

Tonči Valentić

**Media**

**Construction  
of Balkanism**



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# INTRODUCTION OVERVIEW

The basic intention of this work is to point out the existence of certain stereotypical patterns that represent the constant media usage of Balkanism and Europeanism. The work will be based on analysis of various discourses about the Balkans, on which social identity is created and transformed, where I will analyze the situation in Croatia from 1995 until 2013. In fact, in the past, the official political ideology and historiography avoided to put up Croatia in the Balkan region, advocating instead its Mediterranean and Central European identity. Since the aforementioned period is quite long, the area of analysis will be limited to *three main units* in which one can recognize the shift in media representation of the Balkans as a negative form of identity formation: media rhetoric in the periods from 1995 and 1999/2000, when there is a change of political direction and descent of authoritarian regime from power, up to 2007, when the negotiations on accession to the European Union were intensified, finally including 2013 when Croatia joined EU. I believe that in these periods we can clearly see the media transformation of Balkanism as categories of politically driven rhetoric.

After the social and political changes in early 2000 the Croatian identity is attempting to multiply locate and cognitively map itself as European, Balkan, Central European and Mediterranean, so this research will focus precisely on such social transformation. First of all, I want to explore the extent to which the

press, as a very powerful medium, produces a desirable form of symbolic identity with political discourse induced by trying to modify the collective memory. This book is methodologically situated in the field of sociology, but it is an interdisciplinary research that, due to the complexity of the topics, also includes some elements of ethnological, cultural and historiographical analysis and related disciplinary patterns.

Hermann Keyserling in his book on Europe says: "If the Balkans would not exist, one would have to invent it." When it comes to creating a mental image of the Balkans, the greatest contribution was by the classic colonial-anthropological methods of data gathering: based on diplomatic reports, academic research, travel writing and newspaper articles image of the Balkans as the space between reality and imagination was created, the notion of "Balkanism" as a completely different discursive product than it is "Orientalism". Such "ontology of the Balkans" is responsible for the construction of ethnic, national, social and political sense of belonging, so that it could easily be said that the identity of the nation in Southeast Europe has always been relational, it depended on the mental images of Westerners. Mythologization has turned the Balkans into a synonym for violence, political and social unrest and wars. This is how the cultural construction of "Other" discursively produced "Balkanism" which is not only banal ethnocentrism, but it is primarily structural element of expansive European capitalism in the 20th century. In this sense, "Balkanization" inevitably appears as negative category, and the Balkans ("European Other") as a reservoir of negative characteristics on which the identity of Western Europe has been created. In further chapters, I will provide explications of the concept of identity, as well as the notion of stereotypes, which sometimes should not be seen as something exclusively negative, depending on the content. The stereotype of the region which primarily arose due to scientific discourse (and media reports during the war in Croatia and Bosnia 1991-1995) is not weakened,

but rather strengthened the image of the Western Balkans where rules primordial violence, ineffective and authoritarian political leadership, as well as the lack of social integration.

In following analysis it's primarily important to detect the disclosure of theoretical and conceptual apparatus of understanding of the Balkans whose purpose is to simultaneously amaze and disappoint Westerners (oriental romanticism versus tribal barbarism). Negative stereotypes about the Balkans are inevitable, however they do not function within the semantic dimension, but as a *pragmatic tool* of discourse, therefore, serve to understand the ideological mechanisms that produce an image of the Balkans, one should have in mind their pragmatic rather than semantic or linguistic function (while analysing, I conferred with the existing works, such as Todorova 1999, Hammond 2004, Savić and Bijelić 2005, Kourvertais 2002, Detrez and Plas 2005, Čolović 2000, etc.). The rhetoric of Balkanization primarily refers precisely to the above connotations. Discourse in these works is understood in the classical philosophical sense as a linguistic structure which is used as a form of representation: it is not just a medium that objectively reflects the reality, but it necessarily distorts it. Given that the text will discuss the discursive formations and practices, it should be noted that it is taken in the traditional sense of the word: the first indicates the cluster of knowledge that can be institutionalized, and the second relates to the use of a discourse and behaviour in accordance with it.

Southeast Europe has always been the scene of various conflicts, situated between imperial and local powers and shaped by complex configurations and constant changes of borders; it was constantly forced to re-articulate the collective identities. Although we could not separate it from the rest of Europe, it is evident that the scars of conflict in the south-eastern part of Europe have not healed since the war events at the end of the twentieth century. Until now, many cultural-studies scholars have analyzed

the changes that have occurred in the last two decades when it comes to the sociological, anthropological, psychological, and even cognitive research. However, there is a lack of systematic study on the performative effect of media rhetoric in the creation of identity politics when it comes to the issue of memories that still represents an interpretative challenge. *This research aims to bridge this gap.* As I already mentioned, memory plays an important role in the construction of national, regional and local identity, and very often it is abused so that the power structures could gain an adequate scientific legitimacy. One of the tasks is to analyze such strategies of “cultural defilement”, identifying vulnerabilities in the latest research and paying attention to the problem of fictionalization of history and historicization of fiction in Croatia in the past twenty years. Media articles from 1995-98 to 2008 (and even up to 2014) largely associated concepts “Balkans” with “socialism”, trying to show that this is epistemological cut originated in 1991, and especially in 2000, when Croatia ceased to be part of the Balkans and became “civilized” European country. In this context, there are large number of studies and books that talk about the experience of post-socialism and Yugonostalgia (cf. Velikonja 2005 and 2008, Jambrešić- Kirin 2004, Rihtman-Auguštin 1994 and 1999, Pečjak 2005, Škrbić-Alempijević 2005, Prica 2004, Petrović 2009, etc.).

However, in spite of numerous works, *there is a lack of systematic analysis of the interplay of media rhetoric and symbolic identity that has not yet been scientifically researched. This thesis will try to analyze the extent to which the newspaper articles follow the pattern of the form described in the above studies, that is, how in certain periods post-socialism was associated with the rhetoric of Balkanism and how much space in the media was devoted to Yugonostalgia that appears exclusively as a negative term in 2000, which is semantically characterized as disdainful social category. Therefore, one of the focuses will be mental images and discursive mechanisms that produce social imaginary of Croatia; I will examine the ways in which they are produced.*

Given that the discourse on the Balkans has two faces, therefore, it's always used in two ways ("bloody Balkans and romanticized Orient"), traditional narratives about it were always structurally limited and prejudiced. The relationship between history, memory, identity, and power in the Balkans contains diverse ethnographic, sociological, postcolonial, and philosophical perspectives. So I will apply various approaches in the analysis which will set some fundamental questions: what are the strategies used in a way that the Balkan area could be presented as a narrative full of prejudice? Can the media reconstruction of personal experience (newspaper feuilletons on "Balkan culture") take precedence over the dominant historiographical data when it comes to authenticity? Certain attention will be also paid to the rhetoric of Balkanization due to its different use in Croatia and Slovenia.

Large number of contemporary sociologists, historians and cultural-studies scholars believe that history occurs only when the social memory begins to crumble and fall apart, when it stops being functional. In accordance with this understanding, there is only one official historiography, but because of this, there are countless collective memories. The analytical question is whether academic questioning of past is epistemologically superior to popular and everyday understanding of the past, i.e., whether the official science as ideologically based discursive formations has an advantage over "everyday memory" of a community? This is particularly evident in Croatia after the collapse of socialism and dramatic epistemological cut which is a result of an attempt to suppress memories and create an entirely new cultural identity of the nation (some of the major issues on that topic will be discussed more extensively in the chapter on identity).

The split between memory and history as two opposing phenomena, "live" and true memories versus artificial historiography (memory as the life of society, and history as its problematic reconstruction) leads to the "terror of historized memory." Claim-

ing to interpret the past, discourse of Balkanization occupies field memories not only ideologically, but also takes on the role of filing a false social and cultural memory making it a coherent, meaningful and “scientific”. In the context of my research it is particularly indicative to analyze the strategy of “forbidden memory” of socialism, i.e., the period prior to 1991 in Croatia. The ideological function of former media discourse was to interrupt every connection with the Balkans, and geopolitically, socially and culturally place Croats in the region of Central Europe. Such tendency encountered considerable resistance especially among those who testified about their own identity, which did not match the imposed forms of cultural identification. Sociological research like this one in the disposition above seeks to analyze the interrelationship between the demands for national identity and the dominant narrative which repressively implements social integration. The theoretical literature that I will use is primarily related to the models of understanding the functioning of media and approaches to their analysis (cf. e.g. Zgrabljic 2003, Volčič 2005, McLuhan 1997, Danesi 2002, etc.).

Considering the previously mentioned theoretical frameworks and interdisciplinary research, hypothesis is as follows: The discourse about the Balkans is largely present in the media in Croatia in the last twenty years and has influenced the direction of political and social events. However, I believe *that the ideological matrix of “Balkanism” is still very present when it comes to constructing the symbolic identity, and that this problem has not been sufficiently explored in recent works in the field of sociology. The intention of this thesis is to show that political and social matrix is still heavily influenced by the media discourse of “Europeanisms” and “Balkanism”, and that at the same time, just like before, is still using the same discursive mechanisms. In this sense, the power elites consciously accept the stereotypes imposed by the West, reproducing and imposing collective patterns of ethnic and cultural identification which could be described as “post-colonial”.*

Based on the analysis of media discourse we cannot make a full and comprehensive conclusion on the impact of media on the public sphere and ways of collective identification. Such an approach would require extensive and long-term research of various spheres of life with a number of methodological parameters. The research which would show a general interference of politics and media in the social processes is too heavy, *therefore this book will deal with only one aspect of such rhetoric: analysis of the production of Balkanization stereotypes in selected periods and selected print media.*

The theoretical part deals with the above thematic areas in detail where I will critically analyze mentioned theories. The empirical part consists of collecting and analyzing data about the ways in which Balkanism is portrayed in media as a form of construction of national, ethnic and social identity of Croats (Balkan, Central European, Mediterranean, etc.). Data will be collected in this way: content analysis and discourse analysis of various media in Croatia from 1995/1999 to present, or the use of terms Europe and the Balkans in the political rhetoric. Primarily, focus is on print media or newspapers: daily (*Večernji list*, *Slobodna Dalmacija*, *Jutarnji list*) and one weekly newspaper (*Nacional*) in that period.

There are three major methodologically appropriate reasons why I selected printed media: *firstly*, although the television is the most powerful medium where this would be best manifested, research would be very difficult to implement due to lack and complexity of visual material analysis. *Secondly*, given that the print media are characterized by a plurality of access (and there was very little non-state or private and commercial television in the early 90s) it is possible to make their comparative analysis and see what the differences between them are. *Thirdly*, textual analysis is much more appropriate and precise because the semiotic and linguistic interpretation of media articles can recognize patterns of rhetoric which are the subject of this study.

Some of the research questions are:

- In what way and in what context are print media in Croatia writing about the Balkans in the period since 1999 until today?
- What kind of media discourse do media access the formation of symbolic identity or in what way is the political and social turmoil reflected in the media?
- What is the basic matrix of such rhetoric, and what is a fundamental difference between left and right-wing newspapers and magazines?
- Why is there a semantic shift in media rhetoric in critical periods (e.g., pluralistic conception of identity as European and Balkan around 2000 or the disappearance of the term “Southeast Europe” which is replaced by the term “Western Balkans” around 2007)?
- To what extent media research can be fruitful for the analysis of socio-cultural changes in Croatian society in this period?
- Is there a discrepancy between the sociological and ethnographic research on the origin to Balkan and European civilization?-
- Are the so-called independent media also imbued with the rhetoric of the Balkans and colonial patterns?
- How is the problem of Yugonostalgia and socialist heritage in the media often associated with Balkanism and why?
- What are the key words and terms used by the media to describe the Yugoslav and post- Yugoslav experience in the context of opposition Balkans = socialism and primitivism, Europe = capitalism and development?

These are some of the possible questions that this thesis will try to answer by using theoretical literature and analysis of empirical evidence.

Emphasis will be on the qualitative analysis of the empirical material, i.e. on the study of texts from the content, narrative, and semiotic side. Criteria for evaluation of qualitative research will therefore be multi-layered and will be conducted in three phases: data collection and determination of empirical evidence, description which will be useful while structuring the material, and at the end the evaluation. With regard to the type of the required analysis (the content of newspaper articles) it is most appropriate to use the method of qualitative textual analysis: discourse analysis and narrative. Articles are grouped by age to identify certain thematic registers within which specific contents of articles are addressing a specific topic, an analysis of narratives of all selected articles concerning the media discourse of “Europeanism” and “Balkanism” is conducted, and this is where the same discursive mechanisms are used. While processing the data, I will evaluate a formal analysis of content, as well as textual analysis because both are important: to analyze the media discourse, it is necessary to focus on language and metaphor as its key components.

The basic objective of this research is *consequently* to demonstrate the extent to which news discourse of the Balkans in Croatian media is based on stereotypes, and whether there is a causal connection between occurrence of such rhetoric in the periods of political and social events (e.g. 1999, 2000 and 2008). By doing this I will further analyze the extent to which it differs, for example, from Balkanism discourse and Europeanism in Slovenia, on the basis of studies that have been made in Slovenia. Thus, the object of this study is media reports about the Balkans and the creation of Croatian national identity in the media-political rhetoric. Given that there is no systematic and theoretically grounded analysis of the rhetoric of Balkanization in Croatia, this book will hopefully compensate for this void. Therefore, I believe this study will constitute an original contribution to science and it will analyze the discourses that are crucial for the formation of national identity, but have not yet been scientifically identified or evaluated in a satisfactory manner.



# THE CONCEPT AND DEFINITION OF NATIONAL IDENTITY

## ***The concept and definition of national identity***

*The very concept of identity is subject to various interpretations and is not always easy to provide proper and unanimous definition. National elites have unified the need of “nation” for identity reconstruction by greatly relying on nationalism. These national elites have managed to do this through reconnecting with history and tradition, but also by manipulating it, trying to replace mythology revolution with mythology tradition. Nationalism provides foundation to group identity portraying it as a valuable achievement. Nationalism is ideology which claims that meaning or sense can be restored to an individual threatened with global processes provided that we go back to roots and cultural identity (Eriksen, 2004).*

The etymology of the word identity is in the Latin word *identitas, idem*, which means “*the same*”. The identity can be interpreted as sameness, complete equality, a relationship in which something (eg. being or property) is equal to itself, but under differ-

ent aspects and in different cases (Maalouf, 2002). A multitude of different identities such as gender, regional, racial, linguistic, religious, political, generational, ethnic, national, class identities and many others are updating and problematizing the processes of globalization and fragmentation of modern society. The pronounced individualization in modern society, strengthening human rights of individuals and groups is resulting in globalization resistance on local level, but it also promotes the aspiration of these process participants for preserving their own uniqueness. Identity updates and responds to questions referring to meaning of existence of individuals and groups in the networked society (Castells, 2002). National identity, among all, consists of identification of an individual to some national group and adopting its cultural features and, very often, their political ideas and projects which appear in the national field.

The concept of identity was derived from logic and philosophy and it originally meant the sameness of things and beings in the universal flux. Identity, therefore, has marked the essential characteristics of some object or being; the permanent characteristic which, for example, made stone – a stone. Thus, the notion of identity, both in logic and philosophy, philosophically speaking, covered the “being entity” and was an impetus which made human beings what they actually are – human beings (Petrović, 2006). In other words, in the context of philosophical tradition which we have inherited from the Greeks, the identity’ represent a central ontological category. Nations and national communities and national identities as modern historical occurrence are truly modern phenomena. They are formed and built in the modern era and in the era of modern civil society as national collectivities but also as collective identities (Korunić, 2006).

General theories of nations are unhelpful when it comes to addressing particular cases. More precisely, due to the complexity of defining it, *I propose multi-layered approach to studying contemporary Croatian national identity*. Therefore, I argue that

national identity is constituted by the interaction of two levels of social abstraction. The first level is the level of 'big narratives' that distinguish the nation from other nations. The second level focuses at the political and intellectual elites who attempt to make sense of these 'big stories' in order to legitimize particular political programs. On the other hand, national identity derives its power from being embedded in individual subjectivity. Thus the narratives of national identity articulated by political and intellectual elites are manifested and constantly reinterpreted in social practice. With regards to Croatia, even more precisely, *I argue that Croatian national identity is constituted by the narrative of historical statehood.* Such a claim was made frequently in the past as well as in contemporary Croatia, and will be more extensively discussed in the following chapters.

Many authors argue that national identity is important for survival and prosperity of the state and the nation because the joint performance of citizens in their country and its values connects them into one body (Skoko, 2009). During the research aimed at finding a definition of national identity, I can conclude that the notion of national identity is a variable category, just as well as other complex social phenomena, and therefore, it is difficult to define it. There is a wide range of definitions made with interweaving of certain concepts such as nation, national state and nationalism. By applying the inductive way of conclusion, determination of nation term will be the starting point. The nation is relatively intimate and permanent community of a certain number of people which have lived together for a long time and thus acquired certain common traits and character so that they can understand each other and can easily become closer (Lukić, 1975). This is an operational and effective definition, but I believe it needs to be put in the more narrow contexts. To understand the formation of Croatian national identity in the 1990s we need to locate the discussion within wider concerns about the nature and origins of nationalism and national identity. I will

introduce ideas of some authors in order to further discuss this issue and put it into a proper context.

According to Giddens (1996), nationalist ideals strive to connect the concept of homeland to origin myth with a complete cultural community dominance which is responsible for this ideal. Nationalists strive to owning the historical ground of their ancestors which was the witness of nation spirit flowering. The cult of “holy”, past which has the function of preserving exclusivity and purity of ethnical identity and “returning to roots” which were given the first-rate normative significance, aims to emphasize the primacy of collectivism over individualism and pluralism. In other words, one ideology of collectivism has been replaced with another: ideology of socialism has been replaced with the ideology of nationalism. The foundation of such collectivistic pattern is identification of cultural-ethnic and institutional-political identity where the political community is completely identified to national or ethnic community.

Other authors, such as Katuranić (2003), argue that the nation presents a way of shaping the collective identity of one part of society as a system of power and inequality. The nation would be a fact of some collective identity, therefore, more as a static analytical concept. However, as I have indicated before, the nation is not a metaphysical fact but something that is continually changing, producing and reproducing. The thing that puts the nation into motion, its active impetus, its inner drive, is nationalism. Nationalism within supranational system can be defined as a political movement that separates a certain territorial or collective unit from the supranational system based on different cultural traits or different interpretation of its past (Katuranić, 2003). Huntington says that national identity has two forms which are differently labelled: patriotism and nationalism. Patriotism is considered to be good, and nationalism is considered to be bad (Skoko, 2009). An individual with its national group shares common beliefs, stands, values, customs, language and re-

ligion. National identity also implies self-definition of a person as a member of a national group. National identities seem to be an important part of social identity which is derived from a feeling of belonging to a certain national group to which a severe emotional importance is connected (Čorkalo & Kamenov, 1998). To national identity, the subjective identification of an individual to a group is extremely important as well as recognition of a said group by the external members (Feather, 1994).

According to Šiber (1988), national identity represents a feeling/sense of belonging to a certain group which has been acquired through a process of socialization, through which the language, tradition and culture of a national group is received and through which an individual is identified to a group values and interest, as well as the group itself. The conclusion can be made that national identity based on a mixture of tradition, language and national symbols is being built with the process of identification in social environment, and it results in the feeling of togetherness among the people of the nation. It also represents the mixture and synthesis of different identities.

In opposition to some of the above-mentioned authors, I argue that the idea of Croatian national identity begins by posing the question *how do people become Croats?* and also considering the Croatian historical narrative. It is important to address the question of *how* Croatian national identity was represented and reinterpreted by symbols and rhetoric in the 1990s, especially the ways in which politicians, intellectuals and others attempted to render abstract ideas of Croatian national identity more intelligible in order to win legitimacy for their political programs. As a general note, embodying of the nation is the process of reifying and substantiating the idea of the nation within the imagination of individual subjects. And in this particular case, one of the most important things is that *identity is always an interplay between Otherness and Sameness* (as, for instance, Georg Simmel, Zygmunt Bauman and Eric Hobsbawm have accurately

argued), so in this sense, *I think that Croatian identity is impossible to understand if we don't have that distinction in mind. More precisely – Croatian identity is relational, it has always been in-between Europe and Balkans, and moreover, it has always been constant overlapping, interaction and interchange between outside- and inside-Balkanism.* This observation is an impermanent statement that I will in more details develop in the fourth chapter of this thesis.

As a kind of collective identity, national identity indicates to similarity inside of a group as well as the intergroup differences. National identity implies the sense of belonging to a social (national or ethnic) group as well as the belief that these components and all the related interests and goals can be achieved in this ethnicity or with the help of it. Considering that national identity is also based on objective elements (language, statehood, religion), as well as on subjective elements, or in words of Benedict Anderson: national identity is a paradoxical phenomenon. Nevertheless, the biggest problem is that nationalist ideology strives to raise these cultural and ethnical differences to a level of political principle, because the only legitimate type of government is national self-government, thus creating problems related to state government and issues of inclusivity. Janos Kis thinks that a normal and allowed ambition of a nation is its striving to be sovereign and independent in *an exclusive homeland with clear and fixed boundaries, while everything above this is a threat to the interests of others* (Kis, 2002). This is suitable argument with which I could completely agree.

In addition to previously stated arguments, new identities of European states are not being born from “horizontal relationship” with identities of other nation, but from “vertical conflicts” with identities of “higher order” (pan-European). There is no doubt that, besides the obvious problem of European identity content identification, there is also a problem of recognition of new (variable) people identities which make the European Union or want to be a part of it. It is clear that integration of Europe doesn't

imply the liquidation of nations or states (at least in the due time period, measurable in years or even centuries). Although some state functions (especially economic) become either obsolete or limited (i.e. they are being taken over by global economic corporations or organizations which have supranational character), the state still does numerous functions, which will probably be the case in the future as well.

However, these definitions are an example of philosophical and colloquial understanding of identity and they do not necessarily contribute to its definition, but to conceptual confusion. As I tried to point out in previous paragraphs, scientifically valid definition of identity has to be sufficiently precise to specify this term in relation to other social categories, and at the same time, it has to be abstract enough to encompass its complexity and variety of different empirical cases. An individual socializes and builds its identity through a long period of time which goes from birth to adulthood. Continuously, the picture which an individual makes of himself, his beliefs and performances represents an extremely important psychological structure which enables person to choose activities and social relationships. An individual discovers himself thorough his own observations and activities, but also through his relationship to others and their observations. Identity is based on passionate relationships of an individual to “others” (cf. Halpern & Žan-Klod, 2009). Ethnic identity implies a common cultural tradition, the sense of togetherness and closeness which is identified to a certain group which exists as a subgroup in a bigger society. According to this definition, Bosniaks, Croats and Serbs in Bosnia-Herzegovina are ethnic groups. National identity is being related to a certain state. This means that there could be Bosnian-Herzegovinian nation in Bosnia- Herzegovina (Turjačanin, 2005). National identity emerged during the development of nation, that is, during the process of a long historical development of communities which often resided on the same territory, spoke the same language

and shared a certain value system (Such, 2000). I believe this is a good theoretical basis for the analysis of how Croatian national identity was represented and reinterpreted by symbols and rhetoric during the period from 1995/1999 up to 2013/2014.

All group identities are characterized by contradictory desire of an individual for belonging and being independent. This contradictory enables the establishment of balance or hierarchical relationship between different identities, i.e. layers of identity. Thus, some people have a dominant personal layer of identity, and some people have a dominant religious or ethnic layer of identity. Definition of ethnic identity, i.e. ethnicity, was characterized by two opposing approaches in the beginning: primordial and instrumentalist. The first approach insisted on presumed blood ties, phenotypic closeness, language, religion, ethnonym and other specifics that characterize ethnicity. In contrast to this definition, instrumentalists have defined ethnicity as a resource in the service of collective mobilization directed at seeking economic and political advantages (Halpern & Žan-Klod, 2009). Sometime later, constructivist approach has been added which defines identity as a process and not as a definition which explains that ethnicity boundaries are being built and reconstructed in a continuous interaction among groups. They are not derived from some inner logic, but their existence has been defined with confrontation-involvement logic with neighbouring groups (Halpern & Žan-Klod, 2009). In accordance with this view, I argue that there is a concern that various approaches to nationalism and national identity (quite significant in the case of Croatian identity) operate at a level of abstraction and thus fail to account for the *nation* as an integral part of the everyday experiences of people. This kind of pertinence of national identity in the modern social sphere can only be accounted for by locating it at the nexus of the abstract and the everyday life.

It's believed that national identity, out of all types of social identity, had the biggest influence on historic events, both positive

and very negative. The understanding of importance of this phenomenon doesn't only have theoretical value, but it also has a practical value of encouraging international tolerance. Recently, national identity is a subject of interest of many researchers, primarily due to political events and frequent conflicts which are associated to ethnicity, and region of Balkan provides, perhaps, the clearest illustration of it (Čačić- Kumpres, 1999). In that sense, there are two major questions I would like to point out: first, how do people become national? This question goes towards the "big narratives" of national histories that appear to permeate the historical record by asking the simple question: where do *we* come from, and how do *we* differ from *them*? Secondly, I argue that it is of fundamental importance to see *how is the nation symbolized?* *As a result, claims about Croatian national identity in the 1990s and early 2000s respectively, tended to be judged by reference to the frames provided by abstract stories of national identity. And precisely this is the core problem when dealing with Croatian identity.*

Some authors like Šiber (1998) define psychological aspects of nation as a feeling of belonging, togetherness, and as a system of attitudes towards their own ethnic group. National feeling represents a feeling of belonging which is then formed within one certain social group. An individual accepts the culture, behaviors and evaluations thus feeling like one of the members of the group. However, besides national feeling being a subjective category, it greatly depends on behavior of one people to another and on their mutual evaluation of national identification. National identity and related phenomena have so far been investigated in the framework of sociology, anthropology and political science, also psychology, but far less that in the case of the previous three scientific disciplines. Psychological investigation of national identification is generally made in minority groups. However, lately, and due to geopolitical changes in Europe, psychological interest in national identity is also growing, and with this, the number of variety of investigations in this area is also rising. The complexity

of national identity, with the possibility of strong, affective effects on population, allows various forms of nationalism and its appearance in combination to other ideologies like liberalism, fascism, communism, etc.

Constructivists, therefore, argue that identities are “complex”, historically based; socially constructed and therefore, they are constantly changing (Sandole, Byrne, Sandole-Staroste & Senehi, 2009), and my previous argumentation hence holds to that opinion. Ethnicity undoubtedly rests on common territory, history, language, customs, etc, but those elements are not permanent and given forever: they are in a process of constant reconstruction, construction and deconstruction through discourses and narratives. Also, ethnic identity can also be instrumentalised for the purposes of political and other interest. Differences between ethnical and national identity are not precisely determined in the scientific literature. However, they can be summed up through several elements which “turn” ethnicity into nation: political organization “the European way” (Varshney, 2007); “imaginary community” – mythical story of a nation “which dives into the deep past, tells an epic story where national heroes appear”; monopoly of legitimate culture; the carrier of national idea and their “consumer”. Intellectuals of 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century have forged symbols, heroes and events of the nation. Nations did not “wake up” in the 19<sup>th</sup> century to be free of tyranny because they haven’t even existed before that (Halpern & Žan-Klod, 2009).

Every human has a number of needs which are met through interaction with other people. Every human is aware of his/her similarity to other people, especially in the case of belonging to the same social group. This is how human creates its own social identity whose determinants are the key components for defining a national identity. It is impossible to generalize all those components of national identity because they depend on the context and scientific discipline that attempts to explain the phenomenon. *A clear difference must be made between ethnical*

*and national identity.* The term ethnic means typically people, originating from people, related to people (Anić & Klaić, 2002). And it is obvious from preliminary observations that Croats understand themselves to be constituted by continuous history of shared statehood that can be traced back to the medieval times.

Nations don't have a long history, and supporting this assertion is the fact that first European nation emerged at the end of 18<sup>th</sup> century – French nation. After that, a nation making process has begun in Europe, and as an example, in the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century German nation has been formed. At that time, *there were still no Balkan nations*, but the population coming from rural areas identified themselves to village community, to religion and supreme ruler of that region, but not with the nation (Mappes-Niediek, 2005). According to Claussen (1988), the term

“national identity” hides its real content, which is nationalism. According to Benedict Anderson, the nation is imagined because the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow members meet or even hear of them, yet in the mind of each lives the image of their communion (McCleery & Brabon, 2007). Hobsbawm and Ranger's work gave further weight to the argument that the nation, its rituals and ceremonies were profoundly and indisputably a modern phenomenon, cultural product whose history needed to be critically and severely interrogated (cf. especially Hobsbawm, 1992).

Although communication-information structures today are more developed than ever, an important medium for transferring identity narratives, at least when it comes to nation and the state, is still public education. Theorists and researchers in this area mostly agree that school and military played the main role in construction of national identities. Today, in all the countries of the world, school in states/nations determines the most significant memory basis like national history and they define legitimate cultures like literature, humanism, science, etc. (Halpern & Žan-Klod, 2009). If the nations are, as previously stated, a result

of historic construction, *then historiography represents one of the key basics of national identity*. The centuries-old history and the continuity of ancestral founders, language, heroes, monuments, folk customs, etc. are key elements for the existence of national identity. History books have also contributed in the dissemination of historical consciousness. Nationalism is often perceived as too prominent national identity and it occurs when nation as a social group becomes too significant to an individual during his identification.

In the first place, there is need to emphasize the importance of self-identification or self-defining of an individual as a member of national group. Self-identification can be determined by the origin of person, but it's also possible as an expression of their own choices, regardless of origin. According to Phinney (1990), second component that constitutes or defines the notion of national identity is a feeling of belonging to a certain ethnic group. Its intensity can vary from a strong feeling to merely just a formal membership in a group without any emotional attachment. Considering that this component is related to emotional processes, it's difficult to measure. In most studies, it's examined through connection to the own group, but sometimes as a feeling of variety and isolation of their own group in relation to other groups.

Another component is related to attitude towards the group membership which can be either positive or negative. Positive attitudes are usually expressed and explored through positive affective reactions such as pride and satisfaction of belonging, as well as acceptance of their own group. The lack of positive attitudes and/or expressions of negative attitudes towards their own national group can be seen as denial of their own national identity. Negative attitudes can be manifested as a desire to become a member of another national group (Phinney, 1990). Analysis of research results that was conducted by International Social Survey Programme (ISSP) in 1995 in 22 European coun-

tries, showed that national pride is associated to the feeling of group belonging. Higher level of national pride is shown by those that have a strong feeling or sense of national belonging, i.e. they feel close to their country. As it turned out, the older and less educated participants reported higher national pride, while gender differences haven't been detected (Čorkalo & Kamenov, 1988).

The last component which is assumed to define the national identity is that involvement in work and life of their own national group refers to how many individuals participates in maintaining the tradition and culture of their nation. In studies, most commonly used indicators of involvement are as follows: the use of national language, the way of making friends and intimate relationships, i.e. whether if the belonging to the same ethnic group matters to them, belonging to a particular religion and its practicing, participation in work and forming of socio-national institutions, involvement in political activities related to the welfare of their own national group, choosing the place to live considering the national belonging, nurturing of national values, interest in the country of origin, as well as knowing the national history and culture (Phinney, 1990). In a sustained attack on the national identity concept, Brubaker and Cooper (2000) argue that national identity is far too loose to have much analytical value. In their view, it can mean identification and categorization, self-understanding and social location, as well as commonality, connectedness and groupness. But this concept is, in my opinion, too vague, internally inconsistent and unspecific.

Thus, nationality indicates connection to a certain state. The nation is a stage in development of people, which is reflected in creation of national state, i.e. modern state which typically covers just one nation as a whole. In the process of creating a nation, and thus, the national identity, the key factor is the state and law. The state and law influence on creation, maintenance and development of nation because they bind people and influence the strengthening of other social relationships. The state

has a dominant role in construction of national identity, because identity, in good part, is made through institutions of citizenship, use of common language, expressing loyalty, using the state symbols. This sense of loyalty has a very significant role, because state symbols and common language are supported by legal norms, or forced on citizens, while the sense of loyalty that individuals have towards their nation is inspiring and connecting all the other elements.

Common to all the authors is a broad view of national identity, which consists of different discourses and practices. The authors acknowledge that the mass media perform a crucial ideological work in representing social relationships and providing display of power (Čičak-Chand & Kumpres, 1998). At this point, we are opening space for linking two major areas of this research: national identity and media. Among other ideological affairs, the media gives us a definition of nationalism, what meaning have images of nationalism and how to understand the problem of nationalism (McQuail, 1994). They provide a rhetorical space for nationalist discourse, and thus to create and reconstruct identity. Accordingly, the national media in each country offers very strong basis for the processes by which the members of a nation is 'united' and 'homogenized' (Phinney, 1990). Media audiences in different ways refer to creation a sense of *who* we are – 'we' as citizens, and who are not (or who is not 'one of us').

To go one step further and to make a smooth switch to the topic of my research, it must be clearly stated that mass media plays important role in the historical development of national culture and identity. *Media and cultural creativity play a key role in the re-creation of national, religious, gender and ethnic identity* (Rodin, 1998). Anderson (1983) in his influential work argues, from a historical perspective, that capitalism in the press was very important in encouraging the creation of national imagined community. The mass distribution of newspapers and novels led to awareness of the steady, anonymous, simultaneous experience

of' national community of readers. The concept of simultaneity in time and clearly defined national territory was crucial for the creation of national consciousness in its modern forms. Newspapers are connecting remote citizens with symbolic discourses of the nation, and the ritual of reading the newspaper and watching the national news on television still represents one of the basic elements of the idea of building national community (Beck, 1992). Printed and electronic media have helped creating national public that had begun to imagine their community as a nation that supports nationalism. Historically, to become a nationally recognized identity is a process that runs through media representations and their media discourse (Giddens, 1996). The identity of the nineties has become one of the concepts that provide a framework to intellectual debates. Sociologists, anthropologists, political scientists, psychologists, geographers, historians, philosophers, it seems that everyone has, in various discourses, something to say about it: the discussion about its constituency of the modern to its postmodern denial, the various attempts to deconstruct gender feminism conventions of society to confusion about the resurrection of nationalism and ethnicity as a significant political force.

As already indicated when speaking in the context of the former Yugoslavia, *neither political elites nor their discourse would not have been so influential without intermediary* and sometimes reinforcing function of the *press, radio and television* (this is completely in accordance with Van Dijk's observations, 1993). The explanation offered by some authors is that *media operates within specific ethno-national context* within which there is a clear definition of what is considered legitimate controversy, consensus and biases. Therefore, it is clear that the media are not neutral mediators. Each medium occupies position in the ideological and political structure of a given society, which determines approach to events. The media does not describe any recorded informational events passively, but actively reconstruct, largely on the basis of their ideological affiliation. As a result, media building

events are treated as a single message ideology. The media in this way significantly wider range of action of ideology, because they allow the transfer of symbolic forms and potentially unlimited audience. If ideology is conceived as a collection of ways in which meaning is transmitted by symbolic forms that serves to establish and maintain relations of power and domination (Van Dijk, 1993), *it is clear that the mass media have huge influence on the propagation and spread of ideological phenomena.*

Media discourse is in this case a place for the production and dissemination of ideology. For example, taking into account the value of the news media in favor of stories about negative events because such stories are generally better remembered, especially in the case of members of the so-called external groups. This frame is then contributes to the presentation of 'us' and 'them' as competing social forces in the construction of media discourse (Van Dijk, 1993). Maybe this symbolic power of the media can explain their distinctive role in reproduction of (ethno-national) ideology

In the process of social reproduction, *media perform a function that is ideological and political.* Ideologically, the media constantly processed materials that are produced in the social life in order to incorporate them into a single ideological system. In other words, the media help in forming the ideological structure of the society in which it works and influence on it. Politically, the media is trying to show the world to others, i.e. consumers of media products. To the extent that the ideology associated with the social and material practices in which originate from them and express them, the media inevitably has political influence in social reproduction (Danesi, 2002). The dominant media discourse, therefore, forms the struggle for representation, and they in turn influence the course of this struggle. More specifically, the media affect the power relations within society, and the power relations affect them, which means that media discourses offer fertile ground for analysis-oriented ideological dis-

course. The main research of media discourse in recent years has been focused on the broad framework of critical discourse analysis, which deals with various topics, such as the projection of power through discourse, discovering examples of domination and inequality in discourse, discourse and ideological support of connectivity discourse with social change (Van Dijk, 1993) which emphasize the discursive nature of representation, particularly instructive in this regard. Hall defines media discourse as “mental frameworks – the languages, concepts, categories, images, thoughts, and systems of representation – that set different classes and social groups in order to reveal the meaning and order miscalculated and made understandable to the way in which society works” (Hall & Gay 1998).

These mental frameworks serve as milestones in the society in which we live and are very important for cognitive survival in everyday life. Therefore, in order to determine the ideology of any expression one should look at how it is presented and the reality that the attitudes, values, beliefs, prejudices and perspectives are encoded in the text. According to Van Dijk (1993) it represents ideological ‘system of ideas’ and therefore occupies special place in the field of symbolic thought and belief, appearing in the form of ‘knowledge’. Moreover, ideologies are clearly social and generally (though not always) associated with group interests, conflicts or fights. They can serve to legitimize or resistance of power and domination, or may represent social problems and contradictions. They might be associated with social class and other social groups, as well as with institutions, organizations and other forms of social structure. Finally, the concept of ideology can be linked to the use of language, as can be seen in the claim that ideology is typically expressed and reproduced in the language and semiotic systems, as well as through them. The primary function of ideology in society, such as concealing, tampering and so on, has a form of discursive social action (Fabrio, 1994). Key meanings that can be attributed to the ideology of

the totality of social awareness of different forms of social factors (class, nation, state, community groups, organizations, etc.) and specific phenomena in social consciousness, limited and inaccurate, resulting from the effects of social factors on knowledge, which subjects opinions are not aware of.

Accordingly, the language performs key role in expressing, changing and especially in reproducing ideology. However, the language is not used in vacuum without context. In fact, it is used in the context of the discourse that is being built within the ideology of social systems and institutions. Given that language operates within this social dimension, it reflects and builds ideology. Consequently, this idea addresses the specific national contexts and their role in shaping the media presentation of traumatic past. We focused our attention on the structural differences between national ideologies that are played in a variety of media systems, while highlighting the differences between discursive forms reproduction of nationalist ideology (Todorova, 1999). From this point we see that the media serve its own and definitely different “truth” of their (national) group which certainly has the effect of *deepening the gap of hatred and intolerance*. These strategies allow media to settle their reporting in quite different contexts. They cannot speak on some facts, and they are completely omitted, while another highlight, some questions to ask, and some are unimaginable, some answers are given, and some are omitted. These results confirm Jambrešić’s (2004) argument about the relationship between media discourse and ideology. Mass circulation and sharing among group ideologies assume communication, i.e. express or play in the media. To discover the process of playing, we should first understand that the ideological conflicts among different types of nationalism must be analyzed within their specific historical, political and cultural framework (White, 1990). What connects the nationalism in these areas is the fact that they are sharing the closeness of promoting of national culture and state construction.

## ***Change of the ideological direction due to the emergence of new Balkan states***

Emerging Balkan states from the nineties onwards shared deep ideological changes of direction and domination of the nationalist policies. This was followed by drastic reinterpretation of earlier collective identities and the construction of new collective national identity (Todorova, 1999). These identities are constructed so as to filter out some of these existing elements and rearticulated or invent some other elements, where the most important strategy was as much differ from other, adjacent and apparently hostile identity (Jambrešić-Kirin, 2004). Being committed to addressing national identities, it seems that one of the fundamental common traits of our official policy is “here and now”- instead of the stereotypical narrative and imagination, communion, identified in relatively similar social processes in Croatia, Serbia, Bosnia, Montenegro. Perceptions of “a powder barrel” innate hatred and enmity, bridge, intersection, etc. do not reflect the reality of this space: they are forgeries in history, tools for easy reference in the complex and by no means uniform identity and cultural space, as Rihtman-Auguštin already properly asserted (1999). It seems that identity, regardless of changes in life-historical circumstances, is always what we think about ourselves and about others and what others think about us and therefore it is indeed fundamental and primordial category of human experience, so primordial that it would not be overly characterized as the “identity ontology”.

In contrast, what binds different areas of the Balkans are social processes, such as the abolition of privacy, ethnicization of society and culture, creating new national identity and national culture (Todorova, 1999). The ease of acceptance of Western imagination and metaphor facilitated transmitting it to his next-door neighbor and the formation of some particular, Balkan imaginary notions of others, as well as elements that are incorporated

into the national identity. Also, social changes of the early nineties onwards should not be interpreted solely as a cut, because they started earlier and had continuity, as well as the demolition of Berlin Wall and the abandonment of the so-called bloc politics were prepared, earlier processes (Detrez et al. 2005). Nationalism is not a sudden phantom revived in this area, and it had not risen from the grave of Titoist policy and reality does not follow any interpretation according to which the earlier national federation was spared hostilities – and what usurps the nostalgic vision of the former state. This enabled the continuity of certain closeness of socialism and nationalism, as well as the general strategy of the totalitarian system. According to Nenad Dimitrijević, closeness based on the premise of “radical desubjectivity individuals”, “the same type of collectivist matrix”, and creating and raising the political level, the particular identity of a substantially certain collectives, makes ideological assigned values based on the community (Vukman, 2000). However, identity is an essential, ongoing, and determining the form of individual and social existence, without which no individuals or social groups, small or large scale, would not have its existential meaning.

“Collectivist matrix” and “radical desubjectivity” individual means that in the late eighties and early nineties, our private worlds were retreating before the wave of collectivization; individual identities declared treasonous and in their place are set newly formed identities of the ruling political and intellectual elite. New, particular collective identity that has stifled our individual identities became unified and firmly set national identity, and of all the members of the nation was required to accept it. Specifically, individual identities are always and everywhere – even outside the Balkans, Eastern Europe, Central Europe and the Mediterranean, i.e. outside the area where we belong – woven from fine and delicate threads of precious cultural twists that are interwoven in various and numerous combinations. These textures are unique, made up of hybrid, with many parties or collected, and

the diversity and ambiguity of origin that attaches them is interesting. Individual identity is unique, as Maalouf writes: “Each of my affiliation connects me with many people, as belonging to that take into account numerous, it is my identity which shows special” (Maalouf, 2002). The boundary between the collective impacts on the individual identity of the subject often remains unclear because the subject is on the one hand active in the process of building its own identity, while remain subordinate to the demands of the community.

But I would argue that neither means that people do not identify themselves on collective level, nor that such identifying is unnecessary or false. However, a sense of belonging and identification with the collective in societies should not entail the abolition of special formula identity of each individual, as it appeared in the local societies. Multiform identity and hybridism in these societies are the spatial coordinates professed in the fact that the vast majority of the population lived under the influence of different ethnic, religious, cultural and ideological paradigms. This means that many of our well-known rituals of other religions, the words of other cultures, other kitchen smells, rhythms of other people’s everyday life, etc., in the (post) Yugoslav space are more often linked with determinants such as epic, tribal, urban, etc., as well as cultural heritage related to the influence of foreign cultures, rather than ethnicity in the way that nineties conceived and presented (Tepšić, 2012). Furthermore, our individual identities are deeply marked by boundaries, ethnic and cultural mixing, effects of assimilation, interaction (with foreign, invading culture and neighboring cultures) and regional specificities, and cannot be compressed into a single national framework that clearly delimits “us” from “them” and that they be careful not to disturb or cancelled. So we think here *between* languages, cultures, influences, traditions, etc. It is not possible to draw any boundaries nationalist policies aspire to (the state border, of course, have to retire sometime) (Claussen, 1988). While before

the identity was mainly influenced by belonging to a wider social group, which was surrounded by and connected by class or ethnicity, identities are now much more diverse and unstable. The processes of urban development, industrialization, incomparably greater social and geographical mobility and the breakdown of earlier social formations, weaken the influence of inherited rules and conventions on a global level.

Likewise, the regional differences within a country are often large, and cannot be included in collective identity unless it is much more open than this national. But neither plurality is idyllic: it has often been source of disagreement, manipulation, struggle for political dominance, etc. It just needs to be recognized as a specific aspect of this area, as one of its distinguishing features or “long life” (Kordić, 2010). Multifariousness of identity, hybridity and ambivalence offset the policy of nationalism and wars, so this area since the beginning of the nineties onwards was contaminated with certain fillings with identity: narratives, discourses, myths, characters, and themes of defining national identity is set as the central and binding on any nation. New “captive” identities are portrayed as comprehensive, although they were really particular and arbitrary (Čičak-Chand & Kumpres, 1998). Using them means to legitimize national compliant and separating the national traitors and apostates, as a nation different from the other. At work here was new abolition of individual identity, or political in general, and soon a communal consensus occurred that emphasize individual identity or require something in the name of their privacy blasphemous and scandalous at the time of key social turmoil – creating the nation and its defense. Otherwise, collective identities are categories whose meanings are constantly changing and adapting to social moment, but they also regularly include selection, rearticulating, withdrawal limit of belonging and repression.

Thus, the general collective identities are constantly in the process of soft reinterpretation, rejection of one element and

acceptance of others, the new hierarchy, etc. (Stojanović, 1997). It is never possible to consolidate all individual identities; they inevitably excludes someone and something exclusive, and are ambivalent, difficult and at the same time expanding and strengthening, opening and closing. It is a common semantic movement involving the construction of a collective identity, so that, in fact, there is no collective identity that would encompass everything and everyone, *no identity that would be firmly fixed and insensitive to social change* (Vukman, 2000). However, unlike this common identity movement, nineties in this part of the Balkans have been a drastic reinterpretation, programmed changes of direction and constructing new identity moulds which are supposed to adjust all the inhabitants of a certain country (Todorova, 1999). The problem was that instead a number of possible collective identities, it was now constructed single national identity, so there was no choice, because all other collective identities declared themselves inauthentic or enemy. National identity became sacred relic of the most important state where everyone from then on should worship. Relics are kept priests nation (political and intellectual elite), and those who refused to do it were expelled from the sacred home of the nation (homeland or fatherland). That is, those who are not in that relic found adequate reflection of one's being exposed to dangers that are in the same house the sacred duty roll play it dangerous enemies, traitors to the nation, on whose body congregation will be able to symbolically cleanse themselves (remove traces of hostile identity from his past) and over each other to get close. Sacralisation of the policy followed by the sacralisation of its narrative is a narrative of identity that had a central and important role (Vukman, 2000). Identity is therefore historical value and the phenomenon that expresses the historical existence of certain human groups.

As the *nation* is primarily *imagined community*, national identities are also constructed and composed of elements which were the priests of the nation at a particular time set up as self-

evident and binding. These elements are the real and imaginary, rational and irrational, and most concerning origin, language, culture, ancestors, traditions, etc. (Hammond, 2004). Generally, their identity is still being built using mirrors, the reflection toward another identity, and in the process of self-identification is necessary that there is someone different from us. Identity groups are also being built in mirror, and differentiating with respect to the other group. The specifics of our “here and now” consist of narratives, the intensity, the objectives and consequences of such a constructed identity differences (Kourvertais, 2002). Whenever we think about identity, we need to take into account the multiplicity of identities.

Images of others as enemies included, revived and re-interpreted some existing stereotypes about different nations in this space, and this was done through political programs, but more and more through media, culture, literature, etc. Examples of such a thing are numerous and some of them I mentioned within Balkan imagination. Now I will give some examples of stereotypes, narratives and discourses about others who qualified for the nineties in this area. The official political discourse is often articulated in a somewhat polite manner, while the media, culture, so-called public sphere and everyday life often expressed it out of sight (Jambrešić-Kirin, 2004). Such images of others clearly show that one and the same perception of stereotypes can be transferred to different cultures and nations that are produced in vacuum and transferred and recorded in the texts of the culture no matter what corresponds to that reality.

Thus for example, in Serbian media, political and cultural official discourse during nineties often portrayed Croats as nationalist Ustasha genocide nation that genetically hate all Serbs. This way of media reporting contributes to a great extent to creating a wrong image of a certain national group by some other group. Determinations tied with them include: violent, treacherous, arrogant, cold, calculating, but also weak, spine-

less, self-conscious, cowardly, people of servant mentality and without heroic history (Luketić, 2013). It was argued that in the Second World War they fought on the side of the anti-fascists, but they all supported Pavelić's Independent State of Croatia and its genocide against Serbs (Paić, 2002). This notion of Croatian Nazism and hatred towards Serbs is presented the media writing about newly discovered tombs Ustasha victims, as well as long-term(quasi) scientific controversy about the concentration camp of Jasenovac, bidding the number of victims. Croatian culture is however minimized as something that basically does not exist – because everything in it is true in fact part of the Serbian cultural matrix, and it is non-Serb or Austrian/German or Italian, therefore strange. In short, the slavish mentality of Croats and Croatian culture is considered imitative and unoriginal, in Mičić's words "copycat" (Rihtman-Auguštin, 1999). To a lesser or greater extent all these stereotypes are found in the political and literary discourses.

*As I will try to point out in further chapters, Croatian dominant discourse during the nineties declared all Serbs aggressors, nationalists, savages, thugs, primitives.* Their culture was understood only as an expression of rural, tribal, epic or populist, "turbo-folk" mentality of the people. In short, Serbs were and remain the paradigm of non-Europeanism and *Balkan barbarism*. The Croatian discourse was that "crazy people" are genetically capable only of violence, crimes and torture, as columnist Joško Čelan wrote in *Slobodna Dalmacija* in 1994: "To many people, the Serbs madmen, murderers, robbers, rapists and liars" (as quoted in: Stanković-Pejnović, 2010). Or, as the publicist Maja Freundlich asked in Croatian newspaper of the same year: "What is that in Serbs, and every human activity, which can be turned into garbage?" This is not surprising, considering that President Tuđman 1996 said: "All 587,000 Serbs in Croatia are armed." Nineties brought general truths about the Serbs and "only they" can celebrate the battle in which they defeated, that "only they"

cannot call themselves heavenly people and considered older than “amoeba and pedals” (Luketić, 2013).

The outcome of those stereotypes is that for Croats, Serbs are portrayed as people who represent the masculine gender (negative – as bullies, rapists, barbaric invaders), but Serbs themselves stereotyped as positive – the heroes, outlaws, macho men, irresistible charmers. Nevertheless Croats themselves also saw themselves as embodiment of male archetypes (the real fighters, knights, heroes-martyrs) (Jambrešić-Kirin, 2004). But for Serbs, Croats are often in the feminine form (cowards and lazybones, poor fighters, Germanophiles, “pussies”). All this suggests that the culture of the Balkans is deeply patriarchal and here, another binder or Balkan societies, as well as those of the Mediterranean – female epithets always indicate degradation and humiliation. *Femininity in the Balkans means an insult*; it is seen solely as passivity, submissiveness, weakness, as it is nonrepresentational from the standpoint of “big history” and national policies (Rihtman-Auguštin, 1999).

Stereotypes that ruled the region between ethnic or national groups are largely expressed, and certainly are one of the causes of additional ethnic or national intolerance. As I mentioned in the introductory chapter, it is worth noticing how Slovenians are all stereotyped as a bit boring clergy and petit bourgeois, people “without balls”, Austrian servants, i.e. in Kusturica’s version of “Austrian grooms”, there is reference to “Kekec”, who want their small state (Vukman, 2000). Their culture is meaningless, being Balkan or Mediterranean or Central European, it’s always “between” and “nowhere”, imitation of an imitation without historical value and authentic tradition, germanophiles, dangerous slide into Nazism packed in the vanguard (e.g. the action group NSK – Laibach). For one part of the Serbian media, Slovenes can be somewhat grateful audience to which you can sell everything packed as Balkan (while inverted cultural trade is not valid). These are basically “frigid” people (female or passive latent homosexual).

On the other side of the region, Montenegrins are often stereotypically portrayed as servants by Serbs. Most often they appear in the role of eternal slacker and incompetent posers (costume, moustache, fiddle) about epic hearth, comic heroes that far from the front cherish their Humanity, exploit their wife (the female side of the story suddenly becomes important), while in warfare does not much. Macedonians have been favored by Croats in past two decades, more or less acceptable, mainly because they are far away from them; they do not share a common boundary, so there is no so-called territorial issue, and typically are rated as good-natured, amiable, merrymakers. Other nations are still more likely to return to the question of whether there are Macedonians, whether they are Greeks, whether Bulgarians, Serbs? Albanians are the dominant in Serbian discourse in recent decades, also nationalistic, violent and deceitful majority in Kosovo, which is a long-term policy of bullying and the extermination of the Serbian minority (Todorova, 2004).

