



first publication

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1 The name of the project is *W poszukiwaniu nowego kanonu [Searching for a New Canon]*. Ed. Dąbrowska-Partyka Maria. The project will be accomplished in 2004. In the book, my contribution, which serves as a base for this paper, is entitled *Chorwacja między Europą i Bałkanami. Analiza dyskursu prasowego [Croatia: Between Europe and the Balkans. Discourse Analysis in the Press]* and deals with the problem more complexly.

2 Van Dijk, Teun: *Ideology and Discourse*. In: <http://www.discourse-in-society.org/ideo-dis2.htm>

3 The Relation between discourse, power and ideology is studied very deeply for instance by Fairclough, Norman: *Discourse and Social Change*. Cambridge: Polity Pr. 1992.

4 Wodak, Ruth: *What CDA is about – A Summary of its History, Important Concepts and its Developments*. In: Wodak, Ruth / Meyer, Michael (Ed.): *Methods of Critical Discourse Analysis*. London: SAGE 2001, p. 3.

5 In this paper the notion *discourse is language* as social practice. It is determined by social structures and affects them, cf. Fairclough, Norman: *Language and Power*. London, New York: Longman 1989, 17. Note that, since discourse and language are very vague and fuzzy notions, there are disputes over the usage of the two terms: Cf. Meyer, Michael: *Between Theory, Method, and Politics: Positioning of the Approaches to CDA*. In: Wodak / Meyer 2001, p. 14f. Meyer also puts the illuminates how discourse is understood by various researchers (ibid., pp. 17-23).

6 Fairclough 1992, p. 1, explicitly underlines that language is a method of studying social change.

7 Fowler, Roger: *Language in the News. Discourse and Ideology in the Press*, London: Routledge 2001, p. 4.

8 Since there is no consistent CDA methodology, methods used in analyzing discourse are very diverse and

If one wants to research media and its language, one has to bear in mind that every type of discourse is biased and – even more importantly in our case – the product of a certain ideology. In this paper, I will try to answer the question, how discourse is involved in the reproduction of ideology in contemporary Croatian society. In other words I will ask, which sort of ideology is mainly represented in the discourse of the Croatian media, and how ideologies are related to the field of interest fixed in the title – *European Identity*. This article only highlights some aspects of research that is part of a wider project at Jagiellonian University in Krakow.¹

The paper is divided into three parts: the first part defines the methodology and the framework of the research by asking some crucial questions. In the following section, I will present the results of my research, and in the last part I will draw some conclusions.

I.

A very basic definition of ideology, presented by Teun van Dijk, will be used for the purpose of this paper:

Communism as well as anti-communism, socialism and liberalism, feminism and sexism, racism and antiracism, pacifism and militarism, are examples of widespread ideologies. Group members who share such ideologies stand for a number of very general ideas that are at the basis of their more specific beliefs about the world, guide their interpretation of events, and monitor their social practices.²

Each *our*-ideology, the ideology *we* believe in, is usually perceived by us not as an ideology but rather as neutral knowledge, something that is *normal*, *common sense*, and should be generally considered thus by everybody. In this perspective, *the others (they)*, according to us, have ideologies. The same point of view is represented by other discourse researchers. Ruth Wodak also takes into consideration the relation between power and ideology, emphasizing that stable discursive practices, as being resisted, are seen as *breaking conventions*.³

Taking into account the insights that discourse is structured by dominance; that every discourse is historically produced and interpreted, that is, it is situated in time and space; and that dominance structures are legitimated by ideologies of power groups, the complex approach advocated by proponents of CL and CDA makes it possible to analyse pressures from above and possibilities of resistance to unequal power relationships that appear as societal conventions. According to this view, dominant structures stabilize conventions and naturalize them, that is, the effects of power and ideology in the production of meaning are obscured and acquire stable and natural forms: they are taken as »given«.⁴

Ideology uses language and discourse⁵ in order to spread its values/ideas. Therefore it is necessary to carry out research on language (discourse) and to recognize the ideology that underlies discourse⁶. With this in mind, the alleged impartiality or objectivity of some media (or discourses in general) is false (or rather an illusion), because every news (discourse) is practised by individuals as well as institutions. Thus it is biased and socially constructed and *represents the world in language*.⁷

