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SERBIAN POLITICAL THOUGHT

PARLIAMENTARY DEMOCRACY
AND POLITICAL PARTICIPATION OF YOUTH IN SERBIA

Boban Stojanović, Slobodan Vukadinović

YUGOSLAV HISTORY AND ITS INTERPRETATION

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CURRENT ISSUES

Milinko S. Vračar, Igor I. Barišić, Bojana Stajkić,
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REVIEWS

Dušan Dostanić



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SERBIAN POLITICAL THOUGHT

CONTENTS

This Issue's Theme:

PARLIAMENTARY DEMOCRACY AND POLITICAL PARTICIPATION OF YOUTH IN SERBIA

Boban Stojanović

REPRESENTATION OF YOUTH IN LOCAL ASSEMBLIES
IN SERBIA.....1-15

Slobodan Vukadinović

TRENDS IN CONTEMPORARY PARLIAMENTARY
DEVELOPMENT AND INNOVATIVE EXAMPLES
OF BEST PRACTICES OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY
OF THE REPUBLIC OF SERBIA.....17-37

YUGOSLAV HISTORY AND ITS INTERPRETATION

Aleksandra Savić

THE NEW YORK TIMES ON THE NATO BOMBING
OF FR YUGOSLAVIA IN 1999.....39-61

Vasilije Dragosavljević

THE YUGOSLAV NATIONAL FRONT: ATTEMPT(S)
TO UNIFY THE YUGONTEGRALISTS EXTREME RIGHT
1935–1939.....63-82

CURRENT ISSUES

Milinko S. Vračar and Igor I. Barišić

THE DEFENSE FUNCTION OF THE STATE

– TRADITIONAL AND MODERN UNDERSTANDING.....85-108

Bojana Stajkić, Jasna Hrnčić, Milena Blagojević

A CONTRIBUTION TO THE DEBATE ON THE POLICY OF
SANCTIONING CORPORAL PUNISHMENT OF CHILDREN

IN SERBIA: ATTITUDE INCONSISTENCY.....111-136

Maja Trifunović

FAMILY IN DISPLACEMENT AND ITS ROLE
IN CULTURAL ADAPTATION AND NATIVE

LANGUAGE PRESERVATION.....139-155

REVIEWS

Dušan Dostanić

“TITOVŠTINA” IN YUGOSLAVIA..... 157-161

THIS ISSUE'S THEME

**PARLIAMENTARY DEMOCRACY
AND POLITICAL PARTICIPATION OF YOUTH
IN SERBIA**

Boban Ž. Stojanović*
Independent researcher, Belgrade

REPRESENTATION OF YOUTH IN LOCAL ASSEMBLIES IN SERBIA (Translation *In Extenso*)

Abstract

This paper examines the representation of young people in local assemblies and the factors that may influence it. The first part of the study explores the legal status of youth within Serbia's legal system, youth participation, local self-government, local elections, and the instruments of local youth policy. The paper then outlines the methodological approach, data collection, and coding procedures using the statistical software SPSS, as well as the construction of dependent and independent variables. The first set of variables pertains to the demographic characteristics of municipalities and cities, the second set relates to scholarships for pupils and students, and the third set concerns local youth policies aimed at enhancing youth participation in decision-making processes. The total number of young councilors in Serbia amounts to 386 out of a total of 6,483 councilors, representing 5.95%. Through correlation analysis, all hypotheses were rejected except for the hypothesis that the number of young councilors in local self-government units is influenced by the type of local self-government, the number of voters and councilors in a municipality or city, and the size of the municipality or city, with weak to moderate correlation. Hypotheses concerning the influence of student scholarships and instruments of local youth policy on the number and percentage of young councilors in local self-government units were

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rejected. The findings indicate that support for students, as well as local youth policy instruments, do not contribute to an increase in the number of young councilors in local self-government assemblies in Serbia.

Keywords: youth, councilors, representation, youth participation, local youth policy

INTRODUCTION

Youth represent a distinct social, economic, sociological, and political category in every society and state. While there is no universally accepted definition of youth, the age range typically associated with youth is between 12 and 35. In the Republic of Serbia, youth are defined as individuals aged 15 to 30 (Zakon o mladima 2011). The Constitution of the Republic of Serbia defines that every adult has the right to vote, and the same legal act defines that “adulthood is acquired upon reaching the age of 18” (Ustav Republike Srbije 2006). Therefore, a portion of young people do not have the right to vote (aged 15 to 18), but the majority of young people (aged 18 to 30) in Serbia have voting rights. According to the latest census (RZS 2022), Serbia has approximately 1.5 million young people, constituting almost 16% of the total population. An estimated 200,000 of them are under 18, which, according to the latest voter list from December 2023, when there were 6.5 million voters in Serbia, means that there are about 13% of voters who fall into the legal category of youth (Stojanović, Ivković, and Kaličanin 2024), representing a very significant political target group. Given their representation in the population, we would expect young people to be at least similarly represented in representative institutions in Serbia (the National Assembly of the Republic of Serbia and the assemblies of local self-government units in Serbia). This is a key research question in this paper: how politically represented are young people in their local communities, and what factors influence their representation?

YOUTH REPRESENTATION AND PARTICIPATION IN LOCAL YOUTH POLICY

Youth participation at the local level can be viewed on two levels: one more closely related to political involvement and the other to participation in and contribution to community improvement. The first model of youth participation and involvement represents participation in decision-making processes and advocacy at the local level (advocacy for specific public policies). In contrast, the second model focuses more on community activities through various programs related to collective action and youth skills development, which can be characterized as community work (Berthin 2014). Additionally, the most significant measure of influence on decision-making regarding youth is the participation of young people in representative and executive bodies of local self-government (Augsberger, Collins, and Gecker 2017). However, young people are underrepresented worldwide in representative/legislative bodies (Bidadanure 2021; Kurz and Ettensperger 2023; Stockemer and Sundstrom 2022). The situation is similar in the Republic of Serbia. However, we have yet to get exact data on the participation of young people in local assemblies in previous convocations of local self-government units. As a comparison, we can take the number of young MPs in the last 20 years, which varies from 1.2% in the 2016 parliamentary convocation to 8.8% in the 2008 convocation and 11.2% in the 2020 convocation (Stojanović, Ivković, and Kaličanin 2024).

Article 8 of the Youth Act defines the Principle of Active Youth Participation, stating that “all, and especially the subjects of youth policy, shall ensure a supportive environment and provide active support for the implementation of youth activities by young people, the taking of initiatives and their meaningful involvement in the processes of decision-making and implementation of decisions that contribute to personal and social development, based on full information of young people,” and Article 10 of the Law, which defines the National Youth Strategy (as the highest planning document of public policies for youth), states that “the strategy is a document adopted by the Government, at the proposal of the ministry, which regulates, in particular - the active participation of young people in social life” (Zakon o mladima 2011). The National Youth Strategy for the Republic of Serbia for 2023-2030, adopted just last year, provides for a Special Objective 3 of the strategy entitled: “Young people are active participants in society at all levels.” Furthermore, this objective is more precisely achieved through measure 3.1, which

states: “Creating conditions for the involvement of young people in decision-making processes and policies that affect them, as well as their development, application, monitoring of implementation and evaluation” (Strategija za mlade 2023). Therefore, the law and the strategy governing youth policy should influence youth activism and promote participation in decision-making processes. Youth policy instruments and subjects should encourage youth participation in social life.

Given that we are discussing active participation at the local level, the Youth Act and Strategy envision various instruments of local youth policy such as youth offices, youth councils, youth clubs (youth spaces), youth strategies, and action plans as documents of local youth policy, financing of local youth policy through local budgets, and funding of youth associations and associations for youth through local budgets (Zakon o mladima 2011; Stojanović 2021; Milenković i Petrović 2023).

LOCAL SELF-GOVERNMENT AND LOCAL ELECTIONS IN THE REPUBLIC OF SERBIA

Local self-government in Serbia is a constitutional category and guarantees citizens “the right to local self-government through freely elected representatives” (Ustav Republike Srbije 2006). Local self-government is the right of citizens to directly and through freely elected representatives manage public affairs (Zakon o lokalnoj samoupravi 2007). Local self-government in Serbia is implemented through municipalities, cities, and the city of Belgrade, and cities can establish municipal boroughs, which are not units of local self-government as established by city statutes (Stojanović 2022b).

Local self-government in Serbia is characterized by: a) a single-tier model of organization – although there are municipalities, cities, and the city of Belgrade, they are all at the same level of local self-government and it represents a single-tier level of territorial organization of local government (Stojanović 2014; Stojanović and Jović 2014); b) a low level of financial autonomy and independence (Stojanović 2014); c) a very low level of “electoral definitiveness” as an element of local democracy where only local elections determine the formation of local government, expressed by the mirroring of the republican coalition at the local level and a high level of overly broad local coalitions to maintain coalition

agreements at the national level (Stojanović 2022b); d) the absence of citizen representation in local assemblies or the lack of a link between local councilors and citizens (Stojanović 2014; Stojanović 2022b), e) conducting party and national campaigns in elections (Stojanović and Jović 2015; Stojanović and Jović 2017; Lončar and Stojanović 2016), and f) a very high dependence of local boards on the headquarters of political parties as a result of low intra-party democracy (Stojanović 2022b). Local elections should be a holiday and a school of democracy instead of being elections of lesser importance (Jovanović 2008) or so-called “testing ground” elections (Matić 2013) for national elections. Councilors in the Republic of Serbia in municipalities, cities, and the city of Belgrade, as well as in municipal boroughs where they exist, are elected by a proportional electoral system in a single electoral unit with an electoral threshold of 3% and closed electoral lists for both citizens and parties – party electoral lists (Stojanović 2022). Additionally, it is essential to emphasize that data from monitoring election campaigns, both broadly and of young people in them, indicate that election campaigns in Serbia do not pay too much attention to young people, nor are young candidates key actors in campaigns (Lončar 2012; Spasojević and Stojanović 2014; Stojanović 2020; Stojanović 2022a; KOMS 2024).

RESEARCH METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK

In this analysis, we will examine the impact of various factors on the number of young elected councilors and their percentage relative to the total number of councilors in local self-government units. We will use three sets of independent variables. The first set of variables relates to the demographic, typical electoral characteristics, and the level of development of local self-government units. We will investigate whether the type of local self-government unit - whether it is a municipality or a city, the number of inhabitants of the local self-government unit defined in four categories (up to 10,000 inhabitants, from 10 to 50,000 inhabitants, from 50 to 100,000 inhabitants, and over 100,000 inhabitants), and the level of development of the local self-government unit divided into five development categories (“first group – development level above the republican average”, second group – development in the range “from 80 to 100% of the republican average”, third group range from 60 to 80% of

the average, fourth group – development below 60% of the average, and additionally – the fifth group of devastated municipalities with less than 50% of development compared to the republican average) influences the number and percentage of young councilors in local self-government units. (Vlada Republike Srbije 2015). Furthermore, variables in this set include the number of councilors to be elected (up to 30, from 30 to 50, and more than 50 councilors), the number of voters in the local self-government unit (up to 10,000, from 10 to 30,000, from 30 to 70,000, from 70 to 150,000, and more than 150,000 voters), and the election term (regular or extraordinary). Data sources for this set of variables include official data of the Republic of Serbia – laws, government decrees, the Census, reports of the Republic Statistical Office, and the website of the Republican Electoral Commission (Zakon o teritorijalnoj organizaciji Republike Srbije 2007; Vlada Republike Srbije 2015; Republički zavod za statistiku [RZS] 2020; RZS 2022; Republička izborna komisija [RIK] 2023; RIK 2024).

The second set of variables relates to the local self-government unit's (LGU) care for young people in the education category. In line with the competencies of local self-government units in the field of education (Zakon o lokalnoj samoupravi 2007), we examine whether there is a link between student and pupil scholarships granted or not granted by the LGU and the number of young councilors in the LGU. These variables are defined solely in terms of whether or not student and pupil scholarships for young people exist in the LGU. The data source for all LGUs is the author's database, collected through requests for information of public importance sent to all LGUs in the Republic of Serbia (Petrović i Stojanović 2021).

The third set of variables pertains to local youth policy in Serbia, which is also defined by law as one of the competencies of local self-government units (Zakon o lokalnoj samoupravi 2007). The Youth Act provides (optionally) several instruments of local youth policy to care for young people at the lowest level of government, and we have considered all of these instruments in terms of whether they exist or not. These instruments include the existence of a youth office in the LGU as an executive body of government that implements youth policy; funds in the LGU budget for the implementation of youth policy; a portion of budget funds allocated to youth associations and young people as subjects of

implementing local youth policy; a youth council as an advisory body to the LGU assembly; the participation of young people in the youth council; a youth strategy/action plan as a planning document that directs and creates local youth policy; and a youth club as an institution for young people where there is a space for young people. Additionally, we introduce variables that could influence our dependent variable, such as whether there were young (under 30) officials (politically elected officials) in the previous term and whether there was an institutionally designated official for youth in the last term (a member of the LGU council responsible for youth or an assistant to the mayor for youth). Furthermore, we create an index of local youth policy as defined by the representation of local youth policy instruments in each LGU. The source of this data is also the author's database, which was collected using a research instrument – a request for information of public importance sent to all LGUs in the Republic of Serbia.

Data on the dependent variables (number of young councilors in local self-government units and the percentage of young councilors in LGU assemblies) are also from the author's database (Stojanović and Ivković 2024). The data source is data from the website of the Republican Electoral Commission for local elections in 2023 and 2024, such as decisions on the allocation of mandates to councilors, reports on election results, decisions on consolidated electoral lists and individual electoral lists of parties, coalitions of parties or groups of citizens (RIK 2023; RIK 2024). The database of young councilors was created by cross-referencing these four sets of publicly available data. The database of the number of councilors is coded according to the number of councilors itself (from 1 to 9). In contrast, the percentage of young councilors is defined in five categories (no councilors, up to 5% of young councilors, from 5 to 10, from 10 to 15, and over 15% of young councilors). This study's total observations (N) is 145 (145 local self-government units in Serbia – municipalities, cities, and Belgrade without municipal boroughs).

Hypothetical framework – in this paper, we define several hypotheses related to the dependent variable, i.e., the number and percentage of young councilors in municipal and city assemblies. We also examine the impact of three sets of independent variables. The first relates to the demographic, typical electoral characteristics, and development of local self-government units; the second relates to the allocations of

local self-government units for student and pupil scholarships; and the third variables are related to the development and instruments of local youth policy. Based on the previously defined variables, we define the following hypotheses:

Hypothesis 1. The number and percentage of young councilors increase with a higher level (although the same level) of local self-government (urban areas) and a more significant number of inhabitants, voters, and the number of councilors to be elected, as well as with a higher level of development of the local self-government unit.

Hypothesis 2. The number and percentage of young councilors increase if LGUs allocate funds for student and pupil scholarships.

Hypothesis 3. The number and percentage of young councilors increase as the index of local youth policy increases as a summary of the existence of individual instruments of local youth policy.

Hypothesis 4. The number and percentage of young councilors increase if there are individual instruments of local youth policy.

RESEARCH RESULTS

The total number of young councilors in the Republic of Serbia is 386 out of a total of 6,483 councilors, which represents 5.95% of young councilors, which is more than twice the percentage of youth representation in local assemblies compared to their representation in the electorate. The average number of young councilors per LGU is 2.22 (standard deviation – 1.766). Here, we also present findings on scholarships and instruments for local youth policy. As many as 93 LGUs have scholarships for students, 52 LGUs do not, 42 LGUs have scholarships for pupils, and 103 LGUs do not. On the other hand, 102 LGUs have a youth office, while 43 LGUs do not. 97 LGUs allocate funds in the budget for local youth policy, while 48 do not allocate funds. Of these, 30 LGUs also allocate funds to youth associations and young people as subjects of local youth policy. A youth council exists in 84 LGUs but only in 61 LGUs. In 55 out of 84 LGUs, young people are an integral part of the Youth Council. A youth club exists in only 30 LGUs. There were young officials in the previous term in 34 LGUs, while there were none in 111, and in 65, there was an LGU official for youth, while in 80, there was not. Only one LGU has a local youth policy index of 9

(on a scale of 0 to 9), and that is the City of Leskovac. Only three have an index of 8, namely the city of Novi Sad, the city of Kruševac, and the municipality of Bečej. The total index of local youth policy is 3.66 (standard deviation – 2.177).

Table 1. Correlation of Variables on the Number and Percentage of Young Councilors

Variables	Number of Young Councilors	% of Young Councilors
Type of Local Government Unit	.346***	- .024
Size of Local Government Unit	.287***	- .086
Election Term	- .028	- .094
Development Level of LGU	- .147	.030
Number of Councilors Elected	.314***	- .043
Number of Voters	.345***	- .041
Pupil Scholarships	- .162	- .151
Student Scholarships	.096	.029
Youth Office	.081	.003
Budget for Youth Policy	.113	- .012
Budget for Youth Associations	0.38	- .137
Youth Council	- .004	- .003
Youth in Youth Council	- .136	.114
Youth club	.162	.063
Youth Strategy	- .093	- .091
Young Officials in Previous Term	- .004	- .002
Youth Official in Previous Term	.071	.014
Index of Local Youth Policy	.081	- .016

N=145, Statistical significance *** = $p < 0,001$; ** = $p < 0,01$; * = $p < 0,05$.

