater Serbia that resulted in anti-Muslim genocide in B&H and Kosovo in the 1990s, a second topic regularly brought up in the Serbian media is the alleged threat to the survival of the Republika Srpska and the physical threat posed by Bosniaks to Serbs in B&H. Articles from the above table that fall into this group include: "SDA Demand Ordered By West – Undermine Srpska To Cut Off Russian Influence"¹¹, "SDA Initiative – Bosniaks Want To Undo Republika Srpska"¹², "National Holiday Of Republika Srpska Threatened – Bosniaks And Croats Strike At Republika Srpska"¹³, "Bakir Threatens Dodik: B&H Will Join NATO Or US Will Destroy You"¹⁴, "Serbs In Srpska United Thanks To NATO: Bosniaks Risking Biggest Crisis In B&H With No Way Out!"¹⁵, "Bosnian Serb Leader At Gunpoint: Plan To Assassinate Dodik"¹⁶, "Izetbegović: B&H Must Arm Itself"¹⁷, "Dodik: Izetbegović Must Come To Senses Quickly Or Regret It For Long Time"¹⁸, "Heavy Blow For Serbia – Naser Orić Released In Sarajevo In Spite Of Evidence He Personally Slaughtered Serbs And Gouged Out Their Eyes"¹⁹, "Novosti Exclusive – Sarajevo Makes Blacklist Of Serbs"²⁰, "Serbian People Disappearing From B&H Federation"²¹, "Three Serbs Tortured – Brutally Beaten By Sarajevo Police"²².

The essential purpose of these texts is clearly to question the integrity of B&H, but in this case through the claim to victimhood and by affirming a narrative of an existential threat facing Serbs in B&H which renders survival of the Republika Srpska impossible. These texts strongly emphasize geopolitical and geo-strategic issues, insistently underlining the Republika Srpska's special ties with the Russian Federation and its opposition to B&H's membership in NATO, a goal advocated by Bosniak representatives. It is in this context that *Novosti* insists particularly on the Republika Srpska as a bastion of Russian geo-strategic interests in the region. The article "SDA Demand

11 *Novosti*, 25 January 2019.

12 *Novosti*, 25 January 2019.

13 *Novosti*, 30 March 2019.

14 *Informer*, 16 August 2019.

15 *Informer*, 14 February 2019.

16 *Informer*, 30 November 2018.

17 *Politika*, 19 November 2019.

18 *Politika*, 31 July 2019.

19 *Informer*, 1 December 2018.

20 *Novosti*, 9 November 2018.

21 *Politika*, 25 October 2018.

22 *Novosti*, 10 November 2018.

Ordered By West – Undermine Srpska To Cut off Russian Influence” presents a case taken by Bakir Izetbegović and the Party of Democratic Action (SDA) before the Constitutional Court to change the name of the Republika Srpska as an “indirect message sent by Western centres of power to the Srpska leadership to ‘loosen’ ties with Serbia and Russia, accept B&H’s accession to NATO, and recognize Kosovo”. The same text in *Novosti* includes an infographic presenting in chronological order all the attempts by Bosniak representatives to change the name of the Republika Srpska since 2004, interpreted as “much more than just renaming one of the two constituent entities”, as it would actually have a “domino effect... resulting in changes to the B&H Constitution and essentially destroying the Dayton Agreement and so nullifying everything the Serbs had accomplished through it. In other words, changing the name would mean the end of the Republika Srpska”.²³ The texts, “SDA Initiative - Bosniaks Want To Undo Srpska”²⁴ and “National Holiday Of Republika Srpska Threatened – Bosniaks And Croats Strike At Republika Srpska”²⁵, also published in *Novosti*, follow on with the same narrative. These articles similarly insist that the Republika Srpska is under direct threat of elimination by Bosniak and Croat (political) forces, which is why the Republika Srpska’s representatives must “present flagrant breaches of the Dayton Accords to the RS National Assembly” so as to “reach a decision on the future of the Republika Srpska” and “launch an initiative for secession”. With regard to these developments, Milorad Dodik was once again quite explicit in his irredentist endeavours, saying “there is no point in saying Srpska cannot secede, as Valentin Incko does. The Republika Srpska has no intention of suffering in silence, as it awaits the outcome of court proceedings. It is evident that the Bosniaks do not want anyone else in B&H and that there is no place for Serbs in it.” Informer has carried similar stories about threats to the existence of the Republika Srpska in feature articles, “Bakir Warns Dodik: B&H Will Join NATO Or US Will Destroy You”²⁶ and “Serbs In Srpska United Thanks To NATO: Bosniaks Risking Biggest Crisis In B&H With No Way Out!”, the only difference being a focus on the anti-NATO narrative rather than the Russian Federation.

It is, however, texts that highlight the physical threat to Serb survival in B&H, such as “Bosnian Serb Leader At Gunpoint: Plan To Assassinate Dodik”²⁷, “Serbian People Disappearing From B&H Federation”²⁸, and “Three Serbs Tortured – Brutally Beaten By Sarajevo Police”²⁹, which produce the most disturbing effects. In

23 *Novosti*, 25 January 2019.

24 *Novosti*, 24 January 2019

25 *Novosti*, 30 March 2019.

26 *Informer*, 16 August 2019.

27 *Informer*, 30 November 2018.

28 *Politika*, 25 October 2018.

29 *Novosti*, 10 November 2018.

the last of these articles, the *Novosti* journalist, by name Matavulj, reports on three Serbs questioned by police at a Sarajevo police station as part of an investigation into the murder of two Sarajevo police officers. The author places the entire case in a context of Bosniak ethnic and religious intolerance for Serbs, stating that the police tortured the three detainees using “electrocution” and “testicle crushing”, shouting at them “you’ll end up childless... you motherfucking Chetniks”, and that the three Serbs being interrogated were “violated with umbrellas and forced to listen to *Adhan* and to pray *Salat al-Janazah* (the Islamic funerary prayer)”. This narrative is a vulgar manifestation and continuation of such texts as “Serbian People Disappearing From B&H Federation” from *Politika*, which accuses Bosniaks from the B&H Federation of “not want[ing] to see Croats let alone Serbs in it”, while implying that they are carrying out national-ethnic engineering with the aim of “cleansing the Federation of Serbs systematically” in both a “political and a biological” sense.³⁰ The existential threat at the political level is presented in an article entitled “Bosnian Serb Leader At Gunpoint: Plan To Assassinate Dodik”, published in *Informer*. In this text, the claim is made that the Director of Coordination of B&H Police Units has issued orders forbidding the Republika Srpska Police entry to Sarajevo, which apparently suggests a covert operation aimed at paving the way for the assassination of Milorad Dodik, just as, *Informer* claims, happened at Potočari, in an incident that nearly “nearly ended in the assassination of Serbian President Aleksandar Vučić”. The same article also features an official statement from the Republika Srpska cabinet, stating that Milorad Dodik and his associates had received death threats that they would be “burned alive”.

Bosniaks as descendants of the Turks

The third group of texts listed in the above table includes those that present Bosniaks as “descendants of Turkish slaves” who, by adopting Islam, had embraced the Ottoman Empire and so “the invaders”, which is why they still celebrate the victory of the Turkish army at Gallipoli, as *Politika* and *Informer* both reported under the headlines, “Bosniaks Celebrate Turkish Victory At Gallipoli”³¹ and “Bosniaks Erect Monument In Honour Of Turkish Conquest Of Bosnia! Descendants Of Turkish Slaves Celebrate Invaders Of Their Own Land!”³² This narrative of the Bosnian Muslims as ultimate Other was used by Serbian nationalist circles during the 1980s and 1990s to frame them as bearing a threat of Islamic fundamentalism endangering Christian Europe and, so, Serbia as an Orthodox country and last defence against “Islamic invasion”. As mentioned in the introduction, it was precisely this way of presenting Bosnian

30 *Politika*, 25 October 2018.