Revenge is in all the local cultures throughout history shared depicted as the only way to preserve or restore the dignity, because of state and government – according to the tradition of brigands – people never had the benefit of protection (Jambrešić-Kirin, 2004). Besides stereotypical demonization of Albanians as rapists and sexually insatiable men, often the dominant discourse, in other countries by local, underscores their dirt (“instead of toilet paper they use water bottles”), propensity to crime (the main smugglers and drug traffickers), a tribal organization (vendetta, strong family relationships), primitivism and ignorance (national interest: ice-cream), etc. The stereotype of Albanians as a rapist fits into the broader notions of Muslims as perpetrators and pleasures, so the Bosnians are also often perceived as sexually voracious (Kamberović, 2003).

According to the simple historical formula, Bosniaks were considered the successors of the former “Turks”, apparently, especially cruel torturers, murderers and religious fanatics with

no exceptions. All these historical stereotypes present further reinforcing of growing all-western prejudice towards Islam after 11 September attack (Kamberović, 2003). The Muslims were thus in today's dominant western imagination terrorists and fanatics, always ready to jihad and everlasting enemies of West. All in all, this colorful imagery and overflowing stereotypical discourses about others served, among other things, as a counterpart to establish their own national identity. *These strategies of demonization of others* or dramatizations of other nations and the idealization of our nation dominated since the end of the eighties, announced greatly policy of open hostilities, the rhetoric of hatred and warfare during the nineties. All these swollen perceptions of Others are very well summed by Slovenian writer Drago Jančar at literary workshop in Zagreb in 1988. After the revolution, the national question was finally resolved and ideally more than forty years later, the result is this: Slovenians are economically exploited and culturally vulnerable. Serbs have their own state, and their minority in Kosovo historical soil exposed to brutal ethnocide. Macedonians are economically bankrupt, Skopje is growing megalopolis, in the empty villages Macedonian Albanians are immigrating (Kamberović, 2003). Montenegrins are in economic disarray and with more and schismatic split between ethnogenesis and Serbian pride. Bosnia-Herzegovina is a potential flash point of disgruntled Muslims and Serbs. The fact that the most oppressed were Croats, both in Croatia and in other republics, was something no need to waste words. Vojvodina Hungarians, Italians in Istria, Roma, Vlachs, Ruthenians and Slovenes... – it is clear that minorities are still vulnerable. Interestingly, the oppressed are also “Yugoslavs” because they cannot provide a republic, and they took the baton. But: Slovenians attack JNA, spying and shattered Yugoslavia. Serbs are enraged nationalists and Balkan tattle because they quarrel with anyone and everyone (Luketić, 2013). Macedonians are parasites, Montenegrins slackers, Albanians rapists primitive, Muslims are Homeinians (Jam-

brešić-Kirin, 2004). All these are just stereotype of one group to another which has been deeply rooted into the conscience of every national group.

Slovenes are the descendants of Veneta, Macedonians are descendants of Alexander the Great, Montenegrin were Caucasian tribe, the Croats have Aryan, Persian origin, the Serbs are in their country since the Stone Age (Mappes-Niediek, 2005). But, again one should here be sober. As much as acting dramatically and radically such as perceptions of others yet still part of the universal western strategy, part of universal identity politics is the establishment of national difference. Balkans, namely the (post) Yugoslav space is the demonization and dramatization in the name of identity with drastic consequences.

### ***Croatian national identity and national way of cross***

Croatian state policy in many ways has followed the Serbian, sliding into governmentalized nationalism since the beginning of the 90s and they have constructed their recognizable, exclusive national identity on the same narratives and same settings with the different signs (Luketić, 2013). The construction of such nationalism, and afterwards its protection was the most important “homework” of the national elite. As Nedjeljko Mihanović, professor of literature, member of HDZ (Croatian Democratic Union) and the president of Croatian Parliament, once said: “Now, when we have established the Croatian state, I think it’s completely normal for all our artists – writers, sculptures, painters and others – should work to strengthen our own country and Croatian statehood, because without that we are nothing” (*Hrvatsko slovo*, 1995). In my point of view, this statement in a very succinct and laconic way portrays the major line of official Croatian political ideology and fits perfectly into the pattern of Croatian statehood which was in more details theoretically described and presented

in previous chapter in regards to creation of national identity. In the last ten years, there has been many words written in Croatia, many words were said and many political actions have been taken in the name of national identity. Sacralised and elevated to a new level of political and secular icons, *identity became the first and last point of defense of the Croatian nation*. It's been kept on such a key position until today. In fact, even after twenty years the concept of national identity from the 90s has been kept here, its underlying narrations, myths, and perceptions, its ideological skeleton was deeply deconstructed (I could agree with that argument presented comprehensively by Čačić-Kumpes, 1999).

Although the political context has changed a lot, and state policy has declaratively turned away from Tuđman's planting from the 90s, even after year 2000 the national identity represents itself in the medium in which it's been conceived in at the beginning of the Croatian statehood, and this form is considered to be its "natural statement" of the imagined Croatian being. True, the rhetoric of hatred and demonization of Others has toned down, in politics (mostly under pressure of the EU) it's been replaced by the rhetoric of national reconciliation and regional convergence ("region" and "Western Balkans" are new European magic words) and discourse of "Eurosis" which frenetically celebrates the European substance of our identity, which would allegedly be proven by the final accession of Croatia to European Union (this term "eurosis" is created by Mitja Velikonja in his excellent in-depth study of Slovenia case entering EU). Despite such rhetoric and new dominant topics, no one gave up – not in the official policy or in the official culture and mainstream media – from the old, nationalistic way of construction the narration about self, or of stereotype images of enemies as an integral and expected element in the philosophy of patriotism. Those images of enemies have adopted somewhat moderate and nuanced ways of presentation, but they haven't been structurally altered, or critically interpreted, they have just (temporarily?) been put

away in the container of imagination, from where certain groups can take them out and make them politically frequent all over again. National identity which has been established on Tuđman's "tenets" and politically enthroned in the beginning of 90s it's been widely accepted as "natural and self-understanding" statement of Croatian national being (Paić, 2002). Narratives about this identity include a few of characteristics places –the view that this essential, natural and primeval Croatian identity had to be hidden for centuries in same state.

During the years of "Yugoslav imprisonment" it has survived thanks to the faith in freedom and "love for the land" of the nation itself, or so the story says. Croatian people in all of this were perceived solely as "the nation of martyrs" which has "dreamed for thousands of years about their own state" and went through the "way of the cross" (in Croatian language: "križni put") to its realization and its liberation. Furthermore, *Croats identically are*, based on the storming discourse (genetically, culturally and traditionally) *completely different from everything Serbian, Yugoslav and Balkan* (Jambrešić-Kirin, 2004). The politics of Croatia was very clear – to move over as further as they can from the Balkans, that is, from Serbia which led the main role in the former Yugoslavia and was creating the Great Serbia.

The basic distinction formula says: *Serbia, Yugoslavia and Balkans have become the same enemy*, same demonic force (one monster with three heads) from which "we" had to be different. Because "we" are the Europe, culture, peace, tolerance, order, white and pure, and "they" are the Balkans, uncivilized, violence, and exclusivity, chaos, black and dirty. So the first and basic distinction, on which the national identity was based on, was that *"we" are the civilization and "they" are barbarism/balkanism*. As there have earlier been stories about the relationship of Croatian ruling elite towards the Balkans and Croatian neurosis because of its own space arrangement, we have to emphasize other distinctive characteristics of Croatian identity and other areas where

the foundation difference was established on between “Us” and “The Others”. These other characteristics and topics have also been taken down to the same basic difference between civilization and barbarism, Europeanism and Balkanism (Kamberović, 2003). In the process of constructing the identity there were other messages about the mutual differences being huge and insuperable, “our” traditions are completely different and related to completely different cultural circles – Croatian related to Mediterranean and Central Europe and Serbian related to Byzantium and Ottoman Empire or Balkan. “We” have gone through all the phases of the cultural development like Europe, “we” have our own Romanesque, gothic, renaissance, baroque, classicism, romanticism, modernism, secession, and “they” don’t. While “we” were building, painting, writing by the model of Europe and educated ourselves in the European Universities, “they” were partly illiterate, they didn’t have developed cities, and their culture was reduced to folk creativity (Pečjak, 2005). This is actually about the well known Eurocentric arguments which are very often used in other cases, for example, when it’s about the Russian culture and when they are trying to prove their alleged essential Asiatic barbarism and historical inferiority.

The absence of the individual artistically stylistic period is being explained only as a sign of backwardness and cultural incompleteness, because it’s been implied that the culture has its own development path, and the stages along this path was paved by Europe. Those who do not cross over all the stages are culturally suspicious, so in the symbolic mapping and hierarchy, the culture takes up a very low place. *Narrative about the superiority of Croatian culture in relation to Serbian was established by Franjo Tuđman himself*, in an interview from 1991 for *New Yorker*: “Croats belong to the different culture – different civilization – than Serbs...Croats are part of the Western Europe, part of Mediterranean tradition. Serbs belong to the East. Their church belongs to East. They use Cyrillic letter, which is Eastern. They

are Eastern nation like Turks and Albanians. They belong to byzantine culture...Despite the similarities in language, we cannot live together” (as quoted in: Rev, 2005).

According to Tuđman, this means that *the differences of these two nations are not small, they are dramatic* – they are deep, *tectonic*. Another powerful, differential element which has been distinctive in the Croatian narrative about the national identity was the *language*; initial claims stated that “our” language is older than “theirs” and doesn’t have Balkan origin but from the area of present Iran from a thousands of years ago. In addition to being older, “our” language was completely different than “theirs”, so language policies were directed to separation, recognition and detecting those differences and excluding Tuđman’s or common elements which created confusion in the regulated, divided world of nationalism government for an entire decade. It’s clearly visible that *language policy* has been in the service of establishing identity distinctions and maintaining state and political programs, and the language became the exclusive indicator of Croatian national exceptionalism. In those years, distinguished dictionaries were written, new words were prescribed which were made in laboratories of linguistic institutions, archaisms were popularized, the purity of speech was supervised in media (especially on state television), Serbian movies were subtitled, the documents were being translated from one language to another, etc, and thousands of books in Cyrillic letter were thrown away in garbage as well as those written by Serbian authors (weekly newspaper *Feral Tribune*, 1999). Many people became “language experts” during the 90s, and everyday life was stuffed with monstrosity linguistic debates of amateurs which have volunteered to huge state labor action of “cleansing” the Croatian language.

The official language policy and linguistic debate was mostly concentrated around one question – the distinction between Croatian and Serbian language and proving the historical uniqueness of Croatian language. This was precisely said by (leftist) schol-

ar Dubravko Škiljan in one of his interviews from 2006: “Our language policy is directed primarily to determine the differences and drawn boundaries to another” (*Jutarnji list*, 2006). The specificity of Croatian culture and identity, its mythical antiquity and originality has proven to be popular and official theory of ethno genesis of Croats, and Croats were, according to it, one of Persian nations from the border region between Iran and Afghanistan. Throughout history they allegedly remain unchanged and homogenous nation, so since the immigration up until today they haven’t suffered major influences of other cultures with whom they were in contact, including those in conquest.

Integration, assimilation of foreign elements, hybridity, etc. in this interpretation are considered to be negative categories, while the influence of the environment and spatial-temporal context are being denied. It also supersedes any historicity of collective identity, and it is claimed that Croats have always felt like Croats; their national identity is eternal and unchanged. An example of such identity narrative is the testimony of scientist Eduard Kale who, in his book of ethnicity, explicitly says: Croats were self-conscious even in the Iranian area, the represented the cultural and political historical subject”, they “didn’t start creating their national culture and state in the new, present area, but they have come to this new area with the feeling of cultural identity and historical subject” (Kale, 1999). Highlighting the antiquity of language and culture of such homogenous nation had the function of anticipating additional, higher value to this culture, and, of course, strengthening the differences from the entire Slavic Balkans. Referencing to antiquity was in all of Tudman’s speeches and historical excursus, so he liked to present himself as a kind of a *cultural missionary*, because, as he claimed “had to be a constant reminder to his diplomats and his intelligence how they had Croatian language, Croatian literature and Croatian monuments at the time when other nations didn’t have them” (full speech quoted in: Luketić, 2013).

Narratives about antiquity were reaffirmed in all today's states during the 90s and it had an important role in constructing and imagining of all today's national identities. According to Škiljan, with whom I completely agree in regards to his in-depth linguistic studies, its most important role is actually "classical" and "emphasizes the antiquity of ethnicity and its completely uninterrupted", continuous flow; in the case of Croatia, the Iranian ethno genesis, related to early construction of the state, represents Croats as undoubtedly the oldest nation (besides from the Greeks, maybe) in the European cultural circle with completely continuous ethnical tradition. It represents them as those people who were the first to form their own state, which clearly legitimizes their tendency to have their own, independent state organization even today (Škiljan, 2002).

I must emphasize simple fact that similar narratives about the antiquity of language and culture, superiority of national identity and homogenous nation during the long centuries have governed all the official discourses in Serbian in those years. The local national ideologues have said that Serbian language and Cyrillic letter are the oldest; moreover, they declared Serbian language as supra-language of this part of Balkans. They said that this language is the core from which all the other languages have come from, or other linguistic variations. Croatian language was interpreted as a western dialect of Serbian language, so specificity, as well as the right of the state to independently appoint the spoken language was challenged and it's still being challenged for Bosnian language as well as Montenegrin language. This is a part of general challenging of national self-conscience, because in the national logic, linguistic boundaries are also the boundaries of the nation and national state. If language and *language policy* after the war, in the second half of the 90s remained most used *tool of national homogenization* and extensions of political battle in other means in Serbia, it is best shown in *Slovo o srpskom jeziku*, the manifest document from

1998 which was signed by scientists in institutional positions (like the dean at the Faculty of Philology in Belgrade or the president of the Association of Writers of Serbia) and which in turn determined Serbian homogenous language policy (Rihtman-Auguštin, Čapo-Žmegač, 2004). This text claims that the recognition of ethnic groups in the area of Balkans should be brought based on language, which means that the *boundaries of language should also be boundaries of the state*. According to this, it is claimed that the unique Serbian language, which is based on Štokavian, includes Orthodox, Catholic and Muslim religion, which means that Štokavian dialect is exclusively Serbian, and the population from Dalmatia, Slavonia, Montenegro and Kosovo are using it in their speech. Also, in 19 century, part of Serbs from Croatia were Croatized and this Serbian element has been deliberately weakened, so regardless to the dialect, most of literature written in Dalmatia, Dubrovnik or in Bosnia and Montenegro, is inseparable part of Serbian culture (Velikonja, 2003). In this document, nations like Montenegrin and Bosniak are considered to be artificial and with no historical trace, while Croatian nation here was reduced to the narrow strip associated to Kajkavian dialect. Furthermore, distinction between the Croatian and Serbian culture, that is, between the Croatian culture as a part of European cultural circle and all the other Balkan cultures, was determined in Tuđman's policy and its culture by constructing a unique Croatian tradition. The imagining of the nation followed the "imagining of tradition" – *new social rituals were introduced*, ceremonies, memorabilia and memories of the place, in accordance to the new interpretation of history and new historiography, which was more correct regarding to the existing one, which was completely serving the communist ideology and domination of the Serbian nation (Jambrešić-Kirin, 2004). In that sense, I would argue that this is not merely ideological problem, but moreover puts attention on wider aspect of both construction of construction of Croatian social identity.

One of many examples of this new, pro-European tradition is Tudman's choice of Medvedgrad, as an Altar of the Homeland, as a memorial of the millennial Croatian aspiration for the establishment of state independency. It's actually medieval burg, the site that didn't have prominent role in history or has been symbolically marked as a place of infraction events. As an example of new, pro-European tradition, we can name many ceremonial celebration of state holidays or Tudman's birthday where we would witness the renewal and establishment of official version of history, or they staged a national myths and "national hagiography" like those of medieval rulers, Tomislav, Zrinski - Frankopan, the battles with the Tatars and "Turks", etc. (Rihtman- Auguštín, 1994). The unique national identity is constructed with gestures detection of popular culture, inventing folk customs and traditions and ritual returns of the nation to its roots. Among these supposedly authentic testimonies of Croatian identity we have, for example, folklore in all form, folk dances and indigenous traditions, braiding, Glagoljica and medieval ornamentation (though motives are present in other European cultures, they were often interpreted as the exclusively Croatian) tamburica cult as instruments that expresses the essence "of the Croatian being", etc. In the nineties from Zagreb's central square there was such an "original" Croatian music (its familiarity with the music of other people from the Balkans are regularly denied), where there was an observation of the satisfaction of political and intellectual elite in the folk tradition overwhelming the capital. According to an old narrative, the city in those years was often perceived as a source of corruption and national unawareness/betrayal, while the village allegedly guarded vitality of national identity.

Therefore, tenfold, ganga, rera, and other forms of traditional culture preserved the substance of "Croatianhood" throughout the history of alien conquest and "Temptation", and with independence came the time for this to return/become aware of urban life. In addition, the development of nationalism was

going in the good direction because of the ruralisation and revitalization of villages within Serbian society, and there, the city, urbanity, rock culture, etc. were proclaimed traitorous and unpatriotic. In doing so, the idealization of rural and dramatization of urban-rural differences are just some of the dominant social events throughout the nineties (Hammond, 2004). It must be clearly stated that *the construction of national identity in Croatia was always accompanied by narration about the permanent threat of identity*, of constant identity “state of emergency” and the necessity of the struggle for preservation of identity. Such narrative was constructed by nationalist government and nationalist intelligentsia, but it was accepted, supported and manipulated by some opposition politicians and independent, left-liberal intellectuals. During the nineties it had paranoid proportions, while from 2000 onwards it had lower intensity, but was not abandoned. Usurpers and enemies of national identity during the nineties were Serbs, Yugoslavs, the Balkans, many Croatian citizens, critical intellectuals, in Tudman’s discourse “foreign mercenaries”, “black, green and yellow devils”, etc., in short, all those who didn’t respect the relic of identities or didn’t accept its national clergy and its numbing and xenophobic rituals.

After year 2000, the crisis of national identity and the need for its protection was spoken of more within the narrative of globalization and competition rules in the mega-game of national supply and demand and national marketing. Instead substantiality of identity and reflection of those “natural” and “normal” – and in fact rigid and exclusionary – narratives of Croatian identity of Tudman’s time, at this time the pinnacle topic became the image, i.e. the design of the state: its visual and symbolic representation to the outer world (nonetheless, also applicable to some other countries, cf. Velikonja, 2005). The deafening public discourse on the crisis of identity and the need for constant vigilance of Croatian citizens manifested in this sense up until the beginning of the 21st century, in different ways and in different

subjects – the first time in discussions of Croatian language, the second time in in-depth explanations of differences between Croatian and Serbian culture, the third time during an appearance on Serbian artists or singers in Croatia and vice versa; fourth time in polemics of turbo-folk and corruption of Croatian youth by musical trash from the East and highlighting the differences between European and Balkan side of Croatia.

The same thing happened also in a seemingly harmless topics such as “branding the state”, pointing Croatian specifics in broader, European context; usability of a checkerboard motif in the visual character of every major state-owned company or state representation abroad, etc. (Luketić, 2013). In the early nineties established nation-state with it constructed identities and identity narratives, (and respectively, after the 2000 in the prevailing logic of capital and consumer society), began to be seen as large corporation. National culture, now treated as a “national product”, is necessary to be properly packaged, branded, advertised, represented, sold, etc. (Velikonja, 2005). The content of Croatian identity that was mixed by the elite in the years of dangers of war and nationalist politics, today is not reviewed at all; it is, in fact, implied and the question is just how to adequately pack it and market it. Today, in stories about the identity in Croatia, there is a wider representation of *cosmetic treatment* (design, visuality, symbolism) to cover up the traces of *national identity neurosis* from the beginning of the nineties. Official political, cultural, media and other discourses don't seem to be imposing the necessity of thinking of different identity, but all over again they renew the concept of national identity as it was already set in Tuđman's last century's political dustbin (Vujević, 2001), which is, I believe, a clear reference to construction of nation through its historically forged and fictitious myth on statehood.

With all its accompanying stereotypical embellishments, distinctive narratives and artificial, even caricatured images of themselves and others, tourism marketing have become respon-

sible for the identity issues, so the national identity – the European and non-Balkan – is discussed more frequently within the signs, emblems, designs, slogans, projects (e.g. Buy Croatian, Croatian souvenir). Modern media and the political debate touches the design- marketing questions about the tie, pens, sausage, umbrellas, lace from Pag, Hvar lavender, etc., thus: Souvenir Craft levels and opportunities of making profits, while not dealing with the very nationalistic concept, by selecting the content, erasing, re-drawing, reinterpretation, or all those pernicious narratives about “us” and “them”, form the core of identity (Zgrabljčić, 2003). The extent of how much is the discourse of the permanent crisis of national identity and the dangers of losing oneself more socially frequent, was shown in the conference of Croatian identity which was held in Zagreb, in Matica Hrvatska in May 2009. The conference topics were: the power of the identity, the crisis of national identity, national identity in the age of globalization, creating a competitive identity, etc. Incentive to maintain this, the organizers pointed “the fact that even in the Croatian literature on this issue we cannot find a coherent and clear answers, so it can be concluded that the Croats still have no clear ideas about their own identity, which they would be able to present to the world and by which others might recognize them”, and “since Croatia has joined the EU, it’s time to establish an agreement on national identity” (Luketić, 2013). This is important since Matica Hrvatska was (and still is) often seen as a “guardian”, defender of Croatian cultural identity.

All this shows that “here and now” still rules “POW identity theory”, set at the beginning of Croatian independence during the state nationalism, populism and ethnification of all segments of society. Identity is still striving to re-establish, narrow down, fence off and define itself once and for all, while its visual images and symbolization are trying to be almost legally prescribed (Leburić, 2001). All this is very far from understanding identity as a fundamental variable, non-permanent and hybrid formation,

or from some credible structure of “our” identity, and very far from civil society, where we are trying to integrate as much as possible of different micro-identities. The official discourses and strategies of self- presentation and self-identification, the need for a deconstruction of the existing concept of national identity for its redefinition it is not at all recognized (Todorova, 2004). The case of Balkans – ostracism of all possible Balkan components from the sacred identity story, unwillingness to redefine the Balkans and deliver some of the stereotypical growths, shows how much the Croatian identity is closed.

In the reinterpretation of Croatian history by domestic political and intellectual elite *dominant narrative* has become the one about the *centuries-old dream of an independent state and the Way of the Cross of the Croatian people*. The Homeland War is interpreted as the last stop in this long voyage, and after the victory there is award in the form of life in own country (Kale, 1999). In this millennial “Golgotha”, the Croatian people, despite all the temptations, managed to preserve their culture, language, traditions, Catholicism and faith in the ability of their own freedom. Established narratives about the tormented history and the Croatian people as victims, proved to be very well applicable to the national policy in the nineties, they could mobilize the nation at all times on behalf of so many victims who died for their country in history and in present they can conduct an actual political program. Military actions were easily justified in this way, and nation-victim could not become a nation-aggressor, that is, the warrior-Croatian martyr cannot become the warrior-Croatian criminal. The narrative of the nation-victim, i.e. nation’s willingness to sacrifice is considered to be an influential component in identity discussions (e.g. B. Skoko or E. Kale) which “strongly marked the life of the Croats”. This narration was strongly present even before the nineties, and it can be found in a recent analysis of Dinko Tomašić about political identity of Croats that includes Croatian mystique of sacrifice and martyrdom. In many ways the

policy and intelligence has taken over the religious discourses, symbolism and metaphor of sacrifice, passion, crucifixion, cross stations, etc., demonstrating the level to consecrate contemporary politics (Čale – Feldman & Ines Prica, 2006). The institution of the Church, since the nineties onwards, politically very influential, has maintained such Victimology narration, introducing new rituals marking the martyrdom (Stepinac cult), and up until today it remains the main “architect of historical myths” (the way Vjekoslav Perica calls it). It repeatedly promotes new Croatian martyrs and maintains alive narration of the Croatian history as a martyr narratives, thus preventing the creation of civil society and the general dynamics of the relationship between subject and object, that is, the ability to break free from the role of victim and stop to enjoy our own martyrdom.

So, the new reinterpretation and establishing a national version of history, Croatia’s history is presented as a Way of the Cross, the Croatian people as a nation-victim, and Croatian soldiers as Croatian martyrs. But as in the case of sleeping heroes and revenge in the future, the narrative of the nation-victim are also common in mythical version of national history in other European countries or nations and the construction of other national identities. And again, this is not exclusivity of Balkans “inferior” cultures and governments. For our “here and now” it is characteristic that such processes and associated narratives emerged synchronously in the wider area and in several countries, that have become defining elements of national identity and that they are using them to construct apparently irreconcilable differences between “our” and “their” culture, i.e. that with their help, the policies of violence and hostility have legitimized as policies of justice and liberation (Rihtman-Auguštin, 1999). In the experience of history as a certain narrative of torture, the victims, prison and slavery an important role was played by imaginary historical enemies of the Croatian people. Croats, as one compact and homogeneous people who travelled from Iran to Tudman, were

victims of a series of other nations in history: Venice, “Turks”, Austrians, Hungarians, Italians and all the former Yugoslavian nations. Enemies and conquerors in the collective imagination get the hierarchy, and geopolitical awareness has clearly entered in the field of culture and historiography. At the top of the hierarchy, as we have emphasized, we have Serbs and Yugoslavs – the Balkans, and after them came the scapegoats, the real ones, but even more timeless, symbolic Balkan enemies “Turks”, Venetians, and then other European nations who do not appreciate “our” merits in protection of civilization.

However, I should point out that Croatia was no exception in that period: one should be honest and accentuate that similar narratives about the people-victims and history of Calvary were established by the ruling elites in Serbia during the nineties; Serbian history is presented as the history of the suffering of the Serbian people and it started with the Battle of Kosovo, and the entire later subsequent history emerged from this central event (Prica, 2004). The official narrative on the arduous path and the victims, included the conquest of “Turks” and the centennial hard life under their rule, long-term uprisings against foreign rulers and the killing of Serbian fighters for other Slavic nations, the Ustasha genocide in World War II, Jasenovac “as the largest Serbian underground city” (M. Bečković), the extermination of Serbs in Kosovo, repression and persecution of the new Croatian government in the nineties, the killing of Serbs in Bosnia, NATO bombing, etc. We should also add incendiary narrative of Serbian missed opportunities for the creation of separate state at the time of Nikola Pašić (the one that would include a substantial part of the other republics and half of the Adriatic coast), and the Serbian heroic suffering in the First World War, which was widely popularized through the novels of Dobrica Ćosić (Obad, 2006). From the late eighties to mid nineties Milošević was usually represented as a saviour, redeemer, the new Lazarus which will again bring together “the heavenly army”, or, in words of Milorad Pavić, au-

thor of the famous novel “Khazar Dictionary”, he is the “Saint Sava of our time” who will “stop the swarming genocide against members of the Eastern Christian civilization” (Luketić, 2013). Bosnian politicians were presented as direct heirs of “Turks” and, therefore, history ceases to be a history, and the battle from the 14th Century entered into the 20th century. “Turks” have remained in Priština as timeless enemies of the Serbs and the construction of type-character “imaginary Turk” is one of the obsessions of discourse on national identity. The writer Momo Kapor sent a message that “Turks are here again. Jihad rides again” (*Smrt ne boli*), while visiting the Serbian positions in Bosnia. All these examples clearly show that there was almost the same pattern of self-victimization in Serbia. For the accuracy of my research, it is important to establish analogy between Croatian and Serbian narratives, because they proved to be fruitful in regards to the forthcoming conclusions.

Narrative of the nation-victims have been established in addition to the SANU Memorandum, the book of Matija Bečković “Kosovo – the most expensive Serbian word”, Danko Popović’s novel “The Book of Milutin”, Ćosić’s Romanesque epic songs about the suffering in history and numerous other engagements of part of the Serbian intelligence (Obad, 2011). These narratives were created or reaffirmed in the works of intellectuals who are not directly involved in the government, and –as previously cited Dimitrijević says – they were also taken by political actors and carried them away as binding national truths. These narratives in Serbia have a starting point in the most important historical event of the Serbian nation and the lush mythologisation of that event, the Kosovo Battle from the 1389. According to this, some historical facts about the event in the process of mythisation have been ignored, such as the fact that the battle was lost, that together with the Serbs, Albanians and other nations fought as well, that the Ottomans in Kosovo later suffered defeat by Hussein Gradašćević (Dragon of Bosnia) (Žanić, 1999). These contradictions

were overcome by specific narratives; historian, academician and one of the signatories of the Memorandum, Dejan Medaković, in interview for the newspaper “Duga”, on the eve of the celebration of 600 anniversary of the Battle of Kosovo said: “The issue of the Battle of Kosovo is not so simple. It is about the battle that cannot be regarded as finally lost to the Serbs, and the final victory for the Turks. This fact has certainly influenced the echo of the battle in the folk consciousness. If we add a rapidly developed church cult of warrior and martyr to this, you will immediately notice the main features of the so-formulated celestial orientation. They created a special spiritual power, strong enough to withstand and endure all the trials of five century long Turkish slavery”.

Kosovo myth was already established during the 19th century, so that in Gazimestan in 1989 the historical narrative of suffering, strength, temptations and revenge was in full swing. Milošević was then politically established and rearticulated everything to which the part of the intelligence issued a consensus, and thus succeeded, as the journalist Aleksandar Tijanić said, “to turn a long-standing apathy of Serbian nation into the Serbian tide” (Luketić, 2013). What was the prevailing attitude of the Serbian cultural and political elite towards Kosovo shows the famed text by Bečković called “Kosovo – the most expensive Serbian word” which was read in the beginning on author’s numerous appearances in Austria, Europe and Yugoslavia during the 1989. As a result, Kosovo is “Serbian New Testament”, event that gives the Serbian history a higher meaning, and to the Serbs an importance of the chosen nation. “Kosovo is the name of our heavenly fatherland, and this fatherland can only lose by spiritual suicide”. Bečković reminds that you cannot escape from Kosovo, because “What you carry in your bones must be based on the bones. The bones are holy to the nation”. The text in many forms of discourse invokes victimology and revitalizes cult of the dead and the warriors’ cult: “The innocent victims are the

greatest spiritual treasure of a nation” (Obad, 2011). This text had the power of the mythical testament that binds contemporary Serbia; his discourse just as the discourse of publication, sentences can be memorized and repeated as national oath or prayer. Bečković words of Kosovo have been announced in an earlier document that incorporates the entire Serbian history and which is rightly seen as a *programme of Serbian nationalism – SANU Memorandum*.

It also establishes the *narrative of historical injustice and the sacrifice*, and outlines program of the Serbian people for the future. In memorandum, Croatian and Kosova nationalism is widely recounted, the narratives about the threat to all Serbs are being constructed and historical justification is interpreted, according to which all Serbs should live in one state. We have to remind to several characteristic fragments where the myth about the nation-victim is evident: “Serbian nation was imposed the sense of historical guilt, and they were the only ones who didn’t resolve the national question, or gotten the state like other nations. Therefore, the first and foremost it’s necessary for the mortgage of historical guilt to be removed from Serbian nation, to officially refute the claim that they had a privileged economic position between the two wars” (Luketić, 2013). We will mention another contemporary example that confirms the relevance of such narratives in the part of the official historiography and culture; it is a text from 2007 by influential historian Milorad Ekmečić called “Historical and strategic basics of Republic of Srpska” which starts in this way: “If we would conditionally accept the conclusion that Republic of Srpska is a genocide state – just like today’s opponents of peace tend to say – then this sentence would have to read that the Republic of Srpska is a genocide state against Serbian people”. Below is Ekmečić’s overview of Serbian history and statehood, reinterpreting current events, augmenting the international diplomatic game to prove “all the work was done over the back of Serbian nation” and that Serbs in Republic of

Srpska are actually lost, because they did not get more territory and they are administratively separated from the mother of Serbia. For Ekmečić, this part of territory is the only one where the Serbs were left to live west of Serbia, everywhere else the genocide was conducted over the Serbian nation. All the historical enemies of Serbs, from “Turks” to Croats, to NATO army, Ekmečić is mentioning in this text, only to be finishing with a lesson for today, and this lesson refers to the influence of international diplomacy in solving the Kosovo status and the Republic of Srpska status. Orthodox Serbs have saved not only the surrounding nations, but the entire Catholic Europe, and now this Catholic Europe is paying them back with diplomatic scams, betraying the Serbian nation and demining its historical role (Kamberović, 2003). All those examples mentioned above clearly show the same pattern which will be useful in further parts of my theoretical analysis.

The nations-victims, reinterpreting the past from the perspective of the present, the elimination of historical time, mythisation, narratives of national history as a story with a certain structure and certain progression, narrative language of antiquity, the origin and authenticity, the authenticity of one’s own culture, insisting on enemy images, creation of distinctive national identity, etc. – were, therefore, all common point of this part of the Balkans in the nineties (Čolović, 2000). All of these social processes, discursive formations and strategies of political elites should be precisely dissected, deconstructed and thus at least partially expose to the numbing forgeries and stereotypes as “constantly wrong conclusions” about this area and its societies and cultures. This is the only possible way to put away today’s discursive violence, to start interpreting concrete policies, actual historical actors, real events and individual cultural texts in all its complexity and with full responsibility, and not as “Balkan atavisms” or “Balkan degenerations”.

In conclusion, Croatian national identity was indeterminate site of political conflict, and only in the later period (app. around

2005) alternative accounts of national identity flourished. It must be stated that the idea that invocations of national identity do not always invoke the same thing, because Croatian national identity may mean different things even in the same time and place. When trying to answer one of the most important questions – *why national identity became so reverberating in 1990s and early 2000s* – I found appropriate answer in fact that it was deeply embedded in social practice. Another major point is that *the construction of national identity in Croatia was always accompanied by narration about the permanent threat of identity*, and that issue has proven to be one of the major obstacles for defining ways to “escape from the Balkans”. Therefore, the politics of Croatia was very clear: to move over as further as they can from the Balkans. In other words, Croatian national identity was based on opposition, on the notions of Sameness and Otherness. *Croatian identity is relational, it has always been in-between Europe and Balkans, and moreover, it has always been constant overlapping, interaction and interchanges between outside- and inside- Balkanism*. Finally, sacralised and elevated to the new level of political and secular icons, *identity became the first and last point of defense of the Croatian nation*.

# MEDIA DISCOURSE AND SOCIOLOGICAL CONTENT ANALYSIS

## ***Media discourse and national identity***

Many authors acknowledge that mass media perform crucial ideological work in representing social relationships and providing display of power (Čičak-Chand & Kumpres, 1998). In doing so, they are important part of the dominant means of ideological production (Such, 2000). What products are the performances of the world, images, descriptions, explanations and frames for understanding of how the world works the way it works? Among other ideological affairs, the media gives us a definition of nationalism, what meaning have images of nationalism and how to understand the problem of nationalism (McQuail, 1994). They provide a rhetorical space for nationalist discourse, and thus to create and reconstruct identity. Accordingly, the national media in each country offers very strong basis for the processes by which

the members of a nation is 'united' and 'homogenized' (Phinney, 1990). Media audiences in different ways refer to creation a sense of who we are – 'we' as citizens, and who we are not (or who is not 'one of us'). In that sense, analyzing media discourse is of crucial importance in analysis of some major aspects of national identity.

Needles to say, many researchers studied the important role of mass media in the historical development of national culture and identity. The most important outcome could be summarized as follows: *Media and cultural creativity play a key role in the re-creation of national, religious, gender and ethnic identity* (Rodin, 1998). For instance, Anderson (1983) in his seminal work argues, from a historical perspective, that capitalism presented in the press was very important in encouraging the creation of national imagined community. The mass distribution of newspapers and novels led to awareness of the steady, anonymous, simultaneous experience of 'national community of readers. The concept of simultaneity in time and clearly defined national territory was crucial for the creation of national consciousness in its modern forms. Newspapers are connecting remote citizens with symbolic discourses of the nation, and the ritual of reading the newspaper and watching the national news on television still represents one of the basic elements of the idea of building national community (Beck, 1992). Printed and electronic media have helped creating national public that had begun to imagine their community as a nation that supports nationalism. Historically, to become a nationally recognized identity is a process through media representations and their media discourse (Giddens, 1996). Various identity created in the nineties has become one of the concepts that provide a framework to intellectual debates. Sociologists, anthropologists, political scientists, psychologists, geographers, historians, philosophers – it seems that everyone has, in various discourses, something to say about it: the discussion about its constituency of the modern to its postmodern denial, the various attempts to deconstruct gender feminism conventions of

society up to the confusion about the resurrection of nationalism and ethnicity as a significant political force.

As I already indicated in the context of the former Yugoslavia, *neither political elites nor their discourse would not have been so influential without intermediary* and sometimes reinforcing function of the *press, radio and television*. All authors are showing continued ethno-national character of reporting in newspapers. For example, in two articles in the empirical part of the research that deal with cases relating to Bosnia-Herzegovina (Dobrovoljačka and Karadžić), where the main axis of the conflict is between the Bosniak and Serbian interpretation of events, the authors shows that the reporting forms are most focused on ethno-national basis, and that are associated with dominant political discourse in these ethnic groups (Cotter, 2003). Amer Džihana and Sanela Hodžić analyze media coverage of the arrest and trial of Radovan Karadžić, the former Bosnian Serb leader, who is accused of war crimes committed during the war in Bosnia-Herzegovina from 1992 to 1995. They note that the nationalist journalist reporting represents dominant paradigm in reporting on events which there is consensus on the level of ethno-national elites, but also that there are major differences between the Bosnian, Serbian and Croatian political elite (Luketić, 2013).

The explanation is that *media operates within specific ethno-national context* within which there is a clear definition of what is considered legitimate controversy, consensus and biases. Therefore, when it comes to the Karadžić case, homogeneity Bosniak political elite, relative divisions among Serbian elites and dissociation of Croatian elites can be observed in media discourses in daily papers that address the Bosniak, Serbian or Croatian readers. It is clear that the media are not neutral mediators. Each medium occupies a position in the ideological and political structure of a given society, which determines approach to events. The media does not describe any recorded informational events passively, but actively reconstruct, largely on the basis

of their ideological affiliation. As a result, media building events are treated as single message ideology. The media in this way significantly wider range of action of ideology, because they allow the transfer of symbolic forms and potentially unlimited audience. If ideology is conceived as collection of ways in which meaning is transmitted by symbolic forms that serves to establish and maintain relations of power and domination (Van Dijk, 1993), it is clear that the mass media have huge influence on the propagation and spread of ideological phenomena.

*Media discourse is in this case a place for the production and dissemination of ideology.* For example, taking into account the value of the news media in favor of stories about negative events, since such stories are stories about negative events, since such stories are generally better remembered. This frame is then contributes to the presentation of 'us' and 'them' as competing social forces in the construction of media discourse. Maybe this symbolic power of the media can explain their distinctive role in reproduction of (ethno-national) ideology (Van Dijk, 1993). For example, Predrag Marković and Katarina Šubašić refer to this idea in their analysis of the Vukovar case.

Ethno-political character in these two countries creates a context within which a fair trial does not expect convicts in their courts. Because of this direct rejection of justice carried out by international tribunal, the trial is not considered particularly important for the media. Basic standards of reporting in all four analysed newspapers reproduce a clear distinction between *us* and *them*. As noted by some authors, expected impulsive war propaganda has exclusivity with which 'our' soldiers are unfairly branded as heroes and 'their' as insufficiently condemned demons. On the other hand, selection of quotes from the courtroom and the choice of words used in reporting illustrate the ideology of the two countries. As the above-mentioned authors say: the dominant media discourse in the case of 'Vukovar Three' reflected the wider social and political context in which the trial took place,

both in Croatia and Serbia. The official Croatian policy under which Vukovar became symbol of Homeland Defense, the largest scaffold due to Serbian aggression, crime of crimes whose perpetrators deserve only the maximum penalty, was reflected in the way of reporting on the trial of three former Yugoslav officers, where they are portrayed as the most prominent representatives of the Serbian aggressor, and neglected their affiliation to the former Yugoslav army. On the other hand, authors argue that in Serbia “trial and judgment” (especially the second instance) were perceived as anti-Serb and functional evidence that the ICTY political court was established to be unfair to judge the Serbs.

To summarize, I would conclude that in the process of social reproduction *media perform function that is both ideological and political*. Ideologically, the media constantly process materials that are produced in the social life in order to incorporate them into a single ideological system. In other words, the media help in forming the ideological structure of the society in which it works and influence on it. Politically, the media is trying to show the world to others, i.e. consumers of media products. To the extent that the ideology associated with the social and material practices in which originate from them and express them, the media inevitably has political influence in social reproduction (Danesi, 2002). Therefore, dominant media discourse forms the struggle for representation, and they in turn influence the course of events. More specifically, the media affect the power relations within society, and the power relations affect them in return, which means that media discourses offer fertile ground for analysis-oriented ideological discourse. The main research of media discourse in recent years has been focused on the broad framework of critical discourse analysis, which deals with various topics, such as the projection of power through discourse, discovering examples of domination and inequality in discourse, discourse and ideological support of connectivity discourse with social change (Van Dijk, 1993) which emphasize the discursive

nature of representation, particularly instructive in this regard. Hall defines media discourse as “mental frameworks – the languages, concepts, categories, images, thoughts, and systems of representation – that set different classes and social groups in order to reveal the meaning and order miscalculated and made understandable to the way in which society works” (Hall & Gay 1998).

These mental frameworks serve as milestones in the society in which we live and they are very important for cognitive survival in everyday life. Therefore, in order to determine the ideology of any expression one should look at *how* it is presented and the reality that the attitudes, values, beliefs, prejudices and perspectives are encoded in the text. According to Van Dijk (1993) it represents ideological ‘system of ideas’ and therefore occupies special place in the field of symbolic thought and belief, appearing in the form of ‘knowledge’.

Moreover, ideologies are clearly social and generally (though not always) associated with group interests, conflicts or fights. They can serve to legitimize power and domination, or may represent social problems and contradictions. They also might be associated with social class and other social groups, as well as with institutions, organizations and other forms of social structure. Finally, the concept of ideology can be linked to the use of language, as can be seen in the claim that ideology is typically expressed and reproduced in the language and semiotic systems, as well as through them. The primary function of ideology in society, such as concealing, tampering and so on, has a form of discursive social action (Fabrio, 1994). Key meanings that can be attributed to the ideology of the totality of social awareness of different forms of social factors (class, nation, state, community groups, organizations, etc.) and specific phenomena in social consciousness is a consequence of effects of social factors on knowledge.

Accordingly, the language performs key role in expressing, changing and especially in reproducing ideology. However, the

language is not used in the vacuum without context. In fact, it is used in the context of the discourse that is being built within the ideology of social systems and institutions (Stanković-Pejnović, 2010). Given that language operates within this social dimension, it reflects and builds ideology. Therefore, this idea addresses the specific national contexts and their role in shaping the media presentation of traumatic past. I focused attention on the structural differences between national ideologies in a variety of media systems, while highlighting the differences between discursive forms reproduction of nationalist ideology (Todorova, 1999). From this point we see that the media serve its own and definitely different “truth” of national group which certainly has the effect of *deepening the gap of hatred and intolerance*.

These strategies allow the media to settle reporting in quite different contexts. On some facts they cannot speak and they are completely omitted, while another are highlighted; some are unimaginable, some answers are given, and some are omitted. The same pattern emerged in the post-war reporting on the investigation of the Dobrovoljačka case, with the assessment that the main arguments of both sides aimed at proving the politicization of legislation in these two countries. Erjavec shows that the media battle leads not only about the interpretation of history, but also about the current problems and arguments between the two countries. The exception that Erjavec found is reporting on independent newspaper, the daily newspaper in Banja Luka, which gives both parties the opportunity to present their view of the events. These results, I stoutly believe, confirm Jambrešić's (2004) argument about the relationship between media discourse and ideology. Mass circulation and sharing among group ideologies assume communication, i.e. express or play in the media. To discover the process of playing, we should first understand that the ideological conflicts among different types of nationalism must be analyzed within their specific historical, political and cultural framework (White, 1990). What connects

the nationalism in these areas is the fact that they are sharing the similarities of promoting of national culture and state construction.

### ***The conception of media and mass communication***

As I previously pointed out in regards to understanding media in wider context, socially oriented theory of communication primarily focuses on the function of *transposition*, which is actually seen as a function of reshaping public opinion and the image of reality. It highlights the role of media as active agent in the production of symbols and meanings that help us in defining the key characteristics of reality (Berger & Luckmann, 1966). The globalized world of the 21st century lives in the rhythm which is imposed by mass media. According to Jay and Jennings (1995) and in accordance with the media communications in the information society, media is divided to the mass media, personal media and telecommunications media, classifying newspaper along with magazines, books, radio, film and television, as mass media.

In the context of this research, one should clearly emphasize that the role of mass media is different, just like any given media is different, whether printed or electronic, private or public, centralized or decentralized. In developing and shaping our culture, this role is often under-emphasized, even though media are *important means of shaping personal and social cultural identity*. Journalists themselves are in a position to critically evaluate media content, which, according to market and commercial laws, impose a global culture and styles, idols and myths (Lance, 1991). According to Hromadžić (2010), the media are one of the key industries of today, in which revolves a lot of money and they're looking for their piece of the pie, or profit, in a world where the mentioned criterion is the most important: the criterion of profit. In the context of media, it is essential to understand some concepts that are trying to define it - especially in "infotainment" and "infomercial".

The primary function of the media is *labelling* or construction of reality. The concept of mass communication designates one aspect of communicative practices within which, by manipulating the symbols of meaning, educated messages are spread in space and time through mass medium, through instruments of mass diffusion of information intended to the recipients. Mass communication differs from interpersonal communication in the way that the process of symbolic organization of messages and the act of their intervention in space and time is realized through mass medium, i.e. technologies of mass diffusion.

The media represent one of the most important phenomena of mass society. They are present in all areas of social life; they are intertwined with politics, sports, education, family and entertainment, public and private life. Mass media influence the creation and *shaping of public opinion*, they represent the instruments of access to knowledge on which depend the development and status of large number of social activities (Stromberg, 2004). A unique definition of media doesn't exist. Just like in the case of information and communication, here we are facing the whole vocabulary of expressions which was constantly enriched over the last few decades. These terms were sometimes referred to comprehensive concepts, very distant from each other. From the Latin word *medium*, "middle", "center" (*medium dei*,

"midday"), and through the meaning of "mediator", "mediators" (*paci medium se offert*, "it's offered to be the mediator of peace"), we come to the rediscovered term by the Anglo-Saxons, which have introduced the term "mass media" as a means of mass communication. However, all definitions in their diversity generally emphasize the ultimate goal of the media, which includes communication (Koković, 2007). Subsequently, Francis Bal (1997) defines media as technical equipment that allows people to communicate and transfer thoughts, no matter what is their form or their ultimate goal.

The term "media" is broader than the term "mass communication media". It is variously interpreted with regard to

the scientific field or area of social action. In the communication sciences, media is essentially technical or physical means of converting messages into signal that can be transmitted by a channel. McLuhan (1966) differentiates presentation media (voice, face, body), which are limited to “here” and “now” because the media is a communicator itself; representational media (books, paintings, photographs), which are used in cultural and aesthetic conventions for creating communication papers and certain “discourse”; mechanical (telephone, radio, television), which are transmitting both presentational and representational media, and the categories are derived on the basis of differences.

At this point I will introduce the concept of discourse and its relevance in regards to media analysis. According to Van Dijk (1988), the concept of media is somehow equated with the notion of discourse, which is wider, but possible interpretation. The media comes from the Latin word “medius” which means “middle”, and it represents the middle or set of conditions in which something happens, the person which may be a mediator between something and someone in spiritualistic and similar events, a substance that is carrier of energy in any particular work process or in a spiritual sense, and as a mean of mass communication. Communication science and media literacy, as part of the discipline are investigating the notion of media and its meaning in the system of mass communication. Morris Janowitz has defined the mass communication as a term that encompasses institutions (mass media – print, radio, television, film) and the techniques by which specialized groups use technological means to disseminate symbolic content to a broad and diverse widespread audience (Pawson, 1995).

Mass media are social institutions that *impartially, currently and publicly* mediate large, heterogeneous and diverse communion. They are the forum of a public word where the process of consensus between the public authorities and the public is being wrapped (Volčič, 2001). In democratic societies, as

intermediaries between the government and the public, the media should be oversight of government and they should inform the public about relevant issues in the community, in order to properly form public opinion of citizens, taking into account their ideology which is inherent in the media as well as any other social discourse, and their form which does not reflect the reality, but constructs it (Zgrabljic, 2003). Mass communication is interested in sources and recipients, functions and objectives, channels and codes, context and references, as well as the consequences of communication, taking into account that each medium encodes reality in a different way and by doing this it affects the content of the message which is being communicated (Danesi, 2002). Media is not only an envelope that carries a letter, but it is a part of that letter, says Carpenter (1991) paraphrasing McLuhan's famous thesis "The medium is the message". Every medium of mass communication contains other media as well (presentation media – voice and speech – or representational media of images which are contained in the mechanical media, e.g. radio, television). These media shape primary media, such as a sculptor shapes and restructures the stone or clay from which he shapes the statue.

Private speech in the media becomes a public speech and new medium. Media vary in strength of expression, but also in the impact on the audience. Although no media has superseded or abolished some of the earlier, the audience finds each of them interesting in a different way and they all meet their needs in a different way, too. The most used and most influential is television. Television is an audio-visual medium of a very complex technology and highly complex work organization, of global nature, and it is difficult to set a national limit to it, because, as the code they don't use just language (speech), but also a picture, which is universal. Because of the constant threat of political control, extensive regulation of this media is carried out, both in the international and national levels (Volčić, 2001). However,

er, in the following paragraphs I will make place for argument which gives primacy to the newspapers instead of television. It is due to the fact, I argue, that the former provides much clearer picture when analyzing media discourse within the context of the construction of national identity.

Newspapers, the first medium of mass communication in the modern conception, are among the print media such as poster, book, comic, etc., but the newspapers differ from them in terms of regularity and frequency of publication, information content, paid advertisements and commercials. Social and economic history of newspapers slightly differs from country to country. What they have in common is the fact that newspapers operate on the basis of sales and advertisements. So the publishing is a law which subordinates all others: sensationalism has become the driving force and the way how to achieve the circulation. Media literacy teaches the history and the development of newspapers, graphical planning, genres, and economic principles of conduct, ethics and issues of censorship and editorial autonomy. With the advent of computers, new technology and systems have enabled a re-conceptualization of social and cultural communication. Reception of media content was democratized and individualized, the number of possible forms of communication has increased (e-mail, Web pages), the speed of information flow from the source to the recipient is greater, but also the speed of obsolescence of information, and at the same time, with this medium *the trust in media as a reliable source of information has completely and irreversibly been lost*. This is important fact in relation to the analysis of printed media in general, and refers not only to general notion of reliability in media, but also on the problem of reliance in the newspapers articles.

In the previous chapter I tried to point out importance of stereotypes in shaping mental images on Others. Stereotypes are often not completely untrue, but they can be proved only by empirical research. *Why are stereotypes an important part of*

*media messages* and content for media literacy? Because they can be form of direct transmission of lies or half-truths that are not always pleasurable, may not be the only carriers of something that is racist, nationalist, etc. view on the world, but they can maintain, reinforce and promote this kind of opinion (McQuail, 1994). I will now more focus on the analysis of technological, cultural, social, political and economic aspects of media, analysis of the media text, on meanings that belong to scientific field of mass communication which has its roots deeply embedded in Croatia and its notion of identity. It is one of the youngest disciplines of social sciences and its boundaries are set only to divide (the path of development of all scientific disciplines is precisely the separation of their subjects and methods from the discipline from which they originated) but they still make bridges to the social sciences and humanities disciplines from which they originated and which derive from research methods (good reference on this issue is in: Zgrabljic, 2003). Mass communication as a scientific discipline that studies media was institutionalized in the 1940s in the United States by establishing undergraduate and later, graduate and post-doctoral studies in journalism and mass communication and the establishment of scientific journals and professional associations (Potter, 2012). However, the intellectual roots of media studies are broader and older than that. Theorists generally agree that a coherent history of media studies has not yet been written, and at the international level there are more open debates about whether it is about the established scientific discipline or just the scientific research field, and if there is one, two or more paradigmatic approaches in the study of mass communication and what are the criteria for inclusion or exclusion from the disciplinary fields and for its systematization (McLuhan, 1997). Katz et. al. (2003) in the “canons” field of media studies appropriately included texts of authors who are members of Chicago school, where it all began; Columbia, known for its research in persuasion and gratification; Frankfurt, pro-

verbial home of the critical school of media; Toronto, famous for technological determinism, and British cultural studies which we might call Birmingham, if their impact is not as widespread throughout Britain. Here, it's still missing at least the French and Swiss contribution of semiotic beginnings of media studies. From the very beginning of the development of interest in media and communication theory and research of media and mass communications we have dealt with two topics: communication flow (network for the diffusion of information, information content, the influence of the media, media technology as forming or participating factor) and the meaning of communication (selectivity audience, satisfying the needs of the audience, the use of media and their content, media or cultural text, or read media messages, decoding the message or context) (Black & Bryant 1995).