Correlation values range from -1 to 1; values from 0 to 0.3 indicate a weak correlation; from 0.3 to 0.5, a moderate correlation; from 0.5 to 0.7, a substantial correlation; from 0.7 to 0.9, a strong correlation; and from 0.9 to 1, a robust correlation.

Source: Author's analysis

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUDING REMARKS

The correlation analysis reveals no statistically significant relationship for the percentage of young councilors, and the values are predominantly negative (12 negative versus 6 positive). On the other hand, for the variable of the number of young councilors, we have statistically

significant variables with a weak to moderate correlation, and they come exclusively from the first set of variables that deal with demographics, typical electoral characteristics, and the development level of local self-government units. We can immediately reject hypotheses 2, 3, and 4 related to the second set (scholarships for students and pupils) and the third set of independent variables (local youth policy).

The number of young councilors in LGUs is most influenced by the type of local government unit (municipality or city), the number of voters in the LGU, the number of councilors elected, and the size of the local government unit. In other words, cities will have more young councilors compared to municipalities; LGUs with a growing number of voters also have a more significant number of young councilors; the larger the LGU assembly, the larger the number of young councilors, and the more inhabitants an LGU has, the more young people there are, and a cross-tabulation of data confirms this.

On the other hand, we see that the number and percentage of young councilors are independent. There is no relationship between the existence of student and pupil scholarships, nor does it depend on the index of local youth policy in LGUs, nor is there any dependence on any individual instrument of local youth policy. These are exciting findings because they show that local youth policy instruments still need to achieve one of their primary goals, which is to encourage the active participation of young people in decision-making processes (especially not in representative and legislative bodies). An explanation can also be sought, as the functionality and actual work of existing local youth policy instruments still need to be examined. Still, the research was based solely on whether certain documents, administrative bodies, advisory bodies, etc. exist.

In discussing these findings, we must likely question what other potential factors influence the low representation of young people in local assemblies and their underrepresentation. Undoubtedly, the primary conclusion of this research is that local youth policy instruments do not yield sufficiently good results in youth participation in decision-making processes at the most critical level – participation in representative and legislative bodies. The socio-demographic characteristics of LGUs for which we found statistical significance regarding the impact on the percentage and number of young councilors are expected (although

with a weak to moderate correlation). Still, we certainly did not expect that none of the sets of independent variables related to youth policy or scholarships would affect the representation of young people in local assemblies.

As a topic for discussion and potential explanations of such results, we can mention several things that could be the subject of new research. Firstly, the institutional framework of elections at the local level (closed party lists) and, consequently, the low level of intra-party democracy where local committees have a high dependence on the headquarters of political parties. All of this probably demotivates young people from becoming more actively involved in political parties, as evidenced by research on young people, which shows that less than 5% of young people are involved (in membership) in political parties (Stojanović, Ivković, and Kaličanin 2024). Secondly, in line with intra-party democracy and the highly developed level of clientelism (Pavlović 2022) in Serbia, to which young people are likely to be less prone than older citizens, this could be a direction for further research on political participation and the representation of young people. Thirdly, the reasons for the small number of young councilors in LGUs and the underrepresentation of young people can also be sought in the lack of interest of young people in the work of local self-government units, i.e., local politics, generally low interest in political developments, the feeling that they cannot influence decision-making processes, and exceptionally low trust in almost all institutions (Stojanović, Ivković, and Kaličanin 2024). Fourthly, we should not forget that the local elections in 2020 were boycotted by virtually the entire opposition in Serbia, as well as part of the June local elections held in 2024 - which tells us about the irregularity and unpredictability of local political life and external factors that influence it. Fifthly, potential reasons should also be sought in the type of political regime in Serbia, i.e., undeveloped democracy and various elements of political struggle and political activities (Vladislavljević 2019; Bursać and Vučićević 2021).

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**TRENDS IN CONTEMPORARY
PARLIAMENTARY DEVELOPMENT
AND INNOVATIVE EXAMPLES OF BEST
PRACTICES OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY
OF THE REPUBLIC OF SERBIA
(Translation *In Extenso*)**

Abstract

The aim of this paper is to examine trends in contemporary parliamentary development and to determine the position of the National Assembly of the Republic of Serbia and domestic parliamentary practice in relation to global processes. The legal-theoretical analysis begins with an exploration of the role of parliament in modern democracy, the expanding concept of parliamentary autonomy across multiple levels, the standards of a contemporary democratic parliament in the 21st century, and the growing significance of parliamentary diplomacy. Applying comparative legal and legal-dogmatic methods, the study finds that in the published five-year global parliamentary research reports (particularly those from 2017 and 2022), the National Assembly of the Republic of Serbia is recognized and highlighted as an example of good and innovative practice. In this context, the paper identifies and analyzes the innovations that have been introduced and institutionalized in the parliamentary practice and normative framework of the National Assembly over the past 15 years. Key developments include the establishment of informal

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parliamentary groups (GOPAC, Women's Parliamentary Network, Green Parliamentary Group, Economic Caucus, Energy Forum, Focus Group for the Implementation of Sustainable Development Goals), the introduction and regular holding of public hearings and committee sessions outside the National Assembly headquarters, the Green Chair mechanism, the Budget Office, and the public finance oversight portal. Finally, the paper explores current topics at the forefront of global parliamentary development trends over the past year, along with the latest published results, particularly those concerning the role of parliament in combating climate change and the democratic parliament indicators released at the end of 2023.

Keywords: parliament, democracy, citizens, National Assembly, parliamentary diplomacy

INTRODUCTION: PARLIAMENT AND CONTEMPORARY DEMOCRACY

Global interconnectedness has made it easier to see that all parliaments worldwide face the same challenges and are making efforts, each in their own way, to respond to these challenges. The causes of these challenges are reflected in two seemingly contradictory facts: the executive branch dominates and is the de facto center of decision-making, while parliament is (and should be) the central institution of democracy, as it represents the citizens from whom sovereignty originates.¹ The traditional concept of the separation of powers into legislative, executive, and judicial, aimed at creating a system of

¹ In this sense, the Constitution of the Republic of Serbia (2006, Article 2) clearly stipulates that sovereignty originates from the citizens who exercise it through referendum, popular initiative, and through their freely elected representatives. In comparative constitutional law, in the majority of constitutions, the people are identified as the bearer of sovereignty; in a number of constitutions, the nation is the bearer of sovereignty; in a number of constitutions, a mixed solution is found whereby, although sovereignty belongs to the people, national identity and national heritage are included in the foundations of the state; while a fourth group of constitutions are those that have citizens as the bearers of sovereignty (Mikić 2022, 886–888).

checks and balances to prevent the concentration of power in the same hands, i.e., tyranny, is today not only questioned but considered to be insufficient and inadequate in the context of modern societies and states. Discussions about power organization go so far as to say that there are no pure models in either horizontal or vertical organization of power but that pure models exist only in books and professors' heads (Fira 2004, 314). Within the proliferation of institutions, a proposal has been made to introduce a branch of integrity, which refers to institutions that should control and prevent corruption (Ackerman 2000, 691–694). Further development has led to the conception of a fourth branch of government, which in a broader sense includes various actors, from civil society (non-governmental organizations and the press) through public (regulatory) agencies and the constitutional court (guardian of the constitution). In a narrower sense, it consists of independent oversight bodies, such as the ombudsman (Radojević 2022, 448). Regardless of the system in question and whether there is a unity of power or a division of power into two, three, four, or even five state functions or branches of government (if constitutional adjudication is considered a separate function or branch of government), it seems indisputable that parliament is the first branch of government. This power adopts the constitution and laws. Whichever constitution is opened, as a rule, the legislative power is regulated first.² Furthermore, when considering the number of articles regulating a particular matter in the current European constitutions, it is concluded that the most significant proportion (about the total volume of the constitution) is devoted to the legislative power (parliament and legislative procedure), which is 17%. In comparison, 15% relates to the executive power and 10% to the judicial power (Mikić 2022, 46).

However, regardless of the undisputed role of parliament in all systems of government organization, in contemporary societies, there is talk of a so-called “democratic deficit,” which implies challenges related to insufficient inclusion of all and non-compliance with democratic rules. It is also observed that in modern democracies, there is a clear gap between the theory of representative government and political reality

² Within the provision on the separation of powers, the legislative power is most often mentioned first, followed by the executive power, and then the judicial power (Mikić 2022, 626).

(Lovo 1999, 69). It is pointed out that governments are increasingly unable to formulate public policies and quickly solve the problems faced by societies and states, as well as a decreasing level of trust of citizens in their rulers, their political programs, and their authority to implement them through public policies. Three symptoms indicate a crisis of legitimacy: a decline in voter turnout, electoral volatility, and a decrease in citizens' interest in engaging as members of political parties (Jovanović 2024, 229). The identified problems and difficulties do not only relate to parliament as an institution but to the entire representative democracy, which, due to the issues identified, is supplemented, corrected, strengthened, and consolidated through deliberative democracy³ and encouraging citizens to participate in public affairs and shape public policies, as well as increasing participation through various forms of public deliberation and public consultations. A systemic approach to deliberative democratic systems shows that many interconnected participants in public decision-making can complement each other and influence each other, creating a system that is deliberatively democratic as a whole, even if each part individually may be insufficient (Levy 2022, 28). Regarding parliament, the idea is that election campaigns should not be the only contact that future MPs have with citizens. However, holding elections should only be the beginning of continuous two-way communication between citizens and their parliamentary representatives.

THE IMPORTANCE OF PARLIAMENTARY AUTONOMY AND THE EXPANSION OF ITS SCOPE AT MULTIPLE LEVELS

Firstly, it is essential to note that parliamentary autonomy is directly linked to the very idea of the separation of powers and, as such, is enshrined in the constitutional texts of most states. Parliamentary independence is considered a principle that maintains the constitutional system in balance and prevents the abuse of power by the judiciary and the executive (Wintr, Chmel, and Askari 2021, 86–87). Apart from the

³ Jovanović (2024, 244) points out that the deliberative response to the crisis of democracy is not contradictory to representative and direct democracy, which is best seen in Habermas' two-track model of deliberation.

question of the breadth and scope of parliamentary autonomy being an internal or domestic level issue, which is thus aligned with other constitutional principles within a state, contemporary law indicates that it is also strongly influenced by the international or supranational level, given that certain principles are established by supranational and international courts that must be taken into account (Albanesi 2022, 126). It is also observed that parliamentary activities are under increasing scrutiny from international actors and are subject to multiple examinations at global forums and that parliamentary issues are no longer merely a matter of one institution or nation (Szabó 2021, 2). Today, parliamentary autonomy practically relates to all aspects of the organization and functioning of parliament. Although expressed differently and to different extents depending on the state, several fundamental aspects stand out. Traditionally, it is understood as the right of parliament to self-organize, i.e., for parliament to regulate its internal organization and work independently. This aspect is commonly referred to as institutional or functional autonomy. However, contemporary parliamentary development has led to this being only one level, or aspect, of parliamentary autonomy, which currently has a broader expression. The significance of all aspects of parliamentary independence lies in the need to ensure the necessary conditions for the performance of parliamentary functions, which are expanding in contemporary society, and on which conditions the effectiveness of work directly depends. The lack of adequate conditions directly affects the functionality and quality of work, negatively affecting the separation of powers.

The previously described institutional or functional parliamentary autonomy implies a normative aspect of independence in that parliament regulates its organization and works through its legal acts. This aspect has been realized in the National Assembly of the Republic of Serbia (from now on NA) by adopting a legal framework that regulates the work of the NA and includes the Constitution of the Republic of Serbia, the Law on the NA, the Rules of Procedure of the NA, the Decision on the Organization and Work of the NA Service, the Rules on the Internal Organization and Classification of Jobs in the NA Service, the Rules on the Basic Principles of Work, Conduct and Dress Code of Employees in the NA Service and Persons Engaged to Perform Duties in the NA, the Unified Methodological Rules for Drafting Regulations, the NA

Resolution on Legislative Policy, and a whole range of regulations, instructions, decisions and other acts that are mostly adopted by the Secretary-General (independently or with the consent of the committee in charge of administrative matters) or by one of the NA committees.

Financial independence, as the next aspect of the parliamentary autonomy of the National Assembly, was introduced in 2010 with the adoption of the Law on the National Assembly. This law regulated the financing of the National Assembly so that, for the first time, it was stipulated that the National Assembly independently determines and disposes of funds for its operation – a formulation that can be briefly described as the assembly budget. The Law on the National Assembly explicitly stipulates that the assembly budget is an integral part of the budget of the Republic of Serbia and that the Government cannot, without the consent of the President of the National Assembly, suspend, postpone, or limit the execution of the assembly budget (Zakon o NS 2010, čl. 64). The Secretary-General is the ordering authority for the use of funds from the assembly budget, prepares the draft assembly budget and submits it to the committee of the National Assembly responsible for administrative matters, which determines the draft assembly budget and submits it to the ministry responsible for finance for an opinion. The National Assembly has also introduced the position of an internal auditor.

For the parliament to effectively perform its representative, legislative, and oversight functions, there must also be expert and administrative-technical autonomy within parliamentary independence. This refers to the importance of the conditions and capacities of the parliamentary service, parliamentary officials, support for MPs in the form of a library, research service, scientific service, the existence of assistants and consultants, as well as the possibility of engaging experts, as a lack of such capacities in the parliament (as well as a lack of funds for them) can also cause weaker parliamentary oversight and negatively impact the balance of power. In the context of this aspect of parliamentary autonomy in our parliament, there is a Parliamentary Service that is unique and headed by the Secretary-General. The Parliamentary Service performs expert, administrative-technical, and other tasks for the needs of the National Assembly and its working bodies, members of parliament, the President of the National Assembly

and Vice Presidents, parliamentary groups in the National Assembly, the Appeals Commission of the National Assembly, the Republican Election Commission, as well as other tasks by the law, the Rules of Procedure of the National Assembly and other acts of the National Assembly and its working bodies. Within the Parliamentary Service, the following have been established as basic internal units: the Legislative Sector, the International Relations Sector, the General Affairs Sector, the Operational-Technical Affairs, and Information Technology Sector, and (in addition to the aforementioned) the General Secretariat of the National Assembly and the Office of the President of the National Assembly have been established as separate internal units. Apart from internal capacities, an essential and valuable resource available primarily to European parliaments, including ours,⁴ is the European Centre for Parliamentary Research and Documentation (ECPRD). The Centre, founded in 1977, essentially represents a network of parliamentary research centers, which, based on questionnaires sent to member parliaments (usually within three weeks), enables parliaments to gain insight into the legal and practical solutions of member parliaments, or rather, answers to questionnaires. In our parliament, the possibilities of members of parliament in terms of data available from the aforementioned center are regulated by the Rules of Procedure for Submitting Requests for Research and the Preparation of Research Papers of the National Assembly Library (dated January 12, 2012, adopted by the Secretary General of the National Assembly). In addition to the above, it should also be said that although there is currently no more extensive scientific research service in the National Assembly, the President of the National Assembly, at the proposal of a working body, may engage scientific or expert institutions, as well as scientists and experts, to study specific issues within the competence of the National Assembly (Poslovnik NS 2002, čl. 43).

Regarding the internal organization of parliaments globally, there is a trend towards strengthening committees or parliamentary working bodies. In contemporary parliamentary development, there is a tendency to shift the focus of parliamentary work from plenary

⁴ The mentioned centre has 49 members, three observers (Israel, Canada, USA), while four parliaments have limited access within the framework of partnership (Jordan, Morocco, Palestine and Kyrgyzstan).

sessions to parliamentary working bodies while preserving the principle of proportional representation. In addition to being traditionally regulated by parliamentary rules of procedure or laws on parliament, parliamentary committees today are not only a matter of law (in the sense that they are explicitly mentioned in various laws) but are also becoming a constitutional matter. They are, therefore, regulated or mentioned in many constitutions. This is either through general provisions dedicated to parliamentary committees, enumerating their scope, or imposing an obligation for public authorities and individuals to cooperate with committees. In some constitutions, investigative and specialized committees, the composition of committees, and the determination of their chairpersons are also a constitutional matter, and some contain special provisions related to the work of committees (Mikić 2022, 545).

CHARACTERISTICS OF A CONTEMPORARY DEMOCRATIC PARLIAMENT AND THE PLACE OF OUR ASSEMBLY

Recognizing that in today's interconnected world, societies, states, and parliaments alike face similar challenges, the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), the oldest and most important international parliamentary organization founded in 1889, established a Working Group on Parliament's Contribution to Democracy in 2008. This working group conducted research and analyzed both legal provisions (constitutions, laws on parliament, rules of procedure) and parliamentary practices and, in collaboration with parliaments that provided data and participated in the research (including our Parliament), identified five key characteristics that define a contemporary democratic parliament in the 21st century. These are: (1) ensuring adequate representation, (2) being transparent, (3) being accessible, (4) being accountable, and (5) being effective at all levels – national, international, and local (Beetham 2006, 10–11). Even in this comparative legal study, and about the first criterion – adequate representation in parliament, and in the context of the observation that most of the parliament's work takes place in committees, a solution from the then Assembly of SCG was highlighted as a good example. Such a solution is also contained

in the later Rules of Procedure of the National Assembly. It relates to considering proportional representation when constituting the working bodies of the assembly (Beetham 2006, 28).