31 *Politika*, 22 March 2019.

32 *Informer*, 10 March 2019.

Muslims as infidels and collaborators with the Ottoman occupation that led to ethnic cleansing and genocide in B&H during the Serbian attack on Bosnia and Herzegovina in 1992-1995. Perfect examples that show how present such thoughts and politics are in Serbian society and the mainstream media there, even two and a half decades after the conflict ended, are to be found in the following texts: “Smells Like The 1990s! U.S. Infiltrating Jihadists Into B&H And Preparing Alija Izetbegović’s Scenario”³³, “SDA President’s Diabolical Plan: Bakir Sends Afghanis To Settle In Serbian Municipalities And Chase Serbs Out Of B&H”³⁴, “Dževad Galijašević – New York Attackers Were Citizens Of B&H”³⁵, “Bosnia On Alert! Two Hard-Boiled ISIS Terrorists Coming Back From Syria”³⁶, “Galijašević: Bin Laden And His Gang Granted Citizenship By Advocates Of Unified Bosnia”³⁷, “Kitarović: B&H Unstable, Controlled By Militant Islam”³⁸, “Suspect For Assault On US Mission In Sarajevo Arrested”³⁹, and “Jihadi Families Waiting For Housing In Mostar”⁴⁰. All these texts aim to link B&H and Bosniak Muslims to violent paramilitary *takfir*-jihadist groups such as al-Qaeda and the Islamic State of Syria and the Levant, while at the same time “rationalizing” attempts by Bosnian Serbs to break away from a state union that is “dysfunctional” and of “questionable value”. In the text entitled “Smells Like The 1990s!...”, Dževad Galijašević, a vocal proponent of conspiracy theories and Islamophobic ideas in Serbian society, comments:

Just recall the 1990s and how wars in the Middle East were transplanted to the Balkans by the political agency of Western countries. All of this is reminiscent of that period. The United States is withdrawing its military from Syria, reducing its presence in the Middle East, while concentrating its troops and forces towards Iran and the Balkans. American forerunners have already arrived in the Balkans. ...[evident in the] soldiers of the defeated so-called Islamic State, [and B&H has] is prepared to receive them... and they will not come there unorganized.

The other texts serve basically the same purpose, using a range of topics to achieve their aim, applying various perspectives to affirm the idea that Bosnia is fertile ground for the extremist ideology of radical Islamic groups that threaten the stability of the country and the region and the safety of the Serb people. To name a few, there are allegations of links between Bosnian Muslim political parties and al-Qaeda and the individuals who perpetrated the 9/11 attacks on New York, claims of

33 *Informer*, 14 October 2019.

34 *Informer*, 27 August 2019.

35 *Informer*, 27 April 2019.

36 *Informer*, 9 March 2019.

37 *Informer*, 18 September 2019.

38 *Politika*, 31 July 2019.

39 *Politika*, 24 November 2018.

40 *Politika*, 6 July 2019.

plans by the Bosniak political ruling party to cleanse the country of Serbs and replace them with Afghan settlers, assertions about returnees from Syrian battlefields to be given a warm welcome by the Bosniak Muslims, etc. In addition to the texts listed in the table, the idea of “Islamic threat” was prominently featured as topic of the week in *Politika* on 14 July 2019, in an article entitled “The Green Transversal: The Balkan Corridor Of Instability”, which we will now analyse in more detail.

Reaffirmation of Old Anti-Muslim Tropes – “The Green Transversal: the Balkan Corridor of Instability”

“The Green Transversal” was a common term in Serbian nationalist circles in the late 1980s and early 1990s, employed to pave the way for expansionist incursions by Serb forces and forays into B&H and Kosovo. In *U.S. Policy and the Geopolitics of Jihad: The Green Transversal in the Balkans*, Srdja Trifković, a radical proponent of the theory of Islamic threat, says that “Green Transversal” can have two meanings. The first implies that the “long-term goal of Islamist ideologues, both in the Balkans and throughout the Muslim world, is to create a unified territory to include predominantly Muslim cities located along the route from Turkey in the southeast to Bosnia in the northwest”. The second, according to Trifković, relates to the threat of “increased ethno-religious self-identification in traditional Muslim communities in the Balkans”. According to Trifković, these two different concepts and aspirations are not at all mutually exclusive. They reinforce each another and pose a threat to the Serb national idea of a “Greater Serbia”. To support his thesis, Trifković cites the words of Sir Alfred Sherman, former adviser to Margaret Thatcher and founder of the Lord Byron Foundation, who claimed, during the Serbian attack on B&H, that the Muslim goal was to create a “Green Transversal” stretching from Bosnia through the Sandžak to Kosovo, to allow the Muslims to separate Serbia territorially from Montenegro and so establish a compact predominantly Muslim territorial entity. Sherman also accused the Western powers of “supporting the creation of this Islamistan”, primarily through their “close cooperation with Iran, whose aim was to establish a base on European soil for further political activities”, but also because they had enabled Turkey to engage in military actions through NATO, even though the country had abandoned Atatürk’s secular ideology for neo-Ottomanism and pan-Islamist aspirations.⁴¹ In the wake of democratic change in Serbia in 2000 and the overthrow of Slobodan Milošević and his nationalist regime, intellectuals who espoused such narratives found themselves side-lined. When the first democratic prime minister of Serbia, Zoran Djindjić, was assassinated in 2003 by members of the “Hague Lobby”, however, things started gradually to revert towards a reaffirmation of nationalist aspirations and tendencies. The

41 <http://gatesofvienna.blogspot.com/2009/05/green-corridor-in-balkans.html> (accessed on 01/10/2019)

right-wing Democratic Party of Serbia, which won power in 2004 in the first parliamentary elections after the assassination, bears a special responsibility for this turn. As a result of such developments, the intellectuals who had sown hatred of Balkan Muslims during the 1990s regained, over the following 15 years, considerable space in public discourse and the mainstream media in Serbia. This is especially true of the period since 2012, when power was seized by the right-wing populist Serbian Progressive Party, founded by former top-ranking officials of the far-right Serbian Radical Party, whose leader Vojislav Šešelj was sentenced by the Hague Tribunal to ten years in prison for crimes including incitement to persecution and the deportation and forcible displacement and resettlement of Croats from the village of Hrtkovci, in Vojvodina, in 1992.

On 14 July, 2019, the oldest and most important Serbian daily, *Politika*, published a feuilleton, “The Green Transversal: The Balkan Corridor Of Instability”, that offers an excellent example of this reaffirmation of the Serbian nationalist narrative of “Islamic threat” and insistence on the image of Bosniak and Albanian Muslims as part of a pan-Islamic conspiracy network aimed at conquering Europe. It is important to note that the feuilleton was published as the five-page *Topic of the Week* section during the anniversary week of the genocide of Bosniak Muslims in Srebrenica on 11 July 1995. The editorial board did not consider it appropriate to mark 11 July as the Day of Remembrance of the Srebrenica Genocide in any way, even though it is commemorated in countries around the world and in the institutions of the European Union and the Council of Europe. Instead it opted to feature a small piece of news on 12 July, about the commemorative rally held annually at the Potočari Memorial Centre on 11 July.⁴² In this context, given the socio-political atmosphere prevailing in Serbian society, it is difficult to believe that choosing to address the issue of the “Green Transversal” during the same calendar week was pure coincidence.