Studies of media regulation and media industry in the entire analyzed period analyzed in this book were the most represented in the interpretive paradigm, studies of the effects of individual media analysis of media content and media audiences in the paradigm of the social sciences, while from the perspective of critical paradigm most research processed media are content and social consequences of media (Rodman, 1993). Four most used definitions from the perspective of the social sciences are the following theories: the theory of defining the agenda, the use of media to satisfy the needs, cultivation theory and the theory of diffusion of innovations (Carpenter, 1991). In the 50's the understanding of the prevailing influence of the media was conceived, that is, communication technologies on the character of society, by which the Toronto School of Mass Communication and its representatives Harold Innis and Marshall McLuhan were known. Research orientation that emphasizes the importance of communication is particularly important in European research. After Frankfurt School, which in 1930 began a critical analysis of media in industrialized culture, the interest in media and communication occurs in 1960s in France, and British cultural studies

after their formation in the 1970s. Media studies which highlight text and its understanding in their approach are an offshoot of British cultural studies (Rodman, 1993). In addition, according to McQuail (2007) there are three main aspects of media texts which grew out of cultural studies: construction, performance and reception. In analyzing the structure of the text, with questions that are routed directly to the text, such as labeling issues, representation and genre, they include the analysis of economic and political aspects of media/cultural industries. The aspect of performance focuses on the relationship between authors and performers to an imaginary audience, and includes analysis of selected roles that can be applied to all media program groups or genres, from reality to fiction or entertainment.

### ***The theory of discourse analysis***

Today, according to Cotter (Katz et al., 2003), we can distinguish main approaches to the study of media discourse: discourse analysis and sociolinguistic research. While in following chapters discourse analysis will be the primary tool, we cannot overlook other approaches because they intermingle and supplements. Thus, the experts often directed at sociolinguistic research to characterize the soft dimension of media speech such as variations and style, or reported to us on the level of speech communications such as underlying structure of speech and conversation. “Non-linguistic” studies involve the so-called political analysis (policy analysis) of communication and cultural studies (Fairclough, 1992). Although, in this context, we use the terms of the analysis of media discourse, researchers are still managing cross-disciplinary matrix and their efforts can be grouped into several categories. For further elaboration, the primary methods of analysis are as follows (Kintsch & Van Dijk, 1978): 1. Critical-analytical (discourse analysis approach); 2. Narrative-pragmatic (discourse analysis

approach and sociolinguistics), 3. Comparative cross-cultural (access and sociolinguistics and discourse analysis), and 4. Media and communication studies (non-linguistic approach). Different approaches and methods are covering some of the main analytical areas, often focusing on the following primary themes: narrative or sociolinguistic elements that are formed within the media discourse (“news talk”); implications that arise due to the length of the interview or reports; shaping power, propaganda and ideology within each press; media influence on the polarization of social imbalances and inequalities of particular marginalized groups, etc. (Connolly, 1974).

Orientation towards a wide audience is the second move of textually focused analysis of media and many researchers are aware that the theoretical position in analysis of media discourse must necessarily take into account the audience to which the certain content is meant for. Different linguists and theorists offer different conceptualization of the audience and its role in the construction of media reality. In socio-constructivist approach, the audience is seen as part of the mechanism of conversation (Foucault, 1981). This is in sharp contrast to the more conventional assumptions about mass communication, which is based on active sender and passive recipient of information. The position of the audience is all the more notable as the main element of the constructivist paradigm of research that shapes the media reality (Katz et al. 2003). Furthermore, the ubiquity of media language and its availability makes it a natural source of data for linguists interested in the components of language and speech as well as for experts in the assessment of the effects of language in a specific socio-cultural environment. Newspapers and other conventional, yet contemporary media, which carry large amounts of information, are very fruitful ground for the analysis of media discourse and other media research (Fairclough, 1992). During the study of data structures Cotter pays special attention to the four constituent elements that outline the type of textual

analysis. These are (Cotter, (2003)): situational context; function; content, and data form. This work is example of multidisciplinary constructivist approach within which text has contextual, behavioral, and normative character.

One of the most often used methods is deconstruction, which means attempts for texts or other media material to structurally breakdown in order to understand the way in which they are constructed with the aim to present certain media and their effects. Deconstruction, in Derrida's sense of the term, means testing texts that deals with one particular area or scientific discipline, with the purpose to reveal internal inconsistencies "hidden" in the texts and it draws attention to the absent or suppressed meanings to understand the way on which our texts state that we accept the assumptions contained in them. For example, Chun (2002) points out that the traditional "passive" language media research report ignores role and status of researcher and researched subject. Authority of an "absent" researcher is behind every passive text construction. It is he who decides on the hypotheses and research methods and conclusions extracted from the results. This research aims to improve the scientific work and highlight the authenticity and credibility of the empirical material without causing chaos and a large amount of measurement errors. Feeling that the researcher is absent contributes to the construction of the image that is necessary to traditional notions of methodology, and Squire shows it in the deconstruction of media texts. Michael Billig deconstructs texts and descriptions of analyzing their rhetorical nature (Black & Bryant, 1995). He claims that the media texts are written and spoken, as well as the everyday conversations of ordinary people, and they are shaped by using rhetorical means. Analysis of rhetoric, consequently, explores all the ways of using language means by which media researcher presents reasoned description. And descriptions are always placed in the context of public debate.

Media data enrich testing of several traditional parameters of speech, and often offer “third alternative” to standard dichotomy such as continuity of spoken and written interviews and private language (Volčič, 2001). Media research offers a challenge for someone who a priori assumes that the conversation could occur between the written or spoken modes of communication. Similarly, Cotter notes that routine intonation of radio news can be seen as a way of denoting the listener’s expectations in the context of conversation as part of an interpretive community (Cotter, 2003). Unique features of the distribution of speech appear in other media speeches, showing part of the social and textual meaning implied in speech level. The analysis of the spoken level is done to help emphasize key properties and behavior of the language in the news. Media creates unique form of speech and language that enriches our understanding of language and speech. In doing so, the narrative structure and language style are two creative areas of analysis which produce unique results when the media data are being thoroughly analyzed (Danesi, 2002).

Another form of deconstruction of media text is theoretically associated with the kind of post-structuralist theory which relies on Foucault’s notion of language genealogy. This kind of deconstruction examines the development of the current modes of communication, development of existing discourses and representations of people in the media to show how it came to the construction of the current “truth”, how they are maintained and what power relations are they carrying with them (Black & Bryant, 1995). This second form of deconstruction is associated with parsing discourse, which means testing predominant discourse, like gender, sexuality, political marginalization, etc., regarding identity and power relations. This may involve determining the position of subject offered by media discourses and examining the implications of these items which they have in relation to identity and political sense. Finally it should be noted that socio-constructivist theoretical point of view does not necessarily

imply the use of discourse analysis in the study, even as someone who used discourse analysis may not necessarily be social constructivists (Katz et al, 2003). Social constructivism as disjointed collection of theoretical perspectives and discourse analysis, as one of the approaches in the study of media, does not necessarily go hand in hand (Rodman, 1993). Social constructivism can be quite successfully used by other qualitative and quantitative research methods outside the context of discourse analysis as one of the prototypes of qualitative data analysis.

Overall, discourse analysis aims to expose general things in the individual things, so the very notion of context seeks subject-ed generalization. The discipline is mostly concerned with hegemonic, institutional practices, canons, and discursive formations that occur in the principle of exclusion dividing subjective factors and the establishment of linguistic repertoire of clichés. Discourse analytic insights should therefore be understood *conditionally*, and *I argue that we should integrate them into the wider space of sociological and psychological approach to the funded discursive processes*. This concept should be complete and deepen the study of cultural and historical circumstances surrounding the occurrence of the statements and actual moment of reading (Martins, 1974). It is difficult or even impossible today in any sphere of humanist thought to bypass the notion of discourse; it increasingly functions not only as a link between the theoretical and practically oriented approach (for example, in philological domain, between theories of language/literature and pragmalinguistic/literary interpretation), but also as the most versatile multi-purpose base of various disciplinary interests: philosophical, psychological, sociological, historiographical, cultural... Multidisciplinary spread of this idea is keeping us further and further away from general dimensions contained in the meaning of the word discourse, which itself escapes being firmly defining, ranging from language to language, and from one dictionary definitions to other even when it comes to the same language (Kintsch & Van Dijk, 1978).

For instance, in French, discourse primarily refers to the term spontaneous speech; in English, we note shift of the focus on communication, but also formal moment and discourse will be defined as discourse (theme focused) conversation, especially the formal nature. The etymological dimension warns of evolutionary inconsistency in the domain of word meaning discourse, given that Latin *discurrere*, meaning ‘run around’, ‘veer off course’, which does not suggest orientation or solid form, but meander and improvisation. The term *discourse*, therefore, at the level of the involved semantic meaning extends to the poles of internal semantic opposites, and as such represents etymological oxymoron. This is its general characteristic; it appears, according to the very term, as perhaps the best point of syntagmatic circuits within which we find it. Certainly, written discourse, author discourse, narrative discourse, the unity of discourse, the discourse of advertising discourse differences, ideological discourse, discourse formations, discourse strategies, subconscious discourse, the discourse of the epoch, the discourse of culture etc. are springing up with very different starting points of definition (Flick, 2009).

It is clear that term discourse refers to the text and non-text; speech and writing; identification characteristics of speech and differentiators; specific statement, text type or identification strategy; everything that constitutes the meaning and finds its reflection in such statement; historical formation as a set of distinctive linguistic and non-linguistic medals; ideological schemes, conditional demarcation, expansion and contradictions; symbolic interaction and products semiosis in general; textualisation subconscious; processes of understanding, reinterpretations and redistribution of meaning, etc. (as interpreted in: Potter, 2012). Different levels of understanding of discourse, the divergence of approaches, as well as shifts in conditional specific disciplinary and thematic interests result in openness and adapting spreading cognitive horizons, but often diffusivity, fogginess and ambiguities (Sarbin, 1986).

Sarah Mills in the occasion of the latter accepts uneasy task of demarcation boundaries of meaning discourse focusing three broad sense-usable contexts, cultural theory (including the relationships between cultural, critical and literary theory), linguistics and critical linguistics/social psychology (Mills, 2001). Author pays attention to the relationship between language, discourse and ideology in the pursuit of least conditional semantic delimitation of the scope of these highly intertwined and interdependent concepts; interested in the issues of discourse structure, moving from structuralist conceptualization of regularity within discourse towards poststructuralist vision 'disorder' that indicates the relevance of relations between feminist theory and discourse theory, especially from the aspect of discourse and social/political context; monitor progress in the understanding of discourse related to the interpretation of its representational function, and in this regard, the 'alterisation', i.e. the establishment of Otherness (Othering) within the colonial and post-colonial theory environment, including the psychoanalytic framework; identifying shifts in the lap of linguistics which transcends the traditional focus on individual interests linguistic interaction in direct context, in terms of expanding to global discourse and social structures, as well as the achievements of critical-linguistic and socio-psychological orientation. She appropriately adhered to the view that discourse is ideological scene of action, but not in itself an ideological formation. Here, Mills is distinctly guided by Foucault's claims relating to discourse which transmits and produces power; that supports, but also undermines and exposes. In line with this, the author advocates *distinction between the concepts of ideology and discourse*, where the latter is interpreted as a far more complex formation that exceeds the objectives, as well as the immediate significance of individual (ideologically motivated) press strategy.

Therefore, on the general level she deals with the issues of discourse constituents (group discourse or episteme; stated

groups that constitute a particular discourse formations, archive or group of rules within a given period and a given society defines boundaries of expressiveness, maintaining, memories and reactivation of discourse; exclusion discourse, mainly carried out by relying on structuralist phase of deliberations of Foucault and Barthes. Her claim that feminist theory significantly modified the idea of discourse by clearer notion of inclusion in the social context and questioning the possibilities of negotiations with the discursive structures, Sarah Mills (2001) bases on the concept of destabilization of the self that is derived from the analysis of Butler (1990) and Diane Fuss (1990), as well as from the author's own earlier deliberations on issues of instability of the subject and its relocation from one position to another, and thus the relationship of discourse and conflicts as factors constant discourse changes. In discussing the effects of Otherness on society, which is central importance in regards to this research, Sarah Mills also points out possible political focus of discourse theory, referring in particular to the analysis of Edward Said, Peter Hulme and Mary Louise Pratt (colonial discourse theory), but also on the post-colonial discourse theory (mainly based on psychoanalytic theory) exemplified by the authors such as Homi Bhabha and Gayatri Spivak, as well as the criticism of Said's settings related to issues of discourse and representation. The political effect of colonial texts by Said (Azaryalm, 1999) reflected in the actions of 'alterisation' (repetitive use of certain groups of discourse practices and policies, with the effect of the negative impressions of the colonized countries in light of the non-British, anomalous otherness). Said's interpretation alterise compactness colonial discourse critical of postcolonial theorists such as Gayatri Spivak reference to the existence of voice 'subaltern subject' in the colonial text hidden behind the dominant messages featured colonial entity, or in the texts of nothing less obvious elite representatives of the colonized culture (Boyd & Iversen, 1979). I argue that the pattern described above well fits into my research since,

as I already stated, there are many links that connects patterns of colonialist discourse and Otherness which are clearly visible in the context of “Balkanism” and its Otherness.

*I believe that the notion exemplified in Gayatri Spivak’s work can be used as the same pattern for the analysis of Balkanistic discourse, because it extends discursive theoretical vision to identify complex polyphony of discourse, made up of explicit, but also implicit position of the speech with which the texts include ‘silent’ subjects. Display of colonial powers as pathological factors of alterisation (Bhabha) belongs to the founded psychoanalytic view of the subject, and at this point, Mills brings into question discourse-theoretical productivity of this approach which, according to her, is mostly concerned with display of action pathologically disturbed individuals, obscene science-theoretical generalization (Mills, 2001).*

This last distinction implies that, conditionally distinguish area that is called *discourse analysis* from the area of *theory of discourse* where the first approach primarily indicates interest in linguistic analysis of discourse units above the sentence level, is basically interested in the function of individual units in a particular context, while the other is no less dedicated analysis of the text, but provides a theoretical extension in the direction of understanding collusion between language and the broader social and political context and, as intertextual and interdiscursive contextualization to some testimonies, shows transparent types of discourse through linguistic practice. *This is operative pattern which I will partially employ in chapter on empirical research, i.e. in the methodological part of this thesis.*

Following genesis of the idea of discourse on parallel plans of various theoretical considerations, Sarah Mills faces overlapping, with ambiguities and conceptual collisions, sometimes succumbing to them which with its complexity and dispersity generates the central problem of the whole discussion, but certainly the effect is clearly in establishing theoretical framework for further study. I argue that her contribution is particularly use-

ful when it comes to identifying the starting point from which more recently has grown established interdisciplinary field that aims to unify the systematic expressed problematic spectrum, as well as a higher level of congruency in the methodological approach to discourse topics – the study of discourse (discourse studies). On the other hand, as I will in details analyze in this text, the problem of discourse studies presented by van Dijk brings together the work of many international artists that illustrate the range of multidisciplinary fields. It is organized and focused effort to consolidate and, as far as possible, homogenize diverse and seemingly divergent starting points around discourse as central idea. Combining the momentum here was being read in highlighting the discourse structure and a process (Discourse as Structure and Process), or as sites of social interaction (Discourse as Social Interaction). Two titles of prominent thesis through individual contributions to these two editions largely correspond with the theoretical heritage derived from one side of the humanities and psychology (meaning the interest in the verbal structure and cognitive processes), and on the other hand most of the sociology supported by background distinctly in social sciences. It should, however, be noted that the point is in observing systematic attempt to introduce integrative moment, not only at the level of declaration editor who found himself in the essay, but also on the level of integration of methodological procedures, in particular texts directly implemented, as well as the subject matter (Van Dijk, 1993). In the same year as van Dijk editions (1993) in the field of discourse studies appears not less interesting book by Robert de Beaugrande in which the author lays the foundation of the science of text and discourse, and in the liberal spirit of opening access to knowledge and society, from position of (mostly) cognitive theory of communication. By conducting detailed and sophisticated analysis, de Beaugrande explains the genesis shift of interest from the language as artificially separated abstract entity (the traditional philological-vision), according to its

operational domain, where it becomes the object of a multi- and trans-disciplinary interest (semiotics, ethnography, anthropology, and social anthropology, sociology, social psychology, psycholinguistics, cognitive psychology, systems theory and cybernetics, information science). This is the shift where he explains the genesis of the structuralist and poststructuralist thought, with special emphasis on the role of deconstruction, theoretical interest in psychoanalysis, Marxist thought and feminism as a base from which a new, so-called, critical discourse analysis is born (“critical discourse analysis”) in conjunction with the post-industrial revolution trend knowledge (Potter, 2012).

In regards to the very concept of discourse studies, I believe that focusing on these two major approaches, it is clear that they mainly corresponds to the critical-linguistic, and socio-psychological orientation in the study of discourse phenomena, that which Sarah Mills called *discourse-theoretical*, which includes linguistic-analytical torque. The delimitation of the *analysis* and the *theory* of discourse suggests, as a result, the most essential components from which discourse study is born, the specific according to the effort to situate textual analysis of the rich theoretical context related to the notion of discourse, but equally by the fact that theoretical thought is not deprived of its practical dimension that can offer a view of linguistic discourse practices (which was made clear in: Van Dijk, 1993).

This impetus is gathering all touched vistas in discourse-study critical to this debate, and not only because it marks a turning point when it comes to studies of discourse formations, their relationship to language and social environment, according to the ideological lines of force and cognitive processes, but also as a new base of understanding forms and manifestations of textual discourse practices within particular domains of discourse or, more specifically, the types of discourse. This leads to the questioning of traditional approaches to issues of style in a whole range of possible discourse pieces in various contexts

(Michelson & Vliet, 2002). The introduction of integrative analytical and theoretical torque functions as a possible basis for the analysis of stylistic signs that might be interested in the specific language of strategy and design equally as discourse analysis; modelative-cultural processes that drive language use; aesthetic and pragmatic effects in the process of reception of textual meanings and their ensuing correlation of explicit and implicit goals of the speaker; textual polyphony direct and disinterred subjects; ideological and other agents as created, and suppressed meanings; cognitive models that allow the process of reception and social framework in which the meaning fit or they are torn. Overcoming the aforementioned dichotomy in the lap of discourse study consequently shows as fertile ground for the (re)constitution of stylistics as discipline which is in its overall development characterized by seemingly irreconcilable duality between the interests of linguistic expression on the one hand, and of the broader (social, ideological, humanistic, aesthetic, cultural) contextualising texts on the other hand. Discourse-based stylistics, thanks to the range of areas in which it is situated, acquires possible roof position against certain stylistic orientation (feminist, pedagogical, functional, etc.) as well as instruments for conducting textual analysis of the immediate conversational/genre context in regard to the specific linguistic components of the observed texts (Pawson, 1995).

Locating the stylistics of discourse studies therefore provides methodological basis for overcoming the traditional gap between the arbitrariness of aesthetic judgments and sterility of normative grammar since such positioning of the discipline by itself leads all domains involved in an interactive relationship with the totality of reality as the totality of language at all levels of its operation. Literary text that becomes the object of study of all relations involved in it (the ideological-political to those aesthetic and poetic, with the use of temporal and spatial parameters that determine the actual text), provides the basis for

a variety of reading materials in the language of the relations between the multitude of linguistic and textual, social, cultural, psychological and other circumstances (Pawson, 1995). Reading and interpretation of relevant (inter)text and outer text relations becomes a labeled method which we could call *discourse-analytical* where the variability in its implementation mainly concerns the identification of the relevant variable relationships that become the subject of scientific interest, not isolated judgments (normative grammar with respect to the language system, or aesthetic) in the text of the language component. The effects are interpreted as the consequential of activated relational forces, where the style alone could be interpreted as the correlation between the specific text and the totality of discourse upon its applicable parameters (Potter, 2012). Although conversation analysis is named as a starting point, the empirical focus is more on the content of talk, its subject matter and with its social rather than linguistic organization. This allows the analysis of psychological phenomena like memory and cognition as social, and above all, discursive phenomena. Special emphasis is on the construction of versions of the events in reports and presentations. The “interpretative repertoires”, which are used in such constructions, are analyzed. Discourse analytic procedures refer not only to everyday conversations, but also to other sorts of data such as interviews or media reports (Potter, 2012). Van Dijk (1988) hence appropriately argues that the *analysis of journalistic discourse should be guided by the following principles*: a) the analysis goes from top to bottom, or from larger to smaller structures; b) taking into account the importance of information; c) the cyclical presentation of information. In other words, major events and participants are placed at the beginning, followed by details of the main participants, less important the identity of the participants, components, conditions, and consequences of the way of the event, details of the place and time, etc. In essence, this is called principle inverted pyramid, which is the term used in

the journalistic jargon. Several authors dealt with the schematic organization of newspaper articles.

In my research, I will mostly follow Van Dijk's (1988) distinction in which he provides an overview of the news article organization within which he allocates 10 parts: *title, lead, main event, background event, history, context, consequences, verbal reactions, evaluation, expectations*.

This form should reflect the structure of newspaper articles in English language. However, some authors, such as Zoltan Rostas, point out that van Dijk does not provide explicit explanations of these 10 categories. Zoltan for the purposes of his analysis merged parts 4, 5 and 6 (Background events, History and Context), because it has shown that there is often overlapping and that it is often difficult to separate. It is for these three connected parts that he used the term Background events. *I generally agree with this attitude, but for various methodological reasons I will nevertheless follow Van Dijk's interpretational pattern.* He also merged parts 9 and 10 (Evaluation and Expectations) into a single unit called Expectations. Van Dijk differently and in more details described schematic superstructure of newspaper articles in the book *News as Discourse* (Flick, 2009). He especially mentioned categories Introduction (Title and Lead), Episodes (Main Event, Context, Background events, History), Consequences, and verbal reactions Comment (Evaluation and Expectations). The following paragraphs present description that Van Dijk gives in this book. Introduction consists of Titles and Lead. Every newspaper article has a title; large number also includes Lead. Title also still goes ahead of lead, and together they precede the text and express the main theme or topic of the text, and serve as an introduction (Van Dijk, 1993). Thus, Title and Lead summarize the text and thus represent *semantic macrostructure*. Newspaper articles, within Episodes also feature main event, background events and evaluation. Background events usually occur later in the journalistic discourse, i.e. after the parts that relate to the main events. Cat-

egory *The event* can be incorporated into context, which represents additional category that refers to the main event, not on the background. Context is often signaled by words such as, or during, the information provided in this section reflect the real situation and consist of specific events, rather than a general description of the situation. Context is often the main event or the other previous texts. It is different from the background events that are more historical in nature. Van Dijk itself acknowledges that it is sometimes difficult to make a clear distinction between these two categories. The same applies to the preceding events, which remind the reader on things that have happened before. Under History, on the other hand, van Dijk implies time distant events related to the current situation, often those that include the year, not just days or weeks. *It seems to me that Zoltan was right when merging these three categories into one, because they are not easily distinguished. But, at the same time, I think such a division would lead to excessive fragmentation, and often confusion in the analysis.* The consequences are another category that appears in the newspaper discourse. Interestingness of an event for print media is partly determined by the seriousness of its consequences. Sometimes they are even more important than the event itself, and topics in the category of consequences may have the same supremacy as topics within the major events or even the highest position, which can be expressed through the title. Verbal responses constitute a separate category of news organizations of text that can be understood as the result of a special group.

Generally speaking, newspaper coverage includes standard procedure of seeking comments from most participants in these events (Pawson, 1995). The reason lies in the fact that journalists can provide opinions that are not exclusively theirs and which are objective, although choice of people who will be asked to give a statement is not always fair. This category is signaled by the names and roles of the participants in the event and direct quoting or summarizing statement. Comment implied views,

opinions and evaluation of the event by the journalist or a list of writing. Although many believe that one should not mix fact and personal opinion, which is still often in newspaper articles, although sometimes in indirect form. Commentary includes two major subcategories: Evaluation and Expectations.

Evaluation implies expressed opinion on the events referred to in the article, and expectations relates to possible political and other consequences of an event or situation, as well as being able to predict future events. Of course, all the texts do not contain all these categories. Title and main event are required in each article. Categories such as Background to the entire event, verbal responses and comments don't need to be present in the text. Category, on the other hand, can appear multiple times in the text, that is, cyclically, especially when it comes to the main event (Flick, 2009). To make a short conclusion on this chapter, this research and accompanied discourse analysis is based on the abovementioned van Dijk's model. Discourse analysis includes all the parts or the points from the aforementioned models that could be applied to a particular newspaper articles in this case. *Having that in mind, I provided appropriate methodological tools with which empirical data will be analyzed in fifth chapter, and therefore in the next chapter I will go further to the analysis of ideological context of the discourse on the Balkans.*

# THE IDEOLOGICAL CONTEXT OF THE DISCOURSE ON THE BALKANS

## ***Balkan between the worlds – the castaway part of European continent***

To analyze ideological context of the Balkans, it is necessary to provide short general introduction in order to better understand the concept of Otherness which is of crucial importance in this study. Europe represents cape of Asia, and the Balkans represents the cape of Europe. Spatially, the Balkans is a double margin, the edge of the rim. But it does not repeat the European form; it does not make itself off the margins, remote headland, into the cultural and social centre (Hall & Darrick, 1996). It's symbolic geography and spatial potency is quite different from European. Taking into account related parts of the area, the centre and edges, and the mainland and coast, the Balkans for Europe today is not nearly what Europe is for Asia. The Balkans is among other

southern European capes – Apennine and Iberian peninsulas with which it makes the three-cornered Mediterranean – without doubt most economically rearward, but also the most “civilizing” degraded part.

In ancient times, the area of Balkans – although this wasn't its name – had a role of which Valery and Derrida write about: it was the carrier of prosperity and cultural values which were important to the rest of the land (Jambrešić-Kirin, 2004). The North of Europe at this time was formally and symbolically barbaric area, unknown and uncultivated district, while south, precisely Greece, Mediterranean culture, marked the civilization and progress. Europe is the name which Greeks used for the west coast of Aegean Sea. Other essential destinations to them were Asia and Libya (Africa), and there was no interest in any other area, either if they were imagined or no-named. Roman *limes* also meant different conception of the centre and the periphery, so in the North and East from the centre of the Empire there were borders with the barbarian world, and the barbarians were called those who didn't speak Latin (Kourvertais, 2002). So at that time, the south was perceived as *civilization, development, power, culture*, and the north was a discarded *area of savagery and backwardness* which is yet to be conquered and tamed (Savić & Bijelić, 2005). I will show in the further chapters that this opposition is still lively and for this reason of crucial importance in understanding “Balkanistic discourse”. In my opinion, to focus on the research on this topic we must dig deeper in the theoretical ground, looking for the stereotypes that are not new or given in recent times, but which have been constructed long time ago. Cultural, religious, ideological and other homogenizations of Europe and the understanding, by which Europe was unique civilized area, were related to Christianity and they dated from the time when Christian Europe began to interfere with the non-Christian people in the East and South. Also, European civilization *limes* are starting to move since then, and barbaric people are becoming

those people from the other side of imaginary European borders, those of other religion and culture: the nations of East, Asia and North Africa (Paić, 2002). The basic duality North- South significantly changed, and the North began to represent itself as civilization, security, familiarity, and the South was treated as barbarity, danger and unexplored area. The duality known as East-West was also attached to this duality in the next centuries, and it became dominant and more dangerous.

With the changing notions of North and South, former centers of European culture have become the periphery. To overcome the resulting paradox of new Eurocentric imaginative geography, in which the ancient cultures have originate in the backward and primitive South, new narration have been established which these cultures have treated as exceptions (Rihtman-Augustin, 1999). Thus ancient Greece from European Christian centre in the modern era is often viewed separately from the Balkans geographical and cultural environment. On one hand, Greece, as “the cradle of Western civilization”, is entirely displaced from the Balkans; it’s becoming allocated and linked to the Mediterranean, from the European stereotypical views, gentle and idealistic space (Jambrešić-Kirin, 2004). On the other hand, modern Greece renounces continuity with the ancient world, and its present inhabitants are being perceived as other Balkanites, for that reason, as the descendants of primitive Balkan tribes, but not the descendants of ancient peoples. Today’s European Union is appropriating ancient heritage and considers itself the only true successor to the idea of democracy and high culture society, while Greece is treated as a rebellious barbarian country where corruption and political irresponsibility prevail, while its citizens are unrealistically borrowing and living beyond their possibilities, and their disagreement with policy or guidance issued by the EU is expressed through riots in the streets and outbursts of barbarism. In modern Western collective perceptions, Balkans thus became a waste or a menagerie of Europe, its dark

and inaccessible area. This is clearly stated by many authors (obviously, mostly visible in: Todorova, 1999), but I argue that this definition needs theoretical “widening”, which I will try to offer in the next paragraphs.

Balkans was wild peripherals, an appendix, throwback to the civilization of Europe, and in the long and rich history of writing about European identity – especially in the second half of the 19th century onwards – it’s mainly mentioned as its most problematic and most primitive part (Paić, 2002). In the Balkanist ideology *the Balkans is seen as a place of eternal conflict, permanent instability and mythical divergence*, a place where different rules apply than those in the Western world and this is why it will never reach that world. It is characterized by oriental, eastern, Asiatic identity and imaginative components and there dwell its timeless savages, barbarians, “Byzantines”, “Turks”. The space here defined characters and mentalities – permanently and incurably. In the Balkans, apparently, begins reign of chaos and then further it’s expanded to the East, so sometimes it’s displayed and perceived as the lobby of “Oriental hell,” as the rim after which we fall into an abyss of violence, debauchery, irrationality and fanaticism (Mappes-Niediek, 2005).

In this fatalistic view, Balkans represented experience of all kinds of adventures, wonders and strangeness, but in it, you can easily disappear, die or get hurt in the most imaginable horrific ways. The unknown and sometimes dangerous peripherality of Western views can be interpreted in inverse, positive way, so the Balkans is imagined and presented as an exciting place of exoticism and adventure, which no longer exists in the western, civilized world. Such romantic vision of the Balkans was dominant until half of the 19th century and it can be traced down in some texts of culture and in the 20th century (Hammond, 2004). However, in both cases – if you want to escape it with disgust, and when we come there like we’re coming in an exciting safari – *Balkan is realized mainly as a fantasy: space beyond normal and “civilization-*

*ally acceptable*". In psychoanalytic key, Balkan can be interpreted as dark subconscious of Europe, as her instinct, what is repressed, unaware or unsaid, which is a constant threat to everything visible and all the things that Europe is trying to consciously represent (hence I completely agree with the ideas developed in seminal study by Rihtman- Auguštin, 1999). The subconscious, barbarous and irrepressible interior of "European being" is constantly threatening, just like sudden volcanic eruption. Slovenian philosopher Mladen Dolar is even more precise – for him, the second Yugoslavia as a communist country within the European periphery was paradigm of unconscious and repressed modern Europe. Furthermore, following Lacan's thesis about constructing of identity, the relationship between subjects and ways of self-realization, one can argue that the Balkan is a mirror, reversed image of Europe: negative, scandalous and seemingly undesirable (Detrez et al. 2005). I say "seemingly undesirable", because without this reversed, dark image of the Balkans, Europe – also a kind of fantasy – wouldn't be able to construct itself based on anything. Europe needs the Balkans as an opposed and negative extremity to which they will build their own identity, and this identity as an umbrella, transnational cultural structure good for sheltering various European micro-identities. *Balkans, thus, serves as fundamental distinctive features in constructing collective European identity.* Wild, violent and barbaric Balkans is necessary to peaceful and civilized Europe to set up, and repeatedly affirm own image of themselves, therefore negatively fatalist view of the Balkans will probably last as long as the Europe needs it to define itself (Kourvertais, 2002).

And it's not just Europe as a whole administrative political wholeness, rather Europe that is alive spiritually, as a collective identification, as a thing by which "we" living in the Balkans want to be recognized. This means that the Balkan as an identity fantasy is needed to the real Balkanites to cancel Balkan part of their identity and confirm the European one. The possibility of

life, belonging to both paradigms with identity, the ability to abstract meanings of the two cultures in a socio-cultural particularity in which we will be able to recognize ourselves without neurosis, is being rejected in both Europe and in the Balkans, as Luketić (2013) already conveniently argued. Such potentiated dualism and prolonged cultivation of antagonism between the Balkans and Europe is also part of “European code”, the inability or lack of determination to find a passage between Eurocentrism and anti-Eurocentrism. However, I think that criticizing dominant Western discourse on the Balkans we can easily fall into the trap of binary oppositions, simplification and falsification of the complex picture of reality, and (un)consciously share worlds, cultures, places, identities to positive and negative according to the same hard, dual principles of which we are trying to escape of. In the interpretation of relations between the West and Europe to the Balkans, it is of crucial importance that we have to be careful not to create a binary front that will be rocking down on Europe as the sole culprit for the creation of a Balkan negative imagery. Edward Said already (nonetheless, in different but applicable context) warned of such a threat to Western criticism of Orientalism in Occidentalism long time ago, and sought to control his analysis of the prevailing Western discursive strategies towards the East and lead it on another path than those revanchist critics.

In the prevailing European thought, the Balkan is negative term, but it is often just as negative in “our” Balkan notion which sees itself as European. This is another major issue I would like to further develop in this book, in terms of “inner” and “outer” Balkanism. The Balkans is – as seen in the eyes of first modern balkanologists – marked as Otherness first compared to Europe and the West, in the political, ethnic, ideological, religious and cultural sense, but – rarely recognized – it produces otherness within itself (Paić, 2002). Moreover, the very notion of Otherness also originated from the same binary logic of establishing a com-

pulsory order, because it implies that the world is divided into two distinct and opposing camps, First and Second, where in the Second pile up all which remain outside the dominant (Mapes-Niediek, 2005). The Otherness is therefore a unified category, the Second can also take a monologue rather than a conversation, it can prescribe and not respect, it can be monolithic instead of being a multiplicity. The Otherness is not just a repository of imperial or colonial victims, because inside of it hierarchies are being established, relations between the power and domination, because the victims (the Second) may become bullies (the First) according to some the Thirds, the others (Jambrešić-Kirin, 2004). This argument, I suppose, needs little reconsideration, since I believe it does not take entirely into account appropriate notions on “role-changing”.

In short, the Balkans is trying to be suppressed, people don't want to belong to it and they are trying to be away from it. It causes discomfort due to living in this area and due to the residence of their own culture. It is a source of collective neurosis in almost all of people living in the Balkans. Therefore, we are constantly striving to find a suitable replacement term for the *Balkans* such as *Southeast Europe*, *Central South Europe*, *South Central Europe*, *Eastern Adriatic region*, etc. (Todorova, 1999). All these concepts since the end of the 20th Century onwards pushed their local political and cultural elite, trying to prevail accumulated negative semantics and escape from those imaginative meanings that they themselves accepted as the Balkans. Recently, at the initiative of European Union, the new replacement term has been established, *Western Balkan*, for all the countries of former Yugoslavia, except Slovenia and including Albania. The word “Western” in this phrase should suggest, not only a geographical location, but also spiritual, civilizational orientation and mitigate negative marking in the imaginative geography (Luketić, 2013). In my point of view, the term *Western Balkans* most accurately shows discursive ideology in its purest form, in terms of interplay between various geographical and linguistic notions.

Even without taking deeper look at theoretical works or empirical findings in this book, I believe that Croatian politics, but also culture and science that accept and represent the idea of official policies, *from the beginning of the independence of the country seek to find new, collectively acceptable name for the area in which we are located.* We are trying to escape from the real and symbolic Balkans and completely separate from the hateful environment and possible cultural links with its neighbors (Rihtman-Augustin, 1999). *This desire to escape from the Balkans and the desire for removal of Balkan substance forms the basis of national identity constructed in the 90s in the 20th century,* which is becoming binding for all members of the nation (Jambrešić-Kirin, 2004). The desire to escape from Balkans marks some other countries as well and other national identity narratives, so the Balkans is more or less permanently designated as negative opposition, as *something-which-we-don't-want-to-belong- to*, and not as an independent content, as *something-that-we-can-belong-to* (I concur with this view extensively elaborated in the in-depth study by Luketić, 2013).

The dominant Western discourses on the Balkans, on one hand –as a repulsive and hostile, and on the other –as an exotic and attractive space, were formed to the fullest extent from the mid-19th century in the writings of foreign authors who have tried to put Europe closer to its edges (Paić, 2002). The Balkan area itself (differently named) was mentioned in the writings of diplomats, merchants, travelers, adventurers even much earlier, and usually as one of the stops on the way for the Ottoman capital, or the Holy Land. It is about French and German, followed by Russian and British authors, who travelled to the East usually because of business (diplomacy, gathering data on the area, espionage), trade, exploration, pilgrimages, or just an adventure (Detrez et al. 2005). In most of these records there is reflection of political context of the time, and often passengers in an unfamiliar country show a greater degree of identification, their texts reflect the prevailing narrative and hierarchization of cultures, of people and countries of origin.

Older travel books, in addition to recording the basic intention of travelling, have character of anthropological and ethnological studies in an attempt to extensively report on the life of the Balkans “savages”. Their authors often perform archaeological research on people, clothing, beliefs, tools, plants, objects drawn in detail, micro-location, etc. The lyrics are colorful genre: historical documents, diplomatic reports, memoir writing, botanical records, and – above all – *travel books* that were, as Todorova (2004) says, in second place in ratings followed by novels in Britain during the 19th century. This early phase is characterized also by books of illustrations and drawings as well as research and thorough descriptions of monuments, so for example, Italian geographer, scientist and Habsburg commissioner for delineation after the peace in Sremski Karlovci in 1699, Count Luigi Ferdinando Marsigli, left a large collection of maps, views, drawings and notes of this region, where he has repeatedly travelled in the second half of the 17th century (for some time he was a prisoner of the local elite) (Luketić, 2013). In the mid 18th century, the famous Scottish neoclassical architect, Robert Adam carefully studied, described and drew Diocletian’s palace (in collaboration with Clerisseauom), and there are plenty of examples of such early research work (more to be found in: Rihtman-Auguštin, 1999). However, despite the popularity of travel writing as a genre, increasing number of books about this area and appearance of tourist guides in 19th century, the Balkans has not been well and widely known in Europe at that time. *It was both near and far*, and to some extent known and completely unknown, briefly closest and most frequent European exotic territory that could be freely described and visualized (Hammond, 2004). Writing about the Western perception of the Balkans in the 19th century in his book “Wild Europe” Božidar Jezernik states that the Balkan was known as “backwoods of Asia”, even “more unknown than the peaks of the Himalayas and the Pamirs.” Mid-century Paulina Irby saw Bosnia as “wilderness of Asia” and her companion Georgina Muir

Mackenzie wrote that these countries in the minds of Englishmen can be found in the “depths of the Tatar or in the middle of Africa.” According to the narrative strategies of colonization, intense imaginative mapping and constantly erroneous factography, the Balkans remained unknown and mysterious European region even during the 20th century (in the beginning of this century, in the words of poet and politician Allen Upward, it was still “the least known corner of Europe”), and even in the nineties, when driven by the war conflicts and nationalist policies it becomes the focus of the West.

The post-war Balkan, therefore, again became a place of intense Western imagination, but also an attractive destination – an exotic place that magnetically attracts Westerners looking for excitement and “dangerous living” (Jambrešić-Kirin, 2004). According to Todorova, forms of perception of the Balkans up until 1900s were not monolithic and entirely negative or entirely positive, just as the Balkan area did not review homogeneous, so in various texts there were indications of a greater or lesser interest towards one particular nation, for example, Turks, Greeks, or one of the Slavic nations, usually Serbs, Montenegrins and Bulgarians. However, it’s visible that the Christian Slavic nations were discovered later, that they were long unknown, as the travelogues paid more attention to Turks and Greeks from the late 18th and early 19 century, while ethnic, cultural, linguistic, religious and other differences between the Slavic nations and regions were not fully perceived (Todorova, 1999). Western knowledge about the Balkans at that time still wasn’t established and the area was in the first phase of discovery and exploration. (Luketić, 2013). These discoveries were accompanied by the detection of variety of arbitrariness, of imagining and misquotations and those formed imaginations and frequent discourses were kept until today in various ways, moreover they were enriched with new ideas and new *semantic loadings* during the later history.

Morritts' enthusiasm with Ottoman "masters" and demonizing the subordinate Slavic population has actually become the dominant strategy in many other texts in later times. It is about the so-called mutual respect of "great nations" and "great cultures", it's about their agreement in the imperialist perception of Others and presenting those who do not have adequate political power and whose role in the so-called great history was and still is minor (Hall & Darrick, 1996). The Western passengers in Balkans briefly saw what they wanted to see, what they imagined in advance and to what they were prepared by reading texts of their predecessors. Their expectations and presentation of the Balkans were conditioned by the already created imaginative performances of this space, and once established images, ideas and fantasies perpetuated themselves further back in time, from one work into another, as a general truth, the essence of space. This is how a vast archive of knowledge about the Western Balkans was formed (similar to the archive by the emergence of knowledge about the Orient, on which Edward Said wrote), knowledge that is considered relevant, but also because they were collected, numbered, interpreted, verified by Western travelers.

Positive romantic tendencies in the representation of the Balkan area in Europe dominated in the first half of the 19th century, under the influence of general social movements, trends of romanticism and popular ideas about the folk spirit, national freedom and savages which were unspoiled by the civilization. Like Scotland, at that time the Balkans was often described in a positive light, as an attractive destination and an exotic *Europe-that-still-hasn't-become- exotic* (Kourvertais, 2002). There has been backlash from the Balkans at that time, but more common is positive imagination by which the backwardness and the diversity of cultures were interpreted as a superior exoticism and civilization nonconformist streak. It is time in which European writers are travelling to the Orient, thus travelling through

the Balkans, looking for adventure and archaic societies where supposedly honest rule apply, where they will meet unspoiled savages and consequently partially restore or evoke their own innocence (Mappes-Niediek, 2005). Discovering other cultures and the “spirit” of unknown people is accompanied by intense anthropological research and archaeological discoveries of ancient cultures, which awakened the interest of the people who live in that area. As referenced by Todorova, interest in the Orient, and thus the oriental component of Balkans (often at the expense of the Slavic), at that time surpassed even the interest in discovering the New World.

The main conclusion I could derive from this analysis so far is that the basic tone of these texts tells that everything is different in the East than in Europe, so we can see and experience the most peculiar things that are no longer known to the civilized world. The impression of the bold and mysterious was increased by the way of the travelling to the Balkans, the difficulty of overcoming distance due to bad roads and inns, and lack of comfort in travelling (Kourvertais, 2002). Roads were few, mountain crossing the mountain ranges was a great deal and robberies were common. Local residents spoke a strange, unintelligible languages and grime of Balkan villages and inns which were mainly described by the Western travelers strengthened the idea of the underdeveloped world (Rihtman-Auguštin, 1999). The inns often only had one room, and the western traveler had to sleep in it together with other local passengers. The experience of the trip to the Balkans was quite specific, and without a doubt – whether it was portrayed negatively or positively – *it has led to strengthening the impression of exoticism, strangeness and the entire space which was non-European. From the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century, driven by social and political situation, the Balkans has increasingly been represented as a space where negative forces are acting, like dark, backward, primitive and dangerous area of Europe.*

## ***Theories of Balkanism***

The most famous book on Balkanism and most reliable guide through the forest of historical imagination of the Balkans is *Imagining the Balkans* by Maria Todorova, Bulgarian historian who lives in America and teaches at the local university. Todorova, in addition to these excellent studies, wrote a series of historiographic books about the relationships of the Balkan nation and the Ottoman Empire, and has made a collection named *Balkan Identities: Nation and Memory*, which contains articles on various topics of eminent anthropologists, sociologists, historians and theorists in the Balkan countries (Todorova, 2004). Her introduction to this collection is an editorial to “Imaginary Balkans”, it opens new aspects and topics and realistic, geographic determinants of Balkans are being extended (Slovenia is ranked under the Balkans). Two more authors are important for the theory of Balkanism: Vesna Goldsworthy with the book *Inventing Ruritania* and Milica Bakic-Hayden with articles gathered in the book *Variations on the Theme ‘Balkans’*. Originally these books and papers were written in English, and later they were translated into Serbian. Both also live abroad (first in England, the other in the U.S.) and are constantly working in foreign universities, and for their engagement in Balkans they have the much needed academic and scientific background, but also desirable Balkan origin. Further, Vjekoslav Perica, scholar of religions and myths of the Balkans, in the early nineties emigrated to the West from Croatia and this is where he published a book in English called *Balkan idols*, which was later translated into Serbian, and today he works as a lecturer at the University of Rijeka. This fact is important because many authors that write on the Balkans live or come from different environment, and their Western perspective thus does not always means absolutely accurate interpretation, which is sometimes unfortunately taken for granted.

Through a comparative analysis of the Catholic and Orthodox churches and their relationship to the dominant ideology and the state, Perica provides much valuable material for research and understanding the full picture of the realities, myths and imagination of the Balkans. In the countries of the former Yugoslavia there were several books and articles published on Balkanism, but these authors have not gained the status as those who have published their works in the West, and here we include the statuses both from the international scientific community and the local community. Ironically, there are often many prejudices occurring in the Balkans against science that comes with its area, and it's often tacitly expected to confirm a theory in western circles, before accepting it here. From local authors who have exhaustively dealt with issues of identity and imagination in the Balkans we should mention ethnologist Dunja Rihtman-Auguštin, who published an article in 1997 called "Why and since when do we dread the Balkans?" (Rihtman-Auguštin, 1999) which reflects the Croatian national trauma of the Balkan countries and their geographic origin. It's interesting that the emergence of the article was prompted by a lecture of Maria Todorova, held in Zagreb in the Croatian Ethnological Society in 1996, before the book called "Imagining the Balkans" was published.

Traces of above-mentioned lecture do not exist in other media or others' texts, but a book *Imagining the Balkans* was not translated in Croatia while this text was written, and it's known only in Serbian translation, which may also indicate the characteristics of Croatian reception of this topic. Most coherent book written in this region is undoubtedly the collection called *Balkan as Metaphor* which was released after the eponymous gathering organized by the Belgrade cultural circle and with the financial assistance of Western funds. This collection was first published in English, and it gathers a range of authors from various Balkan countries and serves as good, albeit in some terms fragmentary and inconsistent introduction to this topic (Jambrešić-Kirin,

2004). Many of the authors have also previously written about the prejudices of the Balkans, such as Rastko Močnik or Alexander Kiossev, while others have certainly illuminated the key Balkan themes and metaphors of 20th century with their works from the field of politics and identity theory. In addition, the understanding of myths, political narratives, new folklore and rituals of the nineties in the Balkans are extremely important books by Ivan Čolović called *Policy of Symbols* and *Brothel Warriors*, and the same author has gathered his texts and made compilation which became a book called *The Balkans – Terror of Culture* (Čolović, 1994). A great historical analysis of specific textual sources, most itineraries of 16th to the early 20th century is the book titled *Wild Europe* written by Slovenian anthropologist Božidar Jezernik. In the theoretical elaboration particular attention should be paid to the work of Slovenian philosophers Mladen Dolar and Slavoj Žižek, who each in their own way have become entangled in identity theory and the Yugoslav breakup.

Worth mentioning is also Slovenian writer Aleš Debeljak with a series of papers on cultural homogeneity of Balkan/Yugoslav area and the need for its renewal. Theoretical views of the Balkans that include also gender perspective, in many other analyzes otherwise completely neglected, were written by Macedonian theorist Elizabeta Šeleva and Serbian anthropologist with a Slovenian address, Svetlana Slapšak (Jambrešić-Kirin, 2004). All of these authors with their interpretation and methodologically different and contradictory analyzes of works involved in some way are included in this book – they make subtext themes and narratives of it. In Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina today there are no scientific or cultural institutions that has the name of Balkans in it as an area of concern which is a result of the *prevailing perception that Croatia is not in the Balkans*, or the principle of indeterminacy of the official Bosnian identity against the belongings of the state to the Balkans. In Belgrade, however, for decades there is a Balkan Institute SANU, but the current

production of books and projects in this institute does not have a large impact on the issues presented here (Paić, 2002). In fact, I would argue that these works often talk about an outdated interpretation of the Balkan area, related to the history and geopolitics, rather than the very general theory of culture and modern integrative theory that combines anthropology, sociology, linguistics, etc. Recently, there was an opening of the central, common European Fund for the Balkans which refers to local countries. The task of this Fund, as their website says, is to “bring Western Balkans closer to the European Union”, but it’s interesting that this site can only be read in English.

At Ljubljana University, department of Balkan studies has been established where some of the already mentioned influential sociologists and social theorists (for instance, Mitja Velikonja) are teaching. Even from these briefly outlined ways of modern knowledge and theories about the Balkans, the question arises to me as to whether books by Maria Todorova and Vesna Goldsworthy would be noted abroad and in the Balkans if they weren’t first published in English and verified in the context of Western science? How much the norm for the West to verify the knowledge of all of us determines what is written/investigated/analyzed in the Balkans, as it inhibits, slows down or focusing on other tracks those things we would like to say about ourselves? In other words, how much does it affect the formation of one-dimensional narratives of the Balkans, which reverses its heterogeneity and complexity? Instead of an answer, I can name the work of art that could be manifest work to the whole Balkan or Eastern European art and which points to the described strategy of forming appropriate knowledge and the occupation of Balkan theories (Luketić, 2013). The author is Croatian artist Mladen Stilinović, and the paper (created in the mid nineties) is actually a slogan, installation set up on some of these exhibitions about the Balkans from 2002 to 2003. He has ironically detected our situation – in art, in science, in theory by using a slogan

which reads: “An Artist Who Cannot Speak English Is No Artist”. Many papers about Balkanism primarily rely on Edward Said’s *Orientalism*, which is fascinating, then the later written *Culture and Imperialism*, where it’s not so much about the literal following of the thesis as much as the impact on the analysis of language, discourse and knowledge. Todorova also follows Said, but believes that Balkanism is *not only* a “subspecies of Orientalism” and that it’s “more than ordinary Orientalist variations on the theme of the Balkans” (Todorova, 1999), and I generally support this perspective. The Balkans, she argues, in contrast to the Orient, is a concrete space that has geographical and historical peculiarities, which can be determined by tangible historical and geopolitical realities. Balkan has its own mechanisms of representation and in the understanding of the Europe-Balkan relations and internal production balkanism among the nations of the Balkans it is not possible to completely serve to Said’s analogies between East and West.

There are also different opinions. For Milica Bakić-Hayden, which partly critically interprets Todorova, Balkanism is one way of “playing Orientalism”, which “represents a pattern by which they repeatedly apply to the original dichotomy which Orientalism is based on. By this form, Asia is more ‘East’ or ‘other’ in relation to Eastern Europe, in the framework of the Eastern European countries that gradation is reproduced with the Balkans as ‘easternmost’; within the Balkans again we find similarly structured hierarchy (Luketić, 2013). This principle disagreement about inheritance and application of Said’s theory, I believe, does not seem particularly important for this analysis, which seeks to highlight the context and connections between imagination and identity in the broadest cultural field. Without a doubt, Todorova has written the best analysis of imagination on the subject of the Balkans so far, an analysis historically deeply founded, based on texts and facts and not on matters of principle, arbitrary debates in which historical context is introduced sporadically as needed

(Todorova, 1999). Contribution which Milica Bakić-Hayden gave consists in her early detection of topics, at the beginning of the nineties, in a warning to the overlapping imagery Balkans and Byzantium, and some interesting interpretations of the local religion.