When it comes to transparency and accessibility, it is essential to emphasize that the principle of public access to the work of the National Assembly was introduced and guaranteed by law in 2010. The manner of ensuring public access to the work of the National Assembly and its working bodies was established (Zakon o NS 2010, čl. 11). It is important to note that in parliamentary practice, all sessions of the National Assembly and its working bodies are publicly available on the National Assembly's website, both in the archive and through live streaming of all plenary and committee sessions. In comparative constitutional law, the rules on the publicity of the work of parliamentary committees are prescribed by the provisions of only a few constitutions (meaning that this matter is left to the parliamentary rules of procedure), while the widespread rule contained in many constitutions is that parliamentary sessions are open to the public, and some constitutions also prescribe the obligation to publish minutes of parliamentary sessions (Mikić 2022, 324; 327).

Traditionally, foreign affairs and diplomacy have been exclusively associated with the executive branch. However, for over half a century, there has been a growing trend of involving parliamentarians in state delegations and international negotiations (Onderco 2018, 411). This paper focuses on modern parliamentary diplomacy, considered an autonomous activity of parliaments worldwide. Arising from the political practice of parliamentarians, it remains uncodified mainly in international and domestic law, making it primarily political and informal (Stavridis and Jančić 2017, 5). In the case of the Serbian parliament, the National Assembly decides on the composition of standing parliamentary delegations to participate in the work of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, the Parliamentary Assembly of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), and other multilateral parliamentary institutions and organizations, with the proposal for a decision on the composition of standing delegations submitted by the President of the National Assembly, in consultation with the presidents of parliamentary groups, taking into account the proportional representation of political parties and gender representation. The number

of members of our parliamentary delegations varies; for example the delegation to the IPU has nine members, and the head of the delegation is always the President of the National Assembly; the delegation to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe has 14 members, and our country has been a full member since 2003; the delegation to the Parliamentary Assembly of the OSCE has eight members, and after participating in the First Constitutive Session of the PA OSCE in 1991 and the interruption of membership due to sanctions, our continuous membership has existed since 2001; the delegation to the NATO Parliamentary Assembly has ten members, and our country has been an associate member since 2007; the delegation to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean also has ten members, and our country has been a full member since its founding (2006). The delegation to the Parliamentary Assembly of the South-East European Cooperation Process has four members and four deputy members, and the Republic of Serbia has been fully involved in the activities of this organization since the Summit in Skopje held in October 2000. The delegation to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation has six members, and our country has been a full member since 2004. The delegation to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Collective Security Treaty Organization has five members. The delegation to the Parliamentary Assembly of La Francophonie has four members, and our country has been a permanent observer since 2008. The delegation to the Inter-Parliamentary Assembly of Orthodoxy has two members, and our country has been a full member since 1995.

Beyond the aforementioned channels of multilateral parliamentary diplomacy, the National Assembly maintains intensive bilateral cooperation with the parliaments of foreign states through friendship groups. These groups are parliamentary bodies that can be formed in the National Assembly voluntarily, aiming to promote collaboration (and, more broadly, relations) between the Republic of Serbia and foreign states. This means that the mutual interest in establishing and developing cooperation between the two countries' parliaments is considered when forming a particular friendship group. A member of parliament who wishes to be a member of a specific group of friends submits an application to the President of the National Assembly, and the Committee on Foreign Affairs decides on its formation, appoints the

president and members of the friendship groups, approves the decision on the exchange of visits with friendship groups of representative bodies of other states, and keeps a record of membership in friendship groups (Poslovník NS 2002, čl. 50. st. 4). By the principle of voluntariness, there are currently 61 friendship groups in the 14th convocation of the National Assembly (as of September 3, 2024), while in the previous 13th convocation there were 161 friendship groups, some of which were previously independent and have now been merged and grouped. The number of members of friendship groups varies significantly – from 2⁵ to 102⁶ Members.

TRENDS OF CONTEMPORARY PARLIAMENTARY DEVELOPMENT, GLOBAL PARLIAMENTARY REPORTS, AND EXAMPLES OF GOOD PRACTICE FROM SERBIA

The IPU's intensive work in monitoring and systematizing trends in parliamentary development has led to the publication of five-yearly global parliamentary reports jointly published by the IPU and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). The first global report was published in 2012, the second in 2017, and the third in 2022, each focusing on a specific theme. Serbian parliament's practices and innovative approaches have been recognized in these reports and highlighted as global examples of good practice. For example, the Second Global Parliamentary Report from 2017, which focuses on parliamentary oversight as a key feature of the parliament's relevance in the 21st century, highlights the Serbian parliament in several places. It points to the building of public trust in the parliament in Serbia. It states that the Republic of Serbia has been actively working to improve political institutions to strengthen public participation and build public trust and has worked to achieve transparency in its work, accountability, and the inclusion of civil society, i.e., the non-governmental sector (IPU

⁵ Friendship group with the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

⁶ The number of members of the friendship group with China. The friendship group with Russia has 97 members, with Greece 89, and with Italy and the Holy See 78 members (as of September 3, 2024).

and UNDP 2017, 24). In the context of achieving the aforementioned goals, the introduction of public hearings is highlighted. Particular attention is paid to the Rules of Procedure of the National Assembly, which institutionalized the organization of public hearings to obtain information and expert opinions on draft regulations, as well as in the context of monitoring the implementation of rules. At the same time, committee meetings held outside the parliament's premises are cited as examples of good parliamentary practice, which have enabled the National Assembly to exercise parliamentary oversight throughout the country. Such innovations based on public inclusion have helped to create contacts and improve relations between representatives of citizens and the public, resulting in more efficient resolution of both local and national issues. It should also be added that the successful application at the republican level in our country has led to the transfer of best practices from the national to the local level (Vukadinović 2015, 39), so public hearings began to be organized in the assemblies of cities and municipalities in 2014 and were then explicitly introduced into the legal framework of local self-government in 2018 by the adoption of the Law on Amendments and Supplements to the Law on Local Self-Government (2018). Lightbody (2024, 2) also points out that the capacity of public hearings is multiple, as they can be used at different stages of the policy-making process and to varying levels of governance, which potentially emphasizes their suitability for linking with other methods.

In addition to the aforementioned examples, the introduction of the Parliamentary Budget Office (established on November 13, 2013) and work on the Portal for Monitoring the Execution of the Public Budget, with the aim of parliamentary government oversight, are cited as positive examples from Serbia. The Office assists MPs during the budget process (offering expert opinions, analyses, and short studies in various areas) and in the process of reporting on budget execution, with the idea of finally establishing an exceptional expert service in the National Assembly that would provide analyses and specialist support about the budget and financial oversight, as well as advice, information, and other types of support to MPs (IPU and UNDP 2017, 66).

Among the examples of good practice for which Serbia has been recognized by the IPU and UNDP, informal parliamentary groups (cross-party groups) are also mentioned as voluntary associations from

different parliamentary groups (IPU and UNDP 2017, 87). Informal groups of MPs are characterized by voluntariness (i.e., the parliament can function without them, which distinguishes them from committees as permanent working bodies); they are not named either by the Rules of Procedure of the National Assembly or by law. They have a different, and often unlimited, number of members; proportional representation is not required as with committees; they were not formed by the plenary session of the National Assembly, and thus, MPs do not exercise rights as for the work of committees. The focus of the work of informal groups is usually specific, emphasized, and narrower than the scope of committees, or it concerns issues that permeate a more significant number of committees (i.e., it does not represent a parallel system to committees, but the scope is different); they hold meetings and not sessions (like committees); a quorum is not required for work, although there may also be internal rules. By all the above, informal groups of MPs have more political than legal significance, which committees have, and from which, as previously stated, they differ at several levels. The number and work of informal groups of MPs in the National Assembly varies from convocation to convocation. Still, overall it can be seen that the following groups have existed and/or exist: the National Branch of GOPAC (Global Organization of Parliamentarians Against Corruption), the Women's Parliamentary Network, the Green Parliamentary Group (established in 2009), the Economic Caucus (Parliamentary Group for Economic Development of the National Assembly)⁷ – based on November 20, 2014, the Parliamentary Forum for Serbia's Energy Policy (Energy Forum), the Focus Group for the Implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals, the Parliamentary Network for Digital Security (founded on March 30, 2021).

⁷ The reasons for the formation of the Economic Caucus are twofold: the need was recognized to find a functional mechanism that would contribute to strengthening the role of MPs in formulating and adopting documents of significance for the economic development of the state. At the same time, the need was recognized to establish an effective forum for developing a dialogue between MPs and representatives of the economy on issues of importance for the economic development of the country, and for exchanging views between MPs, as representatives of the central government, and representatives of local self-governments (Knežević Bojović i Vukadinović 2016, 289).

The third global parliamentary report (2022) focuses on public participation and engagement in parliament's work, which implies citizens' involvement and encouragement to shape public policies. The IPU highlights explicitly five key themes: 1) youth engagement; 2) leaving no one behind (which implies inclusion, i.e., that everyone is represented); 3) transforming the way we communicate and work in line with modern technological changes – digital tools; 4) encouraging innovation; 5) connecting and networking (IPU and UNDP 2022, 60–70). In the context of parliamentary committees and consultative processes (an effort to encourage greater involvement), examples from Serbia are highlighted, primarily the departure of parliamentary committees from their seats to hear and include – committee meetings outside the seat and public hearings (IPU and UNDP 2022, 27).

An innovative example from Serbia also relates to the mechanism at the Committee on Environmental Protection of the National Assembly that enables a “green chair” – a single place, on a rotating basis, for a representative of the civil sector who can actively participate in the work of the committee, ask questions and participate in off-site meetings and public hearings, and thus articulate interests and better inform committee members (Vukadinović 2022, 16). The committee may allow the presence or participation of citizens and citizens' association representatives at the committee meeting to discuss specific issues in the field of environmental protection (Poslovnik NS 2002, čl. 63. st. 2.).

CURRENT TOPICS IN FOCUS OF GLOBAL PARLIAMETARY DEVELOPMENT

Climate change and environmental protection stand out when exploring relevant topics at the global parliamentary level. In recent years, the IPU has been paying increasing attention to the role of national parliaments in environmental protection. The roots of these activities can be traced back to 2006 when, at the 114th IPU Assembly, a Resolution on the role of parliament in environmental management and the fight against global ecological degradation was adopted. The resolution's preamble highlights the alarming state of the world's ecosystems, expressing deep concern and then, in 42 points, indicating the need for cooperation between all stakeholders, including state

institutions, civil society, and the private sector. Four specific roles of the parliament (as an institution) in the fight for a healthy environment have been identified, based on which four areas have been formed in which the IPU is developing manuals and guides for parliamentarians as valuable sources of information when making decisions. These are 1) parliament and climate change; 2) parliament and renewable energy; 3) parliament and forest degradation; 4) parliament and the extractive industry.

In 2023, the IPU launched a new Parliaments for the Planet initiative, including a media and social campaign to mobilize parliaments to take action on the climate crisis. As part of this campaign and the presentation of case studies from around the world, the IPU has published case studies from 54 (as of 04.09.2024) parliaments, i.e., countries, including Serbia, under the title: Implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in Serbia: Informal Parliamentary Groups, which essentially refers to the Focus Group for Sustainable Development Goals, which was formed as an informal group of MPs in the National Assembly. Additionally, the IPU publishes two-minute video clips (with one parliamentarian each) explaining their parliament's specific measures and actions for the planet and answering the question: How does climate change affect your country?

As of September 4, 2024, 78 video interviews have been published, and a compilation of experiences of parliamentarians worldwide has been prepared titled "My Parliament, My Planet, Our Future!". In this way, MPs and parliaments demonstrate a more significant commitment to environmental issues through their examples, enabling the exchange of experiences and encouraging other parliamentarians and parliaments to engage in global efforts to protect the environment and improve in this area. The Cremer-Passy Award, granted annually under the auspices of the IPU, was awarded in October 2023 to a parliamentarian for exceptional achievements in the fight against climate change, further confirming that environmental issues are one of the most critical priorities for the IPU. Based on the above, it can be seen that action on climate change has been recognized as a key priority for the IPU.

In addition to the above, in 2023, the IPU published a unique guide titled "10 Actions for Greener Parliaments (and Those Who Work in Them)", which outlines specific steps and key actions that institutions

and individuals can consider and undertake to adopt “greener” policies and embrace a culture of sustainability. These actions aim to address the climate crisis and pave the way for more decisive climate action. These ten actions are categorized into three groups: institutionalizing “greening” in parliaments, introducing green practices into the work of the parliament and its members (MPs), and leading and promoting a culture of sustainable change.

The trends and current topics described above are not limited to the work of the IPU. Still, they are also evident in the work of other international and regional organizations, as well as in the work of researchers. In this context, it should be noted that the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) highlighted in 2023, within the observed trends in deliberative democracy, that there is a noticeable trend towards environmental and other long-term policies being the main focus of deliberative processes (OECD Database 2023). Furthermore, an empirical study in 2021 that investigated the relationship between political freedom and environmental performance in 156 countries shows that countries with a higher degree of political freedom are expected to have stronger ecological performance (Averchenkova, Plyska, and Wahlgren 2022, 8).

In addition to the above, and of significance for the same thematic area in parliamentary development, it should be noted that an electronic database of all national laws and documents related to climate change has been established, covering all countries. The London School of Economics (LSE) and the Grantham Research Institute on Climate Change and the Environment have collaborated on this project to build an evidence base for evidence-based decision-making (open data and tools for researching climate policies and laws). This publicly available database of climate change laws from around the world currently contains over 5,000 documents. Searches can be conducted by various criteria, as well as by country, by clicking on a world map, and there is data on the Republic of Serbia, with a total of 21 documents from Serbia.⁸

In addition to the aforementioned topics, in recent years, parliamentary practice, particularly monitoring law implementation by parliamentary bodies, has been a focus of parliamentary development and

⁸ As of September 4, 2024.

advocacy by specific parliamentary organizations. There is a growing interest in the idea that parliaments, within the context of parliamentary oversight, should consider the possibility of regularly preparing ex-post analyses of law implementation with the aim of post-legislative scrutiny (PLS) – monitoring the implementation and application of laws, the actions of ministries, the adoption of secondary legislation, and the verification of the achievement of legislative objectives.

Finally, in November 2023, the IPU, in collaboration with relevant international organizations⁹ Consolidated the previously diverse aspects of trends and topics relevant to parliamentary development, systematized them in one place, and published them.¹⁰ The result is the Indicators of a Democratic Parliament, a comprehensive self-assessment tool designed to help parliaments assess their capacities and practices against established democratic standards. A total of 25 indicators of a democratic parliament are categorized into seven groups: 1) parliamentary autonomy (members of parliament, parliamentary procedures, parliamentary organization, administrative capacity and independence, lawmaking, oversight, budget, representative role of members of parliament, relations with other branches of government, key parliamentary powers); 2) parliamentary ethics and institutional integrity; 3) transparency of parliamentary processes (communication and cooperation of parliament with the public, access to parliament); 4) addressing public concerns; 5) inclusive lawmaking, oversight, and budgeting (inclusive institutional practices); 6) parliamentary environment for public participation (public participation in parliamentary processes, participation of different groups in the work of parliament); 7) electoral integrity (composition of parliament, composition of parliamentary bodies).

⁹ Represents an initiative of multiple partners, led by the Inter-Parliamentary Union in collaboration with the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association, the Directorio Legislativo Foundation, Inter Pares / International IDEA, the National Democratic Institute, the United Nations Development Programme, UN Women and the Westminster Foundation for Democracy.

¹⁰ The website also provides detailed guidelines on conducting the assessment, as well as case studies and online resources.

CONCLUSION

Since every society and state is characterized by a specific national legal tradition and a specific development of statehood, one should not expect a single pattern for the development of an institution such as parliament. However, global research and five-year parliamentary reports, which offer the experiences of other states and parliaments in addressing common or similar challenges, can be helpful both in terms of being taken into account when deciding on the choice of models or creating one's solutions, and in providing us with an insight into the state of affairs about global trends in parliamentary development. In the search for the goal of this paper to determine the place of the National Assembly of the Republic of Serbia and domestic parliamentary practice about global processes, it is first noted that the broadening of the understanding of parliamentary autonomy at several levels has also been reflected in the normative solutions of our parliament. Furthermore, applying a comparative legal and legal dogmatic method in the work established that the National Assembly of the Republic of Serbia is recognized and highlighted as an example of good and innovative practice in the published five-year global parliamentary research (especially from 2017 and 2022). The innovations introduced and institutionalized in the last 15 years relate to the formation of informal groups of MPs (GOPAC, Women's Parliamentary Network, Green Parliamentary Group, Economic Caucus, Energy Forum, Focus Group for the Implementation of Sustainable Development Goals), the introduction and regular holding of public hearings and committee meetings outside the seat of the National Assembly, the green table mechanism, the budget office, the portal for oversight of public finances, etc. Finally, the part of the paper that is focused on researching current topics that are the focus of global parliamentary development and trends in the previous year shows that it is focused on the role of parliament in the fight against climate change and the indicators of a democratic parliament that were published at the end of 2023.