The feature on “The Green Transversal: The Balkan Corridor Of Instability” included texts on “Myth or Reality”, “The Balkan Corridor of Instability”, “Cutting Serbia and Russia off from the Mediterranean” and an opinion piece on “The

42 In July 2019, nine non-governmental organizations issued a public statement commenting that it was “shameful and disgusting” that not one Serbian state official had characterized Srebrenica as genocide since 1995, confirming the continuity of genocide denialism by the state and the society alike. The statement read, “The official politics of genocide denial is particularly reinforced by the continuous refusal of incumbent Serbian President Aleksandar Vučić and Prime Minister Ana Brnabić to call the Srebrenica crime a genocide, in which they are followed not only by politicians from the ruling coalition but a large portion of the opposition”, adding that Srebrenica genocide is a forbidden phrase for Serbian state institutions, while genocide deniers are given ample space and freedom in pro-government media. For more on the statement, see <https://www.autonomija.info/nvo-iz-srbije-shame-and-defeat-the-fact-the-official-serbia-neglect-genocide-in-srebrenica.html> (accessed on 01/10/2019).

Geopolitical Phenomenon” written by the aforementioned Srdja Trifković, with contents basically identical to those of his *U.S. Policy and the Geopolitics of Jihad: The Green Transversal in the Balkans*, analysed above. In addition to Trifković, the feuilleton also featured the Islamophobe Dževad Galijašević prominently, as interlocutor of the author of the text on “Myth or Reality”, in which he set out the goals of the Green Transversal as follows:

This idea implies that Turkey will reach out across Albania and Kosovo and Metohija, along the route that extends from Ulcinj to the Preševo Valley, thus separating Serbia and Montenegro, penetrating through the Sandžak and across Užice, to reach Sarajevo. It involves a route from Sarajevo to Istanbul, a swathe of land that will eventually encompass isolated areas that stretch from Macedonia towards the Bulgarian border and are populated by Turcophone populations. It is supposed to be a broad project of Turkey’s return to the Balkans.

Galijašević claims that this route, with B&H as its stronghold, includes “Saudi Arabian outposts and radical bases that would prove useful in causing destabilization and chaos and serve to redefine borders if necessary”. In addition to Trifković’s article and Galijašević’s expertise, the feature also included short “humorous puns” by satirist Dragutin Minić Karlo, such as “With the Serbs down there stopping Europe turning green, Europe is far from turning red in shame” and “In addition to the green transversal, there’s a white line, and it’s powdery”, along with a map entitled “The Green Transversal Route” (figure 1).



The “Green Transversal Route” map, *Politika*, 14/07/2019 (figure 1)

It was, however, the text on “The Balkan Corridor Of Instability” by Prof Milan Mijalkovski, PhD, of the Faculty of Security Studies at Belgrade University that included the most disturbing claims, framing Balkan Muslims as a security risk in the most direct and dangerous way. In the spirit of Serbian nationalist intellectuals at the turn of the century, he repeated the “mantra” that an entire project to Islamise the Balkans had begun back in the mid-1980s. He went on to recall the presence of mujahideen in the wars of the 1990s, fighting against the Serbs in B&H and Kosovo, which he then (in)directly related to Bosnian and Kosovo Muslims going to Syria today to fight for Islamic State, whose goal is “in its first phase, to reclaim everything that was once Islamic, that is, all the territory of the Ottoman Empire, including present-day B&H”. He also points unambiguously to the threat posed by Islamic terrorists in the region, especially in B&H, the Sandžak, and Kosovo, where they are free to organize and carry out serious terrorist attacks at any time.

II. “Kosovo is the Heart of Serbia”

In the introductory part of this paper, we emphasized the significance of the battle of Kosovo for the creation of Serbian national identity, which is essentially opposed to the “Turk”. The Battle of Kosovo took place on 28 June 1389 on “Kosovo Field, near where the Lab flows into the Sitnica”, not far from Prishtina, the current capital of Kosovo. During the battle, Serbian troops led by Prince Lazar Hrebeljanović, his son-in-law Vuk Branković, and Bosnian Duke Vlatko Vuković clashed with an Ottoman army led by Sultan Murad I and his sons Bajezid and Yakub Çelebi.⁴³ Reliable historical sources for the battle are scarce, which has over time left ample room for the construction and affirmation of legends and myths that stress the values of the Serb people’s “martyrdom, sacrifice and fearlessness”, while at the same time promoting a very specific religious and national symbolism. This is all expressed primarily in a very rich cycle of epic poetry on various aspects of the *Battle of Kosovo*, which dates largely from the period when the Serbian national identity was being formed in the 19th century and was therefore used as the cornerstone for building the national ideology, by combining two very powerful narratives permeated by distinct anti-Islamic sentiment, name a clerical-ecclesiastical and a national-romantic narrative. American scholar of Islam Michael Sells has defined the nationalist ideology created by amalgamation of these two narratives through his coinage *Christoslavism*. This ideology’s

43 Olga Zirojević, *Iz osmanske baštine* (Belgrade: Balkanski centar za Bliski Istok), p. 127.

main characteristic is the emphasis it puts on the Kosovo Battle as a “cosmic conflict between good and evil”, that is, a conflict between Serb Christian knights led by Prince Lazar, represented in epic poetry as embodiment of the entire Serb nation, on one side, and Muslims or Turks, characterized as “heathen” and “de-tractors of the Cross”, on the other side.⁴⁴ Identifying Prince Lazar with the entire Serb nation means his death at the Battle of Kosovo also meant the “death of the Serbian nation”, for which the Turks/Muslims were responsible. It is precisely on this basis that the role of archetypal enemy, the ultimate Other, in Serb national consciousness was transferred to those Southern Slavs who adopted Islam as their religion later on in history. Seen as having sided with the invaders, they were perceived as “race traitors” who had betrayed the “faith of their ancestors”. This is why Muslim South Slavs and Kosovar Albanians have been systematically racialized in Serb tradition and depicted as “genetically faulty” “moral freaks”. Over the centuries, such ideas have begotten a deeply ingrained urge for and obsession with revenge that Serb nationalists nurtured and directed against South Slav Muslims and Kosovar Albanians.⁴⁵ The first opportunity for revenge came after Serbia gained independence from the Ottoman Empire in 1878. From then on, the nationalist Serbian political elite systematically strove to enlarge Serbia’s territory to encompass everywhere Serbs lived and any regions they believed Serbia had an “historical” right to. The first opportunity to pursue these goals arose with the outbreak of the Balkan Wars (1912-1914) and then during and after the First World War (1914-1918). During that period, numerous atrocities and crimes were committed against the Muslim populations of central and southern Serbia, Kosovo, and the Sandžak. To this day, these pogroms remain unfortunately under-researched, especially with regard to ethnic cleansing of the Turkish population of the Balkans as the Slavic, non-Muslim nation-states of Serbia, Bulgaria, Greece, and Montenegro were being created. American historian Justin McCarthy is a leading authority on this issue and, in several works but particularly his very valuable *Death and Exile: Ethnic Cleansing of Ottoman Muslims 1821-1922*, he has tried to shed light on the atrocities committed against Muslims in the Western Balkans during the 19th and first half of the 20th century. Other important sources also outline unambiguously the fate of Balkan Muslims in the early 20th century, including the Carnegie Foundation’s *Report on the Balkan Wars*, published in 1914, and the very valuable first-hand reports of Russian Marxist Leon Trotsky, who was sent in 1912 by the *Kievskaya Myslin* newspaper as its correspo-

44 Michael Sells, “Islam in Serbian Religious Mythology”, in Maya Shaztmiller, *Islam and Bosnia: Conflict Resolution and Foreign Policy in Multi-Ethnic States* (Montreal: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2002), p. 63.