Within the empirical research I focused on two basic realisations of discourse – form and content. I used theory and methodology developed by Teun van Dijk, Norman Fairclough, Ruth Wodak, Roger Fowler, Victor Klemperer (1992 [1947]), Jerzy Bralczyk (2001), Michał Głowiński (1990, 1992), trying to develop my own approach.⁸ Thus I paid special attention to the explicit and implicit (*the meaning of discourse is not limited to the meaning of its words and sentences*) way in which ideology is being expressed. It seems that implicit, the less »visible« elements of discourse are affecting the receiver the most. The entire approach took into account each language-use concerning the whole social and political context, how the analysed texts are composed (including titles and leads). Following this approach, I became aware of discursive strategies and some semantic properties and figures of surface structures of discourse, such as: »synonymies« (important in terms of form in Croatian language because of the recent lan-

each researcher has got their own approach. Cf. Meyer 2001, pp. 23-30.

guage policy), paraphrases, lexical and stylistic variations (metaphors, similes, irony, euphemisms) depending on the context; disclaimers (apparent negations), modality (expressions like: »it is necessary to know that ...«, »he truth is that ...«), *topoi* (Latin: *loci communes* – some common and repeatable semantic centres and fields in discourse). Generalisation and vagueness are one of the most important operations of ideology.

It goes without saying that ideology, using discourse, tends to emphasise good things about *us* and bad things about *them* and de-emphasise bad things about *us* and good things about *them*. I paid attention to word order and took into account, that intolerant ideology tends to show the other as a group avoiding the individualization of people – it uses the paradigm of *them/us* (outgroup/ingroup).

During my research I paid special attention to several aspects. Since Europe and the Balkans (as conceptual notions) are central for the discourse, it is to be expected, that the *others* we will be (re-)presented in it. Thus, I was trying to find out, how (in)tolerance, xenophobia, reluctance and diversity in the general sense were being reported.

In the empirical section I will try to answer more specifically two basic questions:

1. What is European Identity, according to the Croatian press?
 - how is Europe perceived by the ideology
2. How is Europe promoted and what kind of language is used by the ideology?
 - basic enemies
 - visions of Croatian goals as part of Europe

II.

To begin with, I will make some common and general remarks concerning the situation of public discourse, as realised in the media in post-communist countries in Europe. The transitional process in most of these states was related to a serious shift in ideology and public discourse. The main goal of the élite, which took over in these states, was to create or rebuild an identity that had been challenged by the Soviet and/or communist influence. As far as the states of former Yugoslavia, and notably Croatia, were concerned, the »enemy« was different but the mechanism the same. The élite aimed to convince people that they belong to the Western European world⁹, so one of the main semantic fields of the public discourse in the post-communist bloc was the paradigm of Eastern Europe–Central Europe–Western Europe¹⁰, and the most important goal of the Croatian elite in the 1990's was to create a European consciousness and identity among the people (see below). This meant that, according to the national ideology, Croatia had to be perceived as a European, not a Balkan nation and state. Attempts of searching Croatian origins were to some extent closely related to the whole process.¹¹

Since discourse is a product of society, it must be analysed against its social and political background. Therefore, it is important to fix this background, when focusing on discourse analysis in the following social and political events¹²:

1. the Summit of the European Union member countries and former Yugoslav countries and Albania in Zagreb, 2000¹³
2. the crisis of the governing coalition in July and August 2001 and 2002
3. the process of integration into CEFTA
4. the Stabilisation and Association Agreement
5. the meeting of Bosnian, Croatian and Yugoslav presidents in Sarajevo on July 17, 2002

The research was done in two types of press: nationalistic and non-nationalistic. Note that this simple division does not mean that in Croatia there are nationalistic and non-nationalistic kinds of media. It aims to simplify the approach and means that »non-nationalistic« kind of discourse was more democratic and proved more tolerant. The language used there was not as offensive and aggressive as the languages used in state-owned and nationalistic media. Those relatively liberal newspapers used more tolerant, peaceful and conciliatory rhetoric, not aggressive language and non-xenophobic ideas.¹⁴ These types of papers played an important role during the collapse of the *ancien régime* in 2000.

⁹ The Western world is perceived as the Latin part of European civilisation, as Huntington, Samuel: *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of the World Order*. New York, London: Free Pr. 2002 [first publ.: New York: Simon & Schuster 1996] describes the division. In this perspective, Huntington's division only confirms Croatian aspirations because he puts the country into this Latin world.