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THE NEW YORK TIMES ON THE NATO BOMBING OF FR YUGOSLAVIA IN 1999 (Translation *In Extenso*)

Abstract

This paper analyzes the linguistic characteristics of *The New York Times*' reporting on the bombing of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. The research corpus consists of articles published in this American daily newspaper between March 24, 1999, and June 10, 1999. The study also provides an overview of significant works and publications that examine the perception of NATO's military intervention in both foreign and domestic press. This paper aims to determine how linguistic choices influence the representation of the bombing, which linguistic devices are used to construct the image of Serbs and to identify the dominant macro-strategies in the production of this discourse. The first hypothesis suggests that a negative portrayal of Serbia and Serbs is constructed primarily at the language's lexical and stylistic levels. The second hypothesis posits that *The New York Times*' reporting fully aligns with the broader representation of Serbs and Serbia in

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other European and global media and that, together, they form part of a unified transnational discourse. The characteristics of this global narrative include the mitigation of the impact and consequences of the bombing, the construction of a negative image of a particular nation, the simplification of complex historical and political relations, and the demonization of the enemy – all serving to maintain the existing balance of power and legitimize a new world order.

Keywords: *The New York Times*, discourse analysis, bombing, Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, 1999.

INTRODUCTION

The primary focus of this research is a linguistic analysis of the media coverage surrounding the NATO bombing of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia¹, particularly examining the portrayal of the bombing itself, Serbia, and the Serbian people within the pages of the American newspaper, *The New York Times*. *The New York Times* was selected for several reasons. It is one of the most influential media outlets in the United States², providing daily coverage of the NATO aggression, as evidenced by the hundreds of articles published during this period. Furthermore, the newspaper has been subject to only sporadic linguistic analysis about this specific event.

Given the exceptional complexity of the topic, which inevitably encompasses historical, sociological, political, military, and cultural dimensions, this paper will primarily focus on a linguistic analysis of the media. This is particularly relevant considering that reports on the NATO bombing were prominently featured in print media and prime-time radio and television programs (Lakić 2010, 276). The significant role that language played in constructing a discourse justifying the bombing is evident in two linguistic phenomena that are still considered

¹ From a legal and formal standpoint, the bombing of the FRY in 1999 possessed all the elements of aggression against an independent and sovereign state (Krivokapić 2017, 257).

² Nikola Živković (2003, 11) states that, alongside the Washington Post, this newspaper holds a global monopoly and participates in global media production.

examples of propaganda: the use of the euphemism “intervention”³ and the naming of the military operation “Merciful Angel”.

The term “intervention”, instead of more appropriate terms like “bombing”, “attack”, or “war”, was used to create a general public perception, both domestically and internationally, of the necessity of action “that had to be taken to improve, regulate problems, and ensure better conditions in FRY” (Vujošević 2021, 175). Miodrag Mitić (2005, 92) notes that German officials, immediately after the first air strikes in March 1999, stated to the media that “war” was an inappropriate term and that “the government prefers to talk about ‘military operations’ or ‘air strikes’”. While the most well-known, this is not the only example of lexical cushioning of negative meanings: “Instead of the word ‘crimes’, the words ‘campaigns’, ‘interventions’, and ‘actions’ are used; instead of ‘victims’, we hear about ‘collateral damage’; instead of ‘soldiers’, we hear about ‘peacekeepers’; instead of ‘bombing’, we hear about ‘air intervention’” (Lazarević and Artonović 2011, 536).

The name of the NATO bombing operation, “Merciful Angel”, regardless of whether it is incomplete information, a myth, or a term coined for propaganda, continues to produce various effects on readers. While some researchers use this term in their works (Vujošević 2020, 238; Vujošević 2021, 173; Tančić and Gordić 2022, 102), and although it is used in elementary school textbooks (Tančić and Gordić 2022, 102), according to recent media reports, the origin of the name remains unclear. It has been suggested that it resulted from an inaccurate translation (the American component in the Alliance “Noble Anvil” was replaced with “angel”), a mistake by an official when naming the operation (a Chinese president), or the intentional use of the name of a British convoy (“Operation Angel’s mission of mercy”) as a collective term for a military operation (RTS 2009). Regardless, the term itself carries a substantial manipulative potential, primarily stemming from the emotional component evoked by the oxymoron⁴ “merciful bombing” or “steel angel”.

³ It represents a stylistic figure that replaces one (unpleasant, frightening, or dangerous) concept with another, milder and more acceptable one. For example, instead of “war,” we write “conflict”.

⁴ A figure of speech that joins two contradictory terms, such as “living dead”.

Due to these and numerous other examples in the media at the end of the 20th century, many researchers of contemporary propaganda strategies argue that a “language struggle” is crucial, if not decisive, for their maintenance (Höijer, Nohrstedt, and Ottosen 2002, 5). This means that a unique language aimed at a large audience is used for manipulative purposes, to influence public opinion, shape perception, and (dis) inform (Grygiel 2023, 176), all with the aim of what Chomsky calls “manufacturing consent”⁵ (Stojadinović 2014, 135). This is particularly dangerous when media discourse is shaped by state propaganda, often during wars (Boyd-Barrett 2004, 435).

PREVIOUS RESEARCH

Regarding the analysis of media coverage in 1999, there are several studies investigating how the bombing was presented in domestic and foreign media (for example, in the German *Der Spiegel*, the British *Guardian*, *Independent*, and *Times*, the Serbian *NIN*, *Politika*, and several Polish⁶, Norwegian, and Swedish media,⁷ etc.). In addition to academic papers, media discourse on the bombing of Yugoslavia was also the subject of discussion in the media itself. For example, the newspaper *Vreme* published an analysis in 2009 on the divided opinions of intellectuals about the bombing (Mihaljinac and Vujošević 2021, 464; *Vreme* 2009).

Serbian researchers have paid the most attention to the representation of the bombing of FR Yugoslavia in Germany. In addition to Miodrag Mitić’s book (Mitić 2005) “The German Perspective on the Yugoslav Crisis”, which offers a panorama of views and opinions published in Germany in 1999 (5), Ljiljana Glišović’s exhaustive research (Glišović 2011) “Serbia in the Mirror of the German Press 1987–2006” stands out. This work examines the relationship between

⁵ This implies that the media serves to “justify various actions by giving them legitimacy in the eyes of the public regardless of whether those actions are contrary to basic democratic principles” (Stojadinović 2014, 136).

⁶ According to Bjeganjskii and Ščutkovska (2017), the bombing divided Polish public opinion. While some supported it, others strongly criticized it (9).

⁷ According to Höijer, Stig, and Ottosen (2002), the Norwegian public was much more receptive to NATO propaganda than the Swedish public, but at one point, the media in both countries were critical of the bombing (1).

German newspapers and Serbia from the media, politics, and language perspective. Regarding the period of the bombing, the author concluded that during March, April, May, and June, articles about the conflict in Kosovo were daily, largely negative, full of prejudices and stereotypes and that Serbs were compared to Nazis (96).

A similar chronological overview, ten years earlier, is provided by Nikola Živković (2003) in his book “How Others See Us: The Image of Serbs in the German Media 1990–2000”. He concludes that during this period, news was censored, and for an entire decade, the German press approved all actions taken against Serbs while simultaneously reporting on their “atrocities” (266). Author Anđela Vujošević (2021) examined the writing of the magazine *Spiegel*, comparing it to articles in *NIN* and *Politika*. She concluded that there is a significant difference in the frequency of specific vocabulary in domestic and foreign media (182–183) and that, among other things, the use of specific marked words created a negative image of Serbia and Serbs (202). Additionally, the same author found that the German media generally justified the bombing (Mihaljinac and Vujošević 2021, 475).

British media has been the subject of analysis by linguist Igor Lakić (2010). Using examples from *The Guardian*, *Independent*, and *Times*, he determined that the media (or statements by politicians published in the media) shifted the responsibility for the bombing onto Serbia and its intransigence and also, primarily through comments by politicians, justified the NATO bombing (277–280). Slobodan Vuković (2018) also analyzed the British press, among others, in his two-volume work “Serbs in the Western Narrative”. The author emphasizes that during 1999, there was a regular practice of comparing Serbs to Nazis, and it was even published that they were carrying out a “Balkan version of the final solution” (287). This book also includes reviews of US media coverage. Concluding that the shift in US policy toward Serbia went hand in hand with a change in the media (211), the author says that during the NATO bombing, Americans openly sided with one side (270).⁸ Serbs were accused of communism, Greater Serbian

⁸ For example, it provides data showing that during 1998–1999, the American press used the word “genocide” 220 times, and that New York Times journalists openly advocated for Belgrade to be “blackened out”, for the targets to be the power grid,

nationalism, intolerance, violence, and backwardness, and this was the dominant narrative in the reporting for all ten years (211–274).

The New York Times' coverage of the bombing of Serbia has been sporadically examined in domestic and foreign academic works, with media, political science, or sociological analysis predominating content analysis. For example, authors Lazarević and Artonović (2012, 313–338) concluded that this daily newspaper was the most extreme in its reporting and interpretation of information from Kosovo and Metohija in the period from 1999 to 2010: "The BBC and The New York Times had the highest number of texts with a predominantly negative tone towards Serbs from the north or were exclusive, and both media outlets published a significant number of texts with a pro-Albanian/anti-Serb spin" (333). Sociologist Jovo Bakić (2011) wrote about the bias of *The New York Times* reporting from the beginning to the end of the 1990s and concluded that the "most pronounced campaign of demonization of Serbs, both in Bosnia and Herzegovina and in Serbia" had emerged at that time (112). Furthermore, in the book "Degraded Capability – The Media and The Kosovo Crisis", authors Ackerman and Naureckas (2001) argue that *The New York Times* not only served to Americanize the conflict and crisis in Kosovo and Metohija into a one-sided ethnic crime (100) but also that significant historical revisionism and a shift about earlier texts can be observed in the reporting of this media. Namely, in 1982, the terms "ethnic cleansing" and "ethnically pure" territory were used to describe the Albanians' intention to establish an ethnically compact Kosovo. This phrase was used similarly for the next seven years (99).

Therefore, previous analyses, with few exceptions, show that the world press, primarily German, British, and American, acted orchestrated, one-sided, and uncritically, significantly changing its previous stances. Serbs were portrayed as enemies, criminals, and Nazis, and this discourse was dominant not only during the NATO bombing but throughout the 1990s.

roads, bridges, and water supply, and for the need to move to a ground intervention (Vuković 2003, 271–274).

METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK OF THE WORK

Although there is no unified theoretical and methodological concept of an interdisciplinary perspective in sociolinguistics, instead several fluid views on the relationship between language and society from the perspective of different fields, it is essential to note that ‘purely linguistic analysis cannot provide satisfactory results in the analysis of media and that it must be combined with critical discourse analysis that allows the text to be interpreted by the appropriate discourse and social practice. The interpretation of a text can be subjective if it relies on something other than linguistic findings. In contrast, without proper understanding, linguistic analysis alone cannot provide a valid and complete analysis of a newspaper article (Lakić 2010, 269). Therefore, in this paper, we use the analytical framework of critical discourse analysis (of media discourse) that examines the function, purpose, and intent of using specific linguistic means in a specific social context. A critical look at the use of language in any discourse implies that the researcher, through the analysis of different linguistic levels (from phonetics to stylistics), uncovers hidden or at least at first glance, invisible determinants in social relations, which are primarily related to power relations (Filipović 2018, 20). For example, a purely linguistic analysis of a text will establish that a particular politician or media often uses the passive voice in their texts or speeches. Still, only critical discourse analysis can determine which information is being pushed into the foreground and which is being hidden by using these constructions.⁹

As its leading researchers describe, critical discourse analysis examines language as a social practice¹⁰ (Wodak and Weiss 2003, 13) and how power, social inequality, and manipulation are legitimized and reproduced through various linguistic tools (Van Dijk 2015,

⁹ An excellent example is provided by the author Milica Vuković (2014, 223) – the statements of American presidents Reagan, Clinton, and Bush “Mistakes were made,” in which the speaker only acknowledges that mistakes were made, but not who is responsible for them.

¹⁰ Language shapes (or defines) certain events, institutions, or structures, but society also in turn influences language. This mutual relationship can mean maintaining the current status quo or reshaping society and language (Wodak and Weiss 2003, 13).

466). A fundamental premise of this research orientation is that linguistic practices are not neutral but are “ideological and tend to shape social representations according to specific interests” (Pešić 2024, 9). While many studies have been written on political, scientific, economic, and even everyday discourse, media discourse is fascinating because it is the most comprehensive, and the most significant number of people are constantly exposed to it (Caldas-Coulthard 2003, 273). The basic framework for examining language in this paper is Norman Fairclough’s three-step model of analysis (Norman Fairclough 1989, 26), which consists of describing the text, interpreting it, and explaining the social context, combined with Van Dijk’s (Van Dijk 2015) interpretation of the relationship between microstructures (the language of specific texts) and macrostructures (the ideological background of discourse) (469).¹¹ To examine these relations, all texts in the specified media will be observed through the macro-strategies of thematization (imposing a topic on the audience), polarization (the existence of two opposing groups), and justification (spreading danger and stopping it).¹²

The corpus of this research consists of articles published in *The New York Times* between March 24, 1999, and June 10, 1999. Given the daily reporting and the many articles, the analysis included 27 texts categorized as “Conflict in the Balkans: The overview” and a search for keywords that yielded over 200 articles, mostly presented as “Opinion.” This study aims to determine how the bombing is presented in the newspaper’s writing, what linguistic means are used to construct the image of Serbs, and what macro-strategies are built through the specific use of language. The study’s first hypothesis is that the negative image of Serbia and Serbs is created primarily at the lexical and stylistic levels. The second hypothesis is that the reporting of the American daily newspaper *The New York Times* fully corresponds to the representation of Serbs and Serbia in other

¹¹ According to Van Dijk (2015), the relationship between macrostructures and microstructures is the central focus of critical discourse analysis. Microstructures consist of language use, discourse, and communication, while macrostructures represent power, domination, and inequality (468).

¹² In order to examine the relationship between discursive practices and ideology in a specific case, we combined several strategies presented in the works of Van Leeuwen and Wodak 1999; Vuković 2014; Van Dijk 2015.

European and world media and that, together with them, it can be interpreted as part of a unified transnational discourse.

ANALYSIS OF THE LANGUAGE OF THE NEW YORK TIMES

The initial *New York Times* article was categorized as “Conflict in the Balkans: The Overview”.¹³ In the first part of this corpus, there is still a slight deviation from an utterly negative perception of Serbs and Serbia. Serbs as a people are either not mentioned or are given a neutral position. One of the reasons for this is, as the same media reports, the division of Americans on the issue of the situation in the Balkans. Namely, the first polls showed that 46% of Americans supported the bombing, while 43% did not (Clines 1999a).¹⁴ However, later, and also in the initial articles of the second type – columns and opinions (Opinion), this picture changes completely, as, after all, the targets.¹⁵ And goals of the military operation change. Since maintaining a particular ideology in media discourse requires establishing control over the topic – for example, when editors or media owners decide which events to report on and which not to (Van Dijk 2015, 471), based on the number of texts we analyze, their frequency, and nature, we can conclude that the bombing of Serbia was a critical issue for readers in the United States, but also for politics itself. It is believed that after the Cold War, the United States needed an enemy and a new role in established international relations (Stojadinović 2014, 61), and the situation in the Balkans proved highly stimulating. Placing this topic in the focus of interest further opened space for developing two other strategies – presenting the enemy and justifying the attack.

Furthermore, the strategy of polarization, of presenting the adversary, was meant to indicate to readers who belongs to the “us” group and who belongs to the “them” group. We always produce

¹³ These texts mainly provide basic information about the bombing, an overview of the most important statements and events.

¹⁴ “NATO Strikes Go On as Serbs Step Up Campaign”. In the list of references, the dates when the text was published are given. In exceptional cases, when it is appropriate, the title of the article is also noted. All translations by Aleksandra Savić.

¹⁵ First, the goal was military infrastructure, then troops, depots, and communication facilities, and then infrastructure, bridges, and other facilities.

solidarity and compassion, and they distance and intolerance (Van Leeuwen and Wodak 1999). The careful painting of the relationship between “victim” and “perpetrator” begins in the very first days after the bombs fell. One of the first headlines in *The New York Times* is “After the Years of Mourning, a Time for Joy” (Stewart 1999). This text describes the joy of American Albanians after the news of the bombing of Serbia was announced. After that, a negative attitude towards Serbs, prejudices, and stereotypes are found in almost every text. Columns and opinions of journalists (“Opinion”) predominate. It is always emphasized that Serbs have previously participated in “similar slaughter” (Fitched 1999) and have “run wild” (Knowlton 1999). Some established phrases are found in several consecutive texts. For example, “Serbian atrocities” (*The New York Times* 1999a; Friedman 1999a; Lewis 1999a; *The New York Times* 1999b; Lewis 1999b), “Serbian rage” (*The New York Times* 1999c; *The New York Times* 1999d; Erlanger 1999a), Serbian “slaughter” (Friedman 1999b; Ellsberg 1999), which means that the task of such language is to underline and repeat several times what the relations between the warring parties are, but also to increase empathy towards the “endangered”.