45 Ivan Ejub Kostić, *Religija, verovanje i građanski identitet* (Belgrade: Balkanski Centar za Bliski istok, 2019).

ndent to cover the events of the Balkan Wars. The statistics provided by McCarthy tell us that the Muslim population on the territories that would later be incorporated into Yugoslavia dropped from 1,241,076 to 566,478, or by as much as 64 percent, between 1911 and 1923.⁴⁶ The Carnegie Foundation's Report states that 80% of Muslim villages were demolished and burned in areas where the newly established and predominantly Christian nation-states waged military operations in their effort to create "pure monoethnic states". In the case of Serbia, the pogroms occurred primarily in the south and on the territory of Kosovo and were against the Muslim Albanian population.⁴⁷ In retrospect it is clear that the ethnic cleansing of the first half of the 20th century was very similar to how Serb military, police and paramilitary formations operated in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kosovo during the wars of the 1990s, with the unambiguous aim of ethnically cleansing those territories of Bosniak Muslims and Kosovar Albanians. In the Kosovan context, President Slobodan Milošević delivered a famous speech in Gazimestan in June 1989, on the 600th anniversary of the Battle of Kosovo, to a crowd of approximately 300,000 people. Many believe this speech heralded the bloody dissolution of the former Yugoslavia.⁴⁸ Following a series of socio-political developments in the 1990s, open conflict broke out in Kosovo in 1998, between the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA), which sought independence from Serbia, and special forces of the Serbian Ministry of Internal Affairs (MUP) and the Yugoslav Army. The conflict soon escalated into the Kosovo War, which ended with NATO intervention in 1999 against the Serbian forces.

According to a ruling of the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia during the Kosovo War, the Yugoslav Army and the Serbian MUP used "excessive and indiscriminate force", resulting in the destruction of villages, massacres of Albanian civilians, and their mass displacement.⁴⁹ The conflict's final epilogue came on February 17, 2008, when the Kosovo Assembly unilaterally declared independence from the Republic of Serbia.⁵⁰ The Kosovo Parliament's decision for independence and the ongoing battle over the status of Kosovo remain highly controversial issues and burning questions in political and social life

46 Justin McCarthy, *Stanovništvo osmanlijske Evrope prije i posle pada carstva* (Sarajevo, Belgrade: Center for Advanced Studies & Balkan Centre for Middle East, 2017), pp. 48-52.

47 Dubravka Stojanović, *Ulje na vodi* (Belgrade: Peščanik, 2010), pp. 263-266.

48 During his speech, among other things, Milošević famously said "We are again becoming engaged in battles and facing battles. They are not armed battles, but such things cannot be excluded yet."

49 D. Pavlica, *Savremena istorija Kosova*, available on: <https://pescanik.net/savremena-istorija-kosova/> (2011),

50 <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-kosovo-serbia/kosovo-declares-independence-from-serbia-idUSHAM53437920080217> (accessed on 01/10/2019)

in Serbia, which is why the role of archetypal enemy, imposed on the Turks from the 13th to the 19th century, has now been transferred in public discourse to the Kosovar Albanians. In other words, Kosovar Albanians have been given the role of being out to steal Kosovo – the “heart of the Serbian” nation.

After this brief contextual introduction required to allow us a deeper understanding of the motives for the strong animosity expressed towards Kosovar Albanians within the Serbian national ideology, we may now turn to our discursive analysis of the texts selected from the daily newspapers (Table 2).

Articles selected from <i>Politika</i> , <i>Novosti</i> and <i>Informer</i>		
<i>Politika</i>	<i>Novosti</i>	<i>Informer</i>
Kosovo – Fake State Founded On Terrorism	KFOR Also Backs Thaçi's Assault	Emergency! Shqiptars Preparing Criminal Plan: Greater Albania To Be Realized By New Year
Independent Kosovo A Risk To World Peace	On-The-Scene With Representatives Of Our People In Gjakova: Albanians Aim To Eradicate All Serbian Traces	Great Menace Lurking! Shqiptars Plotting Diabolical Plan Against Serbia: Revolt Underway In Preševo
Greater Albania By Back Door	West Threatens Serbia: Set Foot In Kosovo And You Will Be At War With NATO	Emergency! Shqiptars On Rampage Over Kosovo And Metohija: Shqiptars Attack Serbs Using Teargas And Bats
Rama: Strategy For Albanian Unification By 2025	CIA Arming Albanians	Extreme Danger! West Openly Supports Albanian Extremists: Ustashe Train Shqiptars For Assault On Serbian Border
Vučić Comments On Kosovar Albanian Platform – Get That Paper Out Of My Sight, You Prishtina Thugs	Vučić Receives Lynch Threats Just Like Djurić	Alarming! Shqiptars Set Date For Attack On Serbs: War In Kosovo To Begin On 15 December
Vučić: Kosovar Army Could End In Tragedy	EULEX And KFOR Tolerate KLA War Veteran Shoot-Outs	Northern Macedonia Overrun By Shqiptars
Debate Of The Week: Marko Djurić, Head Of Office For Kosovo And Metohija: KFOR Must Disarm Kosovar Paramilitaries	Pacoli's Government Led By Kiddie-Killer	Prishtina Assembly Working Against Peaceful Solution With Belgrade: Shqiptars Declare War On Serbia!
Vulin: Paramilitary Formations Formed In Kosovo	Ramush Defends 'Borders' And Calls For War	Vučić Not Bluffing: Will Send Army To Kosovo

Kosovo Paramilitary Pushes Region Over Edge	Serbs Shot At, Old People Beaten Up	Serbs In Kosovo Still Being Tortured By Shqiptars!
Western Balkans Operation Flash Preparation For Northern Kosovo	Vučić Comments On Moves By Prishtina: They Want To Cleanse Kosovo Of All Serbs	Danger! Madmen From Prishtina Getting crazier: Shqiptars Want War
West Gives Green Light For New Attack On Northern Kosovo And Metohija	Albanians And KFOR Train To Attack Serbian Tanks	They Really Want To Start A War! Haradinaj And Thaçi Threaten New Round Of Arrests In Northern Kosovo
Prishtina Special Forces Terrorize Northern Kosovo And Metohija: Brutal And Indiscriminate Attack On Serbs, Dozens Beaten Up, Four Injured	Minister Vulin In Beijing Warns About Threats To Peace And Stability In This Part Of Europe: Greater Albania Will Set The Balkans On Fire	Shqiptars Have Diabolical Plan: Assault On Northern Kosovo Planned For June 5?!
Ana Brnabić: Prishtina Discriminates Against Anything Serbian	Combat Readiness Of Armed Forces Raised To Highest Level: Serbian Army Ready To Fight!	Horror! Terrorists' Wicked Plans In Kosovo: Shqiptars Planned To Slaughter Serbs
Stefanović: Prishtina Aim Is To Expel Serbs From Kosovo And Metohija	ROSU Assault: They Threatened To Open Fire On Us	Realization Of Criminal Project, Serious Provocation From Peć: Shqiptars Create Greater Albania
Prishtina Has Started To Carry Out Economic Ethnic Cleansing	New Weapon Of The Great Powers: Creating A Kosovar Orthodox Church	Two Devils Join Forces: Milo And Thaçi Usurp Serbian Churches
Serbia Considers Using Military In Kosovo And Metohija	Perfidious Action By Government In Prishtina: Serbian Churches Turned Into Catholic Temples	Serbian Church Under NATO Attack
Next Year In Prizren	KLA Was Terrorist International: Jihadists From Košare On Killing Spree In London	Shqiptars Want To Occupy Northern Kosovo Before Hillary Clinton's Visit On June 12, While Putin's Intelligence Officers Claim Shqiptars From ISIS Engaged For Action