In terms of theory, her research stops at the notion of “playing Orientalism” and neither give a comprehensive interpretation nor penetrates deeper into the cultural, economic, social specifics of this period in the Balkans. This is the major criticism I have in regards to her (albeit seminal) work. In *Imagining the Balkans* there is no indication of many concrete examples of narratives from the former Yugoslavia, both from the past and from the present day, and literature of these authors from that area which Todorova states is scarce (Todorova, 2004). Therefore, it seems that this book has theoretical, methodological and conceptual starting point for the analysis of the situation and Balkanistic imagination in the former Yugoslavia. But different and specific narratives seek their own separate analysis, especially considering the fact that in the local countries or regions attitude towards the Balkans and Balkan own identity is very different, even opposite, so it should be studied separately for every one of them. Anger about the plight of Balkan when it comes to geopolitical relationships, because of the negative perceptions of this area, the subordination of Balkan science in international scientific distribution of power, etc., can turn into anger against the West and its values, that is, in imagining the enemy on the other side. Just as political discourse in this region was characterized by ambivalence between extremes, between worship and hatred of the West and Europe, so can the scientific and cultural discourses support such binary code and lean on one of the sides (superbly distinguished in: Jambrešić-Kirin, 2004).

Maria Todorova in her book also doesn't give only criticism of Balkanistic discourse and does not refer to the historical imagination of this region, but also wonders what is common with Balkans, how does it exist as some kind of shared narrative. So

her theory is not bounded by language only, and does not negate the possibility of a truthful, more complex representation of the Balkans (Todorova, 1999). In her understanding, the identity togetherness of the Balkans is primarily manifested in the rule and influence of the Ottoman Empire and its heritage in this area, where she performs a very important distinction between what is and what was the Empire, how it is perceived in the Balkans. The Ottoman Empire and the empire of oriental signs in general that can be drawn from it are indeed crucial in the construction of stereotypes on the territory of the former Yugoslavia, and they show just how often history here was interpreted as the present, i.e. the extent to which it can become alive almost overnight and current if particular political option needs it (Todorova, 2004).

But it must be stated there are also theories that establish the uniqueness of the Balkans in its common identity base, the alleged existence of unique culture of origin and common pre-modern mentality of Balkans (Mappes-Niediek, 2005). This is the generalization which negates the diversity and specificity of individual identity of social groups and ethnic communities in this area, and gives priority to the supranational, but not quite as harmless collectivist ideas, which actually excluded individuals and groups that do not belong to them.

In such interpretations, the original Balkan culture is quite idealized, conceived and presented as a positive counterpart to today's Western culture. From the totality of the historical heritage of this area elements have been selected that can form such a theory, so this is primarily about the ideologically motivated selection and designing new cultural construct. Often this imaginary "original" Balkan seeks to present itself as an ideal civilizational childhood, as what Europe supposedly was before it "felled in civilization". Thus interpreted, original culture is often an integral part of the narrative of the rotten West and the collapse of Europe, and the renewed power of Balkans or elevation of barbaric myth,

which, I believe, has to be taken *cum grano salis*. It is important to emphasize that in this imaginary Balkanism any influence of foreign culture is interpreted as ruinous and plundering, and not as normal historical interaction. The identity of the Balkans is fixed, and its changes are seen as deviations. Thesis on unique Balkan civilization represented by the Macedonian historian with permanent residence in the United States, Trajan Stojanović, author of conceptual and methodological traditional books *Balkan civilization* and *Balkan worlds: the first and last Europe* are without the influence of postcolonial criticism and theory of identity. As Braudel's student, Stojanović seeks to apply to Balkan categories like "long duration", "total history", "durability cultural field" and cohesion of different cultural areas.

In *Balkan civilization*, Stojanović finds material for common civilization in Balkan prehistory and manifestations of popular culture: beliefs, rituals, sacred elements, appointments, epics, etc. But the Balkans is not quite equal to the Mediterranean, and what was relatively verifiable historical reality when it comes to Braudel – mostly thanks to the openness of the space, trade relations, travel, modes of land management, cultural ties, etc. – is not easily translatable to other areas. Synthesizing cultural paradigm of the Balkans, Stojanović idealizes the past and present, and seeks to transform the Balkans as "imaginary space" of violence and backwardness into another "imaginary space" of idyll and peculiarities. To build the image of a single Balkan world, it tends towards generalization and universalism, particularly in delineating mentality, so for example, he argues: like other European nations in pre-modern societies, the Balkan nations were very impulsive and prone to violence. Therefore, he overestimate the contrary by writing that in the Balkans the central path is not prevailing, but the path of extremes: honor and shame, sin and good works, humanity and inhumanity. The cultural homogeneity in turn proves unstable and constructed categories such as those of three value systems of personality – their shame, guilt and courage

or claims such as the Balkan peasant is visually backward. Here the most important thing is a sense of hearing that may fit into current theories of mentality at the time of writing the book, but from today's perspective are overcome. In addition, Stojanović highlights the technological underdevelopment in the Balkans for centuries of development and research in Europe (15th, 16th and 17th century), and general illiteracy, poor status of women and other indicators of underdevelopment. Furthermore, he points out that the largest parts of the Balkan nations settled without a clear awareness of their particular national identity. He missed to say that it is not a feature of the Balkans, because the majority of the population of Europe by the 19th century and some even longer, didn't experience the national identity in the modern sense, but they felt only belonging to a local community. Mentioning the Balkan sub-nations in Yugoslavia, he writes about the Serbs, Croats, Slovenes and Macedonian Slavs, but not the Montenegrins, Muslims in Bosnia, Kosovars and minorities. Many of his claims stem from the banal Orientalism, such as those on the incidence of abortion in Muslim women unlike the members of other religions and suggestions about their impurity and immorality, and frequent polygamy in Islam (which according to many sources has never been widespread in Bosnia) (Luketić, 2013). I would argue that his argumentation fits well into the wider scheme of this interpretation, but he does not provide sufficient theoretical background for the concept of building national identity.

### ***Mapping the Balkans and escaping to Europe***

The questions of where are the actual boundaries of the Balkans actually include many traumatic issues of belonging, identity and imagery and they involve the outwitting of geopolitical theories. In my opinion, the very aspiration for drawing precise boundaries is meaningless, because, for example, saying that Cro-

atia really geographically belongs or does not belong to the Balkans does not mean much, considering that it is indeed Balkan identity by its specificity (Luketić, 2013). In addition, stringent definition of Balkan borders is often invited by those who wouldn't be covered by these borders, and such geographical precision is actually caused by the desire to get away from fear of the Balkans.

Talking about the borders of Balkans without neurosis means talking about something changeable, about mixing and effects in the sphere of culture which is widely understood, and not about the strict mapping, drawing and defining the area in accordance with specific political, ideological or cultural conceptions. Croatia is – among other things – the Balkans, wherever we think the borderline of Balkan itself passes through, just like Slovenia is the Balkans because of its history and identity strongly determined by what was happening in the “real” geographical undoubtedly Balkans (cf. Rihtman-Auguštin, 1999). Let's look further to what is cooking in the same imaginary cauldron, how to evaluate it and dispense the Balkans, and that European ingredients. To geographically belong to the Balkans for many local residents means not to belong to Europe, therefore implies disconnection from the desirable society which, in the collective consciousness, assures civility, civility and progress, in short bright future (Todorova, 1999). The possibility of the coexistence of the two areas, the possibility that in one of the cultural specificity both paradigms are meeting, or more different paradigm, and Balkan-European hybrid identity consciously lives, without neurosis, usually is not taken into account (hereby I agree with similar argument in: Luketić, 2013).

Being a European automatically excludes the possibility of being Balkanite, because everything that is Europe was created in a shared awareness exactly opposite to the Balkans.

For current position that you can be *either* Europe *or* the Balkans, not both, and the belief that the recognition of multiple, plural identities jeopardizes supposedly important, national

identity, most responsible were the local political and intellectual elites (Hammond, 2004). They defined the magic circle of identity: what remains inside, in the zone of the permissible, and what is out there, the empty space being ousted. They don't support that circle by producing constant characteristic narrations about "us" and "them." We need to destruct/decode such a rigid, identity narratives based on the tense duality as a kind of "zero position" to accept hybridism and heterogeneity, "Bakhtinian" polyphony of cultures. Collective identities are usually variable and regularly depend on the current ideological and political groups and social tendencies of the majority (Jambrešić-Kirin, 2004). They are always constructed according to the requirements or objectives of a social group, they are neither natural nor permanent, but only present themselves in this way. With greater mobility, speed, globalization and everything what characterizes modernity, and what Zygmunt Bauman meant by the period of "liquid modernity" (as opposed to the earlier "solid modernity"), identities are becoming more variable, unstable and fragmented, which means they are increasingly and rapidly creating and dissolving. National gives way to the cultural, great narratives behind the establishment of national identity are replaced with a series of smaller narratives that an individual can take as needed and discard. In addition, the words of historian John R. Gillis say that in a transnational world of capitalism of the late 20th century an increasing number of people are forced to deal with multiple identities and multiple memories (Todorova, 1999). But this "transnational world", typical for the West, was the future in the Balkans at the end of the last century. However, not even today it does not mark these areas. One-dimensional national identities (as they are given in the nineties) still quite impossible open recognition of hybridism and multiplicity of identity in the public sphere. For the area of the former Yugoslavia it's characteristic (and that what distances this space from the time shown by the clock in the west, neoliberal zone, and we don't think about the

delay/retardation/inadequacy, but in a different development) that the strong national identities, as they were shaped in the nineties, were constructed in Europe almost a century ago.

In Croatia, Europe appears as an *object of desire* and determines the most local fantasies, while the Balkans averse and it is trying in every way to escape. Balkans in Croatia and identity binary equation can never replace the position with Europe, as it is for example the case in Serbia. In fact, even when Europe finds favor, when weaken the intensity of identification fantasies about some current political events (such as court judgments in Hague, the criticism of European diplomacy, etc.), the Balkans in Croatia is never taking her place. Here comes to reversals, but only to a temporary lowering of Europe at the level of the Balkans, where it is often revived and narratives by which “we” are more Europe rather than the Member States of the European Union (Rihtman-Auguštin, 1999). So, in regards to my research, following questions logically arises: *What is the content of these Croatian fantasies about Europe?* In one version it's the fantasy about the community at a high civilization stage of development with stable democracies. I say fantasy rather than reality, given that in many countries of the European Union repressive policies exist towards foreigners and immigrants, and in many social groups racist refusal on the existence of the others. European hyper-correct and decorated democracy is not simply established in the reality, even today in the political sphere dominated by the pursuit of achieving the maximum possible democratic. In another version, it is Croatian fantasy on Europe that unites many cultures, on a supranational identity in which differences have a common root and a unique heritage and therefore can uniquely represent. After all, the idea of the unity of different cultures is one of the basic notes and documents of the Union itself. But that unity of culture or supranational European identity also arose after some reinterpretation of individual cultures and the appropriate selection in which “European” take only elements that can prove

the imaginary identity construction. (In this selection they are, of course, removed the Balkans and all Eastern areas as possible areas of Europe.) In third version the fantasy of Europe is recognized in particular discursive understanding and striving for the same values of civility, tolerance, dialogue, openness, etc. In other words, the presentation of these values as authentically European means that they have long history and are, apparently, recognized just in Europe. In this way, the European history is reinterpreted again in a way to overemphasize certain component, while for example, religious or national struggle, imperialist policy of repression of some rulers, etc. are kept quiet.

At the same time the Balkans or Eastern European history is interpreted mostly with regard to such events and phenomena, which have led to a situation in which, for example, violence, aggression, tyranny, arbitrary power and mass ferocity are naturalized as natural characteristics of these “non-European” cultures. So it’s not just about “Europeanisms” as code or paradigm of life, measurement and interpretation of the world where it is difficult to escape, but about creating additional value, a surplus of imagination, which indicates that we have stepped into the world of psychoanalytic, almost tangible fantasies. Just climax of these fantasies opens up the possibility of strong disapproval or hatred when this object of desire, refuses to accept “us” under its aegis (Kourvertais, 2002). Generally speaking, the relationship of many countries – primary Croatia and Serbia where this is the most important landmark in the construction of identity – as conceived by Europe is twofold: on one hand, to be in the Balkans in the prevailing notions means to be at the gates of Europe, on its bumper, a historical mission to save Europe, the preserve West world from the Balkans or eastern barbarism. The Balkans is perceived as the last stop before entering the East, the lobby of the Orient, as an area where the age-old battles are led for the salvation of Europe in civilization, religious and cultural terms. To the local people who are more easily reconciled with possible Balkan origin there

must be an appropriate reason – like the one on a special mission of salvation the West civilization values (Hammond, 2004). It is a historically recognizable and widespread myth of the bulwark that is strongly present in the Croatian and Serbian collective consciousness and history; specifically it is present in different interpretations of Balkan history (Todorova, 2004). The face of the myth of the bulwark/safeguard represents a myth where the Balkan is a bridge of the East/Orient, to another religion and another culture, and this myth of the bridge was repeatedly actualized in history. In both cases, when present as bulwark and bridge, on a symbolic level, takes central edge converting the margins to the centre. But as the European perception of the edge is overstretched and politically, ideologically and culturally marked, the Croatian/Balkan perception about the central role in the western history is the same – both are a reflection of inner identity neurosis of particular culture. On the other hand, as a result of never quite achieved desire for union with Europe, the counteraction appears a kind of hatred for Europe that has betrayed “us” or hasn’t sufficiently recognized “our” credit.

*In Croatian official narratives the place of such Europe, as we have seen, remains vacant, it cannot be filled with semantically different extremes, while in the Serbian narratives Europe replaces the Balkans. It becomes the bearer of true civilization, cultural and spiritual values, while Europe stumbled and steeped in materialism, dishonesty and interest fight. Thus, general concept of Europe in the Balkan nation schizoid alternate attraction and repulsion relationships, attachment and hatred, which clearly indicates that without establishing a relation to Europe it cannot determine Balkans own position and conceive its own identity. The narrative of Europe is the reason why the people of the Balkans are so often thrown from one extreme to another, from ecstasy to despair, from devotion to hatred. Writer and philosopher Boris Buden summed up this ambivalence very well: *Europe is not just a place where we’ve always been, but the goal towards**

*which we are moving.* Its presence in our country is experienced as strongly as her absence. It is the object of our worship and desire, as well as the subject of disappointment and backlash. As its chosen nation who saves it from its bitterest enemies, sometimes from itself, we are more European than the Europe itself is, but anti-European from it .

On the basis of previous argumentation, I will formulate hypothesis as follows: *For Croatian society the Balkans presents the key concept in the construction of national identity and also the strongest social trauma since the beginning of the nineties.* To separate from the Balkans and to distinguish itself from the neighbors, former “fraternal” republics, primarily Serbs, Bosniaks and then the other ex-Yu “suspects” twenty years ago were foundations on the design of new homogeneous Croatian identity (here I rely on the ideas developed in: Jambrešić-Kirin, 2004). This identity was suitable to Gellners’ formula “one nation – one culture – one language”, and from it they tried to turn off all the assets that was recognized in other nations, i.e., indicating to some, at least minimal familiarity with Balkan culture. In the prevailing perception of the Croatian intellectual and political elite during the nineties, the Balkans is perceived exclusively as negative and it was identified as the major culprit for the centuries-old “Golgotha of Croatian nation” (in Serbia, as we have seen, there is a parallel narrative about the “Golgotha of the Serbian people”). According to this view, the Croatian nation with their identity and cultural heritage belongs to Europe, but in the history endured great sacrifices for their unfortunate spatial arrangement at the “crossroads of the Worlds” (line clash of civilizations, the bulwark of Europe) and the expansionist policies of other nations and national communities (“Turks” “Austrians”, Serbs, etc.). It seems that Croatian public and socio-political reality of the late twentieth and early twenty-first century’s fear of “returning to the Balkans” was huge.

In fact, back in the mid 80s of the 20th century in Croatia (and parallel narratives exist elsewhere, notably also in Slovenia) became dominant reinterpretation of history according to which the Croatian nation is the biggest victim because the others – neighbors – economically exploit it in various ways and secretly destroyed it. (Examples are the narratives of Serbian “colonization” of the Adriatic, parasitic economy in which the rich republic feed on the poor, centralization in Belgrade, etc). With the independence, the elites were revived in the past the present narratives of nation-victim, together with its rhetoric, metaphors and figures, as a general truth, that is, the total synthesis of Croatian history. To further confirm these narratives and obscure national neurosis due to the geographic origin – among others, the Balkans – the 80s has fully accepted the negative imagery of the Balkans. From the historical dustbin it pulled up and reaffirmed the myth of the bulwark that is supposed to give the nation a greater reason for living on the territory of the Balkan (Rihtman-Auguštin, 1999). The greater reason was *Croatian historic mission to defend the borders of Europe* from the barbaric onslaught from the East. Balkans has been, in the last twenty years in every way (geographically, symbolically, politically, culturally...) equated with Serbia (and Slavic Orthodoxy), Yugoslavia and all ideas about the unity, regardless of what the historical context they occurred in. Some Serbian intellectuals, as we have seen, have already appropriated the Balkans and gave it certain meaning, but also there were some Croatian intellectuals at that time willing to accept such a semantic conquest of the Balkans and further negative mental food imagination about it (detailed examples can be found in Luketić, 2013). In addition, contemporary Croatian geographers, historians, writers and others point out that it was in the time of Yugoslavia that the concept of Balkan has been established in a way which has expanded the borders that no longer overlap with the borders of the Ottoman Empire. Thus, symbolic and imaginative geography was built in conformity of

significant part of Croatian and Serbian elites, although these elites were apparently in opposite political positions.

The minting of Croatian national identity stereotypes were paired with each other, in a domino-effect of one's determination which has entailed another, equally hostile, accusatory and negative. The Balkans are tied with Yugoslavia, Yugoslavia with Serbia, and Serbia with violence, backwardness, primitiveness, barbarity, etc., i.e. with the historic oppression of Croatian people, the Četnik movement, "the appropriation of the fruits of someone else's work," etc. Balkans then over Yugoslavia and Serbia identified with communism: "dark times" unfreedom, despotism, state repression, persecution of dissenters. Such common position has gotten a negative imagination of Eastern Europe originated in the West and partly accepted in the Eastern Europe (Kourvertais, 2002). Once again, all this is a good example of general Orientalist notions, the fantasy of Orientalism, Asiats, Byzantism, to establish a single negative, a-historical imagery, adaptable to all situations and all times. Ease of bonding stereotypes shows such as this quote from the collections of Croatia and the Western Balkans, which summarizes the official nationalist narrative of the nineties: Balkan viruses are the legacy of the Ottoman Empire and Yugoslavia. In this spiral of stereotypes one could hear this message – Ottomans conquered the Balkans and for centuries ruled despotically in the area, and then it was ransacked by Austrians, Hungarians, Italians... in short, all of them who could, all of our neighbors. In pre-war Kingdom, Serbs dominated as the biggest "Balkan bullies," and they have devastated "us", but in a slightly different way – economically, culturally, linguistically (Hammond, 2004). After the Second World War, the Balkans was entirely conquest by the communists, and again, they ruled over "us" to be true, under different ideological sign, but just as violent and "against the will of the people".

To belong to the Balkans in the last twenty years in the Croatian official discourse implies to renew or accept "our" dis-

astrous relationship with Serbia, Yugoslavia and communism, or the Orient, i.e. with all the mental outlook and identity negative legacies that these stereotypical notions implied. In other terms, it means to opt for democracy overall. The Balkans is so constantly open to new and emerging negative fantasies, its semantics is not closed, but it can be, according to the interests of political or social elites, updated as new content is dangerous. But stereotypes sometimes have coverage in reality, real source of meaning that is exaggerated, the raucous imagination swells, spreads, and sometimes completely changed. Also, once formed ideas often come to life and build a new detail in later period (Detrez et al. 2005). For example, the stereotype of Serbia as the “right” (masculine) Balkans in recent history often comes back and rebuilds – it is part of the theory of “Balkan mentality” and superiority of “Dinara type”, part of the narrative of Slavic and Orthodox as the essence of the Balkans, and part of the discourse of many foreign travelers on the Balkans during the 20th century (Rebecca West, more recent, Peter Handke). Such stereotype includes certain characters, rituals, symbols and strategies (violence, passion, machismo, culture, weapons, etc.) (Kourvertais, 2002). Singular here is replaced by all actual and potential plural; Balkans is presented only as a certain type of uniform indoor and culture, while its diversity, multiplicity and contradictions reversed (Paić, 2002). The Imaginarium of Serbs as prototypes of what is true, wild Balkans, all time barbarian, has accepted, or had brought to life again, Croatian national ideology of the nineties of the 20th century onwards. For it, it was the only appropriate way of defining and representing Balkanism. Obviously, it was easier to mobilize the nation’s defense and warfare stereotypes and form national identity in opposition to the menacing, Serbian Balkans, but they were trying to show wider space in a different way and to distinguish aggression of Serbian and Yugoslav army from stereotypical perceptions of the Serbian people and its alleged essential Balkanism (Detrez et al 2005). It

was leapt on the map of exclusion and strengthening of collective neurosis, rather than to break down, ironically or relativist narratives about violent, Serbian Balkans and find a less frustrating perception of Balkan components of Croatian identity. However, such a thing was not even expected of the former political elite, because essentialism and binarisms, which are the lifeblood of any stereotypes, I would argue, corresponded to the nationalist political discourse.

Summarizing previous reflections, I will articulate above-mentioned ideas in the following conclusion: *The last two decades of Croatian official policy – but also the media, journalism, science, culture – are wholeheartedly engaged to get the country out of the Balkans, to geographically, and with identity and mentality, and symbolically join it to Europe or Central Europe and the Mediterranean.* If they can't do it in any other way, than at least to rename this area, find alternative concepts and mitigate geographic implacability. Another name for the Balkans is always euphemism; it has the function of alleviating or masking the possible meanings and cultural affiliation. One of these aliases for the Balkans and the Balkan peninsula was Southeastern Europe; it was understood that territorially it includes Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Montenegro, Macedonia, Romania, Serbia and conditional Greece, Moldova, Slovenia, Croatia, Turkey (Mapes-Niediek, 2005).

However, this term uncomfortable evoke Nazi geopolitics (*Südosteuropa*), and therefore it's avoided. On the other hand, the definition of Eastern Europe and its meaning is narrowed and imprecise, because in the narrow sense it's used exclusively for Belarus, Moldova, Ukraine and the European part of Russia, while in the broader sense it's connected with all countries in which up until the 1990 there was a communist government there (Savić & Bijelić, 2005.). Eastern Europe is strongly related to the Cold War division of Europe, and also contains a number of negative connotations, to the great extent these meanings were lost

and become semantically fluid after the fall of the Wall, because a solid border that is realistic and was the very backbone of the semantics of the term itself has leveled German unification and ideological twist states that have until recently been “behind the curtain”. Today, political tendency to throw that term out of service is very notable, so (as Maria Todorova pointed out) they are increasingly talking only about Central Europe or Russia. On symbolic level, the displacement of Eastern Europe notion means to supersede negative communist legacy, i.e. dangerous Soviet/Russian geopolitical, but also mental occupation of this part of Europe. Today, in public discourse in these areas the name *Western Balkans* is completely accepted as well as administrative and political term that the European Union forces. In Croatia in the early nineties it was fiercely criticized and interpreted as pushing the country into a new Balkan integration, i.e., a new Yugoslav community in which it would be worth equal proportions of power as in the past.

Nonetheless, over time the term has become reality, largely because it is imposed as necessary part of the official discourse of the Balkan states to join the European Union. It is actually a concept that “hangs in the air”, because in addition to the Western Balkans, there is (ironically) no administrative “East” or “North” or the “South Balkans” (Compared to Eastern Europe and Western Europe where it exists, as already pointed out in: Detrez et al. 2005). Moreover, in contrast to the West as there is no east, north south of the Balkans, or South does exist, just as semantically negative South relative to the positive North. Also, the space to the east of the state, such as Romania and Bulgaria have become, rather than western, recognized by members of the Union, so they are more in political terminology, and not tied to the Balkans (Jambrešić-Kirin, 2004). But adjective phrase in Western Balkans and the West does not have a precise definition of space, it only seeks to mitigate the dissatisfaction of the population that remained in the Balkans and achieve easi-

er to accept applications for accession to the Union. In addition, the adjective Western symbolic makes it easy to the EU that the people from the edge of the continent, where there are so many writers, scientists or politicians in history to be considered barbaric and non-European, however, accepts into its society. The term Western Balkans represents also discursively smearing eye to easily implement the ruling European politics “civilizing” of this area, and it actually includes quite specific interests of the European countries in the Balkans. European administration launched the very concept of Western Balkans in the early nineties and later introduced it to one document as an official political designation for all the new states of the former Yugoslavia, minus Slovenia (which is already a member), plus Albania.

It is especially used after the Council of Ministers of the EU established a committee for the Western Balkans. The term was used before, but in neutral, geographical terms, in the travelogues or other texts from the 19th century (Kourvertais, 2002). Today, especially after conference of the Council of the EU for the Balkans in Vienna in 1998 it has become the official policy of the European administration and it's mentioned in all documents of the Union whenever it is about (geo) political strategies towards this area. As usual, the notion of political discourse in the public sphere expanded and became universal, supranational, and unifying definition. Such spread of political terminology and the general idea of rootedness of Western Balkans shows its good acceptance in the tourist discourse, so world's most famous tourist guide publisher, Lonely Planet, published a guide titled “Western Balkans Travel Guide” in 2006. In it are included Croatia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Serbia, Montenegro, Macedonia, Albania and Slovenia (from the later editions in 2009, Slovenia has been deleted and attached in the guide for Central Europe). However, the editorial Lonely can easily move all the local countries from one to the other territorial definition – which is actually mitigating represent you stand on hybridism and plurality of this

area – for example, their guide on Eastern Europe from 2011 includes 21 countries, including those in the Balkans: Albania, Croatia, Serbia, Montenegro, Bosnia-Herzegovina.

During the nineties, as mentioned, European strategy for the Western Balkans partly included projects of which the Croatian public policy publically despised (such as loose confederation of Carl Bildt). But part of Croatian politics was satisfied with such projects, because they justify some power moves, masked the failure of government policy abroad and well served to frighten and domestication of the nation. Tuđman's government publicly condemned the name of the Western Balkans and the strategies associated with it, regardless of their content, adding that he still think only about one – an effort to put Croatia again under the authority of Yugoslavia and Serbia. According to Davor Domazet, military personnel and advocates of conspiracy theories in the Croatian version: The Western Balkans is a clone of 'Greater Serbia'. In his book "The Western Balkans" publicist Anđelko Milardović believes that for Croatia it's a false strategy to escape from the Balkans at all costs and alignment with countries such as Slovenia after 2000. Very few authors specify what is the true meaning of the "Balkan policy" – as stereotypically assumed that the adjective "Balkan" means. According to Milardović, they wanted to emphasize the third dimension as Croatian Mediterranean, Central Europe and the Balkans. Therefore, for this author acute political issue is what Croatia can do to get away from the Balkans in every sense, even if it's West ("Croatia needs quality of service to ascend from the Western Balkans to the west balcony"). On the basis of these and similar narration is banal Tuđman's equation – HDZ equals the state independence and European orientation, and the opposition and critical intelligence – new Yugoslav and Balkan communities. Over the past year against the term Western Balkans, but the Balkans in general, was often written in Croatian geography, and Duško Topalović believes that European Union has intellectually failed in intro-

duction of the term 'Western Balkans' in the official political lexicon (Rihtman-Auguštin, 1999). Therefore, he proposes new aliases, such as "The Eastern region, the eastern Europe, the Adriatic-Danubian space, etc", but adds that this is "problem of political bureaucracy of the European Union". For him, Croatia it is by no means in the Balkans, therefore not addressed to neighbors, does not share with them common tradition, experience, narrative, heritage and must be separated from the "Balkan politics." And because of this, debate on Croatia's membership to geographical Balkans still remains at the theoretical level. It is important to prove that Croatia does not belong to a political Balkans, and it is not done by deliberation, by the specific state policy. According to Topalović, the advantages of our position are: "geo-economic nature and relate to the economic evaluation of different geographical content, including geographic location. If Croatia we know how to timely take advantage of them, it will be of no importance where they are geopolitical classified – in the Western Balkans, in Europe's southeast, in the Adriatic-Balkan area or elsewhere. Then it will be fully confirmed and Croatian cultural and geographical diversity, eclipsed the current situation in which the social mentality of the spatial components of the national minimum, those in the Balkans, a dominant political and social position (Topalović, 1997)."

On the other hand, concept of the Balkans and general alignment of Croatia in the Balkans isn't accepted by the geographer Owen Feletar. His article "Misconceptions of nonexistent Peninsula" (published in popular-science journal) illustrates one type of interpretation by which negates the Balkans as a concept, so that negates the fact that it's about the peninsula and in general area that according to the principles of geography and cultural geography could have any sort of common denominator. Feletar argues that "some part of the land could be geographically a peninsula, sea (water) leg must be longer than the land", and that "in the so-called Balkan Peninsula this is not the case"

(Rihtman-Auguštin, 1999). The author disclaims any cultural, historical and social cohesion of Croatia with the Balkan area, because, as he claims, Croatia for centuries “belonged to and built the Mediterranean Roman Catholic culture and Central European cultural circle” and its inhabitants “cannot accept any ‘Balkan’ qualifications”. Even if there is some geographic Balkans, continues Feletar, Croatia does not belong to it, because it is only “the Mediterranean and Central European country”, and therefore he send this invitation to the “Croatia’s geography and science, especially the political elite to maximally insist on explaining the scientific interpretation of the actual components of the geographical position of Croatia. Classification of Croatia in any frames or names of ‘Balkans’, ‘Western Balkans’, ‘Balkan Peninsula’ and the like, for that reason cannot be accepted.

In my opinion, his text, as an example of the dominant type of national discourse on the Balkans, may be challenged by a number of grounds: first, the Balkans has been implemented as a geographical and cultural concept for more than a century and at the very least delayed his denial. Also, perseverance on definition of the peninsula as an imaginary triangle whose land site must be shorter than the other two, may entail insisting on other geographic precision even those that Europe is not a continent. In addition, there are numerous grounds for determining the closeness and common points within the culture of the Balkans, and their waiver is seen as a sign of political and ideological myopia or tuning authorities, including the testimony of a sort (again politically induced) fear that, by confessing our own multiplicity – i.e. belonging to the Mediterranean, the Balkans and Central Europe – we will lose our own peculiarity. Also, Feletar inappropriately accepts the concept of the Balkans as it’s created in the ideological and nationalist interpretations of the Serbian intelligence to then exclude Croatia from it. But criticizing Jovan Cvijić and its forcing of the Balkans as integrative cultural-national idea and partial replacement for Yugoslavia, he

does not see that Cvijić writes about the semantic interpretation of the Balkans in a certain way, and that it should go a step back and critically explain the meaning and not a priori accept them and then build on them their criticism. In my point of view, this does not provide accurate framework for analysis, so in the next passage I will focus more on “Croatian desire for Europe”, since that part of analysis can show much precise picture on this topic, and it is by all means more closely related to the empirical part of this research.

### ***Croatian Europeanization of the Balkans and the desire for Europe***

I argue that one of the ways of symbolic of escape from the Balkans and overcoming geographical meaning in the past two decades consisted in placing narration on “special assignment” which Croatia has in the Balkans – *the task of Europeanization neighboring nations*, those “real” Balkanites. Croatian mission was, as it was imagined by the ruling elite, to take out other Balkan nations on the European path, i.e. “normalize them.” This mission was ordered by Franjo Tuđman where he clearly expressed in the interview with *Le Figaro* in 1995 the fact that Croatia has accepted the task of Europeanization of Bosnian Muslims (summary of this important interview can be found in: Rihtman-Auguštin, 1999). Except they sought to justify possible Balkan origin, Tuđman and his political and cultural elite wanted to conceal the expansionist Croatian policy in Bosnia from 1993 onwards, and to reduce the consequences of the conflict of Bosnian Army and Croatian Defense Council (The Croatian Defense Council, abbreviated: HVO, was the main armed force of Croats during the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina).

“Normalization” of Bosnia by Croats further justified, in their opinion, the fact that population of the country in basis was

Croatian or Serbian, and today's Bosniaks from the nationalist perspective (as in Serbia) were considered historical Islamized Croats or Serbs. It is interpretation which stood in the grounds of many Greater Croatian and Greater Serbian ideas of Bosnia in history and especially the updated early nineties, not only in the political milieu, but also in historiography, journalism, media, etc. The discourse of cancelling BH specificity is actually the point at which the Croatian and Serbian nationalism have met from the nineties and found common ground. Narration on the normalization of Bosnia as a subtext implied religious and symbolic cultural and religious conversions, the return of the "lost flock", but also westernization and suppression of oriental. The narrative of normalization, with their respective terms, in politics often means concealing or mitigates certain interests and expansionist plans civilizers itself. Behind normalization is often hidden policy of conquest, resettlement of the population, "cleansing of the territory", etc., but more often with it, they achieve some seemingly softer policy of economic, cultural, narrative colonization (Rihtman-Auguštin, 1999). In both cases it's implied that the state – objects or people – objects of someone's interventions/civilizing are really wild, ignorant, uneducated, inarticulate, etc., and thus less valuable. "Normalizing" them means to bring them to civilization, to win them to their side, to subordinate them to adapt themselves in order to further strengthen power as a leader, nation or nation – teacher – educators. "Charity of civilizers" is actually, as shown throughout history, more or less an illusion, as noted by Edward Said, discussing the relationship between culture and imperialism, cultural creativity and political processes.

Narration of "normalizing" the *others* in this part of the Balkans is appropriated, as we have mentioned, by the official Slovenian politics after the country joined the European Union, and advocated by official Belgrade politics. But they insist on it from the outside: administration of the Union and some European countries, governments, institutions, corporations etc. Balkan

experts also support the view of the necessity of domination of one over the other Balkan nations, i.e. the necessity of monitoring the “big Balkan nation/state” over small. In this monitoring large Balkan nation, i.e. the state, despite the propagation of multiculturalism and civil society, there is a strong tendency for identification of state and nation – figures like puppets which in turn triggered another “great European nation/state”, i.e. powerful European policy. Foreign interest in setting up the “Balkan Monitor” in “correctional facility of Balkans” consists mainly in better administrative, economic, political, market controlling of the local nation and states from one centre, due to the breakup of Yugoslavia and the creation of new states emerged the problem of how efficiently political supervise the Balkan area.

In addition, the Balkans is new potential market of the West and it is necessary to conquest it. Its complexity and “fragmentation” of the territory for big companies mean additional costs, the establishment of many regional offices, additional training of employees, a complex control, etc. This is why it’s often insisted on establishing joint centre for this area, which, apart from the negative uniformization of stronger links between countries also means the greater fluctuation of ideas and goods in Yugoslphere. Desire to play the role of country-leader in the region and thereby increasing the political power, has led to the further notes, often comical, the rivalry between the Croatian and Slovenian authorities since 2000 (cf. Mappes- Niediek, 2005, but same arguments can be found in the works of various authors). Both Croatian and Slovenian media and political discourses are full of metaphors about the state mission at the door of Europe, of “normalization” and “civilizing” Others in the Balkans. Ljiljana Petrović mentions many of such constant figures in Slovenian politics, media and culture, such as those on “Europe as our only family”, about “European parents who must raise their children”, about “the Balkan people which must learn the adult life”, on “homework that childlike nation must solve”. In short,

by joining the EU, these childlike states are finally becoming an adult, so Slovenia, who was a child until 2004 took over the parental role when it joined the EU and helps the children of Western Balkans, European paternalistic attitude toward others is being appropriated by these others (Balkan nations) when they enter the EU. The logic is clear: until recently, Europe has had to civilize “us” and now “we” get a chance to civilize other non-Europe. In the hierarchy of power that means that we have crossed the one below, to another, higher level. In front of the “European doors” remain some other “misfits” and “immature” nation, the other “political children” anxiously awaiting their symbolic majority in actualized EU membership.

They are now left to precarious waiting in the East (in the South) squeezed in the waiting room at the margin and unified sense of collective fear (are they even going to take us in) and collective hope. In the future, however, they will move on to the next level, attain their majority and be rewarded with the position of the local civilizers, and will continue to be able to spend some of their desires, thanks to collective illusions about charity. This rhetoric of normalization of the region by Slovenia or Croatia is present in the documents of the European Union, in the statements of its leaders, and reports from meetings, it’s insisted on by the foreign intellectual elite. As an example of the rhetoric of normalization and the Europeanization of the Balkans, and the new – old metaphor of the Balkans as a bridge to the East, I will quote the words Nicole Lindstrom, lecturer at the University of York, from interview given to a Croatian media. For Lindstrom, “Croatia can be a bridge to the region, but it is awkward that this idea was very successfully used in Slovenia” (Detrez et al. 2005). Today, when Croatia is a full member of the European Union it can be considered that they truly represent a bridge which separates or connects Europe to the Balkan. This line of thinking is as follows: The country is saying we’re out of the Balkans, but we understand it. They do it diplomatically and it is

their attempt to increase their power within the institutions of the European Union decision-making. They used it in economic terms. This is the idea that they can sell Laško beer in the region or that there may disseminate chain of Mercator stores. They present themselves as European company with special ties to the Balkans. Lindstrom further supports quite geopolitical vision of the role of states – bridges, and it's because from the perspective of a European city “there is nothing better for EU than diplomatic ties from being them as more countries are such bridges. At the same time it annoys her that there is a quite a number of bridges” and that “now you have a member of the EU, such as Slovenia and Bulgaria, which both say they are bridges to the region. And if they say that they are linking EU and the Balkans, this brings them some money.

In similar “well-intentioned” discourses, there is no mentioning of the fact that this state and this area does not need any bridges or intersections, since in these cases they have only function of satisfying the interests of some European countries. Build yourself only as a bridge through which Europe will easily exceed the East means to undo yourself in one part, i.e., reduce to a restrictive, subordinated or mediating role. After all, this is political idea of the Balkans as a bridge or “the way of the East” which was an integral part of Western policy throughout the 19th and 20th century, in crises and debates about the so-called Eastern question, even in Nazi geopolitical vision of the area (Rihtman-Auguštin, 1999). That is already apparent from the historical experience of how such policies are disastrous for our nations and ineffective as well. Likewise, accepting the mission of civilizing other countries/nation of the Balkans in the way that this role is defined by the European Union and Eurocentric intellectual elite who dutifully promotes attitudes of political elites and freely selling their own independence, means to fit into a certain mould, and to qualify for the squad of Early Modern Western “crusaders” (Todorova, 1999). Indeed, joining the European Un-

ion, in a sense represents leaving of own values and taking the “better ones” European. The very kind of transition constitutes a waiver “of their own” to embracing “other people”.

The fundamental relationship of Croatia towards Europe in the last twenty years is equally ambivalent and dramatic as in Serbia, notably the same neurotic teetering, emotionally falling into extremes – from worship and desire to disappointment and disdain (Jambrešić-Kirin, 2004). However, unlike Serbia, where disdain for Europe entails once the “pride of the Balkans”, I argue that the official Croatian discourse on Balkans cannot be seen as a holder of any positive meaning. Exclusive focus on the Europe and national identification with European culture, “European mentality” and European belonging is not questioned in any dominant public discourse, and the only thing that casts a shadow over the EU-Croatia fairytale and sometimes causes disappointment and disdain from the Croatian side is – the European perception of the Croatian Europeanism. Dramatic attitude towards Europe in Croatia is enhanced in today’s understanding of the concepts of Europe and European Union. In public discourse and collective notions, the unifying conception according to which there is no distinguishable belonging to European culture (specifically European cultures) of belonging to the European Union. Each narrative about “us” and Europe in the medium assumes the identification of culture, identity and traditions of Europe with a single administrative state community, and this identification is one of the causes of semantic confusion and discursive neurosis in Croatia. But, on the other hand, European Union itself has appropriated European heritage, occupied all European identity narratives and declared itself the sole successor to the idea of Europe. Unlike some other countries in the region, the Croatian public in the last two decades has not articulated any critical discourse on the usurpation, so political narrative of the original Europeanhood of European Union accepts as natural and self-evident. Consequently, key fears of Croatian integration into Europe-

an integration occurred before the entry into the EU. In addition, criticism of the functioning of the EU in Croatia comes mostly from right-wing barricades, mixing with nationalist outbursts, xenophobia, hate rhetoric towards its neighbors, smugness, fantasies about conspiracies and criticism from left-wing, liberal or other positions in Croatia are rare, recognized only after the 2010, when the global recession intensifies the problems in the eurozone and when the referendum is implemented on Croatia's EU bid. These criticisms mostly relate to the unsustainability of neoliberal model and the emergence of new rigid national policies in Europe, and much less on usurpation, possession of European heritage and Naturalization Service (convert something historical into something natural) of European identity in the European Community.

*Identification of the Union and European culture in Croatia dates back to the early nineties*, and this is when all the others were formed, the ruling perceptions and narratives about Europe and Croatian origin. The official and prevailing attitude towards Europe at that time was set as the ratio of ambivalence and neuroticism, constant shifts pro-European and anti-European narrative, desire and hatred (Savić & Bijelić, 2005). Croatia once truly belonged to Europe, the second time it was anxious to affiliation verification by the document of accession to the Union, then boasted that it is more European than Europe, and was frustrated because it was left in the “Balkan waiting room” at the end it was angry and disappointed with such Europe. All of these narratives have been established in Tudman's time, and later wish they just took over, showing that passive vacillation of Europhilia to Europhobia that do not understand the fundamental importance of Europe and the EU; they are blind to the peculiarities of the historical moment and trapped in their own rigid fantasies and mythologies (Kourvertais, 2002). The mere craving for Europe resulted primarily in Serbian aggression against Croatia. Here, the reversal and striving towards Europe is

happening, but determined efforts to renouncing everything that seemed common values of the people in the former Yugoslavia.

Regardless to what individual narrative work it was about, noticeable is the central tendency – again as in Serbia – to political, cultural, geo-strategic, economic and other transformations into centrality. As a result, in the 90s, as the national level the myth of the bulwark is revived, just like the myth that gives an additional, “higher” value from the edge of the nations of Europe. With its independence Croatia has intensively represented itself as the most important “bulwark for Europe” which protected the Western civilization of eastern barbarism. This myth was present in the past and modified in various ways according to the prevailing policies and the prevailing narratives about the enemies of the state. Once it implied defense of the Ottomans, orientalizations and Islam, the second time, defense of Orthodoxy, byzantism and Russian domination, the third time, defense against communism and Soviet influence; fourth defense of Milošević’s despotism and undemocratic forces (these examples are given in: Jambrešić-Kirin, 2004). But myth of the bulwark is not Croatian exclusivity, it exists in other Christian countries of the Balkans (especially in Serbia) and Eastern Europe (such as Poland) and the mythical narratives about defending Europe more often, as Ivo Žanić warms, came inside, and for example, the Croatian and Serbian nations of understanding themselves as a bulwark, a shield, rather than what they perceived as such from the centre of which are protected from Europe (Žanić, 1993). Perception of Croatian and Serbian residents as some kind of protective walls of East Europe and non-Christian civilization (*antemurale christianitatis*) is essentially a paradox, and as discussed above, Europe did not see it in this way.

But myth of the bulwark is not Croatian exclusivity, as it will be discussed more detailed later –there are solid and impermeable boundaries between East and West, “natural” civilization clash specified boundary of Ottoman conquest that is by religion

and schism. The Croatian version of the myth is in presenting images that are not only defending Western, European civilization of Eastern European, Balkan barbarism, but also Catholicism from Orthodoxy and Islam. Serbian version of the myth, the Orthodox East defends Catholic West of unfaithful Islam, therefore suggests that Orthodoxy shows its high level of tolerance by protecting another religion and true spirituality. The myth of the bulwark is supported by the recent Bosniak elite, and in their version it's shown in the thesis of Bosnia as an Islamic bulwark of the West, "a lion who defended the gates of Istanbul" (Luketić, 2013). It is clear that three versions of myths are again greater or lesser extent rooted in understanding of the common man whether he was a Croat, Bosniak or Serb. The myth is particularly widespread in the 19th century, along with the first stronger homogenization of national identity, and then as a central symbolic figure appears in ban Nikola Šubić Zrinski who was killed in 1566 in defense of 'Croatian Thermopylae'. The metaphor of Croatian territory as walls, shield, outpost of Europe, and in the cultural sense defense of its values and in religious sense of Catholicism, in fact is the foundation, according to Žanić, of modern patriotic ideology and vision of the national territory. Within this myth was developed the image of the Christian holy warrior who "does not only include secular warriors, but also some military saints, especially St. George, whose widespread veneration in all Croatian regions probably has something to do with the raising of the spirit to fight on the bulwark of Christianity" (accurately analyzed by Žanić, 1993). To make a difference to a maximum extent between Croatian and Balkan, was done through the empowerment and religious identity, which again was slightly different from the religious identity of the "other side" of the Balkan Peninsula, which is predominantly Orthodox and Muslim.

Croatian albanologist and historian Milan pl. Šufflay in the beginning of the 20th century saw Croatia also as the bulwark, and

it is exclusively Croatian mission, located on the “Balkan wind-swept” to protect “the white West”. This is why the history of this “Western and Slavic nations on millennial marked borders between two worlds, East and West Mediterranean, extraordinarily important from the standpoint of the history of mankind”. According to Šufflay, the mission of Croats is civilization, thus he writes: “While there is a gap between ancient Asia and Europe, and the Balkans through the 500-year-old Byzantine-Turkish crucible rushes XIV century, Croatian nationalism denotes one of the strongest ramparts of Western civilization” (quoted in: Rihtman-Auguštin, 1999). From the above quotation we see that Croatia was seen as a line of demarcation land – on one hand, those of Western civilization is advanced while the other, eastern side, backward civilization and a kind of “foreign tissue” with the Orthodox and Islamic background.

Croatian nationalism is not only love of native soil and Croatian homes on it; it does not mean local patriotism, but loyal service throughout the white West. In article entitled “The Voice of Croatian blood” where Stjepan Radić, prominent Croatian politician is criticized as well as others for their politics led towards their neighbors, believing that by creating “nameless Balkan republics, some weird Balkan Federation” and Croatia pushed into the Balkans, Šufflay national distinctiveness argues even in stronger words: “Croatian nation belongs in the West, with West. Croatian nation doesn’t belong in the Balkans. Who is binding against the West, is working against the Croatian history. Who is riding on the Balkans, is Croatian blood enemy” (ibid.). “Croatian blood means civilization. Croatian is the synonym for all that is beautiful and well-made by the European West”. On one hand, the myth implies such a national pride because of the role that the Croatian people had in the past, but, on the other, disappointment with Europe, which does not recognize and does not value Croatian merit sufficiently in the defense of Christian values and civilization. Great efforts to back away from the Balkans in the minds of

most Croats were obvious, and massive. All Croats who want to be part of the Balkans and Yugoslavia were simply satanized. How rich is the Croatian imaginary about the Balkans shows range of characters from the fictional Balkan nation, which usually scared the nation in the past two decades. Balkanite could be anyone, if declared by such ruling political and intellectual elite, and in the national imagology violent, primitive and barbaric Balkan neighbors were all at the top of the pyramid Serbs, Bosniaks and then the other nations of the former Yugoslavia. Such negative typology was encouraged by war, politics, nationalism and the rhetoric of hostility, but it is also based on the *imaginations of longer duration*, collective intent of the essence of each nation, characterology, worldview, mentality, etc., which can be traced in large culture text of the 20th century. Zoran Vukman interpreted this identification of Serbs and Balkan like this: “You cannot escape, the Balkans is coming here where I thought the Mediterranean is, and where Central Europe is. And to get away from it, if Serbs are offering themselves as a role model for you, for a measurement of tolerance or even as a criterion for its proof! Why is the world so interested in having us all reconciled to the Serbian side? Because the Balkans extent to Serbia, not to Croatia” (Vukman, 2000). In the official discourse of politics, media, culture and literature, especially Serbs have become real Balkans, Slobodan Milošević was the biggest “Butcher of the Balkans”, “Balkan vampire”, “Balkan butcher”, and is associated with Balkan Serbian killings, violence and barbarity. Here there is a tendency to put equation of the Balkan and everything belonging to it with Serbia.

The Balkans has barricaded roads, led wars, destroyed towns and killed, and they were looking for breakaway of territory in Croatia or they came from neighboring countries to monthly, or “weekend” warfare and looting. Serbian soldiers in the local media were regularly depicted as bearded, neglected, toothless, dirty guys with a bottle of brandy under their arm.

They were ruthless, dangerous and predatory army which is raping and killing in the battlefields. (Although this research is focused on Croatian media, here it must be stated that in general, similar images appeared in Serbian media, to testify about the supposedly primitive Croatian army, which is another in a series of parallelisms in constructing images of enemies and war propaganda of the official Croatia and Serbia.) Such images of Serbian soldiers have regularly been rhetorically reinforced in media discourse expressions such as “Balkan killer” or “Balkan butchers”. Croatia’s prose has also formed a gallery of typical Serbian soldiers with permanent Balkan attributes, characters and roles, and an example of such banal stereotypes and nationalism inspired the character of Serbian Vronsky, and even Serbian characters in the novel *The Death of Vronsky* by Nedjeljko Fabrio from 1994. Photos of “Serbian, Balkan butchers” were contrasted with the images of neat, short cut and handsome Croatian soldiers with hats and styling like the actor Tom Cruise in mega-hit movie *Top Gun*, which should reinforce the impression of Western civilization and unquestionable, orientation of “our” army. *Croatian soldier was portrayed in the media and in literature as an urban guy who went to war because of ideals and defending the homeland, often volunteer and member of the rock generation* (in the background TV picture was regularly accompanied with the music of Dire Straits). In this way, it was necessary to send a message to all Croats, and especially young men to look like a real Croatian soldier – for urbanism, European and pro-Western values.

In contrast to Serbian/Balkan warriors, embodied barbarians, there were true stories printed out of the Croatian heroes, like those of Ante Gotovina in the hit biography from the nineties called *Warrior, adventurer and general* by Nenad Ivanković. Gotovina (paradigmatic Croatian patriot hero) is shown in hagiographic manner, as sinless, fearless and righteous patriot, holy warrior, romantic knight and passionate seducer. His participation in the French Foreign Legion was presented as a military

training in the West and the proof of his military professionalism. Among other things, Gotovina, according to Ivanković, attractive and erotic, is liked by many women, because it embodies the archetypal male warrior values. He is mythical figure and just one lonely Croat defending Europe from the Balkans, West of the East, but is also exposed to the temptation that Europe/West does not understand it. The scenery, the ruling politicians, dangerous Balkan nineties were all citizens of Serbian nationality or those who are counting blood cells were suspicious, mixed and not pure enough.

*In short, official discourse during the Balkan in the nineties was often labeled by both external and internal political enemies, but also different opinions outside the political circle: writers, artists, journalists, even critics of the regime. Slavenka Drakulić, Mira Furlan, Predrag Matvejević, Slobodan Šnajder, Feral Tribune journalists and others have been accused countless times during the nineties from the political booths or in the national media as well as those who “conjure new Yugoslavia/Srboslavia”, “want to return to Balkans”, “friends of the enemy”, etc. Balkans in reproducing stereotypes became Serbophils, Yugonostalgic, Yugoslavs, etc., while abovementioned writers, journalists, feminists or actresses were further demonized as “witches”, and by the intelligence that represented as a liberal and non-regime (Jambrešić-Kirin, 2004). The political regime was determined to fight with all our strength to all those who expressed sympathy with the previous system or the former Yugoslavia and its values. In the discourse of Franjo Tudman those were “yellow Pharisees bred with some kind of world-liberal ideas”, “crackpots and troublemakers, brainless, and easy sell-outs... genetically programmed against free and independent Croatian state,” “black, green and yellow devils” “those who sell themselves to Judah Scuds”, “pseudo-democratic deceivers who preach us great ideas about human rights and media freedom”, “opponents of the Marshes negative historical legacy”, “foreign body in the nation”, etc.*



# EMPIRICAL RESEARCH

Finally, after theoretical part where major notions of Balkanism and related theories were discussed, this chapter brings empirical research on respective topic.