Such a wholly stereotypical and malicious way of describing an entire nation and country is further complicated by the fact that it talks about persecutions and killings “perpetrated by Serbia” (*The New York Times* 1999e) and about “Serbia’s destructive role in the Balkans” (*The New York Times* 1999f). Serbs are depicted in an article dated April 4, 1999, in the following manner: “Serbs are tough and extremely nationalistic. Kosovo occupies an almost sacred place in their hearts, and they are led by a powerful opportunist who benefits from the crisis.”¹⁶ (Eagleburger 1999). The demonization reaches its peak in parallels with the Nazi regime, both directly, when Serbia is openly declared a neo-Nazi state (Clines 1999b), and through allusions, such as the use of the phrase “brutal Serbian blitzkrieg” (*The New York Times* 1999g). All these mechanisms that successfully establish the image of the enemy are activated at the moments when the newspaper openly supports the bombing – “Serbs deserve it” (Judah 1999), “Sanctions remain. The Serbian people will suffer, but

¹⁶ “The Serbs are tough and highly nationalistic, Kosovo occupies an almost holy place in their hearts, and they are led by a power-hungry opportunist who thrives in crises”.

it is necessary because of the tyranny they supported” (Lewis 1999b), “I am glad we are punishing Serbs for ethnic cleansing” (Friedman 1999b), and “Serbs must learn a lesson” (Datta-Ray 1999).

Finally, the most interesting aspect of the analyzed corpus is undoubtedly the attitude towards the bombing itself and its justification, i.e., according to the reporting of this media, its necessity. To fulfill the strategy of justifying the military attack, the bombing is described as a “moral imperative,” “the end of a tragedy,” and essential for “American national interests” (*The New York Times* 1999h), as well as the “right decision” and an “attempt to solve a problem that Serbia considers internal”, as well as a “matter of duty” (Clines 1999b). Also, NATO aggression is described as “preventing a humanitarian catastrophe” (Clines 1999a) or as a “goal worth fighting for”, “defeating something bad to build something good” (Mitchell 1999). By using tested phrases, specific lexicon, and even oxymorons (in the examples of “humanitarian catastrophe” (Clines 1999a) and “large-scale humanitarian catastrophe” (Miller 1999),¹⁷ they try to justify America’s role in the bombing and further gain public opinion. In these texts, the words of others are mostly conveyed, mainly those of the US president, members of Congress, secretary of state, and NATO officials.

The naming of the military operation has been the subject of many works and studies. In the selected corpus of the American New York Times, in addition to the previously mentioned “intervention” (Rieff 1999), the bombing is also called a “humanitarian intervention”.¹⁸ (Glaberson 1999), “air strikes” (Perlez 1999a), “intensive air operation” (Perlez 1999b), “air mission” (Schmitt 1999), and “bombing campaign” (*The New York Times* 1999i). The goal of mitigating military terminology and euphemisms is not only to hide a particular word or mislead the audience. One of the most dangerous characteristics of using this linguistic tool is the attempt to evoke as few emotional reactions as possible from the message recipient (Vuković 2014, 235) and prevent the emergence of empathy. How dangerous intentions can

¹⁷ Ljiljana Glišović, in her 2011 analysis of the German magazine Spiegel (issue 212), also highlights these same examples.

¹⁸ In some texts (for example, “American negotiators depart, frustrated by Milosevic’s hard line” (Erlanger 1999c) and “Honor compels opposition to rally around Belgrade” (Harden 1999)), it is clearly emphasized – directly or ironically – that these names are used by politicians and centers of power.

be hidden behind such discourse is shown by the text “Birthday in a Shelter, With “Fireworks” (Erlanger 1999b), dated March 26, 1999, in which the culmination of the negation of violence in descriptions of the bombing is achieved. Namely, depicting the life of a family of four in a Belgrade suburb, the reporter states that Biljana’s husband Mile said: “The Americans organized fireworks for your birthday”. Since a Serb from Belgrade utters this sentence, it completely reverses the situation and, besides being genuinely tragic, humiliates the victims of the aggression, mainly civilians. The attempt to control the reader’s empathy is ultimately revealed when, in similar texts (“Crisis in the Balkans: the Kosovars; Serbs Shelling Wide Swath of Kosovo”), we read the sad confessions of the opposing side, in which the words of Albanians are conveyed: “When we drive down the street, all the shops and houses are burning on both sides” (Kifner 1999). Thus, the same strategies were used to justify the bombing as in the other analyzed media, which tells us that it was a broader propaganda effort – an affirmative approach to the bombing (Mihaljinac and Vujošević 2021, 464).

“The use of metaphors is also exciting. Given the frequent use of these linguistic tools and the large number of texts, we will present only two interconnected and form a powerful parallelism. The first is the metaphor of fire, and the second is water. The former is used to describe Serbs and the latter Albanians. The metaphor of fire is used in the following expressions: ‘Serbs are *fanning* the flames’¹⁹ of ethnic and religious division’²⁰ (Clines 1999b), ‘pouring *oil on the fire*’²¹ (Broder 1999), and Serbia is a ‘*powder keg that has exploded twice before in this century*’²² (*The New York Times* 1999h).²³ On the other hand, there are metaphors such as how refugees have ‘*poured*

¹⁹ Italics by Aleksandra Savić.

²⁰ “*Serbia who has done nothing since the cold war ended but start new wars and pour gasoline on the flames of ethnic and religious division*”. Given the exceptional precision of the metaphor and the potential misunderstandings that may arise during translation, the original phrase will also be given in this case.

²¹ “*Pour gasoline on the flames of ethnic and religious division*”.

²² “*To defuse a powder keg at the heart of Europe that has exploded twice before in this century with catastrophic results*”.

²³ All these metaphors were used in his speech by Bill Clinton.

across the borders'²⁴ (Shenon 1999), there is a '*flood* of new refugees'²⁵ (Clines 1999a), a '*non-stop refugee flow*'²⁶ (Clines 1999c), and a '*wave* of refugees'²⁷ (*The New York Times* 1999h).²⁸

Lakoff and Johnson (2015) define metaphors as concepts through which we think and act, understanding one aspect of reality through another that is more familiar, simpler, or clearer (10). In this case, the metaphors of fire, which highlight experiences of war, conflict, and disputes, and metaphors of water, which emphasize danger or catastrophe, have the task of presenting readers with a simplified picture of the world in which, on the one hand, there is a people with strong emotional charge, who have no control over their actions and who can explode at any moment, and on the other, a large number of lost and distressed people who lose their identity and become a catastrophe for neighboring countries. Although these two metaphors are opposed, they share some standard features - fire and water destroy each other, are difficult to control, and produce great crises. Their task in these texts is to present large amounts of information through simple, opposing concepts to which people will react quickly and to show the consequences if the fire or water is not stopped. And the question of stopping brings us back to the justification of the bombing from the beginning of this analysis.

The preceding paragraphs have described the linguistic structuring of three macro-strategies: setting the agenda, identifying the enemy, and justifying the attack. In almost every text, it is clearly emphasized that Serbs are evil-doers and bullies, that their behavior is bestial and uncontrolled, and that the state protects and encourages them in their atrocities. Albanians, on the other hand, are the target of attacks and martyrs. Due to the conflict, they have to leave their homes, thus threatening neighboring countries as well. When Serbs talk about bombs, it is like fireworks for them, and when statements by Albanians are conveyed, it is described how everything is burning

²⁴ "*Poured across the borders*".

²⁵ "*A flood of new refugees*".

²⁶ "*Nonstop refugee flow*".

²⁷ "*Wave of refugees*".

²⁸ They can be labeled with the following concepts: *Serbs are fire*, and *refugees are water*.

and disappearing. This relationship, built on the manipulation of empathy and the creation of a black-and-white picture, is intended to justify attacks on Serbia and serve to position the United States not only as a global hegemon involved in resolving yet another crisis but also as a protector of the weak and the disadvantaged, a guardian of the world order, a defender of human rights, and an advocate of just war (Stojadinović 2015, 39). Later surveys show the fact that such reporting was very successful – unlike the initial hesitation of public opinion, as early as April, the opinion about the bombing changed drastically, and the New York Times now records that one survey showed great support for the bombing by the American people – as much as 58% (Kohut 1999).²⁹

²⁹ “Beware of Polls on the War”. Given the content of the article, polls and manipulation of them could be the subject of a separate paper.

CONCLUSION

Critical discourse analysis aims not only to uncover the linguistic tools frequently used in reporting but also to provide answers as to the political goal of the message senders with such a choice. This analysis has shown that language plays a vital, if not key, role in producing a simplified but contrasting picture of the world that is then easily used for propaganda purposes. By using three propaganda strategies – agenda-setting, enemy-marking, and justification of attacks – an illusion was created of the United States as a benefactor and advocate for protecting human rights. The importance of the topic of NATO aggression against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia for the study of political and media discourse in general is also indicated by the fact that this event was declared the first Internet war,³⁰ as online news had a great impact on the approval of the intervention (Vujošević 2020, 190).

The analysis reveals that the American New York Times employed a softened lexicon, descriptive constructions, and numerous euphemisms to obscure the true nature of the military operation and prevent the audience from feeling empathy or compassion. Such language use allowed for gaining voter approval or greater support for the state's foreign policy, as well as securing international legitimacy for military intervention. The most striking example of this use is the portrayal of the bombing as a fireworks display, which not only seeks to conceal the violence and suffering of innocent people but also inverts it into a celebration. Furthermore, in addition to the stereotypical portrayal of the military attacks themselves, the relationship between the two opposing sides is presented in a clichéd and simplified manner. A negative attitude towards an entire nation, its past, and its characteristics is intended to justify all the inhumanities of the target of NATO bombs, and ultimately to lead to direct advocacy of the attack. The demonization of Serbs is further

³⁰ The article states that every global event had its own media. In World War II, it was the film, television footage proved to be the most significant in Vietnam, while in the Gulf War it was the live broadcast. The latter also marks a “turning point in the way war events are presented in the media” (Petrović 2021, 283). Media researchers agree that a turning point in reporting occurred precisely after the Gulf War (Živković 2003, 15).

enhanced by the use of metaphors that simplify complex historical, political, and ethnic relations and reduce them to a question of external control.

The analyzed discourse has several important characteristics. Not only is it one of the first of its kind in modern warfare, as, in addition to military methods, it also uses media, political, and linguistic ones, but it can also be said that it builds the so-called global discourse (Höijer, Nohrstedt and Ottosen 2002). Namely, during the analysis of previous works on this or similar topics, it was established that almost identical discourse appears in German, British and other American media, which is enough to say that it is a transnational media narrative whose characteristics are: mitigating the impact and consequences of bombing, building a negative image of a nation, simplifying complex historical and political relations and demonizing the enemy, all in order to maintain the existing power relations and legitimize the new world order.

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**THE YUGOSLAV NATIONAL FRONT:
ATTEMPT(S) TO UNIFY THE
YUGONTEGRALISTS EXTREME RIGHT-WING
1935–1939
(Translation *In Extenso*)**

Abstract

This paper aims to reconstruct the history of attempts by Yugoslav integrationist political organizations – namely, the Yugoslav National Party, the Yugoslav People's Party, and the Yugoslav National Movement Zbor – to establish mutual cooperation and form the Yugoslav National Front coalition during the late 1930s. Their objective was to more effectively counter the informal process of federalizing the Yugoslav state initiated by the government of the Yugoslav Radical Union. The central focus of this study is the course of negotiations between these integrationist organizations, as well as the stance of Milan Stojadinović's regime toward the idea of uniting supporters of national and state unitarism. A more detailed examination of the Yugoslav National Front concept would shed light on the background and context of several key political events – such as the Arnautović assassination attempt on Stojadinović and the Technical Union affair – that significantly influenced the political landscape of the first Yugoslav state.

Keywords: Yugoslav integrations, Yugoslav National Front, Yugoslav Radical Peasant Democracy, Bogoljub Jevtić, Yugoslav National Party, Petar Živković, Yugoslav People's Party, Svetislav Hođera, Yugoslav People's Movement Choir, Dimitrije Ljotić

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The idea of integral Yugoslavism – a political theory according to which Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes represent “tribes” of a single Yugoslav nation – emerged on the eve of World War I in circles of radicalized youth gathered around the Serbian-Croatian Coalition. After the war, this theory was further elaborated by the ideologues of the Organization of Yugoslav Nationalists (ORJUNA). Using historical constructions, the leaders of ORJUNA imagined the history of a single Yugoslav nation inhabiting the lands between the Adriatic and Black Seas, the bearer of progress and the fighter against anachronistic political, social, and economic forms. According to their interpretation, the Yugoslav people, after centuries of struggle, completed their national-social revolution in 1918 by overthrowing the Ottoman and Habsburg empires, exponents of autocracy, religious fundamentalism, and feudalism, and for the first time found themselves united and free in their state (Dragosavljević 2018, 64–74; 109–125). By this premise, ORJUNA perceived all advocates of federalism and political organizations based on ethnic, regional, and religious identities as anachronistic forces that threatened the freedom of the Yugoslav people. Guided by the maxim “Into battle for the Yugoslav nation! Whoever is not with us is against us! Whoever is against us is against the State!” ORJUNA formed its militia (Action Squads), which targeted all opponents of national and state Unitarianism. Although the aggressive propaganda and terror of ORJUNA activists on several occasions threatened public order, ORJUNA, and its ideology dwelled on the margins of the political life of the Yugoslav state (Dragosavljević 2020, 172–206). Conceptualized in circles of highly educated urban intelligentsia, the theory of integral Yugoslavism was an abstract construct that had difficulty penetrating the ranks of the rural population, which remained loyal to political organizations based on ethnic, regional, and religious identities.

The dramatic turning point in the fate of this political theory was the assassination of Croatian deputies in the National Assembly in 1928. After months of negotiations with representatives of political parties, King Alexander, on January 6, 1929, issued the 6th January Manifesto – a proclamation in which he declared that parliamentarism had led to ethnic conflicts that threatened the further survival of the state. The king emphasized the need to find new ways to achieve unity, equality, and the equal rights of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes (Dimić 1996, 247). The monarch’s idea was to overcome the accumulated problems of Yugoslav society through a policy of national Unitarianism,

i.e., levelling on the Yugoslav level, whose ideological expression was the theory of integral Yugoslavism (Petranović 1991, 243). The king entrusted the implementation of this political program to the government headed by General Petar Živković. In the period 1929-1931, the 6th January regime was joined by a large number of prominent ORJUNA members such as Budimir-Grga Andjelić, Dobrosav Jevđević, Juraj Demetrović, Jovan Banjanin, and Albert Kramer, who would establish the organizational and ideological backbone of the regime's party – the Yugoslav Radical Peasant Democracy (*JRSD*)¹ (Stojkov 1969, 101–103). By presenting Yugoslav nationalism as a “divine right” and elevating national unity to the rank of a “law of the cosmos,” the ORJUNA members, through state institutions, continued to propagate uncompromising national and state Unitarianism (Dimić 1996, 279). The policy of integral Yugoslavism met with resistance and further exacerbated existing national conflicts (Petranović 1988, 197; 203). The inconsistent policy of the monarch, who, neglecting all criticism leveled at the pre-January 6th parties, tried to attract the NRS, SLS, and JMO into the orbit of the regime, led to a split within the regime's corps (Petranović 1988, 199). In December 1931, during the constitution of the regime's JRSD, a group of younger deputies (91 of them) led by Nikola Kešeljević opposed the name of the newly formed party, which, according to them, represented an unacceptable concession to pre-January 6th political organizations (Bodrožić 1964, 47–48). At the beginning of 1932, this group gathered around Kešeljević and Svetislav Hodjera, separated from the parliamentary club of the JRSD. It formed the Yugoslav National Club, accusing the rest of the JRSD of betraying the idea of January 6th. In May 1932, the club was transformed into the Yugoslav National Party (JNS, better known as Borbaši), which launched a fierce campaign against the leadership of the JRSD, which, in their opinion, had capitulated to tribal-separatist forces embodied in the pre-January 6th parties (Petranović 1988, 263). In addition to Borbaši, several political organizations were formed that, from the positions of uncompromising defense of the 6th January Manifesto, criticized the leadership of the JRSD. The oldest

¹ In 1933, the JRSD changed its name to the Yugoslav National Party. Due to the identical acronym with Svetislav Hodjera's Yugoslav National Party, in this paper we will continue to use the abbreviation JRSD even after 1932.

among them – the Veterans’ Organization of Yugoslavia (*VOJ*) – was founded in 1929 as an attempt by ORJUNA members from the Drava Banovina to continue their political work through the defense of the rights of veterans and the struggle for their more active involvement in political life (Dragosavljević 2019a, 234–255). At the same time, the Yugoslav Action was formed, which brought together former members of ORJUNA from the Sava and Primorska Banovinas and a political circle formed around the Belgrade newspaper “Political Voice” (*Politički Glasnik*) (Dragosavljević 2019b, 367–390). The mosaic of political organizations of dissidents of the 6th January regime was also made up of a political group gathered around the newspaper “Fatherland” (*Otadžbina*) under the leadership of Dimitrije Ljotić, a group of radical leaders from Banat Milorad Mojić, and the so-called “Small Council” (*Mali Zbor*) of Ratko Parežanin. These organizations, with minor variations, inherited the foundations of ORJUNA’s ideology – the theory of integral Yugoslavism, monarchism, advocacy of the concept of a centralized state, and plans for radical change of the political order. Their leadership unanimously criticized the corruption and ideological confusion within the ranks of the JRSD and showed intense animosity towards political parties formed on ethnic, regional, and religious identities. After the assassination in Marseille (09.10.1934), the membership of these organizations merged into a single Yugoslav National Movement Council (*Zbor*) under the leadership of Dimitrije Ljotić (Prežanin 2001, 22–25; 34–41; 51–54).