¹⁰ The concept of »Central Europe« was discussed among anti-communist dissidents mainly from Czechoslovakia, Hungary and Poland before the communism collapsed in 1989.

¹¹ We could mention here, that descend theories, which seem to have been an important piece of the ideology, appear to have shown the Croats in the different, non-Slavic, non-Yugoslav perspective: Iranian theory of descend.

¹² Note that, in order to recognise the difference between the discourse before and after the political shifts in Croatia in 2000, I did some research before 2000 as well.

¹³ Discourse of *Vjesnik*, *Večernji List*, *Nacional*, *Globus*, *Slobodna Dalmacija*.

¹⁴ Implicit (hidden) prejudices in the media could be found not only in newly-established democracies like Croatia but in countries with a long democratic tradition.

15 We need to remember that every discourse which refers to national identity, not only in Croatia, tends to homogenize it in terms of national myths. The nationalistic discourse is, in this perspective, explicitly intolerant.

16 Although the language represents the same linguistic system or rather diasystem, in the discourse – not only of the press but also from of the scientific literature – a difference in language is one mainly due to its different historical development.

17 Note that these constructions are also discursively constructed and naturalized. This can be seen in every single transitional country in Europe.

The political aspect of Europe (integration with the European Union) is more and more often discussed in Croatia. This is because the Stabilisation and Association Agreement was begun and Croatia will probably be a rightful candidate for EU accession shortly. In this perspective, the Europe/Balkans paradigm is important for the public discourse (both: nationalistic and non-nationalistic¹⁵, although in different ways). The Croats and Croatia have been presented as an integral part of Europe and thus European civilisation unnaturally divided from its roots. The Bakhtin's »opponent« (in other words the *us/them* paradigm) were Serbs, communists, Yugoslavs, Soviets and so the discourse emphasized the most important diversifying elements of national identity (division between Serbs and Croats): religion, tradition, history and language¹⁶. In pro-national papers (including state-owned papers until 2000), the Serbs had been presented as a primitive Balkan people: *Balkanac* – this Croatian (and also Serbian!) word has received a pejorative meaning that has quite often been used for the Serbs. In today's Croatia, this term is used polemically when referring to an ideological opponent.

As a result of the ideological *naturalization* of discourse, the same geographical notions: *Western Balkans* and *Southeastern Europe* have different connotations in the press. It means that the conceptual meaning of the two, although referring to the same geographical space, is not the same. A diagram introduced here is based on the discursive construction of these expressions.



This simple diagram shows how Europe is seen by Croatian public discourse (both nationalistic and non-nationalistic). The Balkans and the Western Balkans are places to which Croatia does not want to belong, and according to most instances, where it is not. As an antidote (*modus faciendi*) for placing Croatia in the Balkans *Southeastern Europe* has recently been promoted steadily. On the other hand, *Central and Eastern Europe* and *Central Europe*¹⁷ are presented as embodiments of transitional success (in a political sense) in the discourse. If Croatia had not lost time during Tadjman's period, as a vast majority of the discourses of the non-nationalistic press say, it would have been a part of this kind of Europe. In a cultural sense, Croatia is shown as a Central and Eastern European state because of its history and western, Latin values. It means that Croatia must join the *successful transitional Europe* and become a part of *Western Europe* where its real place is, which will enable it to pull itself out of the Balkans. It still happens, however, that it is nevertheless placed there in the discourse, but then, it is presented as an important player and propagator of *European* values.

Quantitative research of linguistic items confirms the strongly pejorative meaning of the term »Balkan«. In descriptions of Croatia the term »the Balkans« is substituted by other, less pejorative, expressions such as: »region« (*regija*) – 37,7%, »South-Eastern Europe« (*jugoistočna Europa, Jugoistok, Jugoistok Europe, europski jugoistok*) – 50,8%, as opposed to »the Balkans« (or »Western Balkans«) with only 11,5%.

■ Balkan/Zapadni Balkan ■ Regija □ Jugoistočna Europa



18 Carruther, Susan L.: *Media at War. Communication and Conflict in the Twentieth Century*. Basingstoke: Macmillan 2000, p. 24.