Table 2

Kosovo as a Fake State

Unlike the texts dealing with Bosnia and Herzegovina, which are primarily aimed at undermining its statehood, the language employed in the media in the case of Kosovo and the Kosovar Albanians is openly warlike and as such constantly fosters a sense of instability and a pre-war atmosphere in both Serbia and Kosovo. Such writings may naturally have unpredictable consequences for the region and for the integration of Kosovar Albanians living in Serbia proper. It is of particular importance to note the openly belligerent statements coming from top-ranking officials of the Republic of Serbia, including the President Aleksandar Vučić, Prime Minister Ana Brnabić, Defence Minister Aleksandar Vulin, and Interior Minister Nebojša Stefanović. Before turning to their statements, however, one should note how the Serbian media present the idea of an independent state of Kosovo. In texts such as “Kosovo – A Fake State Founded On Terrorism”⁵¹, “Independent Kosovo Risk To World Peace”⁵², “Greater Albania By Back Door”⁵³, “Rama: Strategy For Albanian Unification By 2025”⁵⁴, and “Realization Of Criminal Project, Serious Provocation From Peć: Shqiptars Creating Greater Albania”⁵⁵, the state of Kosovo is pictured as a “fake” and “criminogenic entity” thanks to the activities of the separatist and terrorist organization that is the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA), which “financed itself from human trafficking, narcotics, weapons and organ trafficking” during the war. There is also a constant insistence that Kosovo’s independence is actually only a first step towards achieving the ultimate goal, the establishment of a “Greater Albania” by unification of the territories of Kosovo and Metohija and Albania. The arguments published in *Politika* on 27 November 2018 to support such claims include the words of Albanian Prime Minister Edi Rama, who presented the concept of a “national project for the unification of Albania and Kosovo, and called on Ramush Haradinaj, at the time Kosovar Prime Minister, to start developing a common strategy for the unification of Albanians by 2025” at a joint meeting of Albanians from Kosovo and Albania. Such articles on the potential creation of a “Greater Albania” provide strong support for the thesis put forward for decades by nationalist Serbian circles insisting that the goal of Kosovar Albanian separatism is to unification with Albania in a single state. In this way, the narrative of the Serbian nationalist intellectuals is given extra weight, while presenting itself as a kind of “prophecy”.

51 *Politika*, 24 November 2018.

52 *Politika*, 1 July 2019.

53 *Politika*, 8 August 2019.

54 *Politika*, 26 November 2018.

55 *Informer*, 27 November 2018.

Kosovo Albanians as Existential Threat

As well as being presented in the media as a “criminogenic creation”, Kosovo is also regularly written about as a territory where Serbian heritage, medieval Orthodox monasteries, and the Serbian population generally are threatened by the Prishtina authorities and Kosovar security intelligence services, which, with the tacit support of Western countries, are carrying out systematic aggression against Serbs in Kosovo with the aim of ethnically cleansing them. The number of texts conveying such messages is extremely high and they serve to create an atmosphere of profound indignation among Serbs living in Serbia, as well as national homogenization that could potentially be used to mobilize the Serb population should military force be employed and armed conflict with Kosovar Albanians break out again.⁵⁶

As already noted, these accounts acquire additional weight in the light of statements made by top government officials of the Republic of Serbia, who directly threaten war or the use of force against Kosovo. Such statements were especially frequent in November and December 2018, after information emerged that the Kosovan Security Forces were being transformed into a Kosovan Army. President Vučić commented that, if this were to happen, “Serbia will find itself in a hopeless situation”, implicitly telling the public what Serbian Prime Minister Ana Brnabić had already stated openly on November 6, 2018, viz. that if a Kosovan Army were formed Serbia would “consider using military force to prevent any new ethnic cleansing of Kosovo Serbs”. The Prime Minister’s statement was followed by statements by other senior Serbian officials, such as Defence Minister Aleksandar Vulin, who said “it is clear to everyone that the Kosovan Army is not an army but a terrorist organization” with only one goal, “to clash with Serbia and Serbs”, adding “that it may have grave consequences and jeopardise the security of the entire region”. These statements by Brnabić and Vulin

56 Texts from Table 2 foreground the vulnerability of Serbs in Kosovo and the risk of ethnic cleansing and so help create a febrile atmosphere in Serbia. The following texts spread this kind of victimhood propaganda: “Vučić Comments On Moves By Pristina: They Want To Cleanse Kosovo Of All Serbs” (*Novosti*, 22 November 2018), “On-The-Scene With Representatives Of Our People In Gjakova: Albanians Aim To Eradicate All Serbian Traces” (*Novosti*, 2 September 2018), “Horror! Wicked Plans Of Terrorists In Kosovo: Shqiptars Planned To Slaughter Serbs” (*Informers*, 26 July 2019), “Serbs On Kosovo Still Tortured By Shqiptars!” (*Informers*, 15 Jun 2019), “Emergency! Shqiptars On Rampage On Kosovo And Metohija: Shqiptars Attack Serbs Using Teargas And Bats” (*Informers*, 4 May 2019), “Ana Brnabić: Prishtina Discriminates Against Anything Serbian” (*Politika*, 20 November 2018), “Stefanović: Prishtina Aims To Expel Serbs From Kosovo And Metohija” (*Politika*, 11 December 2018), “Prishtina Has Started To Carry Out Economic Ethnic Cleansing” (*Politika*, 22 November 2018), “Serbs Shot At, Old People Beaten Up” (*Novosti*, 29 May 2019).

were followed by basically identical messages from Marko Djurić, the Head of the Office for Kosovo and Metohija, and Interior Minister Nebojša Stefanović, who both accused the Kosovo authorities of systematically striving to expel Serbs and labelled the Kosovo Army “paramilitary”, just as their fellow government officials had done. Another thing to provoke uproar among Serbian officials was the decision by Kosovo officials in November 2018 to impose a 100% tariff on Serbian exports to Kosovo. Following this decision by the Kosovo authorities, negotiations on normalizing relations between Serbia and Kosovo, mediated by EU officials, were suspended.⁵⁷

Indeed, the European Union, as mediator in the dialogue, and the United States are framed as pursuing “anti-Serb ideas” and supporting the “war” against the Serbs by arming the Kosovar Albanian security forces and providing logistical and military assistance for their operations in the north of the country. Units of the Kosovo Force (KFOR) and the EU Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo (EULEX) are presented as destabilizing agents whose aim is to help the Kosovo authorities in Prishtina meet their goals to the detriment of Serbs and their rights.⁵⁸

Media coverage also plays on the religious feelings of readers. In the texts, “Serbian Church Under NATO Attack”⁵⁹, “New Weapons Of The Great Powers:

57 Texts from Table 2 that (in)directly contribute to the warmongering atmosphere, whether by reference to potential threats of attack by Kosovar Albanians against Serbs living in northern Kosovo and Serbia or threats that Serbia may use its military might against Kosovo, include: “Serbia Considers Using Military On Kosovo And Metohija” (*Politika*, 6 September 2018), “Vučić Not Bluffing: Will Send Army To Kosovo” (*Informer*, 30 May 2019), “Combat Readiness Of Armed Forces Raised To Highest Level: Serbian Army Ready To Fight!” (*Novosti*, 30 September 2018), “Vučić: Kosovar Army Could End In Tragedy” (*Politika*, 20 October 2018), “Debate Of The Week: Marko Djurić, Head Of Office For Kosovo And Metohija: KFOR Must Disarm Kosovar Paramilitaries” (*Politika*, 9 December 2018), “Vulin: Paramilitary Formations Forming In Kosovo” (*Politika*, 13 November 2018), “Kosovo Paramilitaries Push Region Over Edge” (*Politika*, 5 December 2018), “Danger! Madmen From Prishtina Getting Crazier: Shqiptars Want War” (*Informer*, 19 May 2019), “Prishtina Assembly Working Against Peaceful Solution With Belgrade: Shqiptars Declare War On Serbia!” (*Informer*, 8 March 2019), “Great Menace Lurking! Shqiptars Plotting Diabolical Plan Against Serbia: Revolt In Preševo Under Way” (*Informer*, 1 July 2019), “Extreme Danger! West Openly Supports Albanian Extremists: Ustashe Train Shqiptars To Assault Serbian Border” (*Informer*, 4 Jun 2019), “Alarming! Shqiptars Set Date For Attack On Serbs: War In Kosovo Will Begin On 15 December” (*Informer*, 4 December 2018).

58 The following texts from the table affirm this narrative: “EULEX And KFOR Tolerate KLA War Veterans Shoot-Outs” (*Novosti*, 11 September 2018), “West Threatens Serbia: Set Foot In Kosovo And You’ll Be At War With NATO” (*Novosti*, 4 October 2018), “CIA Arms Albanians” (*Novosti*, 5 December 2018), “Western Balkans Operation Flash Preparation For Northern Kosovo” (*Politika*, 2 April 2019), “West Gives Green Light For New Attack On Northern Kosovo And Metohija” (*Politika*, 12 Jun 2019).

59 *Informer*, 22 July 2019.

Creating A Kosovar Orthodox Church”⁶⁰, “Perfidious Action By Government in Prishtina: Serbian Churches Turned Into Catholic Temples”⁶¹, and “Two Devils Join Forces: Milo And Thaçi Usurp Serbian Churches”⁶², the claim is made that the Kosovo authorities, helped by NATO and Western countries, have plans to “steal” Serbian monasteries and churches, including some of the oldest and most significant temples of the Serbian Orthodox Church, like the monasteries of Gračanica (erected in 1321) and Visoki Dečani (1335) and most important of all, the monastery of the Patriarchate of Peć, which served as seat of the Serbian Orthodox Church from 1346-1463 and 1557-1776 (under Ottoman rule). These monasteries have great emotional value for Orthodox Serbs, who regard them as a pillar of their religious and national identity, which is why such media accounts can incite popular indignation and anger against Kosovar Albanians and especially Islam. In this context of fake media coverage of the potential “theft” of churches or attacks on them, it is appropriate to recall how the Belgrade Bayrakli Mosque was set on fire in retaliation for a number of Serbian monasteries in Kosovo attacked in 2004.

Kosovo Liberation Army: radical paramilitary jihadists

Texts linking the KLA to radical paramilitary *takfir*-jihadist organizations and Islamic State of Syria and the Levant (ISIL) aim to place Islam in a confrontation with Orthodox Christianity and Serbia, which in turn are framed as forces standing in defence of a Christian Europe unaware of the lurking danger from Muslims. An article in *Novosti* entitled “KLA Was Terrorist International: Jihadists From Košare On Killing Spree In London”⁶³ includes the claim that “Mujahideen led by al-Zawahiri, bin Laden’s right-hand man” responsible for “massacres in Britain, Belgium, Israel, France and Syria” fought against Serbia in the 1990s. The same text includes the claim that the KLA was trained by the CIA, Green Berets, and the SAS Regiment of the British Special Forces during the 1990s. The text ends with the conclusion that Western countries’ cooperation with “Islamic terrorists” in Kosovo “backfired on them” on September 11, 2001, and again in 2005 with the bomb attack on the London underground. Another article, “Assault On Northern Kosovo Planned For June 5?”⁶⁴, in *Informer*, has the claim that “Shqiptars” from ISIL “joined Kosovo ROSU special forces, which have the consent of the US Administration and backup training of official Albanian troops to invade the north of Kosovo”, where the Serbian population is in the majority.

60 *Novosti*, 7 September 2018.

61 *Novosti*, 7 June 2019.

62 *Informer*, 15 June 2019.

63 *Novosti*, 9 April 2019.

64 *Novosti*, 23 April 2019.

III. Memory Politics and Crimes Committed in the 1990s in B&H and Kosovo

The politics of remembrance is strongly emphasised in the monitored media. In particular, it plays on readers' feelings by insisting on the (nationalist) politics of remembering Serb victims, taken to include not only those of the 1990s but also of the distant past, especially from World Wars I and II. It is worth noting the key role that the politics of remembrance play in creating both the present and the future. Nenad Dimitrijević offers three possibilities for how a collective or group can relate to its past: a) to promote official memory, based on officially established truth; b) to affirm the politics of oblivion and espouse the ideology of a new beginning; or c) to adjust the past to particular political, social and cultural goals.⁶⁵ The last of these three possibilities has been the dominant pattern in Serbia ever since Slobodan Milošević came to power in 1989. That is when the politics of remembrance and of the past itself came increasingly to be deployed in very brutal ways for the fulfilment of the goals of the Serbian expansionist national ideology and the "rationalization of intolerance". Using the politics of remembrance in this way in the 1990s led to genocide and the ethnic cleansing of Muslims in the B&H and Kosovo.

Attitudes towards the Serbian nationalist ideology and its (ab)use of the politics of remembrance did not change substantially even after the democratic changes of 2000, when Slobodan Milošević was ousted from power, even if the criminal politics of the 1990s were subjected by the new authorities to "various forms of interpretative negation". Things nonetheless got much worse in 2012, when the Serbian Progressive Party, led by Aleksandar Vučić, former vice-president of the neo-fascist Serbian Radical Party, and the Socialist Party of Serbia, which had ruled the country during the criminal 1990s, took power. From that point on, there has been a rise in most direct forms of:

refusal to accept responsibility for crimes committed in Bosnia, Croatia and Kosovo; vindication of the destructive essence of nationalism; promotion of war criminals and setting them on a pedestal as national heroes, and refusal to recognize the legitimacy of the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia. Public discourse has been colonized by an authoritarian friend-enemy dichotomy, where the enemies are non-Serbs, the international community, and any individual or organization in Serbia trying to examine the past with open eyes and insist the country's path to democracy requires prior condemnation of crime and a straightforward rejection of the nationalist heritage.⁶⁶

65 Nenad Dimitrijević, „Sjećanje na zločine u naše ime“ in Hikmet Karčić (ed.), *Sjećanje na bosanski genocid: pravda, pamćenje i poricanje* (Sarajevo, Institute for the Islamic Tradition of Bosniaks, 2017), p. 97.