Prince Pavle Karadžević, who took power at the head of the Regency, was determined to reject the policy of the 6th January Manifesto. Bogoljub Jevtić was mandated to form a new government, which announced a break with the JRSD regime and the restoration of a multi-party parliamentary life. Jevtić’s government *de facto* (although not *de jure*) allowed the resumption of the work of pre-January 6th political parties and invited some of them (NRS, SLS, and JMO) to take over specific ministerial portfolios. Contrary to Jevtić’s expectations, all opposition parties refused to cooperate with his government (Stojkov 1969, 278–279). Faced with the refusal of cooperation, Jevtić called elections for May 5, 1935 (Tešić 1997, 17–19). By distancing himself from the JRSD, Jevtić opened the possibility of the fall of the 6th January system. Part of the JRSD presidency wanted to help B. Jevtić’s list, while part demanded that the party run with its list. Ultimately, the GO JRSD abandoned the idea of setting up an

independent list and recommended to its supporters to support lists that stood on the principle of national and state Unitarianism (Bodrožić 1987, 259–261). The JNS managed to set up an election list only to have it illegally annulled by the regime, which calculated that it would secure votes for the Yugoslav integralists (Bodrožić 1987, 275–276). Revolted by Jevtić's actions, Hodjera directed his supporters to vote for the opposition list, thereby causing further confusion among the supporters of Unitarianism. The JNP Zbor also set up an independent list. However, its leadership knew it could not expect a significant result since the movement was in the initial stages of formation. The campaign of the government list was accompanied by repression and intimidation of political dissidents (Petranović 1988, 211). In the Sava and Primorska Banovinas, opposition supporters used “terror from below” methods to intimidate candidates and voters of the government list (Dimić 1996, 331–332). Thanks to repression and falsification, the government list won a landslide victory in the elections (Stojkov 1969, 311). The government of B. Jevtić relied on dissidents from the JRSD, the cooperative movement, and individuals from the ranks of the extreme right-wing Yugoslav integralist movements. A precedent was the entry into the government of a prominent member of the disbanded NRS, Milan Stojadinović, as Minister of Finance (Stojkov 1985, 8–9; 19). Compromised in the public and the eyes of Prince Pavle by the repressive methods by which it won the election, viewed with distrust by Yugoslav integralist circles (due to the presence of M. Stojadinović), the government of B. Jevtić fell a month after winning the election (Tešić 1997, 21–24).

Milan Stojadinović, representing the NRS, was mandated to form a new government. He approached Anton Korošec and Mehmed Spaho, leaders of the SLS and JMO, seeking cooperation. Representatives of the three parties formed a new political organization called the Yugoslav Radical Community (JRZ), which, relying on the party apparatus of the three parties, was supposed to provide the government with the appearance of popular support and, at the same time minimize the influence of the Croatian national movement on the political scene of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia. According to an internal agreement, these three parties divided spheres of interest on an ethnic principle (Pavlović 2008, 310–311; 340). This conceived regime represented an introduction to the federalization of the state, i.e., it foreshadowed the abandonment of the centralized state order envisaged by the Octroyed Constitution (Janjetović 2007, 106). An

additional challenge to the constitutional order was the passive attitude of the government towards the situation in the Sava and Primorska Banovinas, which, after the May 5 elections, found themselves under the political dominance of the HSS, which pursued a determined policy of liquidating the political legacy of the monarchical dictatorship as the main obstacle to the establishment of a Croatian federal unit within the Kingdom of Yugoslavia. Supporters of the JRSD and other Yugoslav integralist elements were removed from all state services and subjected to terror by the so-called Peasant Protection – the party militia of the HSS. Encouraged by the passive attitude of the Government, extremist elements within the HSS directed terror even at members of the ruling party who, in vain, sought protection from state organs (Stojkov 1985, 83–85).

Radical changes in state policy led to organizational turmoil within the Yugoslav integralist forces. The JRSD, paralyzed by internal conflicts, was a silent observer of events. The JNS, which supported the opposition list, lost much of its credibility among Yugoslav integralists, and the JNP Zbor achieved a negligible election result. Under pressure from the Crown, the deputies elected to Jevtić's list en masse crossed over to the regime's parliamentary club. Among the ranks of Yugoslav integralists, the rejection of the policy of the 6th January Manifesto and the renewal of the work of political parties based on national, regional, and confessional identities were interpreted as political suicide for the Yugoslav state and a prelude to its disintegration. As a reaction among Yugoslav integralists, the idea of gathering all supporters of national and state Unitarianism into a coalition aiming to return to the policy of the 6th January Manifesto emerged. During August and September 1935, a group of JRSD senators – Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes from the borderlands who remained faithful to the politics of uncompromising national and state Unitarianism, held a series of meetings, the result of which was the so-called Pohorska Resolution. It condemned the government's departure from national and state unity policy. It appealed to all supporters of Unitarianism to unite in the Yugoslav National Front (JNF), which would overthrow the government of M. Stojadinović and return the state course to the positions of the 6th January Manifesto. The prominent activists of this group (the so-called Pohorci) were senators B. G. Andjelić, A.

Kramer, J. Banjanin, Petar Zec, and Svetislav Popović (AJ, 38–94). Jevtić also issued a circular letter in which he called on the deputies elected to his list to refuse to cooperate with the government of M. Stojadinović and to direct their work towards uniting all supporters of national and state Unitarianism in the JNF, which would continue to implement the 6th January policy (AJ, 37–19). In September 1935, twelve deputies led by Milan Božić (an associate of P. Živković) separated from Jevtić's club and formed the Yugoslav Independent National Club. Members of Božić's club supported the Pohorci and appealed to all supporters of Unitarianism to unite in the JNF, which would "continue the policy of the Knightly King" (AJ, 38–94). In September 1935, at a public gathering, the leader of the JNP Zbor, Dimitrije Ljotić, supported the idea of gathering all supporters of Yugoslav integralism. The JNS took a reserved position towards the concept of the JNF and, in November 1935, denied cooperating with the Pohorci. Contrary to the official position of the party, part of the membership led by the party's general secretary, Miloš Dragović, maintained close ties with the Pohorci and Jevtić's political group and supported the idea of the JNF (*Borba* 1936a; *Borba* 1936b; *Borba* 1936c). In February 1936, a conference of the JRSD was held in Belgrade at which the party president Uzuunović called on all supporters of Yugoslav integralism to unite to "break all tribal and religious fronts" and secure the victory of the "great idea of the Uniting King" (AJ, 37–19).

Further work on the formation of the JNF was interrupted by Damjan Arnautović's attempt to assassinate M. Stojadinović in the National Assembly in March 1936.² This event represented the culmination of several months of clashes in parliament between the deputies of the regime party and members of Jevtić's parliamentary club to which the assassin belonged. Investigative documents clearly show that Arnautović committed his act in a state of severe intoxication³. This event did not prevent M. Stojadinović from using the entire case to morally degrade Jevtić's group and politically liquidate P. Živković,

² For more information on the Arnautović assassination, see: Simić 2020, 163–174.

³ According to his own statement, Arnautović mixed 6 drinks during the evening (jenever, plum brandy, vodka, whiskey, wine, and cognac), i.e., he drank about a liter of spirits and an unidentified amount of wine.

who, as Minister of War, represented the last stronghold of the 6th January system within the government. The JRZ regime tried to use Arnautović's assassination also to compromise the JNS. Among those suspected of complicity in the assassination was Miloš Dragović, the leading advocate of the JNF idea from among the Borbaš. Supporting the involvement of the JNS leadership in Arnautović's assassination is a letter dated March 9, 1936, received by Stojadinović's chief of staff, which warns that on February 12, 1936, Hodjera stated that a regime change would soon occur and that the dictatorship of P. Živković would be re-established (AJ, 37–19). The regime's efforts to link the JNS to the assassination resulted in the Borbaš distancing themselves from the idea of the JNF. Dragović and all other supporters of the JNF were expelled from the party, and a resolution was adopted stating that the JNS would under no circumstances cooperate with the JRSD, the Pohorci, and Jevtić's political group (*Borba* 1936d). Dragović launched a public debate in which he accused Hodjera of having placed himself in the service of the regime in exchange for material means received from M. Stojadinović (Hrabak 2008, 77; Lompar 2022, 256). According to his claims, the leader of the JNS was given a task by the regime to sabotage the process of forming the JNF by attacking P. Živković (AJ, 307–2). Dragović claimed that after Arnautović's assassination, negotiations to create the JNF were renewed but failed due to a conflict between Hodjera and Živković. According to Dragović, only the leader of the JNP Zbor showed a willingness to support the idea of unification without setting any conditions (Hrabak 2008, 78). His claims are confirmed by a letter from the Central Press Bureau informing the Prime Minister about forming a coalition of unitary forces that would include the JRSD, JNS, and JNP Zbor (AJ, 38–94). A ruthless anti-opposition campaign in the regime's media, violations of the law (disregarding the immunity of assembly members), and police torture of those accused of the assassination resulted (contrary to M. Stojadinović's expectations) in the unification of the previously mutually conflicting factions of the JRSD. At the end of June, the Banovina administration in Niš reported that the JRSD leadership was preparing a congress at which General Živković would be elected party president (AJ, 37–19). To this news, the regime's Samouprava responded with a series of articles

in which the JRSD was denounced as a political organization that had no base among the people and was trying to impose itself by monopolizing patriotism and using terrorist methods (*Samouprava* 1936a; *Samouprava* 1936b; *Samouprava* 1936c). At a congress held on June 28, 1936, in Belgrade, in the presence of 700 delegates, P. Živković was elected president of the party, which caused great concern among the ranks of the JRZ (Stojimirović 2000, 65).

Živković initiated the process of reintegrating Jevtić's group into the party, which culminated in the merger of the parliamentary groups of M. Božić and B. Jevtić into a single parliamentary club of the JRSD (Tešić 1997, 90). A smaller group of Jevtić's deputies continued to act independently as the Yugoslav Independent Club under the leadership of J. Baričević (AJ, 37–19). Živković continued negotiations with this group and simultaneously sent an invitation to cooperate with the JNP Zbor and the Borba. The leader of the Zbor rejected this invitation to collaborate, recalling the long history of conflicts and disagreements that the Zbor had with the politics and personalities of this party. According to his assessment, the leadership of the JRSD was making a mistake in the politics of the JNF by emphasizing the struggle for national and state unitarianism and neglecting socio-economic issues, which were the main driving force behind separatist forces (Ljotić 1936). Živković received a similar response from the JNS (Hrabak 2008, 77). Despite the rejection of the leadership of the JNP Zbor and JNS to accept Živković's offer, negotiations continued in an informal form. This is evidenced by articles in the regime's *Samouprava* and the opposition's *Hrvatski Dnevnik*. *Samouprava* reported in January 1937 about creating a "right-wing cartel," including the JRSD, JNS, and JNP Zbor (*Samouprava* 1937a). In January 1937, *Hrvatski Dnevnik* published news that a "cartel of the right" was being formed, i.e., that the JNP Zbor, JRSD, and JNS would soon merge. According to the claims of the regime press, a meeting was held at which it was concluded that the JRSD, Borba's, and Jevtić's group would adopt the program of the JNP Zbor and then unite into a party under the leadership of D. Ljotić (AJ, 102-7). In February 1937, Ljotić denied these claims, stating that there were no concrete negotiations on creating a "right-wing cartel" but that this idea was present among the ranks of unitarians (Jugoslovenska pošta

1937). The Zagreb-based *Obzor* disputed Ljotić's claims, stating that a "right-wing cartel" had already been formed in Vojvodina, embodied in the cooperation of cadres of the JNP Zbor and JNS who had jointly launched an active campaign among the German population (*Obzor* 1937). In February 1937, *Samouprava* again spoke on the topic of the JNF, stating that the JRSD, JNS, and JNP Zbor were anachronistic political organizations, "bloodless phantoms of reaction" that were "struggling in the last gasp" (*Samouprava* 1937b). A similar tone was taken in the article "One Math Formula" (*Jedna matematička formula*), whose author concluded with the sarcastic remark, "Since the first have no one in the people, the second has nothing, and the third has nothing, the sum of all those mathematical magnitudes would represent more of nothing than when each is considered as nothing" (*Samouprava* 1937c).

The regime's attempts to prevent the formation of the JNF did not stop at merely publishing humorous articles. Before the local elections of 1936, the Prime Minister offered Ljotić to merge his movement into the JRZ in exchange for the position of Minister of Agriculture, leadership of the Main Association of Serbian Agricultural Cooperatives, and the position of Ban of the Danube Banovina (AS, BIA II–69). After Ljotić rejected this offer in early February 1937, a series of articles appeared in newspapers suggesting that the JNP Zbor was receiving subsidies from Nazi Germany through the Yugoslav-German company Technical Union.⁴ The so-called "Technical Union affair" seriously questioned the political credibility of the Zbor (Lompar 2020, 94; 96; 97). The leadership of the JNP Zbor responded to these insinuations with a series of lawsuits in which the editorial boards of the newspapers *Politika*, *Vreme*, and *Samouprava* were accused of defamation. In May 1937, the court sentenced the editor of

⁴ It is interesting to note that the intermediary between Ljotić and the company Technical Union was Milan Danić. Danić's real name was Alfred Diamantstein. This converted Jew – an optant for Hungarian citizenship – was a collaborator of the Bolshevik government of Béla Kun and a well-known Comintern agent who was arrested several times in Yugoslavia during the 1920s for subversive activities (including the organization of a communist uprising in Zagreb in 1919). See: Gligorijević 2002, 92. It would be very interesting to investigate how a converted Jew and Comintern agent found himself in the role of an intermediary between Ljotić and German capital.