Analysis of the media content as “texts” (single unit) can serve us to understand how media texts represent and construct knowledge, values and beliefs, as well as patterns of change and constancy (Frankfort-Nhachmias & Nachmias, 1992). When analyzing individual articles, one have to follow the standards of analysis of narratives, such as understanding narratives (stories) as a media text which “establishes a certain order and creates a pattern of meaning” in relation to what we are talking about and that our approach can help to get a glimpse of it “how the media creates our knowledge of the world” (Flick, 2002). To retrieve it, the analysis studies narrative position in order to have an impact on the audience, making sure not to forget that what has been left out of the story is as important as what is selected to enter the story (Pawson, 1995). This is the assumption that the author of the contents of message with symbols which he considers will be best understood by the target audience (those that are available to them in their cultural universe). ‘Decoding’ (comprehension, reading) any media message itself can have limitless variety, but the author of your message is formed, in a way that

seeks to “close” and “focus” its decoding (to reduce the diversity of understanding the message), and to ensure that public, that is, readers understand the message in the desired manner (which seeks to induce desired behavior of target audience – in this case negative attitude towards The Balkan and all of the Balkan and positive towards the European Union and European values). yellow devils” “those who sell themselves to Judah Scuds”, “pseudo-democratic deceivers who preach us great ideas about human rights and media freedom”, “opponents of the Marshes negative historical legacy”, “foreign body in the nation”, etc.

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Through the analysis of the narratives I follow the development of the narrative, making causal connections and conclusions, as well as space-time reference frame (Gillespie, 2006). In terms of discourse analysis, I will examine how the complete series of articles, with shared communicative practices makes a discourse, “social construction of reality, a form of knowledge” (Halimi, 1996), that is, “practice of creation, reproduction and transformation of social relations” (Laclau and Mouffe). The particular use of language forms are identifying, such as rhetoric, hyperbole, metaphor, and the diversity of sentence structure, the way of their textual and detailed articulation, commenting, thematization, associations, implications, numbers game, thematic lines, jargon, etc., as Van Dijk (2000) explained in his classic studies of the application of discourse analysis of media texts.

This analysis suggests that the author’s expression is an effort of routing the decoding, i.e. the systematic allocation of certain signifiers to specific, selected markings, and the aim of this analysis is to make it obvious and problematize what unifies text and subtext articles: 1) how author of the article wants his intended audience to understand his message, 2) what is the message, 3) how is the reader implied in such prepared article (how does the author imagine its reader, on the basis of how he made the article), 4) how he addresses him, 5) what relationship of power is established between the main protagonists of the article content, and 6) with what specific combinations of writing the author is trying to direct readers to “read” the message. To conclude, the standard is in the tradition of textual analysis, the components of texts, text dynamics, power relations and discursive permanence that the analysis identifies it doesn’t have to correspond with any other reading of the contents in everyday contexts, but to draw attention to this kind of information, symbolic and affective resources analyzed articles are offering to readers – just as in this case we have the discourse on The Balkan.

In the analysis I included **four Croatian news releases**: three daily newspapers, ***Večernji list***, ***Slobodna Dalmacija***, and ***Jutarnji list***, and the weekly ***Nacional***. Analysis includes the aforementioned newspaper articles, which were available mostly in electronic form on the official websites. The overview of newspaper analysis and articles within stretches **from 1999 to 2014** as follows: ***Večernji list*** in the period from 2001 to 2014; ***Jutarnji list*** in the period from 2003 by 2014; ***Slobodna Dalmacija*** in the period from 1999 to 2008, ***Nacional*** in the period from 2001 to 2012. The total sample entered in the analysis is **197 articles** including: ***Večernji list*** (79 articles, or 40.10%); ***Jutarnji list*** (45 articles, or 22.84%); ***Slobodna Dalmacija*** (45 articles, or 22.84%) and ***Nacional*** (28 articles, or 14.21%), taking into consideration the period from 1999 to 2014 (although the survey was expanded to January of 2014 there were no adequate articles that would be included in the research process **so the analysis stops in December 2013**).

Analysis of media content and discourse analysis of the Balkan start from the article published on 29.05.1999 in *Slobodna Dalmacija* titled “Nobody can impose us their will”. The article states the following: “The President (meaning Franjo Tuđman) has warned that there are those in the world that recognize us, and who would like different Croatia. They recognize us because we were the winners, and because they could not disintegrate us and change and bring some others with whom we would go to The Balkan – said the President. They published the world atlases, continued Dr. Tuđman where Croatia was attributed to The Balkan. It cost us a lot of diplomatic and political efforts to show them will not accept such projects because we cannot go to The Balkan”. From the text can be seen that Franjo Tuđman did not want “to return to the Balkan” at any cost. The text gives a message that Croatia has made much effort to distance themselves from the “famous” Balkans and how her place is not in the Balkan.

In the newspaper article, from the same paper that was released on 23.07.1999 titled “The new leadership for a new pact”

states: “The fact is that Croatia will access the Pact, which is in contrast to its earlier foreign policy commitments and even its constitutional definition which literally forbids entry to any Balkan association”. Here the author draws attention to the “danger” of the Croatian entry in the Balkan association, and the entry into the stability Pact for South East Europe, and notes that even the Constitution of the Republic of Croatia prohibited entry into any Balkan alliances.

In an article published on 24.07.1999 titled “Who’s signed there?” states: “In truth to be told, there are various interpretations of the Stability Pact, and one of the most significant is a return to The Balkan and by this, it loses part of its sovereignty.” Here the author refers to the loss of sovereignty which can experience by being returned to the Balkan.

Article titled “Summit repaired war holes in the street”, published on 29.7.1999 contains the following: “As much as the typical “Balkan” things it’s empty and even funny democratization and economic development of societies of Southeast Europe, accompanied by a corresponding prize, or punitive measures, will be a concepts in which the developed world decided to trust, and, which is far more credible, invest their money”. Here, the author draws attention to the adjective “Balkanite” which should point to a different Balkans mindset – it is obvious they allude to the arrogance and lack of seriousness. In this and similar cases, the use of guidelines “Balkan” and “Balkanite” usually corresponds to the notions of “primitive”, “dumbed down”, “arrogant”, “irresponsible”, “heartless”, “raw”, “rough”, etc. It is obvious that under this heading in dictates, that believes everything that is inhuman, uncivilized, non- European.

“The ministers of their own affairs” an article published on 28.09.1999 contains: “Tudman repeatedly warned that excessive pressure will bring Croatia to The Balkan. And the truth is that internal-political Balkan policy fails to generate Croatian European foreign policy”. By drawing attention again, the mes-

sage of the President is conveyed that the pressure (that is the external pressure, the pressure of the EU) will bring Croatia back on the unwanted Balkans which political leaders and citizens the Croatian certainly don't want to because they do not feel like "the Balkan", but Central Europeans.

Article titled "Corruption must be eradicated without the use of political chase!" published on 05.10.1999 transcripts the interview of Vice president of Council of Minister in B&H, Neven Tomić, which states: "The Balkan is a geographical term, but The Balkan is a way of thinking, too. We, with this mindset thinking that we will trick someone cannot search for long-term trip to Europe". The contents of the interview indicates that the Balkan, despite being the geographical term, is in fact also a way of thinking that is based on fraud. Tomić shows and warns that if we do not leave the "Balkan behaviour", we cannot provide a path to Europe. All this hatred, if we can say so, pointing at the Balkan and everything related to Balkan obviously comes from the fact that Balkan is perceived as a form of behaviour that involves all forms of non-primitive and residual.

In an article titled "Adriatic – Sea of welfare" published on 09.10.1999 the deputy of Italian Minister Foreign Affairs, a fifty-two year old Neapolitan Umberto Ranieri in *Slobodna Dalmacija* declares: "Everyone is slowly learning that the Croats are the people of Central Europe, and if someone mentions The Balkan, it is nothing bad. The Balkan is just a geographical term". The said interview as if it wants to encourage and reassure Croatian political leadership as well as the public in general that the Republic of Croatia is a part of Central Europe and The Balkan is only geographical term and nothing more or less than that and it doesn't represent anything bad, and in particular there is not a slightest reason to run away from it (The Balkan).

"Dr. Franjo Tuđman – the first traveller through the heart of Velebit" is the name of the article published on 17.10.1999 in which then-President said: "We've overcome the difficulties, we

have created our own independent, sovereign Croatian state such that no one will ever be able to threaten our freedom and independence, even those who still, even today, in the country and the world, cannot reconciled with a standalone, independent Croatia, who would like to have some sort of Yugoslavia, those who want to make us go back to The Balkan. There is no force that could get us back to the Balkan". It is obvious that *Slobodna Dalmacija* stressed the importance of highlighting the message of the President, which referred to the "running away" from Balkan and never return to it. This is a clear message from the President of the Republic of Croatia that freedom must not and will not be compromised.

In an article published on 28.11.1999 titled "I do not see the possibility for BH to survive as a single state of three people", Arnold Suppan, Austrian historian and professor at the University of Vienna's Institute for Research in Eastern and South-eastern Europe in *Slobodna Dalmacija* declares: "The Balkan as a historical entity is an area where we had countries within the Ottoman Empire. So, in today's Balkans understanding of the term includes all countries south of the Sava and Danube rivers". This statement by "external factors", from someone who is not from this area indicates that Croatia is still territorial or geographical division under the name of the Balkan although the article is not primarily directed on it.

"The Adriatic highway 'walked' in Dubrovnik" is an article published on 19.12.1999 which states: "Many in Croatia argued that the Pact wants to re-create a new extended confederation, a regional approach which would throw Zagreb back to Balkans." This isolated part of the text confirms that at the time (1999 and before) there were a lot of controversy about the fact that the Republic of Croatia "at the expense" of the Stability Pact could "squeeze" in The Balkan.

In January, more accurately on 25.01.2000, *Slobodna Dalmacija* published an article titled "Escape from The Balkan", in

which the author states the following: “If Balkanization means the process of extracting individual countries from major government entity, then it is entirely logical thing for the Balkan States to flee the Balkan from the mutual integration”. Here the author explains the term ‘balkanization’ as if indirectly justifying the determination of Croatia which doesn’t want to be part of the Balkan association, under the pretext of the meaning of ‘Balkanization’. Thus continues: “The Balkan is an area of constant deregionalization, the climate in which the neighbours see themselves in all other regions except for this one whose name they don’t even want to hear. Balkan neighbours do not want to have a common identity on a multilateral basis no matter how common interests they showed bilaterally. To say that Slovenia and Croatia are in the Balkan, is thought of the political provocation in these countries, however, even Albania, a country from far southern Balkans is often declared as a Central European country. Only Turkey and Greece recognize its Balkan regionalism, but Greece sees Turkish political expansion on the Balkan as a geopolitical rounding”. Here we want to mitigate, and to some extent justified Croatian “revulsion” against The Balkan, noting that other states that fall under the geographical area of The Balkan increasingly emphasize that they are not part of The Balkan”It does not matter with how many feet you are in Balkans, but the pace at which you spend the Westernisation, how are you politically in Europe. Some countries are politically in the Balkan because they do not want to spend the end of democratization, but they wanted to enter the EU to avoid this – but such ‘roadmap’ doesn’t exist. Responsibility for neighbourly relations cannot be achieved by renaming the region. Neighbours remain neighbours called it The Balkan, EuroBalkan, New Balkans, the Western Balkans, “Group 5”, Südost Europe, Southeast Europe.” He concludes that certain countries in Balkan are there willingly because they do not want “Western values” in their backyard, such as democratic values, but in spite of that fact wanted to be

integrated in the same West, in the European Union. At the end of the article, the author nevertheless “softens” and concludes that “Western values” does what was this area like before (and today) and why is it called The Balkan, but what matters are relations between peoples and states in this region because they are the ones who create an image of us as we are (Balkanites).

Article entitled “Croatia in the composition of Balkanija?” published on 26.01.2000 among other things says: “Croatia is a part of South-Eastern Europe, and of which it cannot escape,” recently said U.S. government expert in the southeastern Balkans, Richard Schiffter, clearly pointing out the following: ‘The Stability Pact aims to unite Southeast Europe into a unified political and economic zone.’” Article and the mentioned expert of the U.S. government are very clear regarding the affiliation of Croatia to Southeastern Europe (refined name for The Balkan). This is message, as part of this article, but also the above-mentioned expert from the U.S. government, which said it, can be interpreted as “do not be sensitive to the stability Pact and do not feel the fear that the Republic of Croatia will be returned to Balkan, in Southeastern Europe. You are here; you are not going back, only taking steps forward towards EU”.

In a separate part of the article titled “Voters did their part, its turn for the new government in Europe”, published on 28.01.2000 Colin Munroe, UK Ambassador in Zagreb says: “I noticed with interest that Ivica Račan said that Croatia is Central European and Mediterranean country, but it is also the Balkan country. Personally I believe that the Balkan is a geographical term. Large numbers of countries have no problem with the fact that they are described as the Balkan countries, including Greece, which is a member of the EU and NATO. The word Balkans has unjustly become synonymous for violence. We should more use the term Southeastern Europe, which is also geographically based and in it we can “fit” Slovenia, which agrees with that term”. Here we also see that the foreign delegates think

that being in Balkan is not a big deal, and that Balkan just involves the geographical concept and nothing more.

In an article published on 10.03.2000 titled “We won’t desotonize Balkans anymore” Stanko Nick, foreign policy adviser to President Mesić says: “At one time the term Balkans was phrase that should definitely be avoided. I, in fact, do not see anything wrong with it – we are not in Scandinavia, but we are in the Balkan and we should not run away from the geographical environment. We should run from primitivism and determination of Balkan and balkanization in that sense. We are where we are, and we should not be ashamed of it, because the Balkan has extraordinary achievements of civilization”. The advisor of President Mesić clearly says that there is no reason for shame that we belong to the Balkan, certainly giving an emphasis on geographical term. He also says that one should give up every kind of primitivism in that context when the noun “Balkans” is used. According to his words there shouldn’t be reason for shame, on the contrary, this is an area that is rich with civilizational achievements and probably we should be proud of that, and if not that, than we shouldn’t have inferiority complex.

In the article “Balkan model” published on 14.03.2000 reappears the previous speaker – interviewed Stanko Nick, Stipe Mesić’s advisor for foreign policy, where he states that he “is committed to desotonization of Balkans and the official use of the term ‘cooperation in The Balkan’. When in West European capitals you want to offend Southeast Europeans, then refer to them as ‘The Balkan’ dealing with ‘Balkan businesses’ full of angry irrationalism and one-sided justice. What did a recent burning of the American flag in front of the U.S. Embassy in Zagreb represent – already seen a Balkan version of ‘anti-balkanism’”. Again, Stanko Nick wanted to draw attention to the fact that Balkan as a geographical term isn’t big deal and that he would just stand for “removal of the bad image” of The Balkan, first through cooperation in Balkan. The fact is that in Western societies, governments

negative climate against Balkan and all of the Balkan, as well as the primitive forms of behaviour south-eastern Europeans often say that they are “Balkan business”, “Balkan”, etc.

An article entitled “Historical Fraud” published on 15.03.2000 states the following: “This is a historic fraud: people voted for Europe, and will get, as the main goal, our dear and from the seventh century desired Balkans”. Here the author with a large dose of sarcasm gives his vision. The title of the article apparently aims to attract more readers, and the content pointing to the fact that the people are fooled, plain Croatian man and a citizen who aspired and voted for Europe, however, Europe will remain just a dream, because Croatia wants to “push” itself in the Balkan.

In an article entitled “European strategy: extraction from The Balkan” published on 28.03.2000 in a way happens a kind of revolution in writing, and the relationship of Europe towards The Balkan, where it say: “The European Union is leaving the current strategy of treating Eastern Europe, and with a new plan it’s indenting to pull the country by country out from The Balkan. First in line Croatia, which could quickly come out of the group of countries that were previously in the official Brussels treated as ‘Western Balkans.’” Here we see that the Republic of Croatia is mentioned in the context of The Balkan – that the EU intends to derive or receive in its membership each Balkan country – a compliment for Croatia as it is this country’s first in line.

“To identify Milošević with Tudman – nastiness” is the name of the article published on 29.03.2000 in which Otto von Habsburg, president of the Pan-European Union states: “In this way you can oppose the concept that Croatia is pushed into The Balkan and, unfortunately, this view was represented by many factors in Europe, mainly by the bureaucrats, not so much with serious politician. The Balkan is a term that is perceived differently, but it is clear that Croatia is a western state. When someone is travelling to Split and Dubrovnik, it is nonsense to say they are travelling to The Balkan.” Author of the text or interviewed von

Habsburg warns that the term “Balkans” is treated differently, but also notes that Croatia is Western country, probably thinking that Croatia does not belong to the part which is called the “Balkans”. Above all, he wishes to draw attention that any part of the Republic of Croatia does not belong to.

An article published on 19.04.2000 called “Grotesque fraternization” states: “Trampling Croatian independence and obliteration of the spirit, on one hand, and enforcement in the ‘Western Balkans’ or, if you prefer, ‘Euroslavia’ – continues with unabated speed. The signals of this kind are coming in torrents – it attacked the Croatian national identity and Catholicism in full swing, Yugoslavianism is a subclass of Europeanism, what seems to be the only one we deserve.” Here we also see that the constant mention of “forcing the Croatia into (Western) Balkans” by the author of the articles, and it’s also states that they are targeting both Croatianism and Catholicism, and in return they submit the “Yugoslavhood”.

In the article entitled “The engineers of souls” published on 22.05.2000 it says, “All our primitiveness, voluntarism and uncivilized behaviour, got their balkanoid based in Greater Serbian Yugoslavia! Our Balkanlies last remains, and what is most absurd, while talking about our European integration, strengthen, in fact, Balkan integration! Croatia duality in itself is always a duality Europe and The Balkan.” Here all forms of primitivism are subscribed to Greater Yugoslavia. They are obviously thinking of Serbia, which, as the most populous country in the former Yugoslavia, next to its capital city, Belgrade, led a key word and among other things was the main culture for placement or lack of culture and primitivism of other nations and republics of former Yugoslavia, including of course Republic Croatia.

On the date of 30.05.2000 an article was published titled “Balkan watchtower” in which the author extensively says: “Looking at the mental outlook, psychologically, what would be the most typical characteristic of The Balkan, if by that term,

among other things, we mean messy, a bit wild and exotic part of Europe to its south-east? Incomprehensible ease of cheating. Word, contract and agreements do not mean anything, does not oblige anyone. The ease inconsistencies in formalist sense of Westerner here can lead to despair. An interesting phenomenon is that the balkanized societies where the violation of norms is the only standard that is respected, where everything is subject to voluntarism – that's just the worst and least tolerable paperwork, administration and bureaucratic consciousness. In general, sloppiness insists on sick neatness which prevents any initiative and kills the will to initiate anything. Bureaucracy usually goes against common sense, because where there's all messy, order is trying to flush out the meaningless formalities, fees and securities, which are often the result of absurd requests, office of institutional inertia and inefficiency". Here the author is clearly trying to approach the Balkan reality which he apparently blames for a condition in which there is bureaucracy – sloppiness, lack of professionalism, and all of this seeks to be concealed or corrected with even greater absurdities that frequent the unnecessary and meaningless formality. Continuing on, "‘Connection’ then becomes a magic word, and resourcefulness in avoiding norms main virtue. So we have a mess in space, clutter in your life, mess in everything. This is just one of the segments of the Balkan consciousness. Legalism of Western Balkans consciousness is not recognized because legalism in The Balkan is only naive and stupid." The text further say: "We are in quarantine for years because of The Balkan which is within us. And as we longed for Europe waiting in her hallway, that's how much advanced galloping Balkanization Croatian became. General drab is also one of the characterizations of The Balkan. Neglected facades, interiors and dirty streets and potholes on the roads, wild settlements of ugly, aggressive, alienated architectural forms, testify to the general state of mind in Croatian society." Author does not stop, thereby emphasizing the fact that the drab is actually Balkan

symbol which is accompanied by strange architectural solutions and poorly paved roads with holes, all of which reflect the state of mind in Croatian society.

*Slobodna Dalmacija* on 06.04.2000 published an article titled "Clinton: Yugoslavia of the past!" which transmitted the following: "The Daily newspaper *Süddeutsche Zeitung* on the first and third page, brings an extensive report from Aachen titled 'Clinton for Russia's special status in the European Union and NATO' and emphasizes the message of his speech 'The Balkan should be debalkanized.'" What exactly is meant when Clinton said that The Balkan should be debalkanized, we cannot say, but probably this statement is in a close relationship with the Balkan primitivism, lethargic, irresponsibility of one Balkan man that need to be replaced, and probably by using a pro-Western form which is obviously much better.

Article with an unusual title "Pat - player" released on 06.06.2000 contains the following: "As an antidote for poisoning Balkanisation international community has urged Scandinavization of Balkans". One of the best examples of Scandinavization of Balkans is the fact that the previous sentence shows that the European Union sees Balkan. They are aware that the area belongs to Europe, but that is (according to them) backward and it should be changed". Huntington, however, forgot only one 'little thing': that all the Scandinavian countries are Lutheran while the Balkan countries are Orthodox, Muslim and Catholic. Clinton sent a message from Berlin that there is no return to the 'old Yugoslavia' because different people cannot be forced to live in the same state, but for the sake of lasting stability of Southeast Europe the Balkan should be 'debalkanized'. Wouldn't it be appropriate to respond to the least important question of who Balkanized Balkan? It is generally believed that the 'Balkanization of Balkan' as a term of ethnic cleansing was created with its Ottoman conquest. President of the JAZU between the two wars, Albert Bazala, spread it and to further invasive tendencies, conclud-

ing that in South Eastern Europe there won't be a stable peace while historically and politically they don't unmask how the imperialist countries balkanized Balkan under the principle of *divide et impera*. Balkans was the intersection of geopolitical interests of Austria-Hungary, Germany, Italy, Russia and Great Britain.

"There mustn't be a memory left of Tudman!" an article which really, considering the praises of former President, could surprise the readership. Released on 29.06.2000 the author states: "The visit of the former Bulgarian President Zhelyu Zhelev with the initiative of the Balkan club and Romanian President Constantinescu, then president Mesić's visit to Albania, show that the Balkan statesman activities are intensified, and that they are seriously working on the integration of Croatia with Balkan." Here we see the author's fear of Balkan where he is trying to show whether intentionally or not, that Croatia is pulling back to it. "It is a paradox of Croatian position: dreamed so much about Europe, and it pushes us to The Balkan because, as Clinton says, The Balkan should be debalkanized. Is the price of that Croatia's victim who once was Serbized, and today fully Balkanized on behalf of debalkanization, so that tomorrow we can have peaceful Balkan area all the way to the Alps?"

Part of an article which was published on 30.06.2000 with the title "Those who seek my resignation are fighting for their privileges!" the author states the following: "Many Croats still do not want to believe that the definitive American geostrategic plan is to integrate The Balkan with Croatia and this part of Europe and to leave a permanent odds with the more prosperous part of Europe. Balkania wasn't political SF (science fiction), but the reality in which we glide slowly. U.S. President Clinton recently in Aachen is occasion of awarding the Karl's Prize said that Balkan should create a magnet stronger than hatred that separates the nations". Again the text that indicates that Croatia is in "danger" and that it could "plug in" Balkans. Clinton however believes that things must change in The Balkan, es-

pecially in regard to curbing the hatred that is largely present among the nations, and that is obviously largely credited to The Balkan is treated so as to retire.

“I was sacked after an anonymous pamphlet” article was published on 01.07.2000 which states: “We were convicted in The Balkan, to the space to which Europe and the United States treated as a civilized and economically inferior, as the area over which they should exert constant control and protectorate. In this context, they are trying to belittle Croatia’s autonomy and the very notion of sovereignty in the new global relationships is viewed as an anachronism, although sovereignty becomes super exclusive right that you are still sticking to the great powers, especially the United States as a supranational globalizer”. This explains that Croatia is still doomed to be in Balkan, but it is the worst of all is that the EU and the United States of American view Balkan as uncivilized and immature economic space.

Article that seem to be showing fatigue author related to the theme of The Balkan, on one hand and Europe on the other hand titled “Does indeed the way to Europe lead via the Balkan Glen?” published on 30.07.2000 writes the following: “Despite initial protests and odiousness of the term ‘Western Balkans’, in which Croatia found itself, some politicians and diplomats are trying to prove that Croatia is in The Balkan and the ‘Western Balkans’ isn’t something bad at all. What does that term mean operationally, maybe it can be explain in the title of the newspaper Die Tageszeitung: “Between Vienna and Thessaloniki borders should be erased’ – For months now, regional specialists, such as the U.S. and foreign currency speculator George Soros, advocate the Balkan Customs Union. Because they know: without the unique customs, each euro invested in the region is lost Euro.” The author here points out that some Croatian politicians do not want to deny that Croatia is in the Western Balkans and that it was not anything bad – they are of course referring to a geographical term of Balkans. Furthermore here is trying to

show how some politicians and diplomats are trying prove that Croatia is a Balkan country, but at the same time Balkan does not mean anything bad.

In an article published on 17.9.2000 entitled “Strong Serbia, submissive Croatia: behold scenarios to return in 1989”, Carl Gustav Ströhm, at this period eminent journalist and analyst on Western policy toward the Croatia says: “I’m not too happy that Zagreb is the headquarters of the Conference of the Balkan countries. Specifically, whether they want it or not, it takes you back to Balkan. Since Croatia has accepted the concept of regionalization and to be a part of the western Balkans, which was performed by the new authorities, it is perceived as a part of Balkans, and in the vision of Western diplomat falls in society with Albania and Macedonia”. Here Carl Gustav Ströhm expressed disappointment why Croatia found itself in the company of The Balkan; it is through him that Croatia should not fall off. He also points out that it is precisely because of this (Croatia’s return to The Balkan) politicians in power are responsible.

An article with title “Back to the ‘Western Balkans’” sends a direct message to the readers. The article was published on 30.09.2000. It says: “In the foreign policy orientation of the government pushes on ice the concept of Central Europe and influenced by its sponsors began to admire the foreign policy concept “Žika’s round” from the Western Balkans. Precisely this smaller part, that is Balkans, becomes a source of inspiration of a new foreign policy”. Cynically and with a dose of sarcasm, the author shows that Croatia returns to the” Western Balkans” because of the politicians in power who are in the author’s opinion part of the certain interest groups. Here the author seeks to show how the Republic of Croatia returns “back there” because someone wants that (obviously political leadership), while on the other hand, they are urging back to apparently civilize and substantially better solution as it is Central Europe.

On the 27.10.2000 *Slobodna Dalmacija* published a long article under the title “The Road to the European Union began reading the 80,000 pages of regulations that have become a practice” in which the author states: “In the minds of the Balkan, gloating someone else’s passion and benchmarking is worse than himself, and seems logical that no one remembered to compare with Sweden, the UK or Germany”. Very interesting is the comment which aims to show the Balkan side of mentality. Here we talk about how the residents of the area that covered Balkan look forward to your neighbour when it gets into some trouble which is very shallow, inhuman and uncivilized, we can say. On the other hand, according to the author of course, people in The Balkan do not dare to compare with the better of them, and therefore the author mentions Scandinavia, Britain and Germany as models in scientific terms, a culture of life and civilization in general.

The first article that I have chosen as relevant in 2001 refers to the article published in *Slobodna Dalmacija* on 29.01.2001 titled “The terror of the past” in which the author says: “Croatia consciousness experienced contractization of Yugoslav subconscious. It did not overcome it, but only suppressed. It never reviewed it as its own anomaly. If Tito is our destiny at the beginning of a new era, we did not deserve anything other than the Balkan”. Author in a critical way comments on events involving the return of Croatia to the “famous” Balkans. The author here seems to blame everyone but most of all the politicians who have led Croatia to the place “where it does not belong”. The author mentions the former president of the former Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, saying that, if Tito is our destiny, that is, best solution for Croatia, the Croats and the state in general didn’t deserve anything better. It seems that the author mentioning Josip Broz Tito complains to Croatian SDP (Social- Democratic Party) that through anti-fascism heritages partly shares Tito’s ideals.

On 05.04.2001 under the title “Mimica: In 2006 ready for the EU” the author states: “The Stabilisation and Associa-

tion Agreement could be initialled by the end of May, and signed by the end of October this year, announced Mimica – Law-makers quarrelled over who was pushing Croatia in isolation, and we discussed whether we are Balkan or Europeans”. This article also highlights the dilemma of who are Croats and what is Croatia? The author states that they discussed “whether we are Balkans or Europeans”?

Short separate part of the article with maybe a little sarcastic name (published on 08.04.2001): “In Croatia, the Yugoslav identity again is the most profitable profession!” The author writes: “That’s why we were again dragged into Balkan and we have to be afraid of reconstruction of new Yugoslavia, whether you call it Balkania or whatever you want”. Also, this article shows the same as most of the previous ones. They keep pushing us to Balkan, but we don’t want it. There is an obvious fear of any kind of reconstruction of the Balkan alliance in which Croatia could squeeze in, so among everything else, they mention Balkania.

Article published on 31.07.2001 titled “Does Hague persist on charges, Croatian Government certainly – falling states: “...we do not want to be predominantly related to The Balkan,” said Tomac, adding that Croatia is not running from his share of responsibility for the stability of The Balkan’. We are aware that Balkan will be a long crisis area and bonding with these countries would stop the development of Croatia’.” Here the author conveys a statement of Mr. Tomac who was interviewed and who said he does not want to see Croatia, mainly related to The Balkan, because among other things the Balkan itself is the crisis area in which Croatia doesn’t see its place, and doesn’t want is as well.

In an article under the unusual name “Alka is polluted with right-handed policy” published on 7.8.2001 Prime Minister Račan says: “In a democratic Croatia, everyone has the right to disagree with the President of the Republic, but no one has the right to insult him. It’s not democratic, it is Balkan behaviour. So those of us, who cry that we are not Balkan, are the ones who keep us in the Balkan”.

“Ethnic hatred is treated with psychotherapy – of politicians” is the title of the article published on 05.09.2001. The title says a lot. In this part of Europe where the differences are obvious and where hatred is not slowing down as up yesterday and decades ago “hatred treatment” is when “our” politicians are taking for example the rhetoric of “beating” by “them”. The author presents the following: “Friends are being employed, acquaintances, party sympathizers, relatives, godparents and locals. It doesn’t matter what they do not know. The capable and qualified ones stay out of it. It is a primitive tribal behaviour pattern. For us, however, the tribes rule because we are Balkans. It is better to say that it is our mentality. And as long as that mentality dominates, we won’t have the right people in the right places.”

An article that is more “election gimmick” entitled “HDZ must re-save the country” was released on 22.12.2001 where Andrija Hebrang, former Minister of Health and Defence, and member of HDZ, said for *Slobodna Dalmacija*: “Stabilisation definitely pulls us into Balkan rather than in Europe. They say that we must first establish relationships with neighbours. Good, but our neighbours are also Slovenia, Italy and Hungary, and with them we had to sign an agreement which Croatian public has never seen! But what we’ve seen, it’s dangerous. It states that the bilateral relations with the Balkan countries to abolish barriers to the circulation of money and people to lead EU representative and that his word will be decisive. So who is selling off our sovereignty before we create in all aspects?”

Article entitled “Politicians unencumbered by the past are a condition for the development of democracy” was released on 11.11.2001 and the author states: “A new balance of power in the area and the Croatian position we spoke in New York with Dr. Istvan Gyarmati, Vice President of the East-West Institute, an expert in the Balkan region. Is Croatia in The Balkan? –There are multiple interpretations to where Balkans starts.” Here, respondent does not want to give a simple answer or answer with “yes”

or “no”. Obviously, there are a number of theories about what is meant by Balkan. “Some claim that it is to Vienna, while others say that Slovenia and Croatia do not belong to this area.” It is very doubtful what Balkans is, if one says that it starts from Vienna and another says that Slovenia and Croatia are not even in the territory of The Balkan.” “Nobody wants to be Balkan because the name is not geographically hated but politically.”

This is the reason of running away from the Balkan – “The term “Balkan” includes a number of negative things; it is not merely a geographical term.” “Croatia’s historical and civilizational achievements have always been part of Europe, and no one can deny that. We can, but don’t have to, consider this as a consolation.” “The people are not to blame for living in a particular region and cannot be judged only by such affiliation”. Here, respondent asserts that people are not to blame because they live in an area that is referred to as Balkan and in no one, not even the Balkan should be judged accordingly. “Europe needs to argue the conditions for the development of its southeastern part and participate in all the positive processes, not derisively to wait until you are unable to get out of the legacy of the war-torn economy and civil society”. The last sentence says a lot. It goes as criticism to Europe or the European Union which should direct their attention to the development of South-east part of the European continent, and not wait for the already complicated issues the Balkan resolve itself. The gentleman here wanted to say that European Union is responsible for The Balkan and how today they are looking at it and its inhabitants, let’s call them The Balkan.

I will start 2002 with the analysis of selected articles from the weekly *Nacional*. Their first article (relevant to this study) was released on 08.05.2002 titled “U.S. and EU do not believe that Račan will stay in power,” in which the author states: “In Brussels, however, it’s been revealed that some Croatian companies were importing sugar from EU countries, at affordable prices, then exported it as their own product on the EU market and

gained extra income on the price differences. Therefore, the export of sugar from the Croatia to EU was immediately banned. This scandal caused a great damage to Croatian economic and political interests: it has been shown that individuals in Zagreb have not moved from the tiny Balkan politics of fraud and smuggling.”

Article entitled “Sanader will suspend HDZ in Šibenik county” published on 05.06.2002 contains the following: “The founders of the HDZ in Šibenik evaluated that the local HDZ, led by Ivo Baica, ‘least popular politicians from Šibenik’ became ‘the bottom of Balkan pot’.” This is Balkan and the term ‘Balkan’ used as a synonym for the worst - “Balkan bottom.”

“The results of the survey: Vesna Pusić and Granić caught up with Račan” is the name of the article published on 11.06.2002 in which the author states: “Absolutely every *Nacional* correspondents believe that the return of HDZ to power, which has not yet been profiled as a European and the Democratic

Party, was fatal for Croatia and that it is definitely a long time to return to The Balkan mud”. There are concerns that if HDZ returne to power, it could deepen the crisis in Croatia and return it to Balkan.

Article published on 03.07.2002 titled “The best candidates are Goran Radman, Željko Čović and Boris Nemšić”, among everything else, say: “The prime minister must be a modern political manager which uses knowledge, mentality and world-view to rise above the Balkan provincial habits and mentality”. Here we have an example of media coverage that deepens balkanism. The author wishes to draw the attention of readers that the Balkan mentality is fatal, especially in top state what position such as the prime minister.

“The EU, U.S. and NATO are crushing Račan’s resistance” is the title of the article published on 06.10.2002 in which the author states: “In the last two and a half years, Croatia has made the biggest step forward from the Balkan mud from all the states of the former Yugoslavia. If the Croatian government, the electoral

game, intended to obstruct relation to the Tribunal in The Hague, the answer would be unappealing – isolation, loss of pace to join the European integration, return to the Balkan mud.”

Article entitled “Bobetko’s extradition would cause chaos in the country” was released on 23.10.2002 and contains extracted text: “The government must decide whether to usher the country into the EU, or leave it in the xenophobic Balkans or are we going to have Schengen border just 20 km outside from Zagreb... We have the opportunity to choose between two very clear option: be part of the EU, and from the formal membership to the actual establishment of European standards in the economy, politics and everything else, or be Balkans in the negative sense of the word, and its xenophobic outcast which is potentially eternal source of conflict.”

Article “The EU and the U.S. are punishing Croatia” was published on 30.10.2002 in which the author writes, among other things: “But it should not fool anyone: Croatia, however, cannot escape the political punishment, and that means restoring the Balkan mud, which would have disastrous long-term political, psychological, and economic consequences of civilization. It is therefore important for Croatia’s political and economic interests as soon as possible to join the EU and NATO pact”.

“Račan returned Croatia to The Balkan”, the article was published on 13.11.2002 in which the author writes: “the Prime Minister Račan returned Croatia to Balkan. It is true that Croatia will remain nailed to Balkan... And indeed, in the next election the biggest issue for SDP will explain to voters why Račan’s government has failed to fulfil two very important campaign promises: Croatia is not pulled from the Balkan shackles and did not avoid conflicts with international community”. Here we have a pack of charges, which go to the account of Ivica Račan who is prime-minister and member of SDP. They blame him for the evacuation of Croatian to Balkan.

The following article title “returns” the Republic of Croatia in The Balkan, but it is mentioned here as a leader. The article was published on 20.11.2002. In it, among other things, we can read: “Classification of the Croatia to the Balkan – even in the ‘western’ – perceived as maliciousness, humiliation and insult. All this, however, changed overnight. In the words of the old political existentialists Zdravko Tomac, Croatia found their ultimate interest while approaching Balkan. Its plan is to even become ‘Balkan leader’”.

“If they want to join NATO, Croatia should offer their special forces”, the article was published on 04.12.2002 in which the author states: “In Tudman’s rule there would not be a regional dilemmas. The strategic question would be presented to a rigid and simplistic terms. Tudman said that Croatia is not ‘Balkan’ country and should therefore have little or nothing to do with the barbarians in the south. In fact, HDZ government probably would argue that it is better to stay out of NATO but to be assigned Balkan identity.”

“World statesmen have hitherto completely isolated Račan”, the title of the article published on 29.12.2002 in which the author writes: “Croatia still has open door of the European Union, and there are still chances to join it in the 2007 together with Bulgaria and Romania, but without the political turn of 180 degrees will indeed be long and unattractive isolated Balkan little land”.

The following analysis continues on *Večernji list* whereby (if we consider *Nacional*) we’re back again to the beginning of the 2002. The first article which we took relevant for our study was published on 13.01.2002 called “Law would be immediately changed if a stray bullet hit someone from a family of officials” in which the author states the following: “With all the laws which the state protects and preserves all the negative is not a way to Europe, not even in The Balkan, but went back to the period of primitive barbarism. For the shooting of firearms for the celebration of Christmas or New Year’s is extremely rude and barbarous act. In our country in this regard it is anarchy”.

In the article entitled “Albania is an oasis of white slave traders” published on 21.01.2002 the author states: “The Balkan countries have become the centre of the white slave traders and the trafficking of women and children for their sexual exploitation and this is one of the fastest growing crimes. The Balkan is not only a transit area, but also a destination for many women from all over the world which deceived and lured in the story of a better life just to end up in brothels”.

Article titled “Let’s calm down and finally start working” Ströhm blished on 03.03.2002 contains the following: “We are at such a level of civilization seemingly we cannot be independent and to respond to European standards. That is our true measure of The Balkan”.

“Next to the stadium Zagreb wrecks and rotteness” article was published on 15.04.2002 in which the author states: “Between the Streets of Božidar Adžije and stadium NK ‘Zagreb’ in the area of’ Mali Paromlin, at two and half acres, over the years a bunch of trash has been piled up. With a run-down buildings and neglected lush vegetation, the wild has various garbage dumps – the putrid oranges, old sofas, stoves and car wrecks. – It is the centre of the city – it angers Željko Posarić who lives about two hundred meters from the dunghill. – We should hire guards because there is more and more waste every day. We are preparing for Europe, and we are not in the Balkan!” Especially that last sentence is sufficient to conclude that it sends a message that Croatia is ready for Europe (referring to the time of entry into the European Union), and in fact not even in The Balkan, and the reason for this is social neglect of the environment.

“Expanding security culture” is the title of an article published on 29.04.2002 in which the author says: “The political activist who badly does his regular job can be sure it will not be so easy to end up on the street because they were all shouting at his incompetence and malpractice, you guessed it already, the reflection of’ ‘political harangue’ bad people from competing camps.

Numerous scandals related to certain SDP, HSS, HSLs, HNS, HDZ or anyone other boss, prove that in the parties usually logic prevails where it doesn't matter 'if he is the thief and incompetent, but at least it's ours'. The hilly Balkans is still alive in the minds of many Croatsians".

On 06.06.2002 an article has been published entitled "Don't you fail us a least" in which the author says: "After a long awaited day 'D' was announced in our media and created euphoria in Croatia, our football team suddenly grounded. It was not just about losing a football game, but primarily the relationship and approach to the game and the type of our national well-paid Croats. Our only remaining bright spot in the Croatian national identity and pride suddenly darkened. So the English have their queen, Americans have the President, the French Arc de Triomphe, the Germans fall of the Berlin Wall, and we unfortunately had only our football team. Because, some say, the cult of personality and expression of national pride led us in the Balkan and as such, we are not wanted in the Europe. So I wonder why others are allowed a mass gathering and assert their national symbols, and when our late president Franjo Tuđman did the same he was proclaimed as the nationalists? Unfortunately, not only from foreign circles."

"Will anyone respond for the deception of the citizens?" is the title of the article published on 12.07.2002 which states: "With regard to POS I wish some responsible bureaucrats began to ask: If the competition for the program POS was issued under certain conditions and people applied under these, is it then normal that people expect that the competition will also end under the same condition? Probably this is normal in a normal and civilized countries, but not in the Balkan-banana countries such as ours."

The article "Great Robbery of postal items" published on 13.08.2002 just draws attention to the lack of responsibility and professionalism that seems to be characteristic for the area

called Balkan. The article states: “One of these days the mother sent her daughter to Zagreb a shipment. But the first one didn’t arrive, nor did the second one or the third one, so... a week no packages. Maybe it was not well addressed? It was. When the lady tried to establish where the package is and why it never came, it turned out that the clerk of the Croatian Post Office neatly placed the package in the bag, but it never arrived in Zagreb. Reply from officials was: ‘It’s probably stolen, disappeared...you blame yourself, because you have to send registered mail! You had to know. There is nothing that we cannot!’ And, of course, is the said Mrs. entitled to damages if the shipment is lost? I hope she has, because it would be consistent with fine manners. After all, Croatian Post Office is a cultural Central European company, not a Wild West or, God forbid, the Balkan!”

“By dismissing Dr. Vesna Bosanac they want to destroy Patriotic War” article was published on 06.09.2002 in which the author conveys the following: “Member of associations Council, Mate Ljubičić said that Vesna Bosanac is guilty just because she is participant and a symbol of the war as well as a witness to crime that occurred in the hospital. – Their calculation is clear. It is necessary to destroy all symbols of the war that were once again embroiled in the Western Balkans, which is a strategic goal.” For the umpteenth time, the author emphasizes the danger of the return of Croatia in the Balkan. The key objective or requirement that must be met by the author is to destroy all symbols of Homeland war so that Croatia could be easily returned to the Western Balkans.

The following article is an example of positive reporting in the context of The Balkan and the Croatia. The article was published on 17.10.2002 entitled “Soros leaving Croatia”, which says: “Marking the tenth anniversary of the Croatian Open Society Institute of George Soros, chairman and founder of the Institute network of philanthropic organizations in more than 50 countries, used the announcement of withdrawal from the transition

countries, including the Croatia. – In the region there is a complex picture, but The Balkan will go in the right direction and, although the EU does not act sufficiently good, it is a positive progress – said Soros as he announced that he is now interested in the problems of globalization and the Open Society Institute will switch to United States because it will be in the territory of the world's biggest powers to take decisive battle for the future vision of the world”.

“The iron in the fire, sincere in the pocket” article was published on 22.10.2002 which says: “It’s hardly possible to believe that the world’s cleverest diplomacy and diplomacy of the state which is, a decade after independence in spite of European history and culture, still pushed into The Balkan (what hurts most is that Slovenian border for it will be European), cannot and does not want to negotiate anything that could touch, maybe even struck the country which divides them” Author, we could say in the pathetic way, comments on the fact that Croatia is pushed into The Balkan and how their border with Europe will be precisely neighboring Slovenia.

Article published on 26.11.2002 entitled “Europe in the fight against organized crime” says the following: “Balkan organized crime has become a major jump point for Europe, with a multimillion-dollar business in the smuggling of people and drugs – said British Home Secretary David Blunkett at the conference on organized crime in Southeast Europe, which was held yesterday in London”. Here Balkan is mentioned in the context of brood organized crime that threatens the rest of Europe. It is obvious that it gives a negative impression on the Balkan Peninsula.

Article under short and slightly unusual name of “Uninvited guests” was released on 05.12.2002 which states: “The meeting in Vienna once again gave hope that Croatia won’t have to wait a European IC to its provincial stations. And it will not have to share a squeezed and un-ventilated waiting room with Macedonia and

Albania, and with Bosnia and Yugoslavia. In Vienna, Croatia, especially 'grew feathers' after the EU Commissioner for Enlargement unexpectedly stroked her, adding that Croatia should be treated as an 'exception in relation to other countries in the region'. But Günther Verheugen has not stopped there. Obviously knowing what pleases Croatian ear, the commissioner added what is always dear to Croatian ego – that Croatia' does not belong in the Western Balkans'!"

"Croatia between The Balkan and Europe" the title of the article published on 11.12.2002 which states the following: "The Council on Foreign Relations, a non- governmental organization that analyzes U.S. foreign policy, released a report titled 'The Balkan in 2010'. Why was Croatia found in a report called Balkan 2010? – We asked James O'Brian, one of the report's authors, the former presidential envoy to The Balkan under President Bill Clinton." Here the author does not want to accept the fact that Croatia ranks in Balkan, and therefore raises the question of Mr. James O'Brian why Croatia is in the report entitled "Balkan" with other Balkan countries.

In an article published on 17.12.2002 entitled "Utilities rose up by 500 percent!" the author states: "We are proud, we talk to a democratic state, and overnight, without consultation with citizens, it is decided that the local rate goes up five times! It hurts us when we are told that we are the Western Balkans, but it seems to me that it is precisely this kind of behaviour by individuals in government to support it." Here the author expresses self-criticism against all Croatians disappointed due to price increases utility fees no less than 500%, and concludes that it is not surprising that Croatia and society generally considers The Balkan and the Balkanese as something dreadful.

In article published on 31.12.2002 entitled "The Hague and Europe are waiting for any government," *Večernji list* raises the question of Croatian President Stjepan Mesić: "How do

you comment on a steady rise in popularity of the HDZ? ‘I would not say that HDZ has a growing popularity. It falls to others, and it turns out that HDZ popularity is growing... The election cannot be won by saying we do not want to be Balkan. It does not solve problems, and any isolation of Croatia would lead to the question of its existence.’” The former Croatian president Stipe Mesić when asked about the growth in popularity of the HDZ answers both how Croatia and SDP, whose party the president belonged to, does not want to be on Balkans.

The subject of the research and analysis of newspaper articles in the 2003 we start with articles from *Jutarnji list*. The first such article in the 2003 refers to the article “Croatia in the EU and NATO,” which was released on 01.03.2003. The author conveys the following: “High ranking German parliamentarian said that Croatia should not be treated as part of the Western Balkans, but that it must be independent to join the EU.” Here the author or editor wants to say or convey a message from the outside to the Croatia should not be classed in the Western Balkans, but that Croatia should be independent (not “bundled”) with other countries from the region to enter the European Union.

An article from the sports section titled “Balkan inn” which was released on 11.10.2003 contains: “Although Belgians are a suspicious people, they do not believe in all sorts of combination, which is still only appearing in our newspapers. And they are saying that Croatians and Bulgarians will agree, and that the Bulgarians in Zagreb will play with half throttle. But these are all dirt from the Balkan tavern”.

“All against Dinamo” is another sports article that was published on 01.11.2003. The author states the following: “The others have got a bit less, about 300,000 KN, football clubs from Rijeka and Osijek have profited. And instead of kneeling down to the chapel and pray that Barišić doesn’t get a by any chance, they would prefer to fill the hat with excrement and urinated in his pocket! It’s pretty disgusting and pretty Balkan!”

In the following analysis we go to the articles published in the *Večernji list*. The first one in 2003 was related to the article entitled “The European dream in The Balkan.” This article takes a positive touch. In it, the author states: “In the first half of this week, the Greek Foreign Minister and Chairman of the Council of the EU, George Papandreou visited capital cities of all the countries of the Western Balkans as part of a mammoth program. The tour led him from Tirana to Skopje via Zagreb and Belgrade and Priština to Sarajevo. Governments of all the countries he visited – including the UN protectorate of Kosovo – considered fast integration into the European Union as one of its most important goals. In this context, it is a crucial hope in the economic boom. As equally important goal is often mentioned and – admittedly rather vague – idea – guiding by which the 21st in Europe century boundaries of the founding period of European nation states become redundant and will be ethnic tensions that hinder Balkan resolve by them. If we neglect the necessary direct traffic lines, the Greek desire for the Western Balkans to be quickly integrated into the EU is motivated by specific economic interests. The Balkan is the most important export market for Greek products and has so far quite underutilized potential.”

The article “The appeal of The Balkan: Only the EU can help us” is an article that does not contain negative impurities reporting on The Balkan and one of the few publications (especially in *Večernji list*) that can be considered a leader when it comes to the discourse on The Balkan. This article was published on 23.01.2003 and in it the author states: “Rapid integration of Balkan countries in Europe is a ‘strategic priority’ and a factor of ‘stabilization’ for the whole continent...Under the leadership of democrat Fassino the secretary of Left Democrats party, the round table Peace and stability in The Balkan clearly and unambiguously showed desire, but also a need, of Europe that is now in the air.”We want that the topic Balkan has priority on the European schedule and considering that European and Euro-Atlan-

tic integration of The Balkan is enormous task, we need a new PSC agreement between European Union and Balkan', said the president of the Romanian government Adrian Nastase, summarizing the roundtable."

"Why strike right now", the title of the article published on 25.02.2003 in which the author states the following: "Primarius Babić, you are pulmonologist from Virovitica and you live so well just like every Croatian citizen wanted to live. Do you have what is called European standard? In the world strikes of health workers are famous, but in Europe it is handled in a polite way. In a day or two the government and strikers come to an agreement. You, however, behave in a Balkan manner. One of the interpretations as to what is Europe and where is Balkans, makes Sava river a border of Europe.

In an article published on 04.03.2003 "Croatia does not belong in the Western Balkans": "Talking about the EU enlargement, Archduke Dr. Otto Habsburg sharply criticized some European politicians that Croatia, as he said, unjustly and shamefully call the Western Balkans. – There is no doubt that the artificial construction of the term "Western Balkans" (where does the Eastern Balkans begin?!") within the European Union is not only a result of naivety and ignorance." The title itself sends a message that Croatia does not belong to the Western Balkans. Here it's referred to the Western Balkans in the context of artificial structures, because they do not know the boundaries of the western or eastern Balkans.

Article entitled "England trick" was released on 19.03.2003, and the author in the article conveys: "With indignation we read between the news from England that the country wants for Croatia to be received in a temporary camp until England decides to whom they will provide asylum. England is waving Croatian government in the sight of the promise to sign the SAA, the Stabilisation Agreement, if Croatia agrees to this proposal. And it is better not to sign because

the agreement (Stabilization and Association Agreement) doesn't help Croatia, but causes harm. It puts it on The Balkan with Serbia, from which Croatia finally cut herself off with much blood and suffering. With Serbia, which is still the typical Balkan – Serbian way of killing the statesmen, and Šešelj said a few days ago that he would again conquer Serbian Dubrovnik, Dalmatia, Serbian Slavonia, Serbian Lika and Serbian Knin'. It's time for Croatia to loudly say NO to the Balkans' said Hilda Mary Foley, Croatian – American society."

An article published on 14.04.2003 entitled "Request for Croatian membership will be accepted without debate" among everything else, says, "Although it may be confusing that Croatian request, even Croatia in general, is not even mentioned in the agenda of the Council not even in the part talking about 'Western Balkans', where we were up until recently pushed – our source assures us that this is exactly good news for Croatia." Delight of the author that Croatia is not mentioned in any part of the schedule, not even the one referring to the Western Balkan, and based on its well known sources, this is considered great news for Croatia.

"Zagreb sinks deeper" is the title of the article published on 14.04.2003. Here dr. Ivo Roth points out: "Zagreb, which was never The Balkan, but the city of Central European tradition, is sinking deeper and deeper. Because the image of a city is not only paved road, sewer and building, but more than that – the behaviour of its inhabitants. Wake up all of you managing the city!" Mr. Ivo Roth as if to make an appeal to everyone to stop acting "in a Balkan manner" and take a European pattern of behaviour, because Croatia and Zagreb according to him belong to Central European tradition.

Rarely something positive in the context of The Balkan brings us the following article titled "Kočani Philharmonic thrilled citizens of Zagreb", which was published on 27.04.2003. The author writes the following: "After Boban Marković Orchestra from Serbia and the Romanian group Fanfare Ciocarlia, Kočani Or-

chestra are the third group that visited Zagreb with Roma music that is open to all possible oriental influences which abounds in The Balkan.” This is truly an example of positive writing about Balkans, on its wealth of oriental influence which is plentiful.

An article entitled “Defending Bush and Chirac?” which was released on 21.06.2003 among everything stated the following: “The region, which is called the Western Balkans, the EU and the U.S. favoured a broader term Southeastern Europe, now becomes the space where once again the U.S. and stated which are held central in the EU are crossing their different visions of the future of Europe. The EU “Shaft” is seen as a federation with unique security and foreign policy in which dominate several “central” countries. The U.S., and more European counterparts, see it as more connected common market, a prominent American security role.” From the article, we see that the European Union prefers to call this space The Balkan, while the United States called this space in a wider context – Southeast Europe.