66 Dimitrijević, „Sjećanje na zločine u naše ime“, p. 100.

Reaffirming a radical nationalist politics of remembrance meant undertaking a far-reaching historical revisionism to ensure a positive image of the “national past” and erase any atrocities that had been committed. That is why the media keeps emphasizing the heroism of the Serbian people and their sufferings, for which the world has shown so little understanding or respect. This goes hand-in-hand with the systematic construction of Others, who are thereby turned into enemies of the Serbian people. In general, the main figures of the enemy are Croats, Bosniaks, (Kosovar) Albanians, and Western countries. Hence, the monitored media places a strong emphasis on the torments suffered by Serbs under the Ustashe regime in the Independent State of Croatia (NDH) and the Jasenovac concentration camp during World War II, for which the Croats have never been punished.⁶⁷ As well as to Serbian casualties during World War II, special attention is paid to Operation Storm from 1995, when 250,000 Serbs fled Croatia as a result of Croatian military operations, and the 1999 NATO bombing of Serbia, which was, as already mentioned, the international community’s response to the ethnic cleansing of Kosovar Albanians by Serbian special police forces and the Yugoslav Army. In the cases of Operation Storm⁶⁸ and the NATO bombing campaign⁶⁹, just as with the NDH and World War II, Serbs are presented as ultimate victims, absolutely guiltless and denied justice because the perpetrators of those crimes have not been adequately convicted of their crimes. In the same way, it is insistently claimed that no one has been found guilty at international tribunals

67 “Letter From Former Jasenovac Prisoners To The United Nations: A Warning To The World That The Ustashe Are Back” (*Politika*, 4 April 2019); “Croatia In Shock Bleiburg Commemoration Prohibited” (*Politika*, 10 March 2019); “Ivo Goldstein Given Bad Press Over Jasenovac And Bleiburg” (*Politika*, 10 March 2019); “Šibenik: Nazi Graffiti Sprayed On Monument To Anti-Fascist Victims” (10 March 2018); “Wikipedia Describes Jasenovac As Labour Camp” (*Novosti*, 1 September 2018); “Stepinac Killed Serbs With Blessing Of Holy See” (*Novosti*, 9 September 2018); “Ustashe Salutation In Parliament” (16 November 2018).

68 “Commemoration Of Operation Storm At Krušedol Monastery: Pogrom Must Never Be Forgotten” (*Politika*, 5 August 2019); “Croatia Celebrates While Candles Lit In Serbia” (*Politika*, 5 August 2019); “Requiems To Victims Of Operation Storm Served In Belgrade And Banja Luka” (*Politika*, 6 August 2019); “Croats Keep Silent: Where Have 500,000 Serbs Gone?” (*Novosti*, 4 August 2019); “Twenty-Four Years From Criminal Croatian Operation, Largest Ethnic Cleansing In Europe Since World War II: Screams Were Louder Than Words, Death Easier Than Life” (*Novosti*, 4 August 2019); “Celebrating Pogroms In Croatia: Threats Of New Storm Coming From Knin” (6 August 2019).

69 “Amfilohije: NATO Aggression Like Nazis” (*Politika*, 26 March 2019); “Topic Of The Week: Twenty Years Since NATO Aggression – Heroic Defense Of Serbia, Speeches By Obrad Stevanović, Božidar Delić And Spasoje Smiljanić” (*Politika*, 25 March 2019); “Commemorating Day Of Remembrance For Those Killed In NATO Bombings: We Will Not Remember The Words Of Our Enemies But The Silence Of Our Friends” (*Politika*, 25 March 2019).

for the suffering of Serbian victims of the wars of the 1990s in B&H⁷⁰ and Kosovo⁷¹.

The most important aspect for this paper, however, is the attitude taken by the media we monitored to crimes committed against the Muslim population in B&H and Kosovo, which they constantly relativize, minimize or completely negate. The most blatant example is the reporting in *Informer*, *Politika* and *Novosti* on the final verdict of the Appeals Chamber of the International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals in the case of Radovan Karadžić, who was found responsible for genocide in Srebrenica, crimes against humanity, and violation of the laws and customs of war in B&H. All three newspapers either (in)directly questioned or directly challenged the verdict against Karadžić and unequivocally defined the Hague Tribunal as a “political court” that had failed to deliver justice and showed bias, because it was “founded with the aim of pronouncing only Serbs and their leaders guilty for the civil war in B&H”. *Informer* published a piece on the Karadžić verdict entitled “Hague Crime; Radovan Karadžić Sentenced To Life”⁷², decrying the verdict as “shameful and disgraceful” and “the terrible violation of Serbs continuing in the court in Scheveningen”. The text quoted the words of Karadžić himself, claiming the verdict had “nothing to do with justice”, and of his brother Luka, who maintained that Serbs “should feel pride for [Radovan Karadžić’s] establishment of the first Serbian state across the Drina, regardless of who admits it”.⁷³ The next day the same paper featured an article with a message from Radovan Karadžić from The Hague proclaiming “Brother Serbs, we have won! The Republika Srpska is our victory”. *Novosti* also featured

70 “Day Of Remembrance For Children From Serb Sarajevo Killed” (*Politika*, 12 March 2019); “Investigation Opened Into Killings Of Serbs In Sarajevo” (*Politika*, 26 March 2019); “No Justice For Tuzla Column Incident” (*Politika*, 16 May 2019); “Naser Orić Found Not Guilty Of Crimes Against Serbs” (*Politika*, 1 December 2018); “European Hypocrisy: We Are Labelled Genocidal, While Butcher Orić Is Acquitted” (*Novosti*, 1 December 2018); “How The West Concealed Detailed List Of Podrinje Victims In 1993: *Novosti* Reveals Hidden Report On Massacre Of 1,000 Serbs”; “Seven Islamic Terrorists Who Sowed Death In Tuzla” (*Novosti*, 4 March 2019).

71 “Twenty Years Since Massacre Of 14 Serbian Harvesters: Old Gacko, Life And Sacrifice” (*Politika*, 24 July 2019); “Srna: Body Organs Of Kidnapped Serbs Went All The Way To Damascus” (*Politika*, 31 July 2018); “Tribunal Concealed Evidence Of Yellow House” (*Politika*, 7 December 2018); “Announcement Of Captain Leshi Day In Bujanovac: Why Is Prosecutor Silent?” (*Politika*, 23 May 2019). As well as on these cases, particular emphasis tends to be placed on three events: the Tuzla Column Incident, the crime at the Markale Market in Sarajevo, and the fate of the “Sarajevo Serbs” reportedly expelled from the city. All three cases are subjected to ideological interpretation in line with the dominant Serbian nationalist version of the wars of the 1990s.

72 *Informer*, 21 March 2019.

73 *Novosti*, 22 March 2019. A similar statement by Luka Karadžić was also published in *Politika*.

an article dedicated to the defence of the Republika Srpska, stating that in light of the “(court) ruling that there was no genocide in seven B&H municipalities... Srpska is not in danger”, as it had deprived “Sarajevo [of] its trump cards for dismantling the Republika Srpska”. On the day the sentence was handed down, *Novosti*’s correspondents were in Pale, in the Republika Srpska, where they spent time with local citizens watching the verdict live on television. *Novosti* cited the words of locals: “We would still follow Karadžić all over again. We will not run away and we will not forsake our Radovan. A man like this is born only once. We Serbs are proud of our first president. We are thankful for our Republika Srpska, which he created along with his people. The verdict is shameful.”⁷⁴ As well as glorifying Radovan Karadžić, *Novosti* reported that the public were angry with The Hague Tribunal: “Our Radovan remains a legendary figure for the Serbian people. As for the international gangsters who handed down that sentence, shame on them, not on Serbia.”⁷⁵

Another very illustrative example of attitudes towards crimes against Muslims in B&H is the media silence on 11 July, when the Srebrenica genocide is commemorated. *Informer* and *Novosti* didn’t carry a word on the genocide or any report on the commemorative rallies at the Potočari Memorial Centre, held every year on July 11. On the other hand, as discussed above, *Politika* did something even more shameful and perfidious by publishing its series of articles on July 14 in its “Theme of the Week” section on the “Green Transversal”. On July 12, unlike *Novosti* or *Informer*, *Politika* did feature a piece on the commemorative rally at the Potočari Memorial Centre, but failed to mention that the crime was committed by Serb forces, instead presenting the perpetrators of genocide in completely “depersonalized” terms. Needless to say, the three media monitored for this paper kept their silence not only for Srebrenica but also for many other cases of war crimes or ethnic cleansing committed in B&H and Kosovo, which they have never covered. We mention only a few: Prijedor, Foča, Banja Luka, Višegrad, the siege of Sarajevo, the massacre in Tuzla, Račak, Suva Reka, Vučitrn, Orahovac, Pusto Selo, Izbica, Štrpce, and many others.