19 State-owned media are very important for this analysis because they have changed their rhetoric significantly in the analysed period, which I am going to present in a further contribution. In those media, up to 2000 a nationalistic and non-democratic picture had been explicitly drawn by the regime's journalists, in the name of European identity, creating a xenophobic attitude towards the Serbs and other enemies of the *Croatian national goals*.

20 *Vjesnik*, 14.03.1995: »Na ovim prostorima (jugoistočne Europe, bo nie Balkana) Hrvatska se nalazi između jedne strane »istočne srpske civilizacije«, u kojoj za sada dominira nered i kaos, i s druge strane dodiruje svijet srednje i zapadne Europe, gdje je oduvijek povijesno pripadala.«

As we see, the term ›the Balkans‹ is used very rarely. Researching the context in which it appeared, I found that ›Balkans‹ is used pejoratively in 51,9% of the instances.

At this stage, it is necessary to periodise the development of the Croatian press since 1991, certainly simplifying the whole issue. Since we are examining how the public discourse in the media re-produces nationalism, the most appropriate periodic division would be the following: 1991-2000 and 2000 to the present. The first period is diversified in terms of the legal situation, repression and financial problems of the independent press and could be divided again into 1991-1995 and 1995-2000. After 2000, there follows quite a homogenous period.

1995-2000 – Policy of Ideological Exclusion

Before heading to the presentation of the research let me cite Susan L. Carruthers *The Media at War*:

Wars never end when the shooting stops. [...] In the twentieth century, while war has continued to be evoked in traditional ways – be that through poetry, painting or the construction of memorials – its most wide-reaching representations have generally been those circulated by mass media, cinema, historical films have been staple fare, in countries as diverse as India, Japan, France, Russia and China [...]¹⁸

Until 2000, the late president Tudjman's party, the *Croatian Democratic Union*, was in power and the press had been suppressed many times (the cases of weekly magazines: *Nacional* and *Feral Tribune*). Those papers, however, very strongly opposed Tudjman's regime, political and ideological exclusion of those who *think and act differently*, a language of hatred, a process of nationalisation of every aspect of life in which every member of a society (nation) had to decide fundamentally, if they are with the president and his policy and ideology or against it. Those who did not join the »only appropriate ideology« were very often ideologically excluded. This evoked a strong polarisation of society, and a very deep ideological division. The media played an important role in this entire process. The Critical Discourse Analysis provides information about the ideology we are talking about. Additionally, the autocratic government used state-owned media at the time to promote, build and recreate the national (state), nationalistic ideology (mainly through the dailies *Vjesnik* and *HRT*)¹⁹.

In Central and Eastern European territories, Croatia neighbours »Eastern, Serbian civilisation«, in which chaos and mess so far dominate, and on the other side [Croatia] touches the Central and Western European World, which it has always belonged to.²⁰

Simultaneously, apart from the state media's monopoly and ideologically exclusive press, the free, already mentioned types of press (*Nacional*, *Globus*, *Feral*) emerged and created a rather different kind of discourse (transporting a more open and »liberal« ideology). In the meantime, those who acted against them were suppressed by the autocratic government (the suppression was criticized by the OSCE, the UE [European Commission], the US Department of State and the Council of Europe).

2000 to the Present – Ideological Dichotomy

When in 2000, a coalition of non-nationalistic (to some extent liberal) forces came to power, the situation in some media also changed, which did not so much concern the liberal part of the media scene. The shift has been visible notably in *Vjesnik* and HRT (Croatian State Radio and Television). The new ruling coalition was initially composed of six parties and intended to carry out de-nationalization and so-called de-Tudjmanisation of the Croatian public discourse. That meant literally getting rid of the overwhelming nationalistic rhetoric in every day life, notably in the media.

The new priorities of the government were to reform Croatian strategic goals, i.e. to start negotiations with the EU for gaining membership, but also to require the abandoning isolationism, nationalistic language and to destroy and get rid of xenophobic capacity from state/public discourse and in the state-controlled media. The result was the replacement of the earlier nationalistic ideological monopoly supported by the state with an ideological polarization of positions in the public and political debate.

21 There are several «new», imaginary enemies that emerged in this type of discourse: Western way of life, the international free-masonry, international trade corporations, European laic values etc. Due to that ideology they could endanger the Croatian catholic sense of national identity.