Vreme to ten days in prison and the payment of court costs, with the obligation to publish a public correction and apology in his newspaper (AJ, 38–353). The leadership of the JRSD supported the JNP Zbor. It condemned the unscrupulous methods of the regime in attempting to discredit the Yugoslav integralist forces (AB, kutija 6). The unity of the Yugoslav integralists was also manifested at a political gathering held by the JNP Zbor in Smederevo on May 16, 1937. In addition to D. Ljotić, the gathering was addressed by Janko Baričević, who stated that all Yugoslav nationalists must unite in the JNF and save the state from the destructive policies of the regime (AB, kutija 7). In his statement for the newspaper *Vreme* (May 18, 1937), Baričević stated that the Yugoslav Independent Club had been advocating for the formation of the JNF since its inception, that negotiations on its creation were underway, and that close cooperation between Yugoslav integralist organizations had already been established on the ground for a long time (AJ, 102–7). The Zagreb-based *Obzor* interpreted Baričević's speech at the JNP Zbor rally as a continuation of the action to establish the JNF, which, in addition to the Zbor and Baričević's parliamentary club, would include the JRSD and JNS. The author of the article reminded the public that in addition to the ideology of integral Yugoslavism, these political organizations were linked by cooperation in the apparatus of the monarchical dictatorship; Ljotić was a minister in the government of P. Živković, Hodjera was his secretary, and Baričević was one of the main confidants of B. Jevtić. Emphasizing Baričević's statement that the JNF would be directed against both the regime and the United Opposition and the Peasant-Democratic Coalition, the author of the article warned the Croatian public that the unification of Yugoslav integralist forces represented the greatest danger to the Croatian people (AJ, 102–7). The creation of the Bloc of National Accord coalition, following a successful agreement between the Serbian and Croatian opposition in Farkašić in October 1937, led to a radical shift in M. Stojadinović's policy towards Yugoslav integralist forces. The newly formed bloc stated its goals as removing the JRZ government and suspending the Vidovdan Constitution. While the agreement did not prejudice a federalist state structure, it included a sharp criticism of the state and national unity on which the Vidovdan Constitution was based (Radojević 1994, 176–179). Faced with an opposition coalition united

around a federalist platform, Stojadinović was forced to return to the positions of defending national and state unitaryism (Pavlović 2008, 265–266). The first signs of this shift are visible in articles in regime newspapers that assessed the agreement in Farkašić (published on October 9, the anniversary of the Marseilles assassination) as an attack on the political work of King Alexander (Radojević 1994, 179). At the end of 1937, Stojadinović began intensive negotiations on a joint election campaign with JRSD, JNS, and JNP Zbor representatives. As a result of these negotiations, a change in the political course of the JNS is observed. The leadership of the Borba's continued with vehement criticism of the regime in terms of corruption and indecisive stance towards Croatian separatism, but at the same time, began to advocate the idea of forming a concentration government composed of representatives of all parties (*Borba* 1937a; *Borba* 1937b). Hodjera announced a radical change in the Borba's political course in his speech in December 1937, stating that the JNS policy in the upcoming elections would be designed to get as many Borba candidates into the assembly as possible, which represented an informal announcement of the future coalition with the ruling JRZ (*Borba* 1937c). Stojadinović's offer caused great internal controversy and division within the JRSD. Representatives from the Sava, Primorska, and Danube Banovinas board strongly demanded that the offer be accepted. In contrast, representatives of the boards from the Drava Banovina rejected the possibility of a coalition with the JRZ. They demanded a joint electoral appearance with the Bloc of National Accord. Senators B. G. Anđelinović and J. Banjanin spoke out against cooperation with the JRZ and the Bloc of National Accord. They proposed continuing the JNF policy (AJ, 37–19 "Godišnja sednica GO JNS"). In October 1938, Živković decided that the JRSD would appear on the Bloc of National Accord list. The leadership of the JRSD tried to explain to its membership the decision to appear on the list together with the separatist-oriented HSS as a necessary precondition for overthrowing the JRZ government, assuring them that its loyalty to the principles of the Sixth of January Manifesto was not in question (AJ, 14–22). A large number of officials and members disobeyed Živković and joined the JRZ candidate list (Bodrožić 1987, 398). Stojadinović's offer had a similar effect on the ranks of the JNP Zbor. Contrary to Ljotić, who believed that the JNP Zbor should run independently in the upcoming elections, a group of officials led by the general secretary Velibor

Jonić, Danilo Gregorić, Đorđe Perić, Danilo Vulović, and Dimitrije Subotić advocated for a joint electoral appearance with the JRZ. Since Ljotić refused to give up his position, this group tried to remove him from the head of the party, justifying their actions by interpreting that the electoral coalition with the JRZ represented the final realization of the JNF policy (AJ, 102–7). In the Zbor's press, this attempted coup was characterized as a direct consequence of the moves by the head of the JRZ, who, with the help of money and promises of high state functions, tried to turn the JNP Zbor into a regime branch. Revolted by the failure, Stojadinović carried out a series of repressive measures to obstruct the JNP Zbor's election campaign. After trying to overthrow the Zbor list, M. Stojadinović eventually arrested its bearer, D. Ljotić, who spent the campaign's final months in prison (Parežanin 2001, 196–202). In parallel with his efforts to draw the unitarian forces into the orbit of the regime, Stojadinović continued to conduct a campaign against the JRSD and JNP Zbor in public. The regime's *Samouprava* published articles claiming that the idea of the JNF had failed because the leadership of the JRSD and JNP Zbor, by cooperating with the Bloc of National Accord, had abandoned the defense of the principles of state and national unitarism and that its membership was massively leaving and joining the JRZ as the last defender of the unity of the state (Samouprava 1937d).

The leader of the JRZ continued his work on uniting Yugoslav integralist forces by co-opting the leader of the Borba, S. Hodjera, into his government as a minister without portfolio in October 1938 (Tešić 1997, 227). Hodjera justified his entry into the government and the formation of a pre-election coalition with the JRZ, which he had vehemently criticized for two years, by arguing that under the guise of the People's Accord Bloc, an alliance of federalist forces had been formed, whose victory would pose a danger to the survival of the Yugoslav state, so the Borba's entered into a coalition with the regime party to defend the "sanctity" of national and state unity (AJ, 307–2; AJ, 37–21). Local boards of the JRZ sent M. Stojadinović several reports that the leaders of the JNS sharply criticized the government's work at pre-election rallies, insulted M. Stojadinović, and said that they had entered the government only to control the "theft" of the JRZ (AJ, 37–21).

The presence of many Borbas and renegades from the JRSD and JNP Zbor on the JRZ election list resulted in a radical change in the rhetoric and iconography of the regime party's pre-election campaign.

The campaign's main slogans, such as "His policy is an indivisible Yugoslavia" and "One king – one nation – one state," had a distinctly Yugoslav integralist character. In their public appearances, the regime candidates denounced the People's Accord Bloc as advocates of separatism (Simić 2007, 245; 250; 258). At pre-election rallies, squads of uniformed JRZ youth appeared, indicating the militarization of the regime party, modeled on the ORUJNA Action Squads and the Borba Blue Shirts (Dragosavljević 2021a, 15–30). Using numerous abuses, the JRZ won a victory over the People's Accord Bloc list in December 1938. Inhibited by the arrest of Ljotić and several high-ranking officials of the JNP Zbor movement, the movement achieved a minor result of only thirty thousand votes in the elections. On the other hand, despite internal divisions and the negative campaign of the regime press, the JRSD won a respectable 122,755 votes, which testified to the prevalence of the Yugoslav integralist idea among the electorate (Radojević 1994, 125).

Stojadinović's electoral triumph, achieved on a Yugoslav integralist platform, proved to be a Pyrrhic victory. Confident in the stability of his position, M. Stojadinović failed to fulfill the promises made to the members of Borba and renegades from the JRSD and JNP Zbor who had run on his list. To sanction the disloyal behavior of the Borba members during the election campaign, Stojadinović denied Hodjera the promised ministerial position (Rastović 2006, 132). Revolted by such treatment, Hodjera broke the coalition agreement with the JRZ (AJ, 307–1). A similar scenario was repeated in the case of defectors from the JRSD and a group of Zbor renegades who were rewarded by the regime with lucrative but politically insignificant positions (Dragosavljević 2021b, 272–274; 305–306). Paradoxically, Stojadinović's electoral success was a prelude to his downfall. After the Munich Agreement, the ruling circles of Great Britain abandoned the policy of appeasement towards Germany and began preparations for the inevitable conflict with the Axis powers. As part of these preparations, they counted on the Kingdom of Yugoslavia as a serious ally in Southeast Europe (Petranović 1993, 44–45). The British demanded that the prince carry out internal consolidation of the state, which primarily implied a solution to the Croatian question, which threatened the Yugoslav army's combat effectiveness and the Yugoslav state's very survival (Petranović 1991, 244). Stojadinović's Yugoslav integralist platform, on which he ran in the 1938 elections,

prevented the leader of the JRZ from reaching an agreement with the HSS, which resulted in the fall of his government in February 1939. Compromised by cooperation with the regime and the federalist bloc, the JRSD and JNS failed to capitalize on Stojadinović's fall. Their membership began to increasingly shift to the ranks of the JNP Zbor, which, through the election campaign, had established itself as the last advocate of uncompromising national and state Unitarianism. According to the head of propaganda for the regime's JRZ, "Only the Ljotić's men are still fighting for the nationalist ideal of integral Yugoslavism; everyone else has abdicated, given in, and caved in!" (Stojimirović 2000, 327–329; 390). The leadership of the Zbor condemned the Cvetković–Maček agreement as a capitulation of the state leadership to separatist forces, denouncing all leading political forces – the Slovenian People's Party, the Croatian Peasant Party, and the Serbian Cultural Club – as "tribal separatists" and traitors, and calling on all supporters of Yugoslav integralism to defend the Yugoslav state decisively. The uncompromising defense of the concept of state and national Unitarianism, which led Zbor activists into political extremism and armed conflicts with security forces and separatist paramilitary formations, eventually became a struggle for an idealistic utopia.

The idea of forming the JNF was a reaction by supporters of national and state Unitarianism to the gradual federalization of the first Yugoslav state initiated by the JRZ government. This concept originated among the ranks of the JRSD's senatorial club and was eventually adopted by other Yugoslav integralist political organizations – the JNS and JNP Zbor. Contrary to the thesis put forward by socialist historiography that the cause of the failure of the JNF concept was the struggle for primacy among the leaders of Yugoslav integralist parties, a detailed analysis shows that the failure was due to the continuous work of the JRZ to prevent the unification of supporters of integral Yugoslavism. The radical methods used by the regime to achieve this goal (corruption, police repression, negative media campaigns, and the construction of false affairs) testify to the political potential of the idea of gathering all supporters of Unitarianism, i.e., the danger that its realization posed to the Stojadinović government. A kind of paradox is the fact that the JNF concept was ultimately realized

precisely by Stojadinović – the person against whose policy the idea itself was directed and who devoted most of the time he spent at the head of the Yugoslav government precisely to the struggle against the unification of Yugoslav integralist forces. At the same time, this paradox (in addition to the elasticity of Stojadinović's political principles) reflects the role of the theory of integral Yugoslavism as the last line of defense of the integrity of the Yugoslav state in times of crisis.

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THE DEFENSE FUNCTION OF THE STATE – TRADITIONAL AND MODERN UNDERSTANDING* (Translation *In Extenso*)**

Abstract

A vast body of literature in political science, security studies, and military affairs provides general definitions of the state's defensive function but lacks a deeper understanding of its essence – namely, the fundamental characteristics that define it and distinguish it from other state functions. Based on this premise, the research question arises: What constitutes the defensive function of the state? In pursuit of an

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answer, this paper draws an analogy between the defensive mechanisms of the state and those of the human body. By identifying the essential characteristics of human defense mechanisms, the study seeks to determine what the state defends, the threats it faces, and the nature of its responses to those threats. Applying this analogy, the authors conclude that defense falls within the category of protective state functions but differs from other functions of this type in two key aspects. First, it is specifically aimed at safeguarding the survival and vital values of the state from violent threats. Second, its protective actions are also of a violent nature. For this reason, the defensive function of the state was long equated with its military function. However, in recent decades, there has been a shift away from the traditional military-centric understanding of this function. The authors argue that the growing significance of non-military threats to the survival and vital values of the state drives this shift. This evolution inevitably affects how the state conducts its defensive actions, altering the essence of its defensive function.

Keywords: defense, human, state, defensive mechanism, defensive function

INTRODUCTION

To understand a phenomenon means to know its essence, that is, all those characteristics that make it what it is and different from other phenomena. Since the defense function of the state is a complex phenomenon encompassing biological, anthropological, philosophical, sociological, psychological, political, security, military, strategic, and other aspects, comprehending its essence is by no means an easy task. It requires a multidisciplinary approach and the use of concepts such as man, society, state, values, interests, power, politics, and strategy. The starting point in understanding its essence is undoubtedly man, given that his nature is imbued with the instinctual needs for survival and security. Since the origin and functioning of the political community are based precisely on these human needs, the state's defense function can be explained more closely by applying an analogy with the identical function of man. This analogy, moreover, is grounded in the theory

of political realism. Realists believe that “politics, like society, is subject to objective laws rooted in human nature” (Aćimović 1987, 61). Therefore, the essence of the defense function of the state should be sought within the framework of human needs and human action aimed at satisfying them.

DEFENSE AS A CORE FUNCTION OF THE STATE

Despite disagreements in understanding human nature, whether it is good or evil, social contract theorists, such as Rousseau, Kant, Hobbes, or Locke, share the view that “the transition of man from the natural to the social state is conditioned by his need to solve his existential problems, primarily the problem of his survival and security. They believe that equal and free people voluntarily unite into a political community to protect themselves from mutual violence and other injustices” (Stupar 2010, 245, 255–257, 279–281; Bodin 2007, 30–31). Thus, in pursuing security, a man renounces his absolute freedom, submitting to the standard rules that govern the community. In this way, the political community rises above the people who create it and takes the place of supreme authority. By applying its instruments, it maintains and protects the established social order, among other things, by limiting and restraining the violent behavior of man that is characteristic of his natural state (Stojanović 2012, 87–124).

Another reason for establishing a political community goes beyond the framework of man’s existential environment. It reflects man’s desire to protect his security from the violent threat of people from other communities, that is, from people outside his existential environment. Therefore, some authors, such as Slobodan Jovanović, believe that “the reason for the emergence of the state lies in the need of people to defend themselves from external threats, from attacks by other people organized for plunder and enslavement” (Jovanović 1990, 30–39).

By establishing a social order within a political community, man has created a security mechanism to limit the violent behavior of people within the community. But, in the absence of supreme authority over all political communities, he has failed to create a security mechanism to prevent violence between communities. Therefore, each was forced to develop its security mechanism to protect itself from the violent threat of other political communities. From the moment the first human political

communities were formed until today, this protective mechanism has been considered defensive. In contrast, its inherent function has been considered the defense function of the state.

Historically, defense has been traditionally considered a military function by which the state protects its survival and vital values (security) from armed violence, i.e., military threats from other states. Therefore, the problems of this function have always been inextricably linked to military activity and the question of war.

However, today's understanding of the state's defense function goes beyond the military activity framework. To explain this change, it is necessary to know what the state defends (the subject of defense), from what it defends itself (threats/attacks), and how it defends itself (defense). Knowledge of these questions also offers an understanding of the essence of the defense function. Namely, they indicate the state's defense function and how it differs from other state functions. Knowledge of why, today, the essence of this function is changing requires knowledge of the fundamental law that governs it, which is the law of the dialectical connection between defense and attack.

ANALOGY OF DEFENSE MECHANISMS OF A HUMAN AND A STATE

The state is a creation of man, and this fact is the foundation for understanding its defense function. By transitioning from a state of nature to a social state, man has instilled his nature, values, and needs into the very being of the political community (state). Thus, the role of the state, or the meaning of its existence, lies in satisfying man's needs, especially in protecting his survival and security. To protect the survival and security of the people who create it, the state must first preserve its survival and security. Therefore, like a human, it develops a defense mechanism. Since man has instilled his pattern of thinking and behavior into state thinking and action, the functioning of the state's defense mechanism cannot be explained without drawing an analogy with the functioning of the exact mechanism in humans.

However, this analogy should be approached with extreme caution. The state is a complex social phenomenon and cannot be viewed from the perspective of a human. It represents a 'multitude' of human

values and needs contained in 'one', which are numerous and diverse. Simply put, each person is different from another; he is a 'world unto himself'. The complexity of human nature generates a different value system in each person and stimulates different needs and behaviors to satisfy them. Therefore, it is impossible to understand the state as a homogeneous whole, as an indivisible 'one', a simple sum of human values and needs that stay the same over time. This diversity within the state shapes its internal dynamics, that is, the dynamics of its internal existential environment.

In addition, the complexity of the state is reflected in the fact that it, as an entity in itself, that is, independently of the people who create it, has its values such as survival, territory, sovereignty, and population. The last three are vital values of the state without which it would not exist. The state must preserve or improve these values and protect them, which are most threatened in its external existential environment (international environment). In this environment, the state functions through relations with other states, and "at the ends of these relations are different interests that, in addition to cooperation and competition, often generate conflicts" (Višnjić 2005, 25). Such diversity within the external existential environment of the state produces its external dynamics.

The existential environment of the state is, therefore, significantly more complex than the existential environment of a human. Two internal and external dynamics shape it, and their result substantially affects the development, security, and even the state's survival. This certainly makes a difference in the functioning and defensive action of the state and the human. Namely, in the existential environment of a human, threats to his survival and security usually come from other people. On the other hand, such threats can occur in the state's internal and external existential environment. On this basis, the state's defense mechanism is significantly more complex than the exact mechanism of a human. However, despite these differences, there are inevitably similarities in their defensive action. What makes the state a compact 'one', and similar to a human, are "the values people share, around which they gather and develop a sense of closeness and belonging, or a common identity. These are inherited, common values, such as language, religion, ethnicity, history, beliefs, customs, territory, etc."

(Mijalković 2011, 116). On these values, the state builds its subjectivity and functions as a separate political entity in the international system. From the perspective of the modern state, these shared values can be understood through the concept of “national values”.¹ They constitute the value category of the state, and within it lies the meaning of its existence and functioning. Like a human being, the state strives or exhibits an interest to protect its values. Therefore, the value category of the state is considered the object of its protection and, more narrowly viewed, the object of its defense.

National interests represent the political articulation of national values. They indicate the state’s attitude towards national values. Therefore, national interests, as the institutional aspiration of the state to preserve, improve, and protect its values, can be understood as a political category of the state. This category also includes the institutional action of the state, but it is also considered a strategic category. Namely, the action of the state through practical policies to satisfy its needs, including those for survival and security, is not the result of arbitrary state decisions but of strategic thinking.² As fundamentally rational, strategic thinking is characteristic of both the individual and the state. The logic of strategic thinking, contained in the sensible calculation of set goals, available means, and ways of using those means, is deeply embedded in the pattern of human thinking and, thus, its behavior. As man has transferred this logic from his natural to his social state, it shapes state thinking on preserving, improving, or protecting national values and interests. True, state thinking is significantly more complex than the rational thinking of the ordinary man. Still, despite such a difference, their logic is the same, and that is the logic of strategy.

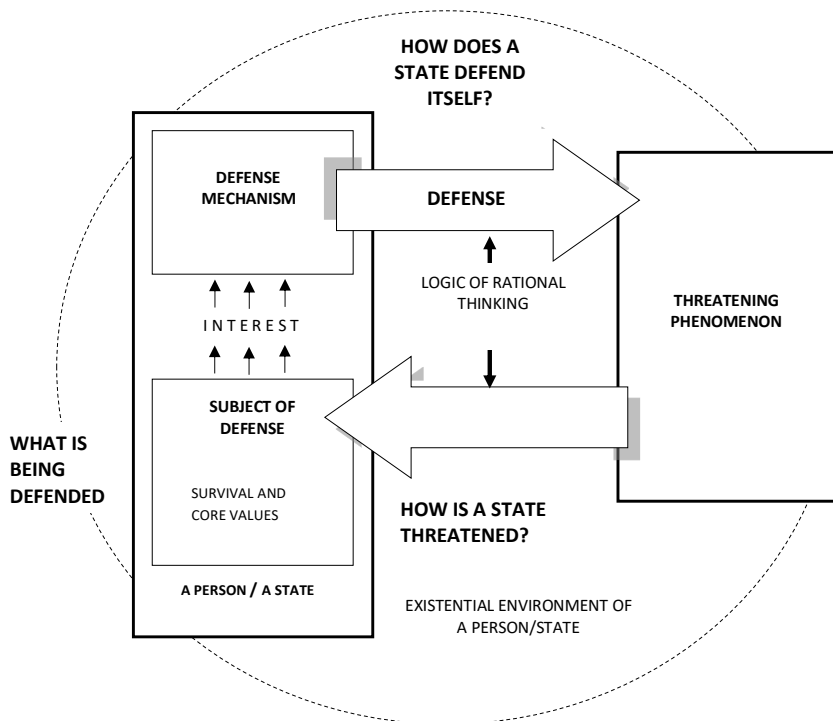
¹ State values are part of national values. Territory, sovereign power and population are the constituent elements of a state without which it would not exist. Therefore, these are vital state values. However, since a nation cannot exist without a state, because it represents a politically (state-forming) organized people, then vital state values are also considered vital national values.

² Strategic thinking, in the broadest sense, can be explained as “mental activity that is applied in the context of achieving a goal, and in the field of national security in the context of finding rational conceptual solutions to achieve policy goals in accordance with national interests”. (Vračar i Čurčić 2022, 49).

DIALECTICAL CONNECTION BETWEEN DEFENSE AND ATTACK

The congruence in the functioning and defensive action of the state and the individual certainly forms the basis for drawing an analogy of the functioning of their defense mechanisms. However, the very process of drawing it is based on the knowledge of the fundamental law equally present within the defense mechanisms of the state and the individual. It reflects the ever-present “dialectical connection between defense and attack, their inseparable and interdependent relationship” (Group of Authors 1973, 251). Namely, the path to understanding the essence of the defensive function of the state and the individual leads through the knowledge of the dialectical connection between defense and attack, and this is not an easy task. It first requires an answer to what the state and the individual defend: what values are considered the subject of their defense. Only by knowing those values, in the next step, can the phenomena that threaten them be identified. In the last step, through knowledge of the phenomena threatening the subject of defense, a conclusion can be drawn about how the state and the individual defend themselves, and it is drawn using the logic of strategic or rational thinking.

Image 1. – Model of the defense functions of the state and the individual



Source: Adaptation by the author

Namely, the rational way of a state's and a person's defensive action is based on finding solutions that bring maximum benefit and minimum damage to satisfying their needs. Therefore, the logic of the functioning of the state's and the person's defense mechanisms is based on the choice of opposing threatening phenomena that achieve efficiency (economicalness) and, above all, the most excellent effectiveness (efficacy). As the logic of strategic thinking is linked to the calculation of power, the defensive action of the state is viewed through the calculation of its power and the power of another state that threatens it.³ If a state is under military threat, it is expected to defend itself using military force, as this achieves the most excellent effectiveness in countering military threats from another state. The same is true for an individual. The most excellent effectiveness in opposing the violent behavior of

³ At the core of every strategy lies power. Strategy is a kind of dialogue between politics and national power. It explains how to use national power in accordance with state policy (Owens 2007, 114; Lykke 2001, 180).

another person is also achieved through the use of violence. The key difficulty in understanding the defensive functions of the state and the individual is not the dialectical connection between defense and attack but the understanding of the subject of human defense and, analogously, the state. Namely, human existence is determined by a complex system of needs. It is not based solely on the satisfaction of his instinctual needs, such as those for survival and security, but also other needs that arise from his nature as a conscious, intelligent, curious, and creative being. Only by satisfying all his needs does a person fully realize himself, both as a conscious and as a biological being, striving for a safe and, at the same time, high-quality way of life. When satisfying his needs, a person faces various difficulties, including those threatening his values. That is why a person strives to protect his values, which can be considered the subject of his protection.

However, not all values that a person protects are also defended values. This distinguishes a person's defensive function from his protective function. In this sense, it is essential to understand that the adopted opinion about those values determines the defended values of a person. Accordingly, according to the same principle, one can understand the phenomena that threaten those values, as well as how to oppose those phenomena. Namely, the defensive function of a person is only a generally accepted idea of what it is within the totality of his protective function, which is a natural given, something that a person possesses as innate, instinctual. Therefore, a person's defensive mechanism does not exist outside of his protective mechanism. It is only a part of it, determined by adopted understandings of what the defended values are, what they are threatened, and how they are defended. Such thoughts about the defensive function of a person are only analogously transferred to the level of the state.

DEFENSIVE MECHANISM (FUNCTION) OF A HUMAN

In the search for an answer to the question of which values are considered the subject of human defense, it should be repeated that human existence rests on "a complex system of values" (Despotović 2000, 11). This makes it different from other living beings because man also strives for a quality of life, survival, and security. This is the basis

of Plato's and Aristotle's understanding of human needs. "According to Plato, every person, in addition to basic needs, such as those for food, strives to satisfy more complex needs, such as culture and education, while Aristotle believes that man, like everything that lives, thinks about preserving himself (survival, life), but also asks how he should live. Human life wants 'goodness', fulfillment in a 'happy life'" (Stupar 2010, 94–97; Simeunović 2002, 22).

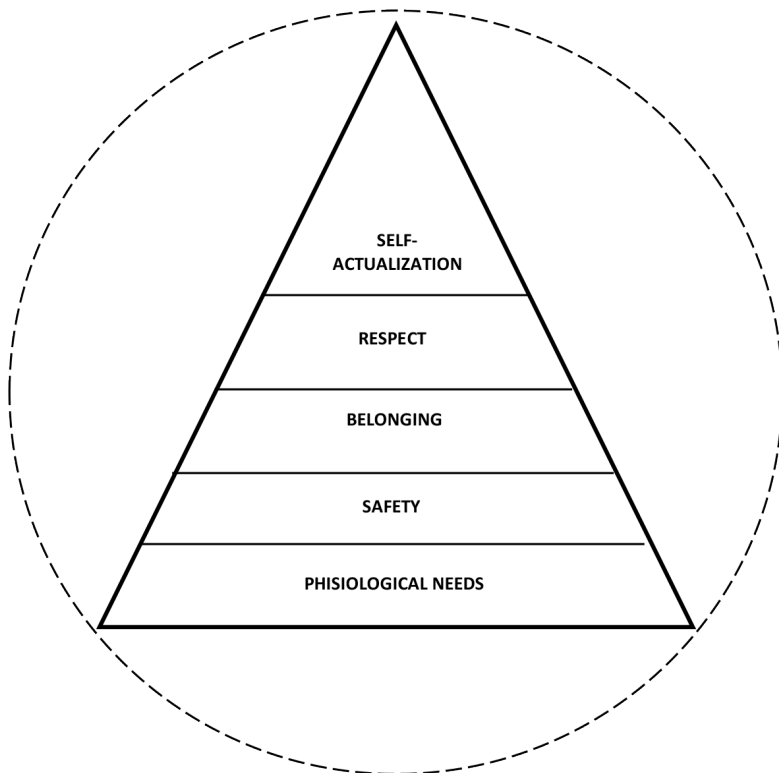
However, on the scale of values on which human existence rests, survival (life) occupies the place of a fundamental value for which man expresses a biological (instinctual) need. As such, it is the strongest motivator of human behavior. It is precisely from this particularity of survival that the widely accepted belief arises that it is not only a value that a person protects but also one that he defends. This conclusion can be drawn with the help of Maslow's theory of personality (Abraham Maslow), which is explained by a pyramidal (hierarchical) model of human needs.

"The most basic physiological needs are at the bottom of the pyramid. They include the needs for food, water, air, procreation, etc. These are instinctual needs directly linked to human survival, as with any other living being. Human life, or rather its survival, is not possible without satisfying these needs, nor is it possible to satisfy all of his other needs at a higher hierarchical level" (Pajević and Kasagić 2001, 214–215). "Only after satisfying physiological needs does a person begin to think about other needs, which are less intense than physiological ones" (Puljić 1980, 270–271). These are the needs for security, belongingness, respect, and the highest need for self-actualization.⁴ After physiological needs, the following instinctual needs of a human are those for security. They are broad in their scope because they imply the need for protection, certainty of future states, etc. They are closely related to physiological needs because a person strives to achieve, maintain, or protect conditions in their existential environment that allow them to undisturbedly satisfy basic needs for food, water, etc. Above them is the human need for belongingness,

⁴ "Maslow refers to these highest needs as 'meta-needs', recognizing them in man's search for values such as justice, beauty, goodness, order, unity, etc." (Hol and Lindzi 1983, 261).

respect, or self-actualization. These are higher needs related to the period of human socialization and his development as a social being.

Image 2. – Maslow’s hierarchical representation of human needs



Source: Adaptation by the author

Indeed, in its natural state, human existence is shaped most by the need for ‘bare survival’ and a sense of security rather than by needs for belonging, respect, or self-actualization. Antagonisms and violent relationships among people in the human natural state arose primarily due to the inability to satisfy these needs and not others. However, even later, in the period of the primitive human community and during the development of the political community, the leading cause of violent relationships among people was found in the satisfaction of needs for survival and security. The lack of the most fundamental values, such as water, food, etc., conditioned a person, whether as an individual or as a community member, to master new

habitats (territories), which resulted in mutual endangerment of the security (life) of people. “Thus, over time, in addition to animals and dangers of natural origin, such as natural disasters and diseases, the greatest danger to man became man himself” (Mijalković 2011, 40). More precisely, the greatest danger to man’s survival (life) became another person’s violent and aggressive (attacking) behavior. This is precisely the answer to what is considered a phenomenon that endangers the object of human defense: his survival. It could be concluded that a person protects all of his values from a broad spectrum of threatening phenomena of natural and social origin and defends his most fundamental values, survival and physical security, from the violent threats of other people. Thus, protecting the aforementioned values from the violent threats of other people is considered the purpose of man’s defensive function.

The fundamental causes of human aggression can be found in the human need for survival and security. This explains the logic of the operation of its defense mechanism. The state of unsatisfied, hierarchically higher needs, such as belonging, respect, or even self-actualization, can also lead to the emergence of human aggression. However, the fundamental cause of human aggressive behavior is primarily protecting its survival. Fromm speaks about this. He states, “Aggression is innate and manifests itself in all living beings faced with the species’ survival or the danger to the security of the individual. He believes that aggression is an instinctive reaction to a situation of threat to vital interests” (Redžić 2012, 395–396). Nietzsche sees in human aggression “the inevitability of wars” (Popović 1975, 83). Hobbes shares his opinion considering that “the drive for power, which dominates human nature, is a constant cause of mutual endangerment of people and the occurrence of wars” (Stojanović 2012, 8). In a state of threatened existence, fear dominates in humans. It creates a feeling of discomfort that develops into a need to achieve security. “To protect himself, and thus feel secure, a person needs power, and the more, the better” (Simeunović 2009, 43).

Understood as the ability to achieve what one wants, power is the essential means of achieving a goal, where the most crucial goal of every person is his life or survival. Therefore, a person, like any living being, strives to gain excess power because it guarantees the preservation of his life, and the nature of that power is often destructive. In the pursuit of survival, a person usually exhibits aggression or

violence towards another person. This is precisely where the logic of the operation of the human defense mechanism is recognized. In relations with other people, faced with a direct threat to their survival and security, a person instinctively acts aggressively, either defending themselves against other people's violence or attacking them. This explains the dialectical relationship between defense and attack within the human defense mechanism.

DEFENSE MECHANISM (FUNCTION) OF THE STATE

In seeking an answer to the question of what is considered the subject of state defense, it must be repeated that the human need to protect one's survival and security from the violence of other people lies at the very foundation of the emergence of the political community and its defense function. It can be concluded that the subject of state defense is found in its own and the survival of the people who create it. However, the state, analogous to man, strives to satisfy other needs, such as belonging, respect, and self-actualization. These needs undoubtedly shape the behavior of the state in its relations with other states.

The state's need for belonging is reflected in its striving for identity-based categorization, whether ideological, religious, ethnic, or, in the broadest sense, 'civilizational' (Huntington 2000). The state also strives for self-actualization- full realization by its being and respect from other states. The aforementioned needs of the state can be recognized in the thesis of the 'end of history' advocated by Francis Fukuyama. It points to the post-Cold War moment in which the states of the Western world, which cultivate a liberal political philosophy, have achieved their full realization. Fukuyama triumphantly announced the victory of liberalism over collectivist ideologies, such as socialism, political Islam, and others. He believed that after the Cold War, liberal states had risen above others and positioned themselves as morally superior (Fukuyama 2002).⁵

⁵ Liberal philosophy is, incidentally, the foundation of American 'exceptionalism', a sense of moral superiority of the US in relation to other states of the world. The notion that its values are the best and universally acceptable inevitably seeks unconditional respect from others. However, the need of a state for respect does not arise exclusively from a sense of its superiority over other states. It is equally

However, in interstate relations, the need for survival outweighs the significance of all other state needs. Mearsheimer states, ‘If a state is subjugated, it is unlikely to be in a position to pursue its other goals’ (Mearsheimer 2017, 64). Therefore, existence is necessary for a state to satisfy all its higher needs. This is undoubtedly in agreement with Maslow’s opinion that a person can meet their higher needs only if they have previously satisfied their most basic needs related to survival. Therefore, survival and the state’s vital values, such as territory and sovereign power, are the focus of its defense function.⁶

Conditionally, it can be stated that a state, like a human being, expresses physiological needs for values on which its survival depends. These needs are primarily reflected in the state’s need for territory, identical to the human need for living space. Just as a habitat provides human access to water, food, and other resources, the territory offers a state the resources and population necessary for its survival and development. Friedrich Ratzel and Rudolf Kjellen point out that “territory is an organic part of the state’s being from which it draws power and cannot be separated because otherwise it will disappear. The land is a fundamental, unchanging given around which the people’s interests revolve, so their struggle for living space boils down to a typical struggle for survival” (Stepić 2016, 143–148; Dugin 2004, 39–43).

Therefore, the answer to what the state defends is primarily found in the territory, as a vital value of every state and nation. If the territory is threatened, if it is subject to domination and enslavement, then other crucial values of the state are also threatened, such as sovereignty or the physical security of its citizens. Therefore, Ljubomir Stajić concludes “that territory is defended, while other state values are protected” (Stajić 2006, 32). In the search for an answer to the question of what the state is defending itself from, which phenomena threaten its territory, thereby sovereignty and the security of its citizens, it must be said that the struggle for living space has always

characteristic of less powerful states that strive to preserve their own identity, independence, and certainly an equal relationship with significantly more powerful states than themselves, especially in relations with great powers.

⁶ For this reason, Mearsheimer views state survival through its endeavor to maintain territorial integrity and the autonomy of its internal order.

been violent. No nation (state) is willing to give up its living space, but it is often willing to appropriate someone else's. Just as the fundamental reason for violence among people, in their natural state, is related to the mastery of new habitats to satisfy physiological needs, it can be concluded that violent relations between states are primarily determined by the need to control territories, or rather the resources that are located on them. This is indicated by the fact that the main reason for most wars in the history of international relations is the desire of states to control the spaces and resources of other states, and this has always implied a greater or lesser use of armed violence.

It could be concluded that a state's violent behavior is primarily linked to its need for survival. However, the need for belonging, respect, and self-actualization can also stimulate violent behavior. This is indicated by the founder of political realism, Thucydides. He says that wars are fought out of fear and interest and out of honor. However, the main reason for a state's violent behavior is its fear of extinction: its need to survive. The fear of extinction generates the state's need to increase its power. In such an endeavor, it often converts its power into violent (aggressive) behavior in relations with other states.

The aforementioned behavior of the state is explained by the theories of offensive and defensive neorealism by John Mearsheimer and Kenneth Waltz. "Analyzing the relations of great powers, Mearsheimer states that they fear each other. They view each other with suspicion and concern about possible conflict. The level of fear among