Such media coverage has, of course, significant implications for how the public perceives the wars of the 1990s, best evidenced by a survey on “The Public’s Knowledge of the 1990s, War Crimes, and War Crimes Trials” conducted by Demostat.⁷⁶ When asked what had happened in Srebrenica in 1995, only 12% of the sample said it was genocide, with as many as 40% saying they did not

74 *Novosti*, 21 March 2019.

75 *Novosti*, 21 March 2019.

76 http://www.hlc-rdc.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/Istrazivanje_javnog_mnjenja_Sudjenja_za_ratne_zlocine_Demostat.pdf (accessed on 01/10/2019).

know. Even more disturbing is that, when asked “which city was under siege for four years during the wars of the 1990s”, 78% of the population claimed not to know. Particularly important in the context of an uninformed citizenry is that the youngest respondents were least well-informed about the events of the 1990s (only 6% were well-informed while 84% were uninformed).

To conclude this section of our analysis on the politics of remembrance, it is worth noting a thirty-part feuilleton published in *Politika* that presented a completely distorted and revisionist picture of the role of Patriarch Pavle and the Serbian Orthodox Church during the wars of the 1990s. The feuilleton featured excerpts of a book by Deacon Aleksandar Prašević, *Patriarch Pavle on Islam and Muslims (1990-1997)*. The parts published in *Politika* abounded in inconsistencies and deliberate disregard for the ample historical sources on Patriarch Pavle and the Serbian Orthodox Church’s attitude during the wars of the 1990s and their shameful (in)direct support to the genocidal politics of Serb forces in B&H.⁷⁷

Conclusion

The dissemination of the nationalist politics of remembrance and revisionist narratives about crimes committed in the 1990s is highly effectively carried out through the mass media, whose language and style help them reach “ordinary” people and the masses. It results in war criminals being perceived as national heroes and the crimes themselves “rationalized”, as explained in the above quote from Nenad Dimitrijević. In our conclusion, it is worth looking at *The Ten Stages of Genocide* written by Gregory Stanton, professor at George Mason University.⁷⁸ Professor Stanton defines denial as the last, tenth, stage of genocide. During this post-genocidal stage, mass graves are excavated, and attempts are made to conceal the evidence of crimes committed and the perpetrators themselves. There is a denial that the crimes were even committed, while the victims are blamed for what happened to them. Serbia has already passed through most of this stage and is now in an eleventh phase of “triumphalism”, added to the aforementioned ten stages by Professor Hariz Halilovich, in his paper on “Globalization and Genocide”. According to Halilovich, the stage of “triumphalism” is characterized by the fact “that the perpetrators, their sponsors, and the politics and ideologies behind them no longer seek to deny the atrocities, but rather to glorify them, celebrating

77 For more details on Aleksandar Prašević’s feuilleton, see Ivan Ejub Kostić, “Prećutkivanje istine” in *Preporod*, no. 22/1128, 2018, pp. 16-17.

78 Gregory Stanton, “The ten stages of genocide”, in *Genocide Watch*, 2017. Available via <http://www.genocidewatch.org/genocide/tenstagesofgenocide.html> (accessed on 01/10/2019)

and humiliating the survivors by erecting monuments to the perpetrators of crimes in the places of massacres”.⁷⁹ This creates a “culture of triumphalism” in which the media play a key role. We have already cited a survey on how unaware the Serbian public is of the crimes committed in the 1990s, but another important aspect of the survey should be pointed out, namely the ethnic distance revealed regarding Muslim ethnic groups, such as Bosniaks and Albanians, with only 8% of the public responding that they feel any kinship with Bosniaks and only 2% doing so for Albanians. This highly disturbing and alarming piece of information should not surprise, given the constant demonisation of these two ethnic groups in the media which has turned them into archetypal enemies based on their religious and ethnic affiliations. For several decades, efforts have been steadily made to prevent Serbia from being constituted as a civil and inclusive state of all its citizens, insisting on its status as a monoethnic state and cradle of Orthodoxy. An illustrative example is a text entitled “France Is Not A Civil State Either”, published in *Politika* and written by Miroljub Jevtić, a highly vocal Islamophobe who sowed hatred against Muslims during the 1980s and 1990s, paving the way for their physical extermination. In his text, Jevtić openly claims that, historically speaking, “Serbia is the patrimony of the Serbian Orthodox Church”, so that all its tenants, no matter whether they are Orthodox or of another faith, are under an obligation to “kiss the hand of the patriarch”. He also says it must be made clear to everyone that “Prince Lazar did not fight for the Serbs but for Christianity and that his enemies were not Turks but Muslims who aimed to destroy Christianity”.⁸⁰

In light of the terrorist massacres committed by Andreas Breivik and Brenton Tarrant, Jevtić’s words resonate even more strongly, not least because his words express the guiding thoughts of the idols who inspired both Breivik and Tarrant, i.e. Radovan Karadžić and Ratko Mladić, in their acts of genocide and ethnic cleansing against Muslims in B&H in the 1990s.⁸¹ Once this is taken into account, it becomes clear that the reaffirmed Serbian nationalist ideology reaches far beyond the borders of Serbia and the Balkan region and reverberates strongly with ultra-right racist and fascist movements around the world that harbour a deep hatred and intolerance of Muslims and Islam.

79 Hariz Halilovich, “Globalization and Genocide”, in Ali Farazmand (ed.), *Global Encyclopedia of Public Administration, Public Policy, and Governance* (Springer International Publishing AG, 2017).

80 *Politika*, 28 May 2019.

81 Both have cited Karadžić and Mladić as their idols.

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Stav prema bošnjačkim muslimanima i kosovskim Albanacima i istorijski revizionizam u srpskim medijima: reafirmacija projekta “Velike Srbije”

Sažetak

U ovom radu monitoringovali smo tri dnevna lista u Srbiji: Politiku, Novosti i Informer. Kada su u pitanju teme koje direktno utiču na živote balkanskih muslimana, identifikovali smo tri dominantne teme koje se izdvajaju: 1. podrivanje državnosti Bosne i Hercegovine i (ponovna) afirmacija ekspanzionističke politike srpskog nacionalizma; 2. „Kosovo je srce Srbije“ i (kosovski) Albanci kao egzistencijalna pretnja; i 3. Ideološko bavljenje politikom sećanja i istorijski revizionizam spram zločina koje su srpske snage počinile devedesetih godina prošlog veka na teritoriji Bosne i Hercegovine i Kosova, s ciljem reafirmacije nacionalističkog projekta “Velike Srbije”.

Ključne reči: mediji, islam, muslimani, Bošnjaci, bosanski muslimani, Bosna i Hercegovina, Kosovski Albanci, Kosovo, Velika Srbija