22 »Kad smo prihvatili da nas svijet jednako politički i moralno tretira kao i Srbiju, prihvatili smo i svoj civilizacijski poraz[.]« In: Slobodna Dalmacija, 24.11.2000.

23 »Ne želim nikoga podcjenjivati, ali mi i Srbija smo dva svijeta! Hrvatska je u civilizacijskom i kulturološkom smislu, po svojim resursima i potencijalima, tako posebna cjelina u odnosu na bosansko-srpski Balkan[.]« In: ibid.

Ruling over the state-owned media, the new government started to promote its political and social programme to replace the xenophobic and intolerant discourse with political pragmatism, and the media's nationalism was deconstructed to some extent. It has recently been nearly impossible to find any sort of explicit reluctance towards the Serbs in media like *Vjesnik* or *HRT*, because nationalistic discourse is limited and restricted. The political events evoked such a shift in the proportion of the ideology represented in the Croatian media. It is very hard to say how »honest« those changes are, since the shift of discourse had been evoked by the political correctness of the new ruling coalition supported by the EU.

In both types of press, some stereotypes and prejudices are still being reproduced: in nationalistic (*Hrvatsko slovo*, *Fokus*) explicitly so, in non-nationalistic (independent: *Globus*, *Nacional*, *Večernji list*, *Novi list* and state-owned: *Vjesnik*) more or less implicitly. In this debate, Croatia is always glorified and presented as the best candidate for EU and NATO membership out of all the Balkan or rather South-Eastern European countries. On the other side of the border, there are Serbia and Montenegro, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Romania, Albania. Very often, political analysts emphasize that Croatia, although in the same group, is better prepared and richer, and therefore strengthens a negative attitude toward its neighbours. This kind of discourse was used in order to create a sort of consciousness and European identity among the Croats, that stands in contrast to the Serbs, who, allegedly, belong to another, non-European but Byzantine civilisation which is certainly »worse« than the European one. Such a perspective, which is still very common in Croatia, formed an anti-democratic attitude of the vast majority of the public discourse in Croatia. The biggest enemy, a ringleader of the Balkan wars, is still Yugoslavia. In this perspective, Croatia – as a civilised European country – was peace-loving and was treacherously attacked in order to be conquered. Again, a myth of *antimurale christianitatis* (traditionally used in Croatian discourses throughout history) came back to life, but the enemy of the Western world (Latin civilisation) against which Croatia had apparently to fight, were not Muslims but Orthodox Christians, embodied as Yugoslavs. Hence, we could emphasise that this discourse had nothing to do with the ideological (European, human) values that were being fought for.

Nowadays, the most disputed point between the conservative, national and the non-nationalistic media – including the state-owned media as well – is an attitude towards a process of a regional co-operation between Croatia and Serbia that is demanded by the EU. This situation emerged since Croatia formally started a process of membership-negotiations with the EU. As far as regional co-operation between Croatia and the other Balkan states is concerned, the nationalistic press' discourse deepens intolerance and exclusive policy, emphasising that the *endangered nation* also has to struggle against this.²¹ The Serbs, Yugoslavs, are still explicitly presented as the »worse«, the »less civilised« *group*, belonging to a different culture. There is a very distinctive border being drawn between Serbs and Croats.

If we agree that the world treats us politically and morally like Serbia, we agree to the defeat of *our civilization*.²²

According to the presented ideology, Serbia is part of the Balkans but Croatia is not.

I don't like to underestimate anybody but us and Serbia are two different worlds! [...] Croatia, thanks to its potential, is in the civilisation and cultural sense something completely different from the Bosnian-Serbian Balkans.²³

As I stated before, disclaimers (»I have nothing against them, but...«) combining the positive thinking of the ingroup with negative aspect of the others, as a discourse is indeed explicitly intolerant and uses common linguistic figures widely used by ideologies.

III. Conclusions

Today's ideological polarisation in Croatian political discourse goes through the border of perception of the paradigm of the Balkans/Europe and refers, in part, to Habermasian post-national Europe. According to both the so-called patriotic or flag-waving and the non-nationalistic media, Croatia's place is in Europe - Western Europe being more appropriate because of its history and culture. Non-nationalistic, liberal discourse expresses a wish to be a part of *Europe*