“Gentlemen, do you have squatting in Parliament?” is the title of the article published on 08.07.2003 which states: “We become angry when others say we belong to the Balkan and call us – the Balkanese. And why would they when we smoke like the Turks, spit on the floor, defecate behind a tree and in the touristic and public places have – squatting! Don’t just say that squatting is healthy, because none of them is at home, nor has the health centres or, say, in Parliament – wrote before the summer and tourist season a professor V. Rašić”. The title of this article is somewhat sensational. The author expresses criticism of the Croatian society, especially political, with the key that thing “when we are angry after the people rank us in the Balkan and call – the Balkanese.

“The red thread does not die easily (It is well known that the CIHI modified agreement about supplemental insurance and cheated)” is somewhat longer title of the article published on 15.10.2003 in which, it states: “For with its (referring to the CIHI)

arrogant procedures and belittling those of whom they are living of proofs that Balkans and communist mentality coming from the West.” Here the author criticizes the administration of Croatian Health Insurance (CIHI) for negligence qualifying them with The Balkan or the Balkan and communist mentality.

“About The Balkan in us, in Ulm and Trieste” the title of the article published on 11.12.2003 in which the writer Milan Rakovac says: “I try to debalkanize myself... This auto-debalkanization was described in one of my columns, but not published, and here I am doing it; I said I’m not a Balkanite territorially, if The Balkan spreads to Kupa river, as I learned in high school, yet The Balkan is deep inside me...” the writer Milan Rakovac frankly states that he is trying to debalkanize himself. He doesn’t feel like a Balkanite territorially, but believes that the Balkan is present as a concept deeply within him.

Below we analyze news articles from the weekly *Nacional*. The first such in the 2003, which is the subject of our analysis and it was published on 13.05.2003 titled “The Balkan in Vienna”. Here is the following: “...a common European experience of The Balkan, for ordinary conscience ‘Balkan’ is an insulting word, an insult. – Slovenian writer Slavoj Žižek said that for Austrians Slovenia is Balkan, for Slovenes it’s Croatia, Albania, for Albania...who knows.” This article shows how Balkan is perceived in the minds of others, so that for Austria Slovenia is Balkans, for Slovenia – Croatia, etc. Thus, according to the common European perception of Balkan it’s negative and indicates something that is derogatory and insulting – “Balkanite”, “Balkan”, etc.

“Tomčić will withdraw ministers of HSS if the elections are not in October,” an article published on 20.05.2003 which says: “If Croatia in the next few months does not respond to the 3500 EU issues and harmonizes the first fifty legislation with EU standards, it will miss this historical opportunity to get out of the Balkan mud.... Croatia is facing a catastrophe: the isolation

and rejected by Europe, for another ten years floundering in the mud of The Balkan.” Here the author reports that if Republic of Croatia within a few months does not harmonize laws with the European Union it will be found in the “Balkan mud” which represent a major threat directly to Croatia.

“The great duel: Račan vs. Sanader” is the name of the article published on 19.11.2003. Ivo Sanader said following: “For us, the European People’s Party, as our association is called, conservatism, populism and demochristianity do not mean obscurantism, primitivism, balkanism. It’s about something else.” Former Prime Minister Ivo Sanader said that his party (HDZ) does not imply that there is no inside elements of primitivism and balkanism.

The subject of the research and analysis of newspaper articles in the 2004 we start with articles from *Jutarnji list*, as well as in the previous year. Article published on 31.07.2004 titled “20 Cico’s players” the author points out: “If Niko doesn’t play like Maradona a waterfall of ugly words will be stuck to Kranjčar’s name. Senior drinks too much, junior ears too Western Balkan viciousness, won’t have one inch lag behind sarcasm of London tabloid.” Some sports article implies criticism of the British media that could come down to the Croatian football team member who is hired by an English football club. And here is clearly mentioned “Balkan”, which could be used as a derogatory term that sports media could be used against soccer player Niko Kranjčar.

“Gold for Žarka” title of the article published on 28.08.2004 in which the author states the following: “Looking for a ‘Balkan Olympic House’ in Athens, I got five different addresses, as if they did not want me to find it! And indeed the first-class nonsense is to look for ‘the Balkan inn’ and the past in a country that belongs to the European Union. At one address there was written ‘Union Balkanien Friendship’, but when I rang the bell, no one opened. The plate is worn out and old, apparently no

one sets here. The taxi driver, a good and honest Greek, was violently talkative.’ You know, when they bombed Dubrovnik, I wept’, he said, and his eyes were really teary. But, when I paid, the eye stole five euros. So the idea to watch Blanka Vlašić in the Balkan Olympic Center – is anyone in the Balkan cheering for us anymore?”

An article published on 06.11.2004 titled “Magical Evening” notes the following: “Whenever a coin toss chooses the English, Jewish or Dutch team and headed toward Croatia agitation began of Zagreb and Split as the capitals of racism. It was so when it came to Zagreb or Split Fulham, Maccabi and Ajax, The Beveren lived in “mortal fear” not to be “eaten” by Balkan cannibals.” Article belongs to the sports section and is particularly important last part where the “Balkan cannibals” appears as perceived Croatian soccer players, fans and especially by European team.

“The fate or curse” is the name of the article published on 04.12.2004 which states: “UEFA, a strict and very neat organization, hasn’t forgotten the riots from BBB (Bad Blue Boys – fans of the Football Team Dinamo) in Bergamo, Auxerre, Zurich and Milan, they are elegantly trying to liquidate the club from the European edge, which for them represents a crude and disgusting Balkans, that makes the Nyon gentleman hair grow.”

Below, a subject of newspaper articles relating to the *Večernji list*. In an article titled “Beautiful Balkan Society” published on 07.01.2004 the author states: “Croatia permanently lacks self-awareness. Not some arrogant flatulence, but often the mere awareness of their own values. In a modern, marketing way do not know how to present the world our cultural, civilizational or natural heritage. Perhaps the lack of skills and lack of self-consciousness more than some of the world’s “secret intention” comes the acceptance to put us in the grotesque Western Balkan.’ If Croatia has to go to Europe in this society, it’s better to give up.”

“The European Parliament allocated the Croatia from The Balkan,” the title of the article published on 12.03.2004 which

states: “The European Parliament (EP) adopted a decision with which, instead of the former Delegation for Southeast Europe (Western Balkans), which was led by Doris Pack, they will establish a special Joint Parliamentary Committee (JPC) of the EU – Croatia.” This is the news which was accepted with a thrill by all the lovers of Europeanism and all the haters of Balkanism. The title of the article says it all. Croatia has been separated from the Balkan, as if it wants to say that it’s been separated from all the trouble, obstacles, difficulties and everything that is negative and disgusting and doesn’t fit to Croatian mentality.

In an article published on 20.3.2004 entitled “The benefits of regional democracy” the author notes: “There is enough animosity between the Serbs and Albanians for another war. If so-called Europeans Union allows for this to happen, this will not go without political and economic or psychological consequences for Croatia. Only then we would be actually able to see the real consequences of Croatian acceptance not to put us in the Western Balkan area, and for Croatia to commit itself to regional cooperation and makes itself responsible for the region’. Our politicians have left us to be hostages of the Western Balkan for only a couple of applauses of world power elites. This is why they don’t think of us any different than the Balkan, but they consider us to be a part of it. By agreeing to Western Balkan pandering, Croatia waived its uniqueness, which is Balkanese the least. What Slovenia managed to do, Croatia never did. It never said ‘goodbye’ to The Balkan.”

“How do we become barbarians” is the name of the article published on 14.04.2004 in which the author points out: “In Croatia, next to the feeling that ‘Europe doesn’t know what to do with us’ is more common completely opposite opinion, which is that ‘Europe does know very well what to do with us’. Because of the constant pressure put on Croatia, a belief was created that they want to politically cement us in the ‘Western Balkans’. While EU is making a new age version of the Greek polis, we should

be out of the walls of this polis, which means we have to be those which were called barbarians. But even as such, we should be able to civilize The Balkan, or the region.”

The following analyzes are reduced to articles of *Slobodna Dalmacija*. In an article titled “What has occurred, Varteks is firing” published on 19.02.2004 the author states: “The Balkan became the centre of gray economy in Europe, and as politicians tried to speak as we are not part of the Vilayet, this is The Balkan, and more than you might assume. Fuck the government, fuck the manufacturer, customer, supplier, defraud, resale, steal... Aren't we a gang? Ha, ha...” Here the author is obviously emotional, using vulgarisms to express disappointment with the Croatian society. Blame it on the Balkan, which is the centre of the gray economy, but considers Croatia and the society to be Balkan, because as he says as much as politicians are trying to defend themselves, that is, to represent Croatia as a non-Balkan country, because he thinks this is what it really is.

Article titled “In the end all sad, except for one” which was published on 12.09.2004. author refers to the following: “How many wrongs to the Balkan peoples are there when it comes to the labelling of bad things such as beating, smashing, bribery, chauvinism, irresponsibility, improvisation and backdoor arrangements balkanism term. All these phenomena could be observed at the site of playing the championship as well as in countries whose national team made their way, they have evaded this time precisely the Balkan and the Balkanites, which does not mean that the people who live in it are immune to all this. Simply, primitivism, stupidity and dishonesty are a global phenomenon.”

Article titled “English derby ended in blood of ‘Balkan tavern’” published on 26.10.2004 also includes: “The biggest derby in English football ended in true Balkan style. Just like is some kind of ‘tavern clash’ players of Manchester United and Arsenal have parted with mutual insults and the picking up, and there was blood” Wanting to close an incident between players of two

football clubs in England, the author does not fail to use Balkanism in this, for the Croat not so essential, news.

Analyzing newspaper articles which are the subject of research in the 2005 we start with one article of *Slobodna Dalmacija*. In an article titled “Goodbye Balkans, good day Europe”, which was published on 04.10.2005 the author points out: “Croatia, on 4<sup>th</sup> of October, is definitely out of a Balkan swamp of political, legal ambiguities and uncertainties, economic chaos and the overall lack of perspective: they have achieved the victory of democratic and pro-European forces against anyone who was not in the interests of the state rule of law, political and economic order, the highest democratic standards.” Title of the article which the author has created looks just like the article itself is laughing, “Farewell to The Balkan, a good day Europe.” The author writes that Republic of Croatia on the day of writing this article got out of a “Balkan swamp of political, legal ambiguities and uncertainties, overall economic chaos and lack of prospects.”

Continued analysis refers to articles in *Večernji list*. “Several Balkan countries will never unite again” is the name of the article published on 21.01.2005. Paul Grade, French linguist and writer, spoke in this article for *Večernji list*: “The word Balkan itself isn’t important. It has importance in the commercial sense. When in France they speak about the war in the former Yugoslavia, they talk about the war in The Balkan. The Balkan Peninsula is largely European Turkey. When it was breaking up, it sought a new name and found it by accident with the help of a German geographer of the early 19th century who proposed the name of The Balkan. ‘Balkan’ in Turkish means mountain and it is a mountain in Bulgaria called Old Mountain. In Turkish times they thought that these mountains are stretching from the Black Sea to the Adriatic. The Balkan is a former European Turkey, but no one knows where the borders of Balkans are since the borders of the Turkish Empire changed frequently. Half of the Croatia has never been under Turkey, and the second part, from Makarska to Osijek, was occupied

by the Turks. Discussions on the borders of The Balkan do not make sense because the Balkan is neither a nation nor the state. States must have borders and boundaries because they conflict. But geographical terms do not need to have boundaries. If the word Balkan gives specific cultural and historical content, no one wants to be in the Balkan. If it's just a geographical term, it can be said that the Balkan south of the line Trieste – Odessa or elsewhere, it does not matter. Some geographers say that the borders of The Balkan are on the Sava. Zagreb is in this case outside The Balkan, but Zagreb's airport in The Balkan. This debate is absurd.”

“Debalkanization of Balkans” is the name of the article published on 21.01.2005 in which the author states the following: “The Second World War still isn't completed in the heads of Balkans and Balkan Textbooks. The two most recent events, this time with a hint of Chetnik, are pointing to it. First, the Assembly of the Republic of Serbia which has adopted ‘the changes of Law on the Rights of Veterans, Disabled Veterans and Their Families’, which equate the rights of members of the partisan and the Chetnik movement. Balkans should be debalkanized”.

In an article published on 09.03.2005 titled “Sanader still expects a positive decision from Brussels,” the author states the following: “Croatia still lives EU, although not its member, said the Prime Minister (Ivo Sanader). It holds that the mentioned intellectuals do not want to go back to Croatia isolation, The Balkan, but they are not aware of the repercussions of point of view they represent.” Statement by then Prime Minister Ivo Sanader refers to the fact that Croatia is not a member of the EU, but “lives” the European Union. It also goes on to say that the Croatian intellectuals do not want get Croatia back to The Balkan, but still resents them in particular views.

“The Balkan and Yugoslav bogey” is the name of the article published on 05.09.2005 in which the author states the following: “What are the areas and what is that region? For example, in sen-

tence 'Croatian action has created new prospects for peace in the region' one should ask themselves why isn't there the name of the region, or at least its specific description. My conclusion is simple: the Balkan Region, whether we name it or not, is the Yugoslav area, whether we like it or not. No wonder that the repertoire of same expressions, phrases and catchphrases coined and continued life in The Balkan, among nations whose space was called Yugoslavia from 1918 to 1991. I think we should always be clear and speak our own geographical name instead undetermined spaces and religions. Another thing is that with Balkanites it is not easy to escape from the Balkan, nor remove the mental thought-language boards of yesterday's Yugoslavia, from Alexander and Broz, to the socialist and non-aligned. Balkan and Yugoslav bogey hump yet in our being."

"Parliamentary parties are satisfied with the beginning of negotiations with the EU", the title of the article published on 04.10.2005 where among other things, they say the following: "IDS president Damir Kajin is mostly looking forward to Croatia in early negotiations,' definitely leaves Balkan Express". Croatia cannot get away geographically from The Balkan, but this is a definitive break with The Balkan in the political sense', he said." Here Croatian politician stressed that Croatia did not turn into a state geographically away from the Western Balkans, but there is an obvious break with Balkan in the political sense, and the reason for all this is closer to the European Union.

In an article titled "The Luxembourg night of champagne," which was released on 04.10.2005 the author observes: "After eighty years of Balkan, Croatia has the opportunity to once again become European. After the 'drunken November night' Croatia has rapidly Balkanized. Will it become Europeanized just as fast? As part of the Croatian utopian consciousness for decades fed recurring political mantra 'just to reach America', today is expected from the EU. There is hope, but also the expectation that it will stop the entry of most of our Balkanoid nonsense, that will

replace the crushing clarity, that the chance will be given to the ability, and not connection, that the legality will suppress 'nativity', that the mess will be replaced by order... For decades living in the Balkan way they spent what little remains of civilization carried away from the former Mitteleuropa. Croatia in Karadordevo's Yugoslavia experienced 're- barbarization'. This Yugoslavian "Europeanization of the Balkan" didn't happen, but they dreamed of 'European balkanization'"

Analysis will continue with an article of a weekly newspaper that was entered into the research process – *Nacional*. "Mesić's support for UN is blocking Croatian accession to NATO" is the name of an article published 17.10.2005. The author argues the following: "The separation of the Croatia from the Balkan convoy with the commencement of negotiations on EU membership does not fit in the American approach to regional integration of the Balkan countries into NATO. American ambassador Ralph Frank stated this by saying that 2008 was actually the year where we will discuss further enlargement, but that does not mean that same year Croatia will be able to receive an invitation for membership. It is likely that they will wait for a joint entry of the Balkan countries into the EU."

In continuation we go to the analysis of an article from *Jutarnji list*. "Drama in Zagreb" is the name of the article published on 01.10.2005 which among other things says: "Croatia is in danger, as a candidate for the European Union, to begin thinking about it in the context of Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina. First, it is extremely unfair, because Croatia is much more developed and more democratic than those two neighbouring countries. Secondly, and more importantly, Croatia would, in the event of a new, long-term delay of the start of the negotiations, remain in the Balkan political context, which is characterized by a mass nationalism, mass corruption, lack of democracy, economic decline, and, as a result, continuing political instability."

Analyzing newspaper articles which are the subject of research in the 2006 we start with *Jutarnji list*. In an article published on 31.01.2006 titled “Entrepreneurs and economists do not reject the idea of a Balkan Trade Union” the author points out: “Long before there was even the European Commission, in the early nineties, the most famous Croatian economist Branko Horvat at one meeting said that the only salvation for the Croatian economy is doing business with the East. He was referring to Serbia, Montenegro, Macedonia, Bulgaria, Romania... followed by a real political lynching of Branko Horvat. He is the enemy of Croatia, Yugonostalgic, dangerous element that only independent states pushed back to the Balkan. Politically conscious Croats don’t want anything to do with Balkan, even trading, although in it, according to all the knowledge of economic science, they will be a winner.”

“Puhovski: We need to swallow our prejudices towards The Balkan,” the title of the article published on 04.02.2006 in which Žarko Puhovski, professor at the Faculty of Philosophy in Zagreb says for *Jutarnji list*: “Brussels said that Croatia to them belongs on The Balkan, whether we like it or not. It is a geographical fact to which you still have a simple example: Dubrovnik in the Balkan, Central Europe is Pušća. Gentlemen, please decide what your cultural options are! By what logic is the Balkan something over what semi-literate primitives that run each night listening to folk music, have the right to be offended? Croatia geographically belongs in biggest part to the Balkan and Croatia realistically politically belongs to the Balkan. Who does not like it, they can go ahead fantasize all they want, but geography is not a matter of utopia than facts.”

“Tomac: Mesić works for the Western Balkans” is the title of the article published on 11.02.2006 in which “Zdravko Tomac warned to tragic situation where the political, intellectual and media elites supported the creation of the Western Balkans region according to the dictates of the international community.

Europe will force us to get through the Balkan train for the European Union. Create a free zone markets of the Western Balkans means free labour market in which Croatian workers will hurt most' – said Tomac. Croatian bell, sent an open letter to President Mesić; Tomac said that Mesić creates the basis for the Western Balkans."

Article published on 02.03.2006. entitled "Vulgar radicalization" among other things stated: "For those who are shaking in stuffy folk clubs with the sounds of Ceca, Mile Kitić, Dara Bubamara, Miroslav Ilić and similar tonal workers will shout loudest that we are not Balkans, and in each move or clumsy remark of Brussels' eurobirokrats will see the restoration of Yugoslavia."

"Critique of the title of my book and its two terms" the title of the article published on 02.03.2006 where Robert Greenberg says: "It is clear that we must ask where the Central Europe ends and where The Balkan starts? Is Dubrovnik geographically on the Balkan Peninsula, and Pula is not? Should the term 'Balkan' be deleted from the literature due to the many negative connotations of which it's charged? But also, it should be noted that the two specified terms 'Balkan' and 'Serbo - Croatian', often used in American scientific traditions (eg. Serbo-Croatian prosody, Balkan Slavic languages, the Balkan linguistic league, Balkanism). Using the customary terms in no case did I intend to hurt Croatian sensibility."

"Čačić: Well of course we're Balkans" is the name of the article published on 12.03.2006. in which the author conveys: "The young artist Ana Rucner, the local prefect Radimir Čačić and Robert Ježić, entrepreneur from Rijeka and chairman of NK Rijeka, were shocked over the incident in Zagreb cafe where they guys of homosexual orientation were beaten. It is balkanism, they agreed, not Severina song. Čačić added: 'Look, everything draws to the surface of our misery and complexes and then immediately we all rebel that we are The Balkan. Well of course we are Balkans. But what we are and what we can be, beside

the Balkan? And what we wanted to be, but Balkan? And right now that song will be a space where we won't be The Balkan? Someone was talking about fast food grill. Well let's adopt them, God willing, this is an excellent dish, let's not let others to adopt it, we won't be ashamed of it.”

“Srna, Olić and Balaban suspended for Moscow for going to the folk music” is the name of the article published on 03.09.2006 the sports pages of newspapers. The author says: “Preparations” of three of our players are saying about the immaturity of our players, who are abroad, top professionals, but when they feel the smell of a Madhouse or Fountains (nightclubs), The Balkan awakens in them.”

The following items of analyzes are reduced to *Večernji list*. Article published on 31.1.2006 titled “Sanader: No way for creating a Balkan trade union” in which the author conveys: “For Croatia it's out of the question to make the Balkan trade unions and therefore the Croatian government has proposed to create a free trade zone within the framework of CEFFTA, said Prime Minister Ivo Sanader, commenting before Croatian academics on the latest European Commission proposal on the creation of a regional free trade zone in the Western Balkans.”

“The EU via Belgrade and Tirana” is the name of the article published on 31.1.2006 in which the author states: “When general Gotovina was who-knows-where, from Brussels came assurances that his conversion to the Hague prisoner is the last obstacle to start Croatian accession to the EU. General hardly even learned ‘house rules’, and EU headquarters sent recommendation that it would be good before entering the EU for Croatia to still hangs out with former Balkan neighbours, despite the fact that any mention of neighbourhoods to Croatia is a bad memory. Because of these traumas here every call to some Balkan Games and integration smells of Yugoslavia. Perhaps this belief is not justified, and perhaps a tinge paranoid, but it is reality. People are allergic to any mention of The Balkan, or yugo connections. In the Open HTV,

95 percent of viewers openly said that they oppose the new Balkan bringing regardless of what the EU says that they misunderstood. People are already sick of every European mention of The Balkan”.

In an article published on 05.05.2006 titled “In Sisak Fibi is not released into the bus not even in the bag – after all, we are Balkan” describes the case of a citizen who is trying to enter the dog in the vehicle of public transportation. The article states: “I asked him who is bothered by a little dog and they were afraid that he would bite or contaminate the bus. What about the drunken passengers, who vomit on the bus, I asked, and they said that they are people, not dogs. It was clear that I have nothing to argue with people who do not understand how in the world for the transport of animals there are rules to which people abide so the owner can travel the whole world with the pet. And our dog has all the documents, prescribed bag and no obstacles to ride for those three city bus station. And the fact that Autopromet has such legislation, shows how we still didn’t get rid of the Balkan way of thinking.”

Article titled “Hollywood warriors from Mars” was released on 03.10.2006 and it’s an example of rarely positive writing in the context of The Balkan that is, it’s a surprise to those who are not from this area, and who had the opportunity to visit Croatia and Zagreb. In the article, among other things we read: “This is exactly how we felt by listening to (or reading) a statement of great Hollywood stars that are here in our neighbourhood these day while they are making a movie about the hunt for Karadžić. And Richard Gere and Terrence Howard giving the impression that they “fell from Mars.” It is obvious that they expected arrival in the war-ravaged Balkans. Thereto, imagine, the main star of the film Gere wanted to meet with Karadžić so that he can be better prepared for the role! Should we laugh to their blather or willingness of locals who conquered the request and shut all shops in Bašćarsija so that Gere’s refined vegetarian little nose would not mind the smell of Čevap? They tell us now all these compliment that we are all nicely dressed and groomed.”

“Bosnian election fraud” is the name of an article published on 08.10.2006 which states: “After the elections in BH question is legitimate because it is seen that there is no European law that The Balkan is not able make worthless. So we had the chance to see in glossy directed by the local SDP that a representative of a nation is practically chosen by another nation!” The article discusses the neighbouring Bosnia and Herzegovina, a country with a series of absurd, for which again is largely responsible foreign policy of the European Union and the United States for creating artificial Constitution defined by the Dayton Agreement. One of the absurd is the tripartite presidency where practically Bosniaks due to legal flaws elected Croat member of the presidency. Here the author draws attention, and the example of Bosnia and Herzegovina, as there is no European law and that the Balkan is not able make worthless.

Name of the article “Croatia as a partner” published on 18.10.2006 the author points out: “Today Croatia is the only new state in The Balkan with which the international community no longer has any problems. Croatia is the only stable point, and therefore is called the leader of the region.” This article presents the Republic of Croatia as a country in The Balkan, with which the international community has absolutely no contentious issues, and it is stated that Croatia is precisely the only stable point in The Balkan.

“Americans are’ partly’ fed up the war,” the title of the article published on 10.11.2006 in which the author states, among other thing: “It is well known that any announcement of the return of the Russians in the Balkan political game for American diplomatic ears is cacophony. Will the White House in a democratic set be back in Balkans in 2008? It is now difficult to say. Now America will begin with a gradual exit strategy from the unpopular war zones in the world. But of course that the Balkan cannot remain outside the Euro-Atlantic integration”

Analysis of newspaper articles below begin with the weekly *Nacional*. Article titled “Folded aggression against Mesić” published

on 03.01.2006 where the author conveys: “With Europe we – as aspiring educators often like to repeat here – are civilizationally connected’ to pain’, we might have more Europe than Europe itself, but for us it is nevertheless reserved the Western Balkans. My God, My God, why do they hate us so much that we are constantly pushed to where we belong geographically?”

“Croatian police refused Balkan” is the name of an article published on 06.02.2006 where it says: “A high-ranking member of the administration in Brussels said late last week for *Nacional* that Croatia must be aware that it cannot escape from the Balkan Peninsula.” I know that most of your citizens think that they are significantly different from its neighbours, but things should be seen in the broader context”. Message from Brussels to Croatia that Croatia cannot escape from the Balkan Peninsula.

In an article titled “Around the World in 8 days” published on 17.04.2006 transferred to the statement: “‘During lunch with several prominent members of the Council, my neighbour at the table tells me: “Your president is an outstanding communicator and a very nice man. Who was once heard, will not even think about Croats in the context of patterns of savages from The Balkan.’ Seem like Stipe Mesić himself wanted to give himself a compliment. Here is mentioned as it concerned the members of the Council of Europe praised in such a way that they said, “who had once heard, will not even think about Croats in the context of patterns of savages from The Balkan.”

“Sanader gave up on the latest arrangement with the IMF”, the title of the article that transmits a positive image in question of The Balkan, which is published in *Nacional*. The article was published on 25.09.2006 and this is what it said: “...it seems that the Western Balkans started a new trend of action of the IMF, which is discreetly reducing its role in Southeast Europe, as it is estimated that The Balkan began politically and economically stabilize and mature, especially in the area of forming their own economic policies. It is obvious that there are posi-

tive articles when the Balkan is mentioned, but it is also obvious that these are very few.”

In an article published on 02.10.2016, entitled “Croatia is not part of the Western Balkans,” we can read the following: “In the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe on Monday, 2<sup>nd</sup> of October, Croatian Prime Minister Ivo Sanader and Miomir Žužul with a powerful lobbying managed to persuade Hungarian reporters that from the resolution on the Western Balkans Croatian name should be removed. This gesture for Sanader was important because it was his goal for Croatia to be separated from The Balkan in front of the EU members, and that of Croatia concluded individually or independently of the neighboring countries in the region.” With effort of Croatian politicians they have managed to convince the Hungarian reporters that the resolution on the Western Balkans removed presence of Croatian which was extremely important for prime minister Ivo Sanader.

“Čačić and Đapić break the duopoly of the HDZ and SDP” is the name of the article published on 19.12.2006 in which the author says: “At the next session of Parliament, they will criticize HDZ leniency in negotiations with the European Union, and in particular relations with Slovenia and neighbouring countries. Đapić will attack the signing of CEF'TA with the conclusion that in this way Croatia returns to The Balkan. “Again”old story is a statement that “they” want to return Croatia to The Balkan – it is said that Đapić will act against signing the CEFTA and with explanation that Croatia wants to return to The Balkan.

At the end of the research process, and when it comes to 2006 we will process another article, which was published on 10.10.2006 in *Slobodna Dalmacija* titled “Nobody likes you, Balkans”, in which the author on the brief and very concise way is transmitting the message: “The Balkan comes something like AIDS or Hepatitis C, of which people distance themselves by inertia. The fact that the Croats will not be Balkanians theory is perhaps commendable, as a kind of” cultural endeavour,” but be-

hind this there is a narrow reading of The Balkan.” Here, the title is little more than pathetic “Nobody likes you, Balkans.” But the author very vividly presents the attitude towards Balkan comparing it with incurable diseases and something that causes disgust.

Analyzing newspaper articles which are the subject of investigations in 2007 we start with *Jutarnji list* with the first article titled “East is West”, published on 5.1.2007. Here the author is explicit, and one might conclude angry, but precise and concise: “We-are-not-Balkan-We-have -always-been Europe’ typical domestic rhetoric, and the rhetoric implies a Europe that is non-East, Non-Balkans. That Europe is actually Catholic Europe of our former colonizers and current colonizers, Europe of Baroque altars and Sacher cakes, Lidl, Ipercoop and Hypo Bank. Now, suddenly, here is a reversal. In Europe the Orthodox are entering, those who write in Cyrillic are entering, fifteen percent of Bulgarian Muslims are also entering, ćevap is entering (sheesh kebab), Turkish coffee, brandy, garlic and Dracula, and we are not.”

“HB: The government instead of pushing Croatia into the EU it pushes it in the Western Balkans” is the name of the article published on 02.03.2007 where the “president of the Croatian Bloc (HB) Ivić Pašalić found that Sanader’s so called pro-European policies lead Croatia into the European Union in a paradoxical way of returning to The Balkan, from which Croatia fled in the war.”

In an article published on 17.3.2007 entitled “New Balkans” it’s stated: “major summit was held in Sarajevo, Bill Clinton arrived, and the Stability Pact wasn’t signed in the form of a document, but is accepted verbally. Before then president Franjo Tudman went to Sarajevo, rightists have thundered against this set, shouting that it will bring us back to the Balkan. As The Balkan there is a geographical determinant.”

“The return of Balkan nightmare” is the name of the article published on 03.11.2007 in which the author notes: “The Balkan

is already in a new crisis, that in next few weeks, as we approach the deadline for the Kosovo status settlement, the decision on elections in Serbia and the outcome of events in Bosnia and Herzegovina – could escalate. The Balkan again became not only a potential crisis point but also zones of conflict of interests of the great powers, Russia and America. The EU is again divided and doesn't know what to do. In this situation, the EU will reiterate that it cares about stability of The Balkan because it is, of course, part of Europe but will not find solutions to problems. But the EU acknowledges that it is aware of the weight problems in The Balkan, which are far more political than economic in nature.”

Below we're going to the examination or the analysis of articles in *Večernji list*. “Bulgarian Rollingstones on the European menu” is the name of the article published on 03.3.2007. in which the author states the following: “In a country (Bulgaria), which owns the Balkan mountain, an expressions that Croatians perceive with disdain although never mounted their Cormorant on the proud mountain, a phrase that has been preserved in the Turkmen language as Balkhan, Barkhon Uzbek and Turkish, Balkan – originally meant rolling stones or the rolling dunes.”

“World Agency on energy summit in Zagreb” is the title of the article that was published on 24.6.2007. This article is a positive information and writing about The Balkan as a rarity in daily and weekly newspapers. The author writes: “Croatia, the host of the conference, and its Balkan neighbours are on the increasingly important transit route of oil and gas, Reuters noted in its report... As the battle for control over the European energy markets and supply routes moved to The Balkan, Russian President in Zagreb promised to develop the Black Sea region as a centre of distribution of energy, says Reuters. The conference was held at a time when importance of The Balkan as a transit centre for energy is growing...”

Article published on 4.11.2007 called “The Pelješac bridge in ‘Bosnian pot’” brings the following: “‘Bosnian pot ‘is cooking again. Balkan boiling! Bosnia and Herzegovina is in the greatest

crisis since the signing of the Dayton Agreement. Kosovo is about to explode, Macedonia is nothing further than that, rattle arms again... And that this is completely enough speak the words of Chief Commander of EUFOR, international forces in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the German Rear Admiral Hans – Jochen Wittthauer who openly announces that his soldiers are ready for a new war in that country.”

Finally, we will analyze an article published in *Slobodna Dalmacija*. In an article published on 8.5.2007 titled “Millions in the sea,” author of the article says the following: “I have never been in Afghanistan. And it does not attract me. The entire East, nothing attracts me. I guess these are prejudices. The notion of a monster, but there we are not mistaken. Crowds, chaos, traffic! I have a feeling that is all there on the edge of the infection. Not known how much I’m unfair. I look like an Englishmen looking at The Balkan in this way.”

Analyzing newspaper articles which are the subject of research in the 2008 we start with *Jutarnji list*. “Kajin: The government has started to lose itself when it comes to foreign policy” is the title of the article published on 23.1.2008 where IDS president Damir Kajin says: “If Croatia’s choice is Balkans, not the European Union, it is a legitimate choice, but I think it’s a bad choice.” Here again underlines that Europe is in turn a better choice, not a return to The Balkan.

The author of an article published on 30.1.2008 called “Tickets for Gibonni sold out in an hour,” writes: “For hours no one can pass through the street from people. This is the real Balkans – said the employee of cafe, angry because the people obstructed entry to the cafe.” Any inappropriate behaviour, any arrogance, and primitivism is attributed to Balkan and Balkan behaviour, just as is the case in this article.

“The faster negotiations are in the interests of the EU” is the title of an article published on 12.3.2008, stating: “The interest of the imminent completion of the negotiations and is in

EU's interest as well. Now that Balkan is again at a crossroads, the EU wants Croatia as a positive example. Not so that Croatia could escape from The Balkan, but for the Balkan to follow the Croatia. But with these slow negotiations Croatia can't serve anyone as an example and motivation, but rather as a warning of what awaits them." Here they seek from Croatian to accelerate negotiations with the European Union and to be a model for other countries in The Balkan.

"Balkan is a powder keg again," the title of the article published on 15.3.2008 in which the author conveys: "The second meaning for the space between Vienna and Istanbul, in the region is most often described by the term Balkans, which, in fact, has no real meaning. Just as Central Europe, but the latter term evokes the Viennese coffeehouses, secession, Švejk and Mozart, and the first one on a powder keg. And no wonder, therefore, that in Central Europe they are trying to squeeze in Poland and Ukraine, and The Balkan want to escape almost everyone, but usually bring along an actual Balkans, in the manner of behaviour."

"Fiction, not history" is the name of the article published on 10.8.2008 in which the author states the following: "For them, The Balkan is a wild place. In all these articles it has many layers: first, the traces of the Second World War and everything evil that happened, then traces the strong Serbian influence, then anticlerical and anti-Catholic traces." Here the author expresses the Western European view of The Balkan in which there is nothing positive. They see Balkan as a place where traces of the Second World War and are visible and all the recent events that have marked and permanently etched scars in these areas further underlined the strong Serbian influence.

In an article published on 11.11.2008 entitled "Mira's dance with the vampires," the author states: "Creating Croatian FBI raises doubts that this could be the start of a joint Balkan police", he said recently in an interview with Miroslav Tuđman, who also confirmed his decision to run for state president. The

former long-time head of the intelligence community, which is installed in this position by the will of his own father, is very fond of the theory that the mafia murders in Zagreb are a part of the scenario of conclusion of some of the new covenant in "Western Balkans". Police sees this cooperation as a first step in this direction. Tudman's appearance is as a messiah who will save Croatia from plunging into a Western Balkans fog. Almost like he is obsessed with this threat. He claims that since "the Storm" and especially in the last eight years Croatia is imposed by different formula of the Western integration, and his father strongly objected to this formula, but, he says, Mesić and Račan tied Croatia to 'Western Balkans', Sanader did nothing to change that. However, his claim was not substantiated by any solid arguments, and phantom Western Balkanija in his interpretation seems like paranoia."

"Gallup: Three fifths of the Croats is not considered Balkanics" is the name of the article published on 17.11.2008. in which the author points out the following: "Three fifths of Croats, 60 percent, is not considered Balkan, nearly two-thirds, 65 percent of them strongly identify with their country, while only seven percent of them want to leave the country, according to the first results of the Gallup Balkans monitor, which are presented on Monday in Brussels. The survey was conducted in September and October this year on a qualified sample of at least 1000 respondents in Croatia, Serbia, Macedonia, Albania, Kosovo, Montenegro and Bosnia and Herzegovina. The study included the views and thoughts inhabitants of these countries on all areas of their lives, and provided insight into the current socio-economic, socio-political and multicultural dimension of the region."

In an article published on 19.11.2008 titled "Why Croats despise The Balkan" the author reported: "Croatian animosity towards The Balkan is the creation of Yugoslavia, but in spite of the rejection, Croats must admit, whether they like it or not, along with some other settings - Central Europe and the Mediterranean

– with a great part they belong to the Balkan social and cultural circle. – ‘We have a paradox that some Balkan countries have no problem with that identification, such as Bulgaria and Macedonia, while the Greeks, Romanians and we, with more or less rights and arguments, refuse it’ – says the president of the HHO Ivo Banac. But while some countries are ‘allowed’ not to be part of Balkan on many occasions, such as Slovenia and Romania, and even Greece, Croatia are still classified under ‘The Balkan’ – says historian Tvrtko Jakovina.” Here the author describes the reasons and time of when the Republic of Croatia has a negative image when it comes to ‘The Balkan’, and this time obviously comes from the time of creation of Yugoslavia, notwithstanding its rejection. Yet here the author warns that we must accept that the Republic of Croatia is geographically part belonging to the Balkan Peninsula and should not run from it.

Further on the item of analyzes is reduced to *Večernji list*. “Let the Croatian Prince go” is the name of an article published on 7.3.2008 in which the author states: “Sanader resolutely deny affiliation of Croatia to Balkans, but in an interview with the Croatian press. He would not deny it to Olli Rehn, EU Commissioner for Enlargement. He met with him on the day when Rehn presented a strategy for the so-called Western Balkans, which is, of course, including Croatia. If the situation in Serbia is as it is, if in Macedonia they rattle ethnic weapons, if Kosovo and Montenegro are states only since yesterday, and extremely underdeveloped, if protectorate in BH has economic misery and political chaos, if Croatia is economically and civilizationally incomparable with those countries, and, finally, if some time it was a force in The Balkan, it would be logical for Rehn to return his Finland to Russia in the composition of which was more than a century, instead of returning Croatia to The Balkan.”

“Croatia in NATO still in Yugoslavia” is the name of the article published on 31.8.2008 from which the authors recommend a sentence: “The Balkan is not a peaceful region and

Croatia is certainly needed under the NATO umbrella.” Here Balkans is mentioned in the context of an insecure area and a solution for the Republic of Croatia represents entry into NATO in order to feel secure for life.

In the article “Began with Kosovo, completed with ‘Irish NO’”, there is more positive environment using the noun “Balkans”. This article was published on 30.6.2008 in which the author says, among other things, “Slovenian diplomacy among its successes of presidency notes that the Western Balkan countries are now one step closer to the EU, and bearing in mind that in the past six months, Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina, as the last country in the region, signed the Stabilisation and Association Agreement.” This is certainly an example of the positive use of The Balkan and the countries that are considered to belong to the Balkan Peninsula.

“27 Story: Nenad Šepić: Consultant” is the name of the article published on 17.10.2008 in which one part states: “First, we get, at the country level, the structural credit that will allow us to transform the Balkan crash into a modern European state.” Author quoted Nenad Šepić in which the respective expresses obvious pleasure to give credit funds as the aim of transforming what he calls “Balkan stab at a modern European state.”

Below, a subject continuing an article published in the weekly *Nacional*. “Bordering BH biggest obstacle for entry into the EU,” the title of the article published on 20.10.2008 in which the author states: “The EU has long been identified as The Balkan sore point for their own internal security. Organised crime, trafficking of arms, narcotics, illegal immigrants and human trafficking were present throughout the region. On the other hand, as long as the potential danger was great, the EU must allow the liberal movement of people and goods in the area of south-east Europe, and, given all the other countries in The Balkan perspective and hope for the future. Different criminal groups from The Balkan to the EU.. Balkan route crime and terrorism from the east.”

“Happy new in 1990” is the name of the article published on 9.9.2008 in which the author points out: “The pendulum of Balkan nationalism regularly smeared with blood. Nationalism, in this area is simpler than the democracy, bitterness stronger than reformist consciousness, and patience gives way to inflammatory messages and calls on the classification of the national flag.” This is mentioned in the context of Balkan nationalistic overtones, where the author approaches the nationalism of this area as a natural thing for the difference of democracy and democratic values.

“Nostalgia bound by silence”, the title of an article published on 16.9.2008 in which the author states: “The Balkan is not important as geographical term, it becomes essential as a metaphor for the conflict, intolerance Byzantine dark, call of blood and soil, as well as the space in which it is difficult to grow delicate plants called democracy, and we saw all and experienced it on own skin in the recent past, which unfortunately is still ongoing. The only question is how much of than ‘Balkanism’ has the very being of Croatian society, and that the former government was the one in which the same balkanism was suppressed and imprisoned in a kind of Pandora’s box for 40 years. When they opened the box of evil prophets, evil spreads out and destroys decades of real illusion of living together or as we affectionately called ‘brotherhood and unity’”. Here the author speaks about very crucial thing, and that is not essential to the Balkan in the geographical context, but in the context of the metaphor that represents conflicts, intolerance, etc.

Analyzing newspaper articles which are the subject of investigations in 2009 we start with *Večernji list*. In an article published on 2.2.2009 called “Slovenian interest are not lawns of Joško Joras” the author conveys how “Tanja Petrović from the Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts is convinced that the current situation between the Slovenia and Croatia occurred because the Western Balkans is treated by EU as a non- European region, where crime governs.”

“The U.S. Senate: Bosnia and Kosovo greatest threat to stability in Europe” the title of the article published on 14.2.2009 in which the author states the following: “The Balkan in 2009 will again be the biggest threat to the stability of Europe, despite the positive developments in 2008 including peaceful declaration of independence of Kosovo.” This puts an emphasis on the uncertainty of The Balkan and the former source of uncertainty was all developments regarding Kosovo.

“NATO is more important than the EU” is the name of the article that was published on 2.4.2009. The author emphasizes, among other things: “This membership (referring to NATO membership) is fateful because we were “removed” from The Balkan and European maps of some powerful factors to which we are drawn into a potential regional alliance.” This highlights the importance of Croatian accession to NATO alliance, and even gives him the edge over its membership in the European Union as a result of all the options, and in the form of protection that this pact provides.

Article published on 15.5.2009 entitled “Young Sabol – old politicians” the author says: “For them (referring to the EU), Croatia is the Balkan, Tuđman is for the West, Central Europe and the Mediterranean.” This clearly shows the perception of the EU on one hand and “Tuđman” on the other hand, which are opposite to each other.

“Bulgarian case – our theorem” is the name of the article published on 29.5.2009. Here the author explains: “The phrases that we are not Balkans, that we are better than others and deserve no longer to serve anything anymore. Even the people don’t believe in them anymore or the Union which is sometimes presented as a bogey, and sometimes as a solution to all problems.” Author as if it expressed weariness of repetition (although not linked to the same author comments on several articles). Author somehow operates self-critically, but this self-criticism applies generally to all of “us” – the Croats and Croatia.

In the continuance we are working on articles from *Jutarnji list*. In an article titled “Ostojić: Creative stir up excitement with

several co-productions at the same time”, published on 13.1.2009 Arsen Anton Ostojić says: “It is a question whether we are the Balkans or not. Our rejection of The Balkan and the non-recognition of The Balkan are associated with that as long as we’re not close or not close to Serbs.”

“Masters of rhythm and rhyme won the Great Hall” is the title of an article published on 17.2.2009 in which the author said: “... there is not so many strong songwriters like Saša Antić which laser precision and sharp verses charged with consumerism, socially insensitive Balkan capitalism, political chameleons, war and privatization crime, corruption and everything turned the ‘hilly country on The Balkan’ into our’ beautiful raped country’.”

In the article published on 20.2.2009 titled “The Circus performances of Janša and Pahor” the author points out the following: “The ideological, mental and political climate in Slovenia confirms that it belongs to the political concept of The Balkan. Unfortunately, the delayed explosion of state nationalism that occurred in Slovenia confirmed for the umpteenth time that the Balkan indeed is a source of many accidents and troubles and entering each state from this space brings enormous trauma with it.”

In an article published on 26.2.2009 titled “We have to admit – we are to blame for the delay” the author states the following: “I’m sure that these days the thesis will appear on how it’s about political decision that Croatia should be returned to the Western Balkans, with Serbia, as deviously plan of London which administers the Hague over the new Balkans. But then we have to be aware that we have given the opportunity to such strong forces with our behaviour”.

In the sports pages of a newspaper on 30.3.2009 and interesting article has been published titled “We offered them sausages and musicians, not prostitutes”, which states: “Once we judged one of the matches in the World Championship in Croatia, the hosts invited us to a very nice restaurant in Zagreb. We

were with other guests, but we were in a separate room. Suddenly the room penetrated attractive young girls. No one had offered directly, but it could be concluded that this is a prostitute. This is the Balkans, a different mentality and stuff like that are possible only there”, said Danish handball referee Lars Ejby Pedersen.”

“Sanader called on Slovenia to unblock Croatian negotiations with the EU” the title of the article published on 31.3.2009 where Ivo Sanader holds an interview: “Euro-Atlantic integration is the only option for the prosperity of the countries in the region because, otherwise, the alternative was war again,’ he said, dismissing the possibility that Croatia joins EU together with other countries in the region. “Croatia will enter the EU itself, and Bosnia and Herzegovina will enter itself in the EU,” said Sanader. He added that it should not burden the concept of the Western Balkans.”

“J. Pavičić: We already had our own Borat. His name was Francis” is name of an article published on 11.7.2009 which says: “Borat Sagdijev, however, is not mocked only in Kazakhstan. His Borat was something much more: the embodiment of all the prejudices of the post-communist East. Opening scenes of Borat, after all, were shot in Romania, the Roma village, and for years after the film was completed the complaints were heard by villagers of Glod which Baron Cohen in the movie paid three pounds each, and then made millions portraying them as rapists and prostitutes. Croats laughed immensely to this introductory part of Borat, and it didn’t occur to them: Borat, this is the Balkans, so are we.”

In an article published on 9.10.2009 called “Johnny has escaped from the Balkans, but the Balkans did not run away from it” the author states the following: “Branimir Johnny Štulić may have escaped from the Balkans, but the Balkans has never escaped from him. All that to what, in the era of mature socialism, he mocked, and was reasonably frightened of, the aggressive stupidity, triumphalism and voluntarism, now he represents himself.”

“Židak: Petrić’s goal against England cost us 15 million euros” the title of the article published on 14.10.2009 in which it’s noted: “For a long time we are trying to escape from the Balkans, but the Balkans cannot escape from us!” An article from sport sections among other things says that Croatian citizens are seeking to escape from the Balkans, but the Balkans remains present within them.

“Without an agreement with Slovenia poverty and corruption awaits us” the title of the article published on 2.11.2009. The author states the following: “If until the ratification in parliament opposition to the deal prevails, which now share a portion of intellectuals, representatives and bishops, and therefore fail to present the opportunity to resolve the border issue, interviewees believe that Croatia is threatened to strengthen corruption, economic decline, isolation and return to the Balkans.”

In the article “Salto mortale of eurosceptics and europhiles” published on 6.11.2009 the author notes: “We were full of gratitude then toward Central European brethren, our mouths were full of Europe to which we always belonged and with all forces we tried to abandon the ‘Balkan Inn’- the only phrase every Communist Krleža which every right wing in this country likes.... If twenty years ago we wanted so for Croatia to shed from the Balkans and paste to ‘Europe’, then that is exactly what is happening right now.”

“Croatia is, mentality viewed, still deep in the Balkans” the title of the article published on 17.12.2009. The author states that: “All squads claim that Croatia belongs to the Balkans, where they are less focused on geography and more mentality.’ I know that Croatia is Balkans,” says Lovro Vukoja Trošić. ‘I Guess it is the Balkans’, however, Josip Šarić is cautious, while Philip Blekić thought it was “all over the Balkans””. Title of the article puts Croatia in the Balkans, when you take the mentality of the people into consideration. Here the author points out that in the main those who claim that Croatia belongs to the Balkans do not think within a geographical but mental context.

Analyzing newspaper articles which are the subject of research in the 2010 we start with a *Večernji list*. Article titled “Ladder of the Western Balkans to the EU” was released on 27.2.2010. In part one of this article, the author points out: “Croatia needs quality stairs to ascend from the Western Balkans to western balcony.”

“Untouchable Governor Željko Rohatinski has paranoia” is the name of the article published on 20.3.2010 in which the author points out: “It would be naive to ask the question – who authorized the Prime Minister to take part in the organization together in Brdo, where they will discuss the future of the Western Balkans in the EU and in which representatives of the states of the former Yugoslavia? Ms. Kosor agrees to the phrase “Western Balkans” although Croatia does not belong to any Balkans.”

The following article should probably point out that Croatia is still in the Balkans without any technical and scientific evidence. “Tony Cetinski starred in Sofia at the concert for Haiti” is the name of the article published on 2.6.2010 where it says the following: “Under the auspices of the Ministry of Culture of Bulgaria, first charity concert was held Sofia of representatives of the Balkan countries “Balkan scene in Haiti.” Croatia was presented by Toni Cetinski by our Ministry of Culture”

Article titled “The Spaniards: rendering with Croats playing somewhere in the Balkans” was released 14.9.2010 and it reads: “The Spaniards write that the return game will play somewhere in the Balkans (el pais balcanica), but that the Croats have not yet decided where. To Spaniards Croatia and the Balkans is obviously the same thing. The return game won’t be played in the Balkans after all, but probably in Split.”

The last article for this year, which was the subject of research, belongs to *Jutarnji list*. In an article titled “Croats like the Balkan in themselves and this is why they prefer Turkish soap opera” published on 11.9.2010 where the author points out:

“It seems that to our ear in some way this language which is completely torn, rude and abrupt is close to us. Maybe we would not have gone too far when we say that the show is attractive simply because it’s the Balkans, and it carries all the elements of Balkan folk music, from the patriarchal, rough grandfather who would not care even for the death of a grandson of the wrong sort...”

The process of exploration in 2011 we’ll start by analyzing the articles published in *Večernji list*. An article entitled “We were all not S.O.B” published on 15.2.2011 contains one sentence, but which says enough: “On this side cultures and civilizations, from that side Balkan savagery.”

“Serbia is becoming a leader in the region in 2013, the chance for Croatia is entry into the EU” the title of the article published on 14.5.2011 where the author argues: “The Balkans has been and remains Europe’s black hole, from which first drew Slovenia, and Croatia has the opportunity to do so this year, joining the EU.”

In an article published on 24.5.2011 entitled “EU awaits official proposal on monitoring Croatia”, “Head of the British Foreign Office, William Hague, has not escaped the usual British placing Croatian accession negotiations in the regional context: ‘We want to see Croatia in the EU, but also the entire Western Balkans’”.

“Great Serbia, backed up by the British moving into the Union” is the title of the article published on 28.5.2011 in which the author points out: “For Belgrade, this is a historic moment: now if they didn’t arrest Mladić, they would not be moving to the Union, Croatia would be permanently separated, and the region as a political term would not exist. This must be prevented! How? Just arrest Mladić! Now that Serbia will express the Union, now melting Croatian dreams to the Balkans and the region left behind!”

In an article titled “Stepinac was a great humanist and ISC Hitler instrument” which was published on 4.6.2011. Pope

Benedict XVI says: “I think that most Croats joyfully welcomed unification with Europe because it is a nation that is based on Europe. Cardinals Kuharić and Bozanić told me: we are not Balkans, we are Europe. Croatian nation is European and experiencing European history, and therefore it is logical, just and necessary to join the EU.” this article conveys the speech of Pope Benedict XVI., who believes that Croatia’s place in the EU and that the Croatian people is based in Europe. Croatian cardinals also sent a message saying that Croatia is not the Balkans and that Croats are not Balkans, but the people of Europe who lived through European history and for all that is logical and fair that Croatia joins European Union.

“Eurosceptic Kamikaze” is the title of the article published on 6.6.2011.in which the author in a very sharp way says: “Political stay in the Balkans for all of us is equal to a suicide!” This article is strong enough showing repugnance toward the Balkans, comparing staying in the Balkans with suicide.”

In an article titled “Escape from Yugo-stereotypes”, which was published on 27.7.2011 the author states the following: “Those in Croatia who do not complain for Yugoslavia hope that the Croatian accession to the European political, legal, economic community Croatia finally escape from the Balkan centenary of communion”. It also mentions running away with the Balkan countries into the European one which is nicer.

“Karamarko: We have the most dishonest people in the world” is the title of an article that was published on 18.10.2011. Here the author points out: “The completion of negotiations and accession to the EU is an epic thing. To me as a historian it is important that we get away from the geo-strategic position that we were always threatened by, and it is South East Europe and the Balkans, as some call it.” Croatian historian expresses satisfaction that Croatia will move from the area called Southeast Europe and Balkans.

Assistant Professor at the Faculty of Philosophy in Zagreb Mate Kapović, in an article titled “Why are we opponents of joining the EU? Because it’s devastating” published on 04.12.2012 points out, “that the EU’s policy is solely for the benefit of capital. – It is argued that we cannot extricate ourselves, that we are dirty Balkans, in contrast to the splendour of the EU that will get us out.” Especially the last part of the sentence sandbox article speaks for itself: “we’re dirty Balkans, in contrast to the splendour of the EU that will get us out”.

Below we will process and analyze parts of three selected articles from the weekly *Nacional*.

“Palace’ – a reality trash the Balkan-way” is the name of the article published on 22.2.2011. Here, the title says a lot. It is about the reality show in Serbia which could be traced through several television stations. Here the author notes the following: ““You freak, stupid, smell, shit, Vicious, schizophrenic, thief, traitor, liar!”“ This is how the participants in the reality program Dvor treat themselves with the occasional spitting and hitting” Once again the author wishes to draw attention to all forms of lack of culture, arrogance, ugly conduct, profanity, derogatory expressions directed towards others in the Balkans and the “Balkan mentality”.

The following article was published on 11.5.2011 titled “Financial crisis threatens Croatian accession to the EU” in which the author points out: “A long delay in receipt of Croatian actually a great historical injustice to her and its citizens, which may become even more pernicious, if the current Croatian efforts to join the membership does not give quick results and Croatia is connected to so called Western Balkans – as things stand now – no chance to join the European Union”. Due to the emergence of the global financial crisis emerged and specific fears of Croatia’s path to the EU and the possible re-joining the Western Balkan countries, which on the other hand are very much behind the European Union.

Article titled “Woman on Top of Big Brother: The adulteress against Balkan patriarchy” was released on 28.6.2011 talking about another reality TV program from Serbia in which the author states the following: “While the Balkan men are winners in 90 percent of cases, in the north of Europe, men are the winners in nine of the 19 seasons of ‘Big Brother’, therefore, the native aspect ratio, which reflects the birth ratio of household members. In Europe, however, the percentage of male winner is 65 percent. How to explain this difference – coincidence or something else? The first possible answer is that the more traditional audience often negatively sanctioned move women into the public sphere. A series of studies have confirmed that the societies in Balkans, due to the positioning of women in society, are among the most traditional in Europe.” Here the author shows that only participation in the reality show favoured over men because in many more cases, men are the winners of these shows where awards are extremely valuable. They want to show how women have little opportunities to win first place and that the author attributes to the “Balkan reality”. Here the Balkans is one of the most traditional societies on the European continent which generally means the suppression of women in the background.

The last article in 2011 which is the subject of analysis or research is the article titled “Iron Chancellor” released on 16.8.2011 in which the author states: “Croatia will be highlighted as a good example for the whole region, as an example of “Europeanization” of a Balkan country on the path to full membership.” This article points to the “healthy” writing in the context of the Balkans and the Croatia. Here, Croatia is mentioned as a country that is on the front door of the European Union and that can be an example to other countries in the Balkans.

The process of research and analysis of selected articles for 2012 we’ll start with article published in *Večernji list*. Name of the above article is “The chance to return to Europe” which was released on 4.1.2012 in which the author, among

other things, says: “The referendum decision will determine whether the Croatian political return to Europe or the Balkan environment. The Croatian referendum decision comes down to either-or, that is, the EU or nothing, that is, the Western Balkans. Probably this is conditioned by the fear of some ‘new Yugoslavia’, or the fear of binding the Balkan political association. The EU in its thinking sees salvation from a possible new Balkan binding. Because Croatia is so important to any independently joins the EU, it is no longer relegated to a common policy package with Serbia and the rest of the Balkans”.

This is a referendum to join the European Union, and therefore the author elaborates on what it is that citizens will choose – the way in European society or the Balkans. Also states that the European Union is a lifeline for the Republic of Croatia in order not to remain tied for the Balkans.

Analysis of the research will continue with articles published in the weekly *Nacional*. “Balkan has no bright future: the bank will make us all again at war with everyone” the title of the article published on 6.3.2012 in which, among other things Radko Polič declares: “I know they say that Slovenia is in the Balkans, although the geographic north. We ourselves are sending messages about our Balkanism.” “The Balkans doesn’t have bright future.” Here the author also notes that Croatian citizens themselves are sending a message about their Balkanism.

In an article published on 31.1.2012 entitled “To Slovenes and Croats European Union is healing because it reduces the Balkan arrogance” Drago Jančar points out: “...the same, but just because I also think that all of us facing the European criteria is healing. I am not idealizing European nations, who do not have our experience, a well know and their provincialism and arrogance, and very narrow, but the wider area and its criteria for the operation of the individual, society and culture are automatically reduced for the former Yugoslavia which is so typical Balkan arrogance, which is not self-awareness, but

just the opposite – self-sufficiency, full of hidden inferiority.” Here the author conveys speech of Drago Jančar which shows that he knows all the values and those of lesser value and narrow-mindedness and provincialism of Europe, but that Yugoslavia represented a typical example of the arrogance that was actually full of hidden inferiority.

The first article of 2013, which is listed as part of the research process, which is also the subject of the analysis published in *Jutarnji list*: “Forever crossing the line, which is called the Balkans – Tomislav Karamarko on Croatian accession to the EU” the title of the article published on 10.4.2013 where the “president of the Croatian Democratic Union (HDZ) Karamarko said that Croatian accession to the European Union ever crosses the line, which is called the Balkans, alleging that the founder of this idea was the first Croatian president Franjo Tuđman.’ joining the EU, we are going back home, in a quiet harbour to which we belong. Leaving the geostrategic space that is politically qualified as the Balkans, and we have never been, nor will be the Balkans”, said Karamarko in the central election rally...”

“HDZ demanded the resignation of the government and the Prime Minister -’The Balkans is in their hearts’, the title of the article published on 20.9.2013 in which is transmitted: “Croatia has politically left the Balkans, but, unfortunately, the Balkans remained deep in the hearts of some,’ said Željko Reiner.” There is still a fear of showing all of the Balkan. It was a political game or not, HDZ doubt the feelings of the Government and the Prime Minister (SDP) that are directed towards the Balkans and to them it is in their hearts.”

“Comment of Jelena Lovrić – The government can no longer sit idly” is the name of the article published on 12.3.2013 which states: “Brussels is seen in the role of Croatia Europeanization factors of the entire territory of the former Yugoslavia. Zagreb is the rest of the region should be a kind of locomotive that will haul to Europe. But the composition is moved in the direction

of the counter. Balkan mentality in Croatian heads shows to be stronger than the European.”

Below we process the articles published in *Večernji list*. “Karamarko: Some want to replace Belgrade with Brussels” is the name of the article published on 21.3.2013, which says: “And so we come back home and get out of the zone called political Balkans’ – explained Karamarko particularly happy with the new standards that come with the Croatian accession to the European Union.”

In an article published on 26.4.2013 entitled “Hungarian public does not approve of hydropower plants on the Drava River” among other things, states the following: “The Višegrad group in recent years has developed a framework of cooperation with the south and the western Balkans. Croatia, of course, is not the Balkans.”

“Račan was convinced that without the EU, Croatia cannot rearrange” the title of the article published on 1.7.2013. in which the author points out, among other things: “...because Croatia in 2000 made a turning point in international relations and the reputation of the country, and now has reached the goal, entering the Union and no more danger from any of the Western Balkans.”

The last article included in this analysis, and through the research process refers to an article published on 17.12.2013 titled “The BH tenants Remetinec known more than in Croatia” in which the author states the following: “How could Croatia know about the political situation in BH when it’s not understood even by the BH public. And they don’t have a true star. Thus were created only stereotypes about Herzegovinans and Bosnians. In Croatia, it is known that the political situation is complicated, but why hardly anyone knows or at least trying to find out. Finally, this is the Balkans, and it is better to stay away from it”.

## **Overall analysis**

As already mentioned, the content analyses consists of 197 articles which include *Večernji list* where the representation of their articles is 40,10%, *Jutarnji list* with the article representation of 22,84%, *Slobodna Dalmacija* with article representation of 22,84% and *Nacional* with article representation of 14,21%. The representation of the articles in this research is based on their availability of the archived articles which these newspapers have made available in their data-bases. The first part of the in-depth analysis starts with the *Večernji list* where we have the following:

There were many authors who were writing about Balkan being debalkanized. They were just conveying the messages of the primitivism, which was connected to this area. Balkan area was always connected to irresponsibility and was completely lethargic. All these negative connotations which represented a Balkan man needed to be changed, and apparently, the only way to do so is by using a pro-Western form, which is much more acceptable and it seems to be much better.

But in the media we have seen how the authors are trying to approach the Balkan reality. They are blaming it for every condition in which there is bureaucracy – sloppiness, lack of professionalism, and all of this seeks to be concealed or corrected with even greater absurdities that frequent the unnecessary and meaningless formality. By numbering all these facts, we are obviously stating or emphasizing another fact which is crucial. This fact refers to the drab which is actually Balkan symbol which is accompanied by strange architectural solutions and poorly paved roads with holes and all of which reflect the state of mind in Croatian society. Interesting phenomenon is that the balkanized societies where the violation of norms is the only standard that is respected, where everything is subject to voluntarism – the worst and least tolerable are paperwork, administration and bureaucratic consciousness.

It's been considered that all this primitivism is a result of the Great Serbian Yugoslavia. At this time Serbia was the centre of everything since Belgrade was the capital of Yugoslavia. It's been considered that all this primitivism and the lack of culture have come from this place. It's absurd to be talking about the European Union integration when so many things still holds us tightly connected to the Balkan area. So we could easily say that this has been a Balkan integration, instead of European Integration process.

Croatian independence is being walked all over and obliteration of the spirit, on one hand, and enforcement in the 'Western Balkans' or, if you prefer, 'Euroslavia' is galloping ahead with great speed. The country is trying to get back to the Balkans again, which they were trying to escape in so many ways before. Here, we can find a constant fear of equating Croatia with Balkan region and it's also noticeable that they are targeting both 'Croatianism' and Catholicism, and in return they submit the "Yugoslavhood".

To continue further with the analysis of the Balkans and the Balkanism which appears in the media, *Slobodna Dalmacija* has issued an interview with Otto von Habsburg in 2000, where he distinctively said that it's obvious, while travelling to Dubrovnik and Split, that Croatia doesn't belong to the Balkans. But this statement is quite absurd considering that Dubrovnik is situated in the southeastern part of the state. It's more than obvious that Croatia belongs to the Balkan area geographically. In this context, Croatia was the first in line to be recognized and received into this Union. Croatia was the first in line to be extracted from the Balkan, which was a huge compliment in their way.

People who voted for Europe felt betrayed and haven't gained it, which in a certain way is considered a historical fraud. It was Croatia's dream to become part of the Europe to enter the European Union, but instead the country keeps pushing itself back to the Balkans somehow, and its nation dislikes this and considers it to be an actual historical fraud which is unacceptable.

Drawing attention to the fact that Balkan as a geographical term isn't big deal and that he would just stand for "removal of the bad image" of The Balkan. The climate is like that, from one of the articles stated above we can clearly see how offensive the term Balkan can be. If you want to offend someone coming from this area, from the Southeast Europe, all you have to do is call them Balkans or tell them that you're dealing with Balkan businesses. This is considered to be very offensive and certain nations are trying to escape this opinion.

Previously I have mentioned in several occasions that the term Balkan represents only geographical characteristics. There is nothing wrong with this term and it should not have any negative connotations. If we want to escape the primitivism and determination, we should not connect it to the certain area, because the area is "not to blame" for the behaviour of the people living in it. Balkan is not something we should be hiding from or be ashamed of. Through history it's more than clear that Balkan area has some great civilizational achievements. The media, in this case article in *Slobodna Dalmacija* clearly stated people should give up any form of primitivism when the Balkan is mentioned. But what must be concluded from all what we have previously said is that the Balkans is just a geographical term, and it's been unjustly related to the savages, barbarism and violence. But if it would be more comfortable for countries which want to escape it, this area can easily be called Southeaster Europe, and with this name, even Slovenia agrees. This would completely outcast the negative connotation which the name Balkan represents. Ivica Račan once said that Croatia is both Central European country as well as Balkan country and there is nothing to be ashamed of there since this only represents the geographical term.

There has been notions that many countries belonging to the Balkan peninsula are trying to escape the Balkan and the mutual integration that it represent, and because of this we can come to the conclusion that the term 'balkanization' is indirectly

justifying the determination of Croatia which doesn't want to be part of the Balkan association, under the pretext of the meaning of 'Balkanization'. Balkan neighbours do not want to have a common identity on a multilateral basis no matter how common interests they showed bilaterally. In this way we are trying to ease down, and to some extent justified Croatian "revulsion" against The Balkan, noting that other states that fall under the geographical area of The Balkan increasingly emphasize that they are not part of it. But some countries reside in Balkan willingly. These countries want to move away from all the values that the West represents and they don't want to be a part of it. This area will always be called Balkan, but what matters are relations between peoples and states in this region because they are the ones who create an image of us as we are (Balkanites). Unfortunately, Croatia as a state has many other battles to gain, since not everyone is clear with its geographical position. Balkan area was under the reign of Ottoman Empire for centuries, and this reign included Croatia as well. According to a famous historian Arnold Suppan, Balkan Peninsula includes all the countries from Sava river to Danube river, which also includes Croatia, saying that in certain way, at least geographically this country belongs to the Balkan Peninsula.

Croatia has worked its way through the path of thorns to get where they are now. They have used all their forces and efforts to create an independent and sovereign country. Through this path, they managed to cut themselves off of the Balkan Peninsula, which is commendable and this is why their pride and their will won't let anyone destroy this. There are still other countries who want to put Croatia back to the Balkan area, who want to connect them to former Yugoslavia again, but Croatia is struggling hard not to let that happen, because this would annul all their all their efforts and fights to belong to the Central European countries. The articles which I mentioned above are focusing on one thing more than anything else. According to the

authors of the articles, Balkan and Balkanism is a representation of everything that is residual and primitive. Balkan is not just a geographical area, it's also a way of thinking. If a certain nation or a country, Croatia in this case, is trying to evolve and elevate from what it used to be, than it's more than natural for this nation to try and escape everything that is holding it back. Croatia has always considered that Balkan way of thinking is quite primitive, and it comes down to cheating and deceiving others. This is something that Croatia doesn't want'. This is something that Croatia wants to leave behind in order to make any progress towards moving to the membership to European Union. The hatred, if we can call it like this, has been pointed to the Balkan area and it's all due to the fact that the Balkans is seen as a pattern of primitive behaviour.

As it's already been mentioned, Croatia has always been trying to run away from everything that Balkan presented. European Union was constantly trying to put these countries into the same box, since all the countries belonged to the ex-Yugoslavia, but the fact is that Croatia was always one step ahead and indeed always wanted to move away from the Balkans and become European country. But Croatian population never felt like they belonged to the Balkans because in their own opinion Balkan represented the savages, uneducated people. This might be a prejudice coming from a people who used to be a part of Balkan area, but Croatia felt like they never belonged here. They didn't want to give in to the pressure that European Union was creating, and they wanted to run away from it badly.

Article published on 23.07.1999 under the title "The new government is the new covenant" refers to the formation of a new alliance. From the first reading of this title is not possible to determine which type of pact is it at stake, but the first sentence within the article offer clarification in which is stated, among other things, "the fact is that the Pact access Croatia, which is in contrast to its earlier external political commitment and even with

the constitutional definition with which literally forbids entry to any British associations.” The author draws attention to the fact that although Croatia is forbidden to return to the Balkans and to enter into any British Association or a member thereof that the new government still plans to enter into this kind of pact. From the articles can be seen that, although not explicitly stated, the internationally community exert pressure on the political leadership of the Croatian approaches Balkan associations in order to turn the international community and the European Union and the United States rounded out the proctor the term one geographic and/or political entities.

Article published on 24.07.1999 entitled “Who is signing there”, among other things mentions there are various interpretations of the Stability Pact, and one of the most striking is that it is a return to the Balkans, and thus lead to lose part of Croatian sovereignty. In a previous article, we could not know about from where Pact comes, but here we see that this is a Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe, where countries are grouped geographically, if not by anything else, belonging to the Balkan Peninsula. Here we also see that the very return to the Balkans present fatal by the Republic of Croatia in terms of losing its sovereignty, exactly as it was at the beginning of this analysis, President Tudman warning (“We fought for independence, and now they want to return us to the Balkans”). The author’s views show the deleterious effects of returning to the Balkans, especially in the segment of losing national sovereignty just as it was in the time of Yugoslavia. It is obvious that the return to the Balkans is treated here as the creation of a new Yugoslavia, from which Croatia left in a bloody way.

In article published on 29.05.1999 entitled “No, we cannot impose our will” the author is more direct than in the creation of the title of the newspaper article specifically choosing words such as “No, we cannot” wanting to point out that this article draws the reader’s attention on principle to sending at the same time the message that nobody can and must not manage and push

us over there (in the Balkans) where we do not belong. This title also wishes to draw attention to the self-confidence and pride of Croats who courageously don't want to be put in the place they don't belong in. The author also quoted a former Croatian President Franjo Tudman, who principally warns citizens to the Croatian political scene that exist those international political forces that Croatia recognized and which are recognized at the time of its independence, but that Croatia is seen in a different light.

From here we can see that the former president warns of Croatian public to the fact that some countries in the world, which are friendly narrative, if by nothing then by the recognition of Croatia as a state, and yet these same countries today see something different in Croatia. As we can see from an article, this recognition is seen as a form of threat, taking into consideration these countries that have recognized Croatia still want to leave it in its geographical area, and that is fused to leave the Balkans, which is unacceptable to the fact that this country led by their ruler always trying to break away from the concept of the Balkans and all that it represented. That's why the president emphasizes how they fought and how they will continue to fight to distance themselves from the Balkans because they don't belong there. President Tudman continues to talk that *we* are recognized as winners, because *we* managed to win and bring the "other" which would go to the Balkans. Those who are recognized as independent states have done so only because they are able to defend Croatia from Serbian aggression and what is not allowed to change the borders of the country, and its interior design. The president concludes that it costed us a lot of political and diplomatic efforts to ban these projects of integrating Croatia in the Balkans.

Here, the president says that certain international political currents situated Croatia on the Balkan although Croatia has suffered enormous negative consequences during the "housing" in the Balkans during Yugoslavia. And at the end the presiding says that "he will not agree to such projects because we do

not want to go to the Balkans”, concluded the President directly and sends a message to international political factors, as well as citizens of the Croatia determination that Croatia cannot be placed to the Balkans.

But, we are able to see in some of the articles that there are mildly positive opinions of the Balkan area as well. Some of these opinions were aiming to put Croatian population at ease but explaining to them that Balkan is just a geographical area and has nothing to do with what Croatia and its population represents. Umberto Ranieri said that everyone sees Croatia in the central Europe, but seeing it as the part of Balkan Peninsula is also nothing to be worried about or to be ashamed of. If you put a country geographically in one place, it doesn't have to have a negative connotation. But truth be told, Balkan area has always been associated with wars, barbarism and savages, which justifies the attempts of Croatia to move away from it.

Many world officials said that there is no return to the Yugoslavia. All of this is because you cannot force different nations and people to be living together if they don't want to do so. You cannot force people to live in the same state, but for the sake of lasting stability of Southeast Europe the Balkan should be 'deBalkanized'. Wouldn't it be appropriate to respond to the least important question of who balkanized Balkan? It is generally believed that the "Balkanization of Balkan" as a term of ethnic cleansing was created with its Ottoman conquest.

But throughout the past it's been more than clear that Balkan statesman activities have been largely intensified, which was even more evident after a Bulgarian president and Romanian president paid a visit to Croatia. Also, president Mesić visited Albania. After all these visits it is more than visible how they are working on the integration of Croatia with Balkan. Here we see there is an evident fear of Balkan where he is trying to show whether intentionally or not, that Croatia is pulling back to it. But this was quite a large paradox when it comes to Croatia be-

cause Croatia dreamed so much about Europe, and it's pushed to the Balkan because, as Clinton says, the Balkan should be debalkanized. Is the price of that Croatia's sacrifice that once was Serbized, and today fully Balkanized on behalf of debalkanization, so that tomorrow we can have peaceful Balkan sea all the way to the Alps. But at this time, Croatians didn't want to believe that America has a geostrategic plan. This plan included Croatian integration with the Balkan. Balkania wasn't political SF (science fiction), but the reality in which we glide slowly.

From this part of an article which has been published in *Slobodna Dalmacija* we can clearly see that there are strong indications which show that Croatia is in danger because someone wants to push it back into the Balkan area. But things will have to change in the Balkans sooner or later, especially when it comes to curbing the hatred that is largely present among the nations, and that is obviously largely credited to The Balkan is treated so as to retire. Further on, articles in *Slobodna Dalmacija* states how Croatia was doomed to be in the Balkans, in this the space to which Europe and the United States treated as a civilized and economically inferior, as the area over which they should exert constant control and protectorate. In this context, they are trying to belittle Croatia's autonomy and the very notion of sovereignty in the new global relationships is viewed as an anachronism, although sovereignty becomes super exclusive right that you are still sticking to the great powers, especially the United States as a supranational globalizer. It is more than obvious how Croatia fought over many years to gain and preserve its independence and sovereignty, and it's only natural that they will try and preserve it as much as they can.

This explains that Croatia is still doomed to be in Balkan, but the worst of all is that the EU and the US view Balkan as uncivilized and immature economic space. How could they not after seeing what kind of past these areas have, starting from Ottoman Empire up until today? In regard to the protests and

disagreement with the term Western Balkan, it's important to mention that to some extent Croatia found itself in this term. But even so, it's been trying to escape the Balkanism, and some politicians are persistent in proving that Croatia belongs exactly in the Balkans and that this area doesn't represent any negative connotations. But, what is important to mention is that some Croatian politicians do not want to deny that Croatia is in the Western Balkans and that it was not anything bad – they are of course referring to a geographical term of Balkans. However, as we have also seen, newspaper articles, in this case precisely, the articles in the *Slobodna Dalmacija* are using a dose of *sarcasm* when they are trying to say that Croatia is trying to return to the Balkans. This is due to the fact that certain politicians have certain interest groups and they speak and work according to their belonging to the said groups. Nevertheless we are trying to show how exactly the Republic of Croatia returns “back there” because someone wants that (obviously political leadership), while on the other hand, they are urging back to apparently civilize and substantially better solution as it is Central Europe.

What I am trying to say here is that the residents of this Balkan area are showing their “primitivism” in so many levels. It's been more obvious how it's shown through envy or jealousy because if your neighbour is in trouble we gloat and celebrate, which shows these nations as very shallow, inhuman and uncivilized, we can say. On the other hand, people in The Balkan do not dare to compare with the better of them, and therefore the author in the article mentions Scandinavia, Britain and Germany as models in scientific terms, a culture of life and civilization in general. But, let's turn to a more critical view of the Balkans and Croatian “attempt” to get back to it, because it's been obvious that in some parts they want to do so. In this case, we can start blaming everyone, starting from the politicians. They were the ones who have guided and let Croatia to this place they don't want, the place they don't belong to. In the articles above from

*Slobodna Dalmacija*, a former president of Yugoslavia, Tito, has been mentioned, saying that, if Tito is our destiny, that is, best solution for Croatia, the Croats and the state in general didn't deserve anything better. It seems that the author mentioning Josip Broz Tito complains to Croatian SDP (Social-Democratic Party) that through anti-fascism heritages partly shares Tito's ideals. But being Yugoslav in the Croatia today seems to be the most profitable profession, even now. It's obvious that this nation has once again been dragged down into the Balkan area. But the real threat is the reconstruction of another Yugoslavia, a new one. This push to the Balkan area is not wanted in Croatia. There is an obvious fear of any kind of reconstruction of the Balkan alliance in which Croatia could squeeze in, so among everything else, they mention Balkania, Croatia doesn't want to be predominantly related to anything of the Balkan. In contrary, Croatia still does want to have a part and a role in the stability of the Balkan and it's not running away from this responsibility, because it's more than obvious that this area has been in a long-run crisis, but if Croatia drags itself back to this area, it would mean an instant stop in the development of this country and instant stop of their integrations to the European Union, which does not go in favour to them. But let's turn back to the statement of Mr. Tomac which was published in *Slobodna Dalmacija*, where he says that he does not want to see Croatia, which is mainly related to The Balkan, because among other things the Balkan itself is the crisis area in which Croatia doesn't see its place, and doesn't want it as well.

In this part of Europe where the differences are obvious and where hatred is not slowing down as up yesterday and decades ago "hatred treatment" is when "our" politicians are taking for example the rhetoric of "beating" by "them". So here we can refer to another form of Balkan behaviour where you see people being employed just because they have certain friends and acquaintances or relatives which clearly show a primitive tribal behaviour pattern. For us, however, the tribes rule because we

are Balkans. It is better to say that it is our mentality. Is Croatia in The Balkan? There are multiple interpretations to where Balkans starts. But as I have already mentioned there are too many theories on what Balkan actually represent and what it stands for. Some people, on one hand claim that the Balkan goes even up to Vienna, but others say how both Croatia and Slovenia belong to the Balkan. It is very doubtful what is Balkans, if one says that it starts from Vienna and another says that Slovenia and Croatia are not even in the territory of The Balkan. Nobody wants to be Balkan because the name is not hated geographically but politically. As previously explained, the term Balkan bears many negative connotations in its name. When it comes to historical and civilizational achievements of Croatia, we have to say that it's come a long way, and it's always been a part of Europe, and this fact cannot be taken away from it by anyone. But the fact is that people cannot be blamed just because they live in a certain area. If you live in the Balkan, you cannot be judged just by where you come from or where you live, because it's quite trivial. Europe needs to argue the conditions for the development of its south-eastern part and participate in all the positive processes, not derisively to wait until you are unable to get out of the legacy of the war-torn economy and civil society. European Union should definitely pay more attention to the Balkan, because it seems to be their responsibility.

The question remains: Does Europe even know what to do with *us*? Is Balkan really its responsibility? Croatia has been putting up with a constant pressure when it comes both to European Union and the Balkan. Therefore, there was a firm belief that Croatia will be politically attached to the Western Balkans which will not bring any benefits to Croatia since Balkan has become a centre of the gray economy and as politicians tried to speak as we are not part of the Vilayet, and more than you might assume. Ignore the government, disregard the manufacturer, customer, supplier, defraud, resale, steal. In this

article which has been published in *Slobodna Dalmacija*, the author was obviously emotional, using vulgarisms to express disappointment with the Croatian society. Blame it on the Balkan, which is the centre of the gray economy, but considers Croatia and the society to be Balkan, because as he says as much as politicians are trying to defend themselves, that is, to represent Croatia as a non-Balkan country, he thinks this is what it really is. But how many times are we going to hear the bad labeling of the Balkan nations. We have heard words like beating, smashing, bribery, chauvinism, irresponsibility, improvisation and backdoor arrangements way too many times and all of them are there to describe the balkanism. All these phenomena could be observed at the site of playing the championship as well as in countries whose national team made their way, they have evaded this time precisely the Balkan and the Balkanites, which does not mean that the people who live in it are immune to all this. *Slobodna Dalmacija* issued an article related to sport section as well, and this article also had a negative connotation saying that the derby way ended in a true Balkan style. From this we can clearly conclude that the derby has *violent outcomes*, which is true because the match ended with mutual insults, with even blood involved. The term Balkanism did not fail to come out only to describe this barbarism which happened in the match even though this news had nothing to do with Croatia.

According to many authors, as we have seen, Balkan is something like a *disease* which should be avoided. It's an *infection* which Croatia is trying to escape. They are trying to avoid this infection, and this theory that Croats tend to be Croats and not Balkanians is quite commendable. So, in a way, these articles say that no one desires Balkan, no one wants it. The Balkan is a disease which should be avoided at any costs, and this is why Croatia is trying to escape it so much. In some way, Balkan is compared to other chaotic countries like Afghanistan, for example. There is chaos in this country, traffic, crowds and nothing interesting to

see. And this is precisely the way some Englishmen are looking at the Balkan area.

The next newspaper which has been analyzed is a weekly *Nacional*.

The following section of examination of Balkanism will start with analyzing articles from *Nacional*, where we bring the following conclusions involving Croatia's way to escape the Balkans. But how much is Croatia different than any other Balkan country? Yes, Croatia is by far most developed country in this area and has evolved during the years, but can really escape the Balkan behavior? *Nacional* issued an article saying that it's been revealed that some Croatian companies were importing sugar from EU countries, at affordable prices, then exported it as their own product on the EU market and gained extra income on the price differences. Therefore, the export of sugar from Croatia to EU was immediately banned. This scandal caused a great damage to Croatian economic and political interests: it has been shown that individuals in Zagreb have not moved from the tiny Balkan politics fraud and smuggling. This quite looks like the Balkanism and Balkan behavior. This is what is called "the bottom of the Balkan pot" which is not a name to be proud of at all. In 1999 and 2000 there was even a threat of Croatia going back to the Balkan and the Balkan mud. HDZ was about to gain power again which would only result in deepening the crisis Croatia was facing with. But let's go back to some positive things surrounding Croatia because at this time Croatia made a huge step forward. It has moved forward from this mud and all the prejudice which have been following the Balkan. It has evolved and escaped the former Yugoslav countries. If the Croatian government, the electoral game, intended to obstruct relation to the Tribunal in The Hague, the answer would be unappealing – isolation, loss of pace to join the European integration, return to the Balkan mud.

The government must decide whether to usher the country into the EU, or leave it in the xenophobic Balkans or is it

going to have Schengen border just 20 km outside from Zagreb... Croats have the opportunity to choose between two very clear options: be part of the EU, and from the formal membership to the actual establishment of European standards in the economy, politics and everything else, or be Balkans in the negative sense of the word, and its xenophobic outcast which is potentially eternal source of conflict. But there is a political punishment haunting Croatia and they are unable to escape it which creates a great inconvenience for Croatia because this basically means that Croatia has to go back to the Balkan mud. This would have disastrous long-term political, psychological, and economic consequences of civilization. It is therefore important for Croatia's political and economic interests as soon as possible to join the EU and NATO pact. Classification of the Croatia to the Balkan – even in the 'western' – is perceived as maliciousness, humiliation and insult. A fast integration of the Balkan countries into the European Union is needed badly and has to be done as soon as possible. This is one of the most important goals which Balkan countries have to dedicate themselves to if they want to move any forward. This is their only hope to go through the economical boom and to evolve. The integration of these countries is of crucial importance for this area. The existing boundaries have to be removed and new ones have to be introduced. The topic of Balkan has priority on the European schedule and considering that European and Euro-Atlantic integration of The Balkan is enormous task, we need a new agreement between European Union and Balkan. Once again, we return to Otto von Habsburg who appears in one of the articles issued by *Nacional*, where he says that Croatia does not belong to the Western Balkan.

“There has been another trick which was aiming at returning Croatia to the Balkans. England wanted to receive Croatia in the temporary camp, but they wanted to decide to whom they wanted to provide the asylum. The England wanted Croatia to sign the Stabilization Agreement. But the fact is that it's much

better for Croatia NOT to sign this agreement because it won't do any good to the country but it can only cause more harm."

This agreement would put Croatia back right with other Balkan countries, with Serbia from which they were trying to escape so badly. With Serbia, which is still the typical Balkan, the region, which is called the Western Balkans, the EU and the U.S. favored a broader term Southeastern Europe, now becomes the space where once again the U.S. and stated which are held central in the EU are crossing their different visions of the future of Europe. The EU "Shaft" is seen as a federation with unique security and foreign policy in which dominate several "central" countries. It's obvious from this article that United States calls this place Southeast Europe, while the UK still calls it the Balkans, which is a big inconvenience. Articles in the *Nacional* also criticize the Croatian society. Croatian society badly wants to be out of the Balkan area but still they act like true Balkanians. They spit in the streets, they smoke like Turks. So with this behavior we have no right to be angry once people call us Balkanese because this is how we behave. A common European experience of The Balkan, for ordinary conscience 'Balkan' is an insulting word, an insult. For Austrians, Slovenia is Balkan, for Slovenes it's Croatia, for Croatians Serbia, for Serbians Albania, for Albania...who knows. This is how Balkan is perceived by others and this is how it's going to stay unless we manage to change things for the better.

"Croatia has a great opportunity to exit the Balkan mud." It means that it has to respond to the 350 EU issues and harmonize with the fifty EU standards and this would get it out of the Balkan mud for sure. This has represented a historical opportunity for Croatia because this country was facing a catastrophe: the isolation and rejected by Europe, for another ten years floundering in the mud of The Balkan. Here it's much visible that if Republic of Croatia within a few months does not harmonize laws with the European Union it will be found in the

“Balkan mud” which represent a major threat. This is would be a great breakthrough for this country. The separation of the Croatia from the Balkan convoy with the commencement of the negotiations on EU membership does not fit in the American approach to regional integration of the Balkan countries into NATO. American ambassador Ralph Frank stated this by saying that 2008 was actually the year where we will discuss further enlargement, but that does not mean that same year Croatia will be able to receive an invitation for membership. It is likely that they will wait for a joint entry of the Balkan countries into the EU. On October 2<sup>nd</sup> a Parliamentary Assembly was held by the Council of Europe. This assembly had the most powerful lobbying when it comes to extracting the name of Croatia from the Western Balkans. This was an important move because it signified Croatia’s separation from the Balkans at last. In this way Croatia would be separated from the Balkan in front of the EU countries.

The EU has long been identified as The Balkan sore point for their own internal security. Organized crime, trafficking of arms, narcotics, illegal immigrants and human trafficking were present throughout the region. On the other hand, as long as the potential danger was great, the EU must allow the liberal movement of people and goods in the area of south-east Europe, and, given all the other countries in The Balkan perspective and hope for the future. Different criminal groups come from The Balkan to the EU. Balkan route crime and terrorism lead from the east. Balkan area was always perceived as the centre of the criminal activities, it’s been associated with human trafficking, drug abusing and in general had no perspective for the future. Extracting Croatia from this environment meant faster integration with the European Union. It’s well known that Balkan always dealt with nationalism problems, which resulted in many wars in the end which was a proof that these countries can’t have a good co- existence in this area. The area was tainted with blood so many times. All of this was mentioned in the sense

of the Balkan nationalistic overtones. The article which was talking about this topic was trying to picture the nationalism like a natural thing in this area. It was everything different from the democratic values which have been loudly proclaimed here.

Once more, it's very important to emphasise that Balkan has more importance by what it represents. Its importance doesn't lie in its geographical position or term. Balkan has been a synonym for conflicts and intolerance for a long time, and this where its importance emerges from. The only question is how much of than 'Balkanism' has the very being of Croatian society, and that the former government was the one in which the same balkanism was suppressed and imprisoned in a kind of Pandora's box for 40 years. The European countries have always put Balkans at the bottom of the pot. To them, "we" were the dirty Balkans. In contrast to this, Europe is everything that we should strive for, because Europe is the only thing that can get us out of this mess. The article implicates that the Balkan need help and that it's helpless without the help of European Union who will rush in and save it. On another note, we can use entertainment programme to depict the barbarism and savages who reside in the Balkan area. As an example we have extracted an article from a reality show called "Dvor". The contestants in this show were VIP persons who have showed a fabulous example of what Europe thinks that Balkan represents. The show included many curse words, hitting, accusation, fights. Once again the author wishes to draw attention to all forms of lack of culture, arrogance, ugly conduct, profanity, derogatory expressions directed towards others in the Balkans and the "Balkan mentality".

Quote from the article: "A long delay in receipt of Croatian actually is a great historical injustice to her and its citizens, which may become even more pernicious, if the current Croatian efforts to join the membership does not give quick results and Croatia is connected to so called Western Balkans – as things stand now – no chance to join the European Union". Due

to the emergence of the global financial crisis emerged and specific fears of Croatia's path to the EU and the possible re-joining the Western Balkan countries, which on the other hand are very much behind the European Union. Once Croatia accessed the European Union, after it became its member, she will become a great example of the whole region. Croatia becomes a great example of Europeanization. The accession of Croatia to European Union was an extraordinary achievement. An article written in *Nacional* points to the "healthy" writing in the context of the Balkans and the Croatia. Here, Croatia is mentioned as a country that is on the front door of the European Union and that can be an example to other countries in the Balkans. "I know they say that Slovenia is in the Balkans, although the geographic north. We ourselves are sending messages about our Balkanism. The Balkans doesn't have bright future." The article about this wanted to point out that Croatia itself was pointing out belongings to the Balkan area and they alone were sending a message about their Balkanism. Yugoslavia, in its time was a pure example of arrogance. But instead, it was obvious that Yugoslavia was full of inferiority which was hidden. Croatian accession to European Union was one of the best things that could have happened to this country, author stated.

I will continue with the more deep analysis of Večernji list.

The Balkan had its own ways of doing things. But those ways were not always what Europe expected them to be. A lot of corruption and bribery was present in the Balkans. If a man is shot, for example, and his family comes from the officials, the law it governs would immediately be changed because if we take into consideration all the law which the state protects and preserves all the negative is not a way to Europe, not even in The Balkan, but went back to the period of primitive barbarism. For the shooting of firearms for the celebration of Christmas or New Year's is extremely rude and barbarous act. In our country in this regard it is anarchy. What is even more important to men-

tion and has a very negative connotation and shows a very bad example of Balkanism is the fact that Balkan has, unfortunately become the center of white slave traders and kidnapping and trafficking women and children. All of this was used for their own sexual exploitation. This is everything Croatia wanted to move away from, because Balkan wasn't only a transit area. Balkan was the final destination for all these people who was deceived in such a cruel way.

We are at such a level of civilization seemingly we cannot be independent and to respond to European standards. That is our true measure of The Balkan. Even Croatia and its capital city, Zagreb, have a bitter taste of Balkanism. Zagreb streets were full of trash which has been piling up. The buildings were destroyed, all the vegetation has been neglected and dying a sad death. All this happened in the centre of the city and it was unacceptable to see something like this in the capital in Croatia. Croatia was preparing for the Europe and sights like this were not acceptable and something had to be done about this situation. "Croatia is not the Balkan to allow something like this." Especially that last sentence is sufficient to conclude that it sends a message that Croatia is ready for Europe (referring to the time of entry into the European Union), and in fact not even in The Balkan, and the reason for this is social neglect of the environment. Another thing that Croatia has to get rid of to move away from the Balkan was to take down all the symbols of the war. Symbols of the war were a clear sign of Balkanism being present in the country. For the umpteenth time, we have to emphasise the danger of the return of Croatia in the Balkan. The key objective or requirement that must be met by the author is to destroy all symbols of Homeland war so that Croatia could be easily returned to the Western Balkans.

"It's hardly possible to believe that the world's cleverest diplomacy and diplomacy of the state which is, a decade after independence in spite of European history and culture, still pushed

into The Balkan (what hurts most is that Slovenian border for it will be European). This is something that in no way can affect the country which is dividing them.” The article which has been published in *Večernji list* clearly wants to state that the only border separating Croatia from the Balkan will precisely be Slovenia, their neighbouring country. As I have already mentioned above, in the previous newspaper, Balkan organized crime has become a major jump point for Europe, with a multimillion-dollar business in the smuggling of people and drugs.

Here Balkan is mentioned in the context of brood organized crime that threatens the rest of Europe. It is obvious that it gives a negative impression on the Balkan Peninsula. This is a great inconvenience for the country which is trying hard to access the European Union, but on the bright side, the meeting in Vienna once again gave hope that Croatia won't have to wait a European IC to its provincial stations. And it will not have to share a squeezed and un-ventilated waiting room with Macedonia and Albania, and with Bosnia and Serbia. In Vienna, Croatia, especially 'grew feathers' after the EU Commissioner for Enlargement unexpectedly stroked it, adding that Croatia should be treated as "an exception in relation to other countries in the region." It's been clear through many of the articles that authors who wrote them all have one stand point which they share and that is that Croatia cannot be ranked in the Balkan, but all of this raises another question which needs to be answered. This question refers to the fact that Croatia has been mentioned in the report which has been entitled "Balkan" and has been ranked there with other Balkan countries, just like it belongs to it.

Croatia as a state and its citizens can't be anything but proud of what they've accomplished, but the fact that it has had a few of the sudden decisions which do not go in favour of its citizens is something that leaves a stain. The decision to raise local rates up to five times has been a real shock to everyone in the country. It hurts us when we are told that we are the Western

Balkans, but it seems to me that it is precisely this kind of behaviour by individuals in government to support it. In these few lines we can find self-criticism against all Croatians disappointed due to price increases utility fees no less than 500%, and concludes that it is not surprising that Croatia and society generally considers The Balkan and the Balkanese as something dreadful. But to put aside all this, let's try and discuss more about the European dream of the Balkan. Let's try and analyse a few of the positive sides which refer to the Balkan. During the visit of the Greek Minister due to the Mammoth program, he visited all the countries of the Western Balkan and in this tour he visited all the capital cities, including Belgrade, Zagreb, Skopje, Sarajevo and even the UN protectorate, Kosovo. All the officials and leader of these countries have stated that the fast integration into European Union are one of the main goals of the Western Balkan and that they are all striving to it. In this context, it is a crucial hope in the economic boom. As equally important goal is often mentioned and – admittedly rather vague – idea – guiding by which the 21st in Europe century boundaries of the founding period of European nation states become redundant and will be ethnic tensions that hinder Balkan resolve by them. As we have already mentioned, it's a strategic priority of the Europe to start rapid integration of Balkan countries to the European Union. These integrations will represent the main factor of stabilization for the entire continent involved. It's of crucial importance that the topic of Balkan has priority on the European schedule and considering that European and Euro-Atlantic integration of The Balkan is enormous task, we need a new PSC agreement between European Union and Balkan', said the president of the Romanian government Adrian Nastase, summarizing the roundtable. But let's mention Otto von Habsburg again. He has criticized all of those who have put into and called Croatia Western Balkan, and it's clear from the beginning that Croatia doesn't belong to the Balkan, because, according to him, Balkan seems to be

an artificial structure, all due to the fact that the borders of the western and eastern Balkan remain unknown.

The region, which is called the Western Balkans, the EU and the U.S. favoured a broader term Southeastern Europe, now becomes the space where once again the U.S. and stated which are held central in the EU are crossing their different visions of the future of Europe. The EU “Shaft” is seen as a federation with unique security and foreign policy in which dominate several “central” countries. It’s unmentionable to Croats to call them Balkanese and they do not prefer to belong to the Balkan area which is more than understandable since Croatia has progressed both historically and civilizationally during the last two or three decades. This is why we have to have understanding when Croats get annoyed or angry when they put them together with all the other Balkan nations and countries. I have previously separated articles which claim that Balkan as a geographical term has no much meaning as the synonymous for violence and hatred, but now I would like to point out that Balkan as a word hasn’t got much importance, especially in the commercial sense. When in France they speak about the war in the former Yugoslavia, they talk about the war in The Balkan. The Balkan Peninsula is largely European Turkey. The Balkan is a former European Turkey. But if take a look at this statement closely, we can’t but notice that half of the Croatia was never under the reign of Turkey, therefore all the notions and discussions about the real borders of the Balkans fall into water because Balkan is neither a state nor a nation. Balkan is merely a geographical term, and once you associate it with specific historical content, even cultural content, not many people want to be connected to it or be in it. Back in 2008 and 2009 many countries wanted to join European Union. Back then, Croatia was not a member of the European but they were making it clear on every occasion that Croatia doesn’t want to go back to the Balkan, to the isolation they are putting it in. Even though Croatia cannot escape the Balkan area, in terms of its geographical position, is definitely leaving the “Balkan Express”

rapidly, and this represents a great political breakthrough for this country. After “eighty years of Balkan”, Croatia has the opportunity to once again become “European”. There is hope, but also the expectation that it will stop the entry of most of our Balkanoid nonsense, that will replace the crushing clarity, that the chance will be given to the ability, and not connection, that the legality will suppress ‘nativity’, that the mess will be replaced by order. For decades living in the Balkan way they spent what little remains of civilization carried away from the former Mitteleuropa. Croatia has managed to get away from the primitivism and barbarism which Balkan represented. But even after all this there were aspirations of creating the Trade Union, or more precisely, Balkan Trade Union. The formation of this Balkan trade union was unacceptable for Ivo Sanader because, for Croatia it’s out of the question to make the Balkan trade unions and therefore the Croatian government has proposed to create a free trade zone within the framework of CEFTA. Croatia also had to fulfil other requests prior to their accession to the European Union. One of the last obstacles that we in the way of Croatian membership into the European Union was imprisoning general Ante Gotovina, who was who-knows-where at that time. This obstacle was successfully removed, and in 2013 Croatia became the EU member.

People are allergic to any mention of The Balkan, or yugo-connections. Not only in political sense there is a connection to Balkanism, but in other spheres of society. There was an article published in *Večernji list* addressing a man who was trying to enter the bus with his dog. He was denied the access under an excuse that animals cannot ride the public transportation, only people. They were bothered by a little dog, but not by all the drunken passengers who have access to the public transportation, so in a way, there is an outlook to Balkanism and what it represented in this case as well. Today Croatia is the only new state in The Balkan with which the international community no longer has any problems. Croatia is the only stable point, and therefore is called the leader of the region.

But not to give everything a negative connotation, let us talk about an article which has a positive view of the Balkan. We must mention that these kinds of articles are a rarity, but still can be found in the respective media. “Croatia, the host of the conference and its Balkan neighbours are on the increasingly important transit route of oil and gas”, Reuters noted in its report. As the battle for control over the European energy markets and supply routes moved to The Balkan, Russian President in Zagreb promised to develop the Black Sea region as a centre of distribution of energy, says Reuters. The conference was held at a time when importance of The Balkan as a transit centre for energy is growing. What is also important to mention, and it’s been clear all the way is the fact that Balkan is not exactly a very peaceful area. NATO protection is needed for the Croatia, and yet one more time we are mentioning the Balkan as an unsafe region. “The solution for this unsafe region is for Croatia to be under the protection of NATO forces. Slovenian diplomacy among its successes of presidency notes that the Western Balkan countries are now one step closer to the EU, and bearing in mind that in the past six months, Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina, as the last country in the region, positive use of The Balkan and the countries that are considered to belong to the Balkan Peninsula.

Let us remember the statement that the U.S. Senate gave to *Večernji list*. They have stated that Bosnia and Kosovo remain the greatest threat to the stability in Europe. “The Balkan in 2009 will again be the biggest threat to the stability of Europe, despite the positive developments in 2008 including peaceful declaration of independence of Kosovo.” This puts an emphasis on the uncertainty of The Balkan and the former source of uncertainty was all developments regarding Kosovo. “This membership (referring to NATO membership) is fateful because we were “removed” from The Balkan and European maps of some powerful factors to which we are drawn into a potential regional alliance.” This highlights the importance of Croatian accession to NATO alliance, and even

gives him the edge over its membership in the European Union as a result of all the options, and in the form of protection that this pact provides. But still, Croatia is the Balkan for the European Union.

Tudman was for the West, Central Europe and the Mediterranean. This clearly shows the perception of the EU on one hand and “Tudman” on the other hand, which are opposite to each other. “The phrases that we are not Balkans, that we are better than others and deserve no longer to serve anything anymore. Even the people don’t believe in them anymore or the Union which is sometimes presented as a bogey, and sometimes as a solution to all problems.” As if author expressed weariness of repetition (although not linked to the same author comments on several articles). Author somehow operates self-critically, but this self-criticism applies generally to all of “us” – the Croats and Croatia. But what Croatia needs is a lift up, some kind of a push to get away from the Western Balkan to western balcony. It needed to access the European Union as soon as possible.

The Balkans has been and remains Europe’s black hole, from which first drew Slovenia, and Croatia has the opportunity to do so this year, joining the EU, at least this is what an article dating in 2012 said. These two countries were, by far, the ones who made biggest progress in every possible way; therefore it was obvious these countries will be going to the European Union soon. But, as William Hague pointed out, not only Croatia and Slovenia have this opportunity. They want to see the entire Western Balkan in the European Union as well. But other cities in the Balkans also had some breakthroughs, like Belgrade when they arrested Mladić. This was a big step for them. This is a historic moment for Belgrade: now if they didn’t arrest Mladić, they would not be moving to the Union, Croatia would be permanently separated, and the region as a political term would not exist. This must be prevented. How? Just arrest Mladić. Now that Serbia will express the Union, now melting Croatian dreams to the Balkans and the region left behind. It’s likely to be though that most Croats joyful-

ly welcomed unification with Europe because it is a nation that is based on Europe. “Cardinals Kuharić and Bozanić told me: we are not Balkans, we are Europe. Croatian nation is European and experiencing European history, and therefore it is logical, just and necessary to join the EU”, author previously stated. Croatian cardinals also sent a message saying that Croatia is not the Balkans and that Croats are not Balkans, but the people of Europe who lived through European history and for all that is logical and fair that Croatia joins European Union.

“It was more than clear to everyone living in the Balkan that their staying here is equal to the suicide, which means that not only Croatia wanted out, but other countries as well. Those in Croatia who do not complain for Yugoslavia hope that the Croatian accession to the European political, legal, economic community Croatia finally escape from the Balkan centenary of communion”. It also mentions running away with the Balkan countries into the European one which is nicer. The completion of negotiations and accession to the EU is an epic thing. “To me as a historian it is important that we get away from the geo-strategic position that we were always threatened by, and it is South East Europe and the Balkans, as some call it.” Croatian historian expresses satisfaction that Croatia will move from the area called Southeast Europe and Balkans. The decision to be made was up to the referendum. They were the ones who were supposed to determine if Croatia is going to be going to Europe or be back in Balkan. The Croatian referendum decision comes down to either-or, that is, the EU or nothing, that is, the Western Balkans. Probably this is conditioned by the fear of some ‘new Yugoslavia’, or the fear of binding the Balkan political association. The EU in its thinking sees salvation from a possible new Balkan binding. Because Croatia is so important to any independently joins the EU, it is no longer relegated to a common policy package with Serbia and the rest of the Balkans”. This is a referendum to join the European Union, and therefore the author elaborates on what it is that citizens will choose – the

way in European society or the Balkans. Also states that the European Union is a lifeline for the Republic of Croatia in order not to remain tied for the Balkans.

The final deeper analysis is based on articles extracted from the *Jutarnji list*.

The following examination will go chronologically. The first article in this research refers to the German parliamentarian who said that Croatia cannot be ranked or treated as a part of the Western Balkan. This statement refers to the fact that Croatia has to be independent in order to join European Union. Croatia needs to move away from other countries in the region, because this is the only way it can make any further progress towards the EU. Also, *Jutarnji list* has been issuing sport articles which have a close connection to anything belonging to Balkan, and therefore we have one sports article where the British media talking about the Croatian player who is currently playing for their team. The article also had the use of the word Balkanism and Balkanian in it, which means it's not very easy to get away from these negative Balkan connotations. Whenever a coin toss chooses the English, Jewish or Dutch team and headed toward Croatia, began agitation of Zagreb and Split as the capitals of racism. It was so when it came to Zagreb or Split Fulham, Maccabi and Ajax, The Beveren lived in "mortal fear" not to be "eaten" by Balkan cannibals." Article belongs to the sports section and is particularly important last part where the "Balkan cannibals" appears as perceived Croatian soccer players, fans and especially by European team.

However, since Croatia was the candidate for the European Union, the media has been mentioning that they have been in great danger as such. Some may say that other countries in the region have the same danger hovering over their heads but it's quite unfair to mention other countries in the same context since Croatia is much more developed and more democratic than those two neighbouring countries. Secondly, and more importantly, Croatia would, in the event of a new, long-term delay of the start of the ne-

gotiations, remain in the Balkan political context, which is characterized by a mass nationalism, mass corruption, lack of democracy, economic decline, and, as a result, continuing political instability.

As already mentioned, a Balkan Trade Union was in plan, but not everyone was for it because they believed that it will represent a great threat to Croatia. But entrepreneurs and economists do not reject the idea of a Balkan Trade Union. Long before there was even the European Commission, in the early nineties, the most famous Croatian economist Branko Horvat at one meeting said that the only salvation for the Croatian economy is doing business with the East. He was referring to Serbia, Montenegro, Macedonia, Bulgaria, Romania... followed by a real political lynching of Branko Horvat. He is the enemy of Croatia, Yugonostalgic, dangerous element that only independent states pushed back to the Balkan. Politically conscious Croats don't want anything to do with Balkan, even trading, although in it, according to all the knowledge of economic science, they will be a winner.

But moving further away, we go back to the setting Croatia in the Balkan area again. We have other states that refer to Croatia as the Balkan state. Whether they like it or not, geographically they belong there and this is where others try to put them. Croatia geographically belongs in biggest part to the Balkan and Croatia realistically politically belongs to the Balkan. Who does not like it, they can go ahead fantasize all they want, but geography it is not a matter of utopia but facts.

Let's move onto another article which has negative connotation to the Balkan area. A typical domestic rhetoric implies that Croatia doesn't belong to the Balkan, but they have always belonged to Europe. They were always non-balkans. Europe is Catholic. The Balkan is already in a new crisis, and in the next few weeks, as we approach the deadline for the Kosovo status settlement, the decision on elections in Serbia and the outcome of events in Bosnia and Herzegovina – could escalate. The Balkan again became not only a potential crisis point but also zones of conflict of interests

of the great powers, Russia and America. The EU is again divided and doesn't know what to do. In this situation, the EU will reiterate that it cares about stability of The Balkan because it is, of course, part of Europe but will not find solutions to problems. If in some case Croatia has chosen Balkan that this would be okay, but in what sense Balkan is better than wanting to be in Europe. Both are legitimate choices, but the first one is a bad choice while the second one is a good choice. The interest of the imminent completion of the negotiations and is in EU's interest as well. Now that Balkan is again at a crossroads, the EU wants Croatia as a positive example. Not so that Croatia could escape from The Balkan, but for the Balkan to follow the Croatia. But with these slow negotiations Croatia can't serve anyone as an example and motivation, but rather as a warning of what awaits them. The Balkan is a wild place. In all these articles it has many layers: first, the traces of the Second World War and everything evil that happened, then traces the strong Serbian influence, then anticlerical and anti-Catholic traces. Here the author expresses the Western European view of The Balkan in which there is nothing positive. They see Balkan as a place where traces of the Second World War and are visible and all the recent events that have marked and permanently etched scars in these areas further underlined the strong Serbian influence. "In the last eight years Croatia is imposed by different formula of the Western integration, and his father strongly objected to this formula, but, he says, Mesić and Račan tied Croatia to 'Western Balkans', Sanader did nothing to change that." However, his claim was not substantiated by any solid arguments, and phantom Western Balkania in his interpretation seems like paranoia.

When asked, almost three fifths of Croats said that they do not consider themselves to be part of Balkan. Croatian animosity towards The Balkan is the creation of Yugoslavia, but in spite of the rejection, Croats must admit, whether they like it or not, along with some other settings – Central Europe and the Mediterranean – with a great part they belong to the Balkan social and cultural circle.

-“We have a paradox that some Balkan countries have no problem with that identification, such as Bulgaria and Macedonia, while the Greeks, Romanians and we, with more or less rights and arguments, refuse it Slovenia and Romania, and even Greece, Croatia are still classified under The Balkan.” Here the author describes the reasons and time of when the Republic of Croatia has a negative image when it comes to The Balkan, and this time obviously comes from the time of creation of Yugoslavia, notwithstanding its rejection. Yet here the author warns that we must accept that Republic of Croatia is geographically part belonging to the Balkan Peninsula and should not run from it.

Still the question remains whether we are the Balkans or not. Our rejection of The Balkan and the non-recognition of The Balkan are associated with that as long as we’re not close or not close to Serbs.”

### ***Croatia after 1991: Years of Independence***

When Croatia seceded from the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia in 1991, Croatians were optimistic that their new found independence would accomplish two things: Croatia would be recognized as a sovereign state for the first time in its national history and would “return” to its rightful place in Europe. Croatia’s prospects were encouraging. During the cold war, Yugoslavs’ relative economic prosperity and freedom to work and travel abroad made Yugoslavia the envy of Eastern Europe. Jeffrey Sachs selected Yugoslavia in 1989 as one of the first countries to undergo “shock therapy.” Its advanced economic liberalization and strong civil society tradition promised a quick and successful transition to a democratic free-market state. Of the six republics that made up the Yugoslav federation, Croatia was, like Slovenia, more integrated in to European networks than other republics due to its Habsburg legacy, geographical location and

trade orientation toward Western markets. In less than ten years, Croatia's status shifted from first in line to join the European Union to one of the last. Croatia now lags behind the economically less advanced states of Romania and Bulgaria in European Union accession negotiations.

Croatia's unfavourable position in the eyes of the West undoubtedly stemmed in part from Franjo Tuđman's dismal democratic and human rights record in the 1990s. Tuđman regime suppressed critical media outlets, supported Croatian secessionists in Bosnia-Herzegovina, and fought the extradition of indicted war criminals to the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY). The Council of Europe cited these reasons for postponing Croatia's membership until 1996. The European Union raised the same factors in blocking Croatia's request to start membership talks in 1997. Refugee return, full cooperation with the ICTY, and commitment to regional cooperation are conditions of Croatia signing a Stabilization and Association Agreement with the European Union (a special process created for "Western Balkan" states in 2000). The enormous fall in Croatia's international standing did not depend solely on Western perceptions of Tuđman's political failings or its economic performance. Croatia's fall from grace also involved the deployment of Balkan stereotypes by Western leaders and journalists – a phenomenon Maria Todorova called "Balkanism". In other words, Balkanism proved a very effective method of disciplining states like Croatia with strong European aspirations.

The irony, however, is that *Croatians deployed similar Balkan stereotypes to differentiate itself from its ethnic neighbours*. Balkanist rhetoric was utilized to legitimize Croatia's quest for independence as a necessary emancipation from its "Balkan burden" and its return to its rightful place in Europe. Croatians presented themselves as more progressive, prosperous, hard working, tolerant, democratic, or, in a word, European, in contrast to their primitive, lazy, intolerant, or Balkan, neighbours to the southeast.

Croatian leaders negotiated their so-called final exit from the Balkans and return to Europe. Balkan peninsula has become a symbol imbued with a host of derogatory meaning. To varying extents, these scholars are all indebted to Edward Said's *Orientalism*, a seminal critique of Western knowledge and representations of the East. They hold differing opinions, however, over the extent to which Balkanism can be interpreted within a general Orientalist or postcolonial frame. "Balkanization" has now come to signify more generally the disintegration of viable nation-states and the reversion to "the tribal, the backward, the primitive, the barbarian". These Balkan stereotypes were reinvented by the recent wars in the former Yugoslavia, which were often termed Balkan wars despite the fact they were confined to former Yugoslav republics. Balkanism has been a common discursive tool deployed by the West to explain and justify Croatia's enormous fall in international standing. When Croatia and Slovenia declared independence in June 1991, a consensus existed among the international community that Yugoslavia should be preserved to guarantee stability. By the end of the year, with nearly one-third of Croatian territory under Serbian control and medieval Dubrovnik under siege, Western leaders and media now portrayed Croatia as an emerging European democracy to be defended against Slobodan Milošević's expansionist aims. Germany took the lead in recognizing Croatia in December 1991.

By April 1992, the international community recognized Croatia as a sovereign state. An episode during 1997 conference in Zagreb, "Post-Dayton Croatia," typifies how Balkanism became an effective means of disciplining states like Croatia that aspire to be recognized as European. In front of an audience of luminaries including the Croatian minister of defence and other prominent representatives of Croatian political and academic communities, the U.S. charge of affaires of the U.S. embassy in Bosnia-Herzegovina stopped in the middle of a biting critique of the contemporary Croatian political situation. He remarked,

pointedly and with obvious calculation, “In the Balkans... and when I say Balkans I mean here in Croatia.” Clearly aware of Croatian pretensions to join a more prestigious civilizational camp, the US official let the assembled Croatian elites know that their inclusion in the European Union was currently unfeasible. He also reminded them that Western leaders ultimately decided who European was and who would be kept out of the club. Western policy makers are not the only ones to use Balkanism as a discursive tool to reprimand Croatia in the 1990s. Balkanism has also played an important role in the construction of Croatian national identity during the period. In the period prior to and subsequent to the outbreak of war in July 1991, Croatian leaders aimed to promote an identity that would be maximally differentiated from its Yugoslav identity and other constituent nationalities that made up the former Yugoslavia, most significantly, Serbia.

“Tudman, not the Balkans” was the slogan on which Croatian President Franjo Tuđman based his successful 1997 presidential campaign. The slogan captured what Tuđman saw as his greatest historical achievement: Croatia’s extrication from what one writer termed “the Balkan darkness of the so-called Yugoslavia.” In the post-Dayton era, the general euphoria following Croatian independence was waning and Croatians faced high unemployment and inflation. Tuđman could no longer rely solely on military or diplomatic achievements to maintain his political power. Tuđman found the perfect solution to this dilemma in the Southeast European Cooperation Initiative (SECI). The United States and the European Union initiated SECI to promote economic exchange within Southeastern Europe (including all the former Yugoslavia states, Albania, Hungary, Romania, and Bulgaria). The slogan “Tudman, not the Balkans” perfectly articulated his stand on this new crisis. SECI was not intended to create a “new-Yugoslavia”; nor did it legally bind Croatia to the agreement. Nevertheless, it was nearly impossible to turn on a television or radio or to open a newspaper in Croatia in 1997

without learning of the danger of a world conspiracy to force Croatia “back onto the Balkans.” Tudman, once again, would save Croatia from this fate.

A 1997 cover of the Croatian state-run news weekly *Hrvatski Obzor* illustrates how SECI was represented by the ruling regime. The cover is dominated by a close-up of a Yugo with a headline that asks, “Hoćemo li ponovo voziti ‘yugo’” [Will We Drive Yugo Car Again?]. The Yugo was a symbol of what Croatians viewed as their disadvantaged status vis-à-vis the Serbs in Yugoslav economic relations (not to mention a source of international embarrassment), since the Yugo was manufactured in Serbia but was aggressively marketed among all other republics as Yugoslavia’s national automobile. The headline, therefore, by citing renewed economic ties through SECI, reinvigorated the threat that once again Croatia would fall victim to Serbian hegemonic aspirations. In the upper right hand corner, however, the same cover provided the answer to this threat. Beside a picture of Tudman, the caption declared that, “Croatia still needs Tudman”. Underlying his political opposition to Western attempts to force Croatia into some new Balkan union, therefore, was the outrage that Croatia could be misrecognized as culturally Balkan. By fostering a sense of crisis, Tudman could demonstrate he was a strong and vital leader. Tudman not only would protect Croatia from the Serbian threat; he would stand up to the “Great Powers” who now threatened Croatia’s national interests.

Tudman was not the only politician to utilize Balkanism as a rhetorical strategy. In his 1997 presidential campaign, Croatian Social Liberal Party candidate Vlado Gotovac criticized the “Balkan tendencies” of Tudman and, in contrast, portrayed himself as a European leader. As part of his campaign strategy, Gotovac capitalized on the fact that Croatia was not invited to the 1997 meeting of the presidents of Central European states, the region to which Tudman repeatedly declared that Croatia belonged. As have been shown above, Balkanism – a dichotomous

and essentialist system of representations embodied in stereotypes around which Europe has set itself apart from a Balkan “other” – has served a discursive means by which Croats would liberate themselves from their perceived Balkan burden and return to Europe. When Croatia found itself in the position of being both a recipient and purveyor of Balkanist stereotypes, it spurred a number of different responses. It stimulated anti-Western backlash, intensified efforts to distinguish Croatia more aggressively from its Balkan neighbours, and resulted, in some cases, in an internalization of these stereotypes, either through a kind of self-hatred or through the promotion of an internal hierarchy based on Balkanist criteria. This change in fortune provoked little critical inquiry in Croatia as to why the discourse of Balkanism developed and continues to have such salience in Europe and its periphery. Most criticism directed toward the West stemmed from resentment at not being recognized as European – or for being misrecognized as Balkan.

It is evident from the analysis of the research is that the problem of Yugonostalgia and socialist heritage in the media is associated with Balkanism due to the dominant influence of Serbian factors in the former Yugoslavia with Serbia at the centre and its capital city of the entire common state. Also, enough is the fact and the way of the breakup of former Yugoslavia and the consequences of the Republic of Croatia, where there was war in which many people died. All this contributes enough to the feeling of disgust to all that Yugoslavia represented. Through content analysis of media articles we could see that there are supporters of the Balkan Alliance and “return” to the Balkans.

Many politicians in the articles have been accused for being Yugonostalgic and that they represent a danger to the Republic of Croatia by leading it in the crater of the Balkans and re-create some sort of Yugoslavia. We have seen that the media type of approach is mainly political discourse during the formation of the symbolic identity, in a way the political and social

upheavals are reflected in the media very aggressively, focused and consistently. The basic matrix media rhetoric is based on the principle of mass communication whereby constantly publish different articles with the same or almost the same content under the prism of negativity of all that is Balkans and trying to squeeze Republic of Croatia in (Western) Balkans and include it in the Balkan association. The essential difference between the media does not exist provided that the articles in *Večernji list* are most active in terms of discourse about the Balkans, while it was least pronounced in the weekly *Nacional*.

New, particular collective identity that has stifled our individual identities became unified and firmly set national identity, and of all the members of the nation were required to accept it. Specifically, individual identities are always and everywhere – even outside the Balkans, Eastern Europe, Central Europe and the Mediterranean, i.e. outside the area where we belong – woven from fine and delicate threads of precious cultural twists that are interwoven in various and numerous combinations. These textures are unique, made up of hybrid, with many parties or collected, and the diversity and ambiguity of origin attaches them interesting. Individual identity is unique, as Maalouf writes, that each of his affiliation connects him with many people, as belonging to take into account numerous, it is his identity shows special.

But that does not mean that people do not identify themselves on a collective level, nor that such identifying is unnecessary or false. However, sense of belonging and identification with the collective in civil societies should not entail the abolition of special formula identity of each individual, as it appeared in the local societies. Multiform identity and hybridity in these societies are the spatial coordinates professed in the fact that the vast majority of the population lived under the influence of different ethnic, religious, cultural and ideological paradigms. This means that many of our well-known rituals of other religions, the words of other cultures, rhythms of other people's everyday life,

etc., and we were at the (post) Yugoslav space more often linked determinants such as epic, tribal, urban, etc., as well as cultural heritage related to the influence of foreign cultures, rather than ethnicity in the way that nineties conceived and presented. Furthermore, our individual identities are deeply marked by boundaries, ethnic and cultural mixing, effects of assimilation, interaction (and foreign, invading culture and neighbouring cultures) and regional specificities, and cannot be compressed into a single national framework that clearly delimits “us” from “them” and that they be careful not to disturb or cancelled. It’s pretty hard to imagine the inhabitants of these areas that we did not, or whose loved ones or ancestors are travelling, marrying, moved to “the other side”, were the minority in a foreign country or in some way been influenced by “others”. So we think here between languages, cultures, influences, traditions, etc.

Croatian accession to the European Union does not leave a lot of room open to discussions in the mainstream media. The level of “pro – EU” propaganda is very strong. This is nothing new, because the propaganda carried out for years, and it is an alternative position or has not received the relevant position in the media, or is distorted to grotesque levels, or was present in very marginal media accessible only by narrow circles of people. Lack of choice with which we are faced, though we, at first glance, served many choices, the reality is that anyone who follows the lives of a false democracy also has called parliamentary or representative democracy. The fate of the periphery countries of the EU, debasement of workers’ rights, the decline of small local producers, structural adjustment in the spirit of neo- liberalism (liberalization, privatization, flexibilization, precarious work), etc., are the harmfulness of this organization, whose listing far we have come. The view should still be discarded and the entire system of discourse representation which contribute to support for years to create a “pro – EU” mood catalysed entry in this egalitarian organization.

Yes, it is a Balkanism discourse that can be viewed from different positions depending on which it is that perpetuates a view. Roughly one can say that the Balkanism discourse comes from “outside” and “inside” – the “outside “ means representations of “the Balkans” primarily from the perspective of “the West” (specifically “European”), and the “inside” team “Balkans” from their own perspective i.e. from the perspective of the very inhabitants of the Balkans. This is the first discourse formations that seem perhaps more important because it reminds us of the discourse of Orientalism in real binary opposites gathered around one central “Occident” – “Orient”, which form one huge machine discourse. However, the latter is unavoidable, and perhaps even more important, because it constitutes an entire system to affirm this first. In addition, the Balkanism discourse “inside” is much more heterogeneous, and as such much more interesting. Specifically Balkanism discourse “inside” also represents a system of representation that form in binary opposites, but coming from a very “marked” position i.e., as a reflection of “the Balkans” in itself as “Balkanite” sees himself as well as affirming Balkanism discourse “outside” and contributes to the creation and proliferation of the same. Heterogeneity of this discourse is reflected in the fact that it is by no means a vision. In contrast, the Balkanism discourse “outside” seems pretty homogeneous – binary oppositions are usually very clearly articulated and do not differ much among its generators: “Civilization” – “barbarism”, “rational” – “irrational”, “progressive” – “primitive” etc. In the discourse of the “inside” are present and binary oppositions, but to articulate something different and presents different value judgments and identification or self-identification. The first such type of discourse is affirmative, and he is in the context of the “EU – topia”, the most important and most institutionalized. It is a discourse moping affirmation. It accepts binary oppositions, but they are shy and less inclined to change (i.e., “self-discipline”). The discourse of “inside” often consists of a partial denial – it

is not recognized in this type of discourse in the context of their own country (especially if it is a country that is Periphery of the Balkans as Croatia), but while this is not the denial of such a vision of the Balkans, but denial of perceptions of their own country in this context. In other words, this is the kind of discourse that is often articulated in phrases like: “Croatia is not the Balkans”, etc. This is also important discourse formations very similar to the first. In addition to the very edges of the discourse is complete denial – opposition are being completely rejected, regardless of whether one considers itself to be “the Balkans” or not. This type of discourse simply refrains social construct of the “Balkan” and “balkanism”, but does not add anything of his. This is the type of empty rebellion, pure negation. It is on the edge because nobody uses it. The last was a complete affirmation in the positive sense, recognized “balkanism” in all or almost all binary opposites, but it does not add any negative connotations, a sense of shame or a desire for change – someone feels to be a “Balkan – primitive” and is proud with it. This type of discourse is quite common, but not institutionalized. Mainly it’s observed in informal discussions and parties. The existence of this discourse is only a tail wind because it advocates justification of this discourse, and ultimately confirms the outside.

So, there are at least four types of internal Balkanism discourse reflection: Type moping affirmation, partial denial, complete denial and proud affirmation. It’s hard to imagine a situation that any of these discourses without being able to establish what the outside, so it is difficult to observe any outside relationships with the outside. Joining the European Union is an opportunity for an external balkanism to become one with one of the types of inside Balkanism. Clearly, it is primarily on the type of guy moping affirmation assisted partial denial. This relationship is easiest to visualize paraphrasing the often-repeated platitude in the mainstream media and statements by local politicians: “Croatia became part of the circle of civilized nations.”

There are a few of simple expanded sentences that manage to have so many implications such as these: equalization, “European” civilization (Europe, not in a geographical sense, but in terms of socio – cultural construct, because the quotation marks), positioning of Croatia into a primitive from where it has the desire to escape, great contribution to the stigmatization of “Balkan” as a construct, it’s training with the aim of mitigating the appropriation of European symbolic universe. Just systematize a single binary opposition: “Europa” – “Balkans”, to see a big hysterical attack and oppositions. If indeed any member of the sub- binary oppositions (“Balkan”) manages to become a member of the parent binary oppositions (“Europe”), as is currently the case with Croatian (still in the “becoming” of course, it never was or ever will be a completed process), it means that the subordinate member of the binary oppositions of otherness is not in the true sense, but only the unconscious part of the parent members of binary oppositions.

Recognizing this, we are partially exposing the essence of Balkanism. “Balkan” is unconsciously Europe, the immanent “other” in which there is one part of “Europe” of which “Europe” is ashamed of, which wants to suppress, and that makes it so that it is presented as a separate entity. It would be hard that “Europe” could be seen as a circle of civilized countries, if one takes into account the history of colonization, enslavement and looting. In order to avoid the stigma, “Europe” has done a skilful transfer of negative – the “Balkans”, from which it created something “else”, and in fact inherently itself. Why the “Balkans”? Indeed the Balkan is an area which was in flames for centuries, where there was large inter-ethnic friction, where religious, ethnic, cultural and other divisions reached a level that is still difficult to compare equally with the case anywhere else on the continent of Europe. But just like that, the Balkans seemed like an area that is conducive to make it into “ the Balkans”, those areas that will be “justified” bring all the “evil” of Europe, as well as the

construct of “Europe” as a “community of civilized nations” can not go hand in hand with what could be truly justified impute “Europe” as such. “Europe” does not exist without the “Balkans”.

The discourse of moping, affirmation and partial denial much of self-loathing is manifested. This is the other extreme compared to the extremely nationalist credentials, but both extremes end in the renewal of one and the same discourse actions. And self-loathing and nationalist commitment confirms “Balkanist” discourse – self-loathing make it confessional, and nationalist make it a pride (nationalism contribute their vision of the Balkans as a wild and primitive place that abounds with hatred, intolerance and wars). Cognition of “Balkanism” discourse can still take you to recovery – recognizing the consistency or inconsistency of each “Balkanism” and its role in perpetuating the existing relationships on the continent (and the world) can only build alternative that would go beyond self-loathing “balkanophobia” and by narrow-minded and lavish nationalism.

Discourse representation in the form of the above “Europe” and “the Balkans” are nested as part of the propaganda machinery or a long time, that is, from the moment that it was necessary to start to create an atmosphere that will suit the approaching to the European Union, as well as to create an entire ideology with the aim of convincing people “why Europe”, “why the EU?”. Resignation is manifested both in accepting this self-loathing attitude, and in yet another empty phrase often repeated that “there is no alternative.” It can be concluded that the society in the Republic of Croatia somehow defeated, and the fact that these societies can only construct, at least at the level of discourse, and no one will help them if they accept that escapism which one of the consequences of the long term, we can be free to say so, “brainwashing”.

Extremely fast growing interest in the analysis of the topic in recent years is both consequence and the reflection of an opinion of “linguistic turn” which appeared in the arts, humanities and

social sciences under the umbrella of postmodern philosophy. Linguistic turn was prompted by criticism of neopositivism and the strong influence of structural and post-structural ideas and postmodernist attacks on traditional epistemology. The fact that discourse analysis derives from a critique of traditional social science means that it is based on the radical epistemological foundations that are quite different from other methodologies. This direction is often called interpretism or constructivism.

The scene of the Balkans has a rich history which is undoubtedly woven with blood and honey. It seems that there was much more blood than honey, which is a metaphor of the goodness of life embodied in the mutual assistance between all nations and nationalities inhabiting (and those who inhabited) the peninsula. Long and frequent war years, mistrust, delay on the developed West, primitivism, increased tension, hatred. This is all what the Balkans was, that significantly is today, and who knows what will come out tomorrow in the near future. So spacious, yet tight for many. And as if it was rejected by the mother of Europe, at the dumpsite history of lies and suffering, it has had enough of all the blood and honey – a devastating war, but also the brotherhood and unity.

Thus, windswept between East and West Balkans was being scene of every evil. It seems that nothing could bypass the bad, and a lot of good has just escaped from it, just like it was evil and cursed ground. Until yesterday its citizens were proud to belong to it and proudly called themselves Balkanites, and Yugoslavs in particular. It seemed that everyone was happy and satisfied in all aspects of life. It was a time of brotherhood and unity, the time of strong and united Yugoslavia, which was built on the foundations of Veterans led by Josip Broz Tito. I argue that the time after World War II was (though probably difficult in some areas), some sort of golden age for both the Balkans and Yugoslavia and all its nations and nationalities. Yugoslavia was a respected country, if not much of Western Europe, and then it was

respected by Eastern Europe and much of rest of the world. In that sense, it is striking how few of these reflections came out in above mentioned articles. Yugoslavia, with its Communist setup and scheme of social system was the inspiration for many. It was a multinational and strongly united – from Triglav to Gevgelija. Getting back to the recent past of the Balkans, one darker, which will seal the future? Here I will make a brief and concise view of the recent history of the Balkans, which aims to make an introduction to a *specific analysis of the discourse*. This fact will help *to understand the discourse charge* and possibly to some extent shed light on the reasons for the charges.

The disintegration of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia is the name for a set of historical events that began in the 1980s and which led to the termination of the legal existence of Yugoslavia as a constituent state. Disintegration of Yugoslavia has created seven new countries in South-East Europe, and the time of their occurrence is marked by war and violence, heavy damage losses in human lives and the largest wave of refugees that emerged after World War II in Europe. Severe economic crisis happened in Yugoslavia in early 1980s, the devaluation of the dinar ban imports of many consumer products has led to the churning of social and ethnic problems especially in economically less developed areas. It was the end of Yugoslavia, the end of togetherness and beginning of blood shedding, the bestial executions, expulsions and widespread destruction of infrastructure capacity throughout warring regions in Croatia, and before that in Slovenia and later in Bosnia. The Republic of Croatia has suffered huge losses in manpower and infrastructure as a result of actions of the JNA run by Serbia, or Belgrade. After completion of the aggression on Croatia, it was necessary to add up the damage, and start building all that was demolished. So we can freely say that 1995 was a turning point for Croatia. *Therefore, I argue that precisely that year represents major shift in media discourse.*

On the one hand, Homeland war was over, on the oth-

er hand Croatia's decision, as an independent state, to move in the direction of Europe, the EU, was unquestionable. These post-war years were years of embodied patriotism and national pride. Hostility toward the aggressor has never been stronger. National Policy in Croatia, led by former President Franjo Tudman, among other things aimed "escape" from the Balkans into the arms of Europe. From a media point of view, 1995 can be viewed as the beginning of a new policy of Balkans, i.e. *new structure or discourse on the Balkans*.

Media discourse in the context of the Balkans represents Croatia as a "prisoner" until recently in the Balkans, although it was never part of the Balkans. The vast majority of articles where the main word which appears is "Balkan", which is the subject of this study, sound like they are intended to carry out a deep implantation of the phrase "we are not Balkans, we are Europe" for all potential readers that lookup to grip with given articles. At first, *the context of the Balkans is linked to something very undesirable*, something that was, until recently, a part of reality and nightmare, and something from which, at all costs, they tend to run away. If we attempt to further understand that, through writing of these articles, there exists a dose of certain pressure that came just from Europe, which has seen Croatia as a Balkan country. This especially provoked *aggressive journalistic approach* that is likely to be an additional measure or in part or entirety was prompted by the Croatian political factors which were unanimous - "Croatia belongs to the cradles of civilization, Croatia belongs to Europe". (By *aggressiveness* I mean forceful propaganda and introduction of certain stereotypes)

Above selected articles, especially from the earlier period, radiate a desire for Europe and hope that this desire for Europe would be immortalized with Croatia's accession to the EU. (*Some of the most common words in this articles are "desire" and "hope", especially in the period 1999-2001*). Authors of articles often point to the fact how many people would like Croatia to return

to the Balkans (primarily refers to the part of the international community), which would in any case imply a loss of sovereignty. Clearly, in the articles, we may reveal the author's fears and defying the same time that obviously should convey to readers. (*Articles in the earlier period of research are deeply imbued by the word "fear" which is constantly repeating through various contexts*). This alerts ordinary citizens, but also the political structure or policy options that might be ready to assemble (Balkan) agreements with the eastern neighborhood. But, nevertheless, it is clear that *discourse on the Balkans itself should go in favor of strengthening the Croatian national identity and a sense of European citizenship. This, I believe, is a double-bind: negation goes towards "inner" strengthening.*

Hoping to make a comfort on the one side, and on the other hand convince the population that they are part of European civilization, *authors repeatedly transmitted statements of certain foreign officials, which claim that the Croatia truly is a central European country. It may appear that listed foreign officials were asked to make such statements to the media or are mentioned on that, and on the other hand, maybe they and their statements should soothe the Croatian political scene that has tirelessly represented all European, and running away from all the Balkan. Balkans in the Croatian media discourse is often put in the context of the former state – the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, which was, from the position of most of authors, a great evil that eventually escalated. I therefore argue that many authors in their texts heavily rely on foreign official statements, which is clear if one browse newspapers from that period.*

One of the most important conclusions from my analysis is that *media discourse of Balkans largely reveals the Croatian horror towards Balkans, but also the fact that other countries that inhabit the area of the Balkans have no problem with that.* The Balkans is also trying to be present as part of the (primitive) mentality, rather than as a geographical term. In the beginning of the 2000s while Stipe Mesić was the head of state, it seems *there was a*

*real small shift in reporting* – discourse on the Balkans this time takes on another form which relies on the fact that the term implies Balkans and Balkan primitivism and backwardness through description of several examples where citizens from Western Europe, when they want to insult someone, citizens coming from the area of Southeast Europe, call them “Balkans” or primitive and suburban. But author pressures, when the stigma of the Balkans is involved, do not stop. The reporting policy through the same pattern creates content that warn of the deleterious effects of each approaches the Balkans. It must be stated that *any attempt to mitigate the concept of Balkan different names, such as “Western Balkans” and “Southeast Europe” was greeted as “feathering” of the authors in discussed articles.*

The discourse about the Balkans overlooks the mentality and psychological issues, which according to the authors, was one of the more typical characteristics of the Balkans, if by that term, among other things, we mean primitive, immature, messy, wild and exotic for Europe part of its south eastern part. Balkans, the climate where the frauds are usual, which on the other side should mean that honesty, agreements and agreements do not mean almost anything in the Balkans. Things are too relaxed and where they should not even be. Lack of formalist awareness, one “civilized European man” in the Balkans can lead to complete disappointment. A striking phenomenon is that in the Balkans or in societies that formed the former common state of Yugoslavia violation of norms was the only standard that is respected, where everything is subject to the personal will, and that it was the worst and least tolerable side of bureaucratic society that demands exceptional paperwork and strict administration scheme, which is, I believe, an absolute paradox. All of this together reflects the state of the Balkans from whose hollow space Croatia wants to withdraw. *Authors are inexhaustible, motivated by the idea of seeking to sicken every thought to the Balkans and balkanism bringing it into direct connection with primitivism, vulgarity, defaults, etc..*

Balkans ignored all the rules of logic, embraced the general untidiness on the one hand, on the other hand insists the irrational neatness that prevents any progress and kills the will to start anything for the better.

I noticed one more important thing – *in the discourses, the bureaucracy was not bypassed*. Bureaucracy in the “Balkan-style” is the opposite of each logic as to where it’s all messy, order is being achieved in the absurd formalities and paperwork that are often the fruit of irrational demands, office of institutional inertia and inefficiency. Everything that cannot be achieved through formal, usually bribery and corruption has become the key to success, and resourcefulness in avoiding formalities has become a great advantage.

Consequently, I can conclude that the *texts of selected articles inexhaustible convince readers that the Balkans is destruction, and the only salvation is offered by Europe*. The Balkans is put into the context of unrest in the area, but in all other aspects of life. For all of this Balkans resembles primitive Balkan consciousness. *Further analysis of the discourse on the Balkans helps us to see how Balkan rejects all values embodied in legalism and retains its primitive and relaxation*. Analyzed texts refer to the fact that in the Balkans even the paint of the facades of the buildings are not good – they are dark and gloomy as well as the Balkans. Any thought on the Balkans and in Balkan readers should arouse revulsion and discontent, they should discourage every thought to be, remain or become part of something that is just a nightmare.

*Balkan in almost all of the analyzed texts (with, of course, few examples) appears as a hole, an abyss, the abyss that is so profound that it can be suspected if it even has an end. It seems that the discourse is not slowing down in efforts to exploit any opportunity that mentions the concept of the Balkans, and that it doesn’t “color it in black.”* A bad fate is attributed to the Balkans, according to which refers to as civilization and economically inferiority, like a territory over which should be made permanent control

and protectorate. Various types of primitivism, the petty bourgeoisie, hate and joy of someone else's accident describe the average Balkan people. *Authors of articles in a straightforward manner suggest that being from Balkans is equal to all of the above.* Certainly that's not all. *Articles reflect the "epidemic syndrome of Balkanism".* Balkans on several occasions did not regard Europe or part of the European continent. *Another major issue worth noticing is bipolar position, ideological dichotomy:* the discourse goes to that measure, so that it sets up the thesis – *"Either we are Europeans or the Balkans"*, whereby the Balkans is clearly separated from the European continent. The texts spread fear at the thought that Croatia could sign any European document, which is committed to bilateral or multilateral cooperation with countries of the former Yugoslavia, except Slovenia anyway. Exactly this fear was mostly manufactured with the signing of the Stability Pact for South-Eastern Europe (cf. articles that tackle that issue in the empirical part of this book). The signing alone of such a document authors show that it is equal to returning to the Balkans and to some Yugoslavia that no longer exists.

Preoccupation with the term Balkans in the texts shows interpretation where the Balkans starts. What is not clear are its borders, but the intention of discourse is quite clear that Croatia wants to be outside the Balkans, because that name is not geographically distinguished but political. They support the hypothesis that Croatia for its historical and civilization achievements has always been part of Europe, and no one can deny that. In the analyzed period, I could conclude that the discourse about the Balkans *modifies the intensity but not the course of action*, because the Balkan, or at least how it's cited in the articles, in addition to all its "virtues" has become a transit point of the white slave traffic, narcotics and financial crimes. Since many articles are balanced or uniform, sometimes it comes to my mind that everything comes to one author and one daily or weekly newspaper, which is definitely an absolute falsehood.

The texts usually follow the hope that best and only solution for Croatia is to enter the EU, and that the population within EU will further Europeanized and leave all the bad manners of Balkanism. In this way, *the discourse goes in the direction of removing burden from Croatia*, taking Balkans off of their hands, and then it is believed that things would only go for the better in every way. Finally, the Croatian accession to the European Union is a *historical step* for the Croatian society and the last escape from the Balkans (often pointed out in articles 2007-2013). All obscenities, primitivism and barbarity, petty bourgeoisie, disorder, bad etiquette and dark past are behind Croatia. The discourse about the Balkans didn't wane and the authors of articles as if they were the winners of the battle. *If we try to bring the connection between various newspaper articles and newspaper dailies or weeklies, one can say that this relationship is very strong and balanced in such a way that the discourse about the Balkans is virtually identical.*

# CONCLUSION

This book stemmed from a desire to research media construction of Balkanism in Croatia at the end of the twentieth and early twenty-first century. It deals with so called Balkanism discourse that can be seen from different positions depending on who perpetrates it and in what way. Roughly I can say that Balkanism discourse comes from “outside” and “inside” – the “outside” one refers to representations of “Balkans”, primarily from the perspective of “the West” (specifically “Europe”), and the “inside” one refers to representation of “Balkans” from their own perspective i.e. from the perspective of the very inhabitants of the Balkans.

Discourse representation in the form of “Europe” and “the Balkans” are nested as part of the propaganda machinery since long time ago, that is, from the moment when it was necessary to start to create an atmosphere that will suit the approaching to the European Union, as well as to create an entire ideology with the aim of convincing people “why Europe?”, “why EU?”. Resignation is manifested both in accepting this self-scorn attitude, and in yet another empty phrase which was often repeated that “there is no alternative.” Key area of research represents a way in which the concept of Balkanism is employed in the context of its media usage and in which way can one recognize the patterns of symbolic formation of national identity. The basic intention is to point out to the existence of *certain stereotypical patterns* that represent invariable media use of Balkanism and Europeanism.

Not only Croatian politics, but also culture and science that accept and represent the idea of official policies, seek from the beginning of the independence of the country to find a new, collectively acceptable name for the area in which we are located. We are trying to escape from the real and symbolic Balkans and completely separate from the hateful environment and possible cultural links with neighbors. ***This desire to escape from the Balkans and the desire for the removal of their Balkan substance form the basis of Croatian national identity constructed in the 90s in the 20th century***, which is becoming binding for all members of the nation. This desire to escape from Balkans marks also other national identity narratives so the Balkans is more or less permanently designated as a negative opposition, as something-which-we-don't-want-to-belong-to, and not as an independent content, as something-that-we-can-belong-to.

There is no expressed semantic shift in media rhetoric in critical times, but it must be stated that ***early stages of research (1999-2006) showed a higher concentration of discourse on the Balkans***, by the number of published articles. Also, there is the precise period in which these terms are used and exclude others like "Balkan", "Southeast Europe", "Western Balkans". All of them are used at different times at the beginning and in the end of the study, provided that the term "Balkan" was used more in the periods of first years of research (1999-2004) than the latter (2005-2013). In a great extent, media research can be very fruitful for the analysis of socio-cultural changes in Croatian society, especially in the period from 1999-2009. Surely that there is some discrepancy between the sociological and ethnographic research on the origin of Balkans and the European civilization circles and media texts which, for example, put Croatia under the roof, others feel that it only partly belongs to the Balkans, then believe that Croatia has never belonged to space which is referred to either as the Balkans, the Western Balkans or Southeastern Europe, but it's always been in Central Europe. ***An independent media***

*(in our example Nacional) were also infused with the rhetoric of the Balkans and colonial forms but admittedly to a lesser extent. On the basis of this research, key words and terms that are used by media to describe the Yugoslav and post-Yugoslav experience in the context of opposition are: **Balkans=socialism and primitivism, Europe=capitalism; furthermore, Balkan is “arrogance”, “non-civilization”, “vulgarity”, “savagery”, “barbarism”, etc. while Europe occurs in the context of “progress”, “civilization”, “development”, etc.***

In Croatia, we talk about the Balkans when it comes to the public, media, cultural discourse and everyday life. In fact, we usually mean something negative. However, there is this one part where the Balkan is positively perceived, of course, positive one, also from the stereotypes point of view, so maybe “Balkan” within neo-folk and turbo folk, presents itself as something crazy and wacky and opposite to Europe. Only in this circuit it is considered positive. When it comes to any comparison of speech related to politics and culture in Croatia, the Balkans is mainly seen as a negative term and full of negative stereotypes and various demonic visions that are characteristic of the West when it comes to the Balkans.

**I will now summarize some of the major theoretical points and empirical findings from which a detailed conclusion can be formulated.**

- 1) Until the nineties, with the advent of nationalist ideology and the whole team constructing a new Croatian national identity, ***Balkan has become one of the main axis around which the nation constructs the identity***, so that everything that Croatia wanted to perceive itself was exactly the opposite of that of the Balkans.
- 2) ***The Balkans is largely identified with Serbia, and former Yugoslavia***, even with all the powers of some dark, de-

monic something that is characteristic of some past and of which, in fact, Croatia wants to separate from (which was especially pronounced in years when Croatia was not one of the EU member states). However, we see that even today remains a dose of negative constructions of the Balkans.

- 3) ***The negative perception of the Balkans is characteristic also for Croatia today***
  
- 4) Today's elite, who, perhaps, do not belong to this more nationalist policy or do not represent such a form of culture, certainly accepted this concept of identity, in the background of which there is precisely this duality – the Balkans and Europe, and then Croatia and Europe all that positive, thus civilizations in relation to that Balkan barbarism. ***These are some metaphors of long duration.*** Croatian identity is now seen as an identity that is different and opposite of all Balkan, Balkan and it is then, of course, perceived as savage, barbaric, negative, backward, primitive, retarded in every sense.
  
- 5) ***Analyzed newspaper articles*** indicate strong structure of discourse about the Balkans; texts are motivated by the idea, and in any case very ably, thoughtfully and in a succinct and concise manner ***tend to sicken every thought of the Balkans*** and balkanism to the Croatian people bringing it into direct connection with primitivism, vulgarity, defaults, inconsistency, dark lair, illogicality, which is at all costs damaging to Croatian society. All the rules of logic of Balkans are ignored and underestimated, espoused general sloppiness on the one hand and on the other hand insist on irrational regularity that prevents any progress and kills the will to start anything for the better. The bureaucracy is not bypassed in the discourses. Bureaucracy in

the “Balkan-style” is the opposite of each logic as to where it all messy, order is trying to be achieve in the absurd formalities and paperwork that are often the fruit of irrational demands, office of institutional inertia and inefficiency. Everything that cannot be achieved through formal, usually bribery and corruption has become the key to success, and resourcefulness in avoiding formalities.

- 6) ***The texts of selected articles inexhaustibly convince readers that the Balkans leads to doom and complete destruction and Europe, and European Union offers a good solution and salvation to the Croatia.*** The Balkans is put into the context of unrest in the space, but also in every other life aspect. Media discourse in the context of the Balkans represents Croatia as a prisoner in the Balkans, although it was never part of the Balkans. The key word in most of the articles is always “Balkan”, which is the subject of this research, sound like they are intended to carry out deep implantation of the phrase that Croatia belongs to Europe and not to the Balkan. At first, the context of the Balkans is linked to something very undesirable, something that was, until recently, a part of reality and nightmare, and something from which Croatia has always tried to run away.
- 7) This has especially provoked “aggressive journalistic approach” that is likely to be an additional appraise (in part or in its entirety) started by the Croatian political factors which were unanimous – “Croatia belongs to the real civilization, Croatia belongs to Europe.” Authors of articles often point out to the fact that so many people want to see Croatia back to the Balkans, which would in any case imply ***fear for the loss of sovereignty.***

- 8) ***Almost all of these articles*** can ***show fears*** from both readers and authors and defying at the same time which should obviously convey to readers. But this is definitely a warning to all the citizens; not just them, but also to political structures or policy options that might be ready to assemble (Balkan) agreements with the eastern neighborhood where we can definitely see Serbia, too.
- 9) But, nevertheless, it is clear that this ***discourse on the Balkans goes in favor of strengthening Croatian national identity and a sense of European citizenship***. All these writers and authors are trying to provide some kind of safety or comfort, but on the other side they are trying to convince the population of the country that they do belong to the European civilization, and in this favor they used statements of other foreign officials which claim that Croatia actually belongs to European Union and to Europe in general. But as I have mentioned before, there could have been the case of someone making these officials make this same statements in favor of Croatia, but also these statements might be used to ease the Croatian political scene which has been trying to run away from everything that the Balkan represents and trying to become everything that Europe represents.
- 10) ***Balkans in Croatian media discourse is often represented in the context of the former SFRJ*** – the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, and represents a great danger from the point of view of many of these authors. Media discourse on Balkans largely reveals the Croatian horror and repulsiveness by the Balkans, but also the fact that other countries that inhabit the area of the Balkans have no problem with that. Balkan has always been attempted to represent itself as an area with very primitive mentality;

it was rarely seen as geographical area or term. The term 'balkanite' or Balkan has been used as a mockery when wanting to insult someone coming from a very primitive area, and it was especially used by citizens of European countries. Other terms which were used by these other nations coming from Europe were suburban and primitive, which was quite insulting.

- 11) ***The stigmatization of the Balkans haven't stop*** and the policy of reporting is indicating to the dangerous consequences to everyone who approaches the Balkan Peninsula. But when we try to use another name for the Balkans, such as Southeast Europe, the usage of this term was never welcomed. Many kinds of primitivism exist, many examples of hatred and joy when someone else experiences a misfortune, and thus all of these articles which I have described talk about the fact that Balkan represents all of the above.
  
- 12) Furthermore, articles reflect "epidemic syndrome of Balkanism". In this analysis of the articles we can clearly see that in some specific cases the Balkans was clearly separated from the European continent, so the question is what is actually Croatia, and where it is located – whether it is in the Balkans and in Europe. ***The texts spread fear at the thought that Croatia could sign any European document, which is committed to bilateral or multilateral cooperation with countries of the former Yugoslavia, except Slovenia.*** And as we have already seen in this paper, this fear referred mostly to the Stability Pact, because to Croatian nation, signing of this document meant going back to Balkans, and they were trying to escape that so hard through many years.

- 13) **Discourse about the Balkans modifies the intensity but not the course of action**, because unfortunately Balkan area has become the centre of the white trafficking and drug abuse and many sorts of financial crimes and bribery. Since these articles are uniformed or balanced out, sometimes it definitely comes to my mind that they were written by the same author, because in general they all speak of the same thing and in the same way, which is, of course, not true. The texts frequently follow the hope that **the best and only solution for Croatia is to join the EU**, because this would be a perfect way to leave all the Balkanization behind them. Like this, the discourse goes in the direction of removing the entire unnecessary burden from Croatia, because there is a strong belief that in this way, things will go for the best for Croatia.
- 14) **Articles in general emphasize that Croatian accession to the European Union is a historical step for the Croatian society** and the last escape from the Balkans. All obscenities, primitivism and barbarity, will stay behind Croatia, hidden deep down in the history, in the past of the country and hopefully to be forgotten. First President of Republic of Croatia, Franjo Tuđman did not want Croatia to “return to the Balkans” at any cost and probably he was the worst enemy of the Balkans in the context of the Croatian state in every sense. Journalistic discourse in that period (up to 2000) gives a message that Croatia has made much effort to distance itself from this “famous” Balkans and how its place is not in the Balkans. The discourse often goes in the direction of *warning*, but the alarm on the “threat” of possible entry of Croatia into any Balkan association, and the entry into the Stability Pact in South East Europe, as well as notes that even the Constitution of the Republic of Croatia forbids Croatia to enter into any Balkan alli-

ances, which speaks for itself that the country represents the opinion that any return to something that could be related to the Balkans, is devastating to them.

- 15) Most common usage of the word Balkans in terms of culture usually corresponds to the notions and **key words such as “primitive”, “dumbed-down”, “arrogant”, “irresponsible”, “heartless”, “raw”, “rough” and so on.**

*This book points out and warns that, if the Croatian political society does not leave the “Balkan behavior”, it cannot provide a mental route to Europe.* Exactly all this, if I can say so, points to the Balkans and all the Balkan obviously comes from the fact that the Balkan region is perceived as a pattern of behavior that includes all forms of primitive, retarded, and raw behavior. At certain points, authors whose articles were the subject of this research, try to justify Croatian “revulsion” against the Balkans, noting that other states that fall under the geographical area of the Balkans increasingly emphasize that they are not part of the Balkans.

- 16) **Conclusions are going in the direction of the fact that certain countries in the Balkans are there by their own volition because they do not want “Western values” in their backyard,** such as democratic values, but despite the fact, they still wanted to be integrated in the same West, the European Union. It is generally thought that it does not matter how the space of the current Balkan is called, but the relations between nations or countries in this region which make a true picture of human beings as they are, i.e. ‘balkanites’. Balkan reality is blamed for all sorts of things, for the poor state in which there is a bureaucracy – sloppiness, lack of professionalism, and all of that is trying to be concealed and corrected with even greater absurdities that go into unnecessary and meaningless formality. Balkan

dreary is actually symbol which is accompanied by strange architectural solutions and poorly paved roads with holes and it all together reflects the state of mind in Croatian society that your only remedy should be sought under the roof of Europe, its values and patterns of life.

- 17) The discourse does not avoid the fact that the residents in the area that covered the Balkans look forward to their neighbor when it befalls some trouble which is very shallow, inhuman and uncivilized, we can say. On the other hand, it points to the **fact that people in the Balkans do not dare to compare with better of themselves such as the Western developed countries** that are in scientific terms, culture of life and civilization in general far ahead of the Balkans.

The Balkans is perceived as a place where we employ friends, acquaintances, party sympathizers, relatives, godparents and locals. The Balkans is therefore a hotbed of bribery, corruption and nepotism. It is argued that this is a primitive tribal behavior pattern. In the Balkans, the tribes rule is enforced. It is better to say that it is attached to mentality. It warns that as long as that mentality dominates, people in places which are called the Balkans will not have the right people or experts in their fields in the right positions. Balkans is blamed for all sorts of things that, according to the authors, represents centre of the grey economy, but also *Croatia and society in general are considered the Balkans only in those cases where it is important to point out the bad examples of behavior, riots, illogical, primitivism etc.* Huge dose of aversion leads a discourse about the Balkans, and the Balkan nations are labeled with ugly things such as beating, smashing, bribery, chauvinism, irresponsibility, improvisation and backdoor arrangements, all together under the guise of Balkanism. Pendulum of

Balkan nationalism is regularly smeared with blood. Nationalism in these areas is easier than democracy, outrage stronger than reformist consciousness, while patience gives a way to inflammatory messages and calls to classification under the national flag.

- 18) ***The discourse is not going in the direction that Balkans is essential as a geographical term, but it becomes essential as a metaphor for the conflict***, intolerance Byzantine dusk, the call of blood and soil, as well as areas in which it is difficult to grow a tender plant called democracy, and many nations in the territory which is called the Balkans have seen and experienced this in their own skin in the recent past, which is still on-going. The only question is *how much of that 'balkanism' is there in the very being of Croatian society, and was the former state the place where the same balkanism was suppressed and imprisoned in a sort of Pandora's box for many years during the common state of Yugoslavia. When it was finally opened by the 'evil prophets', evil spread out and destroyed decades of real illusion about the possibility of coexistence or, as it was affectionately called, 'brotherhood and unity'.*

***Finally, the basic goal of this study showed that substantially, news discourse about the Balkans is based on stereotypes and on the fact that there is no causal relationship in expressed impressions of such rhetoric in the break-in periods of political and social events. Quite opposite, it was mostly constant throughout the period – up until Croatian accession to European Union. I sincerely believe that this book made within comparative perspective is not mere academic or scientific analysis, but will be important because it will gain wider social significance through further, deeper examining of the basic structure of media discourse and its possible impact***

*on national and symbolic identification. It is my hope that it can indeed constitute a good basis for another prospective study in that field based on the results of this research.*

# SUMMARY

This book represents analysis of the media construction of Balkanism in Croatia at the end of the twentieth and early twenty-first century. It is about so-called Balkanism discourse that can be seen from different positions depending on who perpetuates it and in what way. Roughly one can say that the Balkanism discourse comes from “outside” and “inside” – the “outside” one refers to representations of “Balkans”, primarily from the perspective of “the West” (specifically “Europe”), and the “inside” one refers to representation of “Balkans” from their own perspective i.e. from the perspective of the very inhabitants of the Balkans. Key area of research represent a way in which the concept of Balkanism is used in the context of its media usage and in which way can one recognize the patterns of symbolic formation of national identity. The basic intention is to point out the existence of certain stereotypical patterns that represent the constant media use of Balkanism and Europeanism.

In this analysis it is proved that discourse about the Balkans is largely present in the media in Croatia in the last twenty years and has influenced the direction of political and social events. In doing so, three periods can be distinguish where this discourse underwent changes: first was the period around 1999 when the collective memory of the socialist period was suppressed at the expense of the official rhetoric of the Central European and Mediterranean roots of Croatian culture and society, the term

“Balkans” back then was identified with the concept of socialism and Yugonostalgia and “Europe” with the notion of civility. Since 2000, the media rhetoric of the term Balkanism is no longer perceived as something purely negative, and around 2007 it takes some positive, primarily ethnographic connotations. However, I believe that the ideological matrix of “Balkanism” is still very present when it comes to constructing the symbolic identity, and that this problem has not been sufficiently explored in recent works in the field of sociology. The intention of this thesis is to show that political and social matrix is still heavily influenced by the media discourse of “Europeanness” and “Balkanism”, and that at the same time, just like before, is still using the same discursive mechanisms. In this sense, the power elites consciously accept the stereotypes imposed by the West, reproducing and imposing collective patterns of ethnic and cultural identification which could be described as “post-colonial”.

There is no expressed semantic shift in media rhetoric in critical times, but it must be stated that early stages of research (1999-2006) showed a higher concentration of discourse on the Balkans, but by the number of published articles the any other topics. Also, there is the precise period in which these terms are used and exclude others like “Balkan”, “Southeast Europe”, “Western Balkans”. All of them are used at different times at the beginning and in the end of the period of the study, provided that the term “Balkan” was used more in the first period of research (1999-2004). In a great extent, media research can be very fruitful for the analysis of socio-cultural changes in Croatian society, especially in the period from 1999-2009. Surely that there are some discrepancies between the sociological and ethnographic research on the origin of Balkans and the European civilization circles and media texts which, for example, put Croatia under the roof, others feel that it only partly belongs to the Balkans, a third believe that Croatia has never belonged to space which

is referred to either as the Balkans, the Western Balkans or Southeastern Europe, but it's always been in Central Europe. An independent media (in our example *Nacional*) were also infused with the rhetoric of the Balkans and colonial forms but admittedly to a lesser extent. Key words and terms that are used by the media to describe the Yugoslav and post-Yugoslav experience in the context of opposition Balkans=socialism and primitivism, Europe=capitalism and the development of the “arrogance”, “non- civilization,” “vulgarity” “savagery,” “barbarism” etc. with the Balkan side, while Europe occurs in the context of “progress”, “civilization”, “development”, etc.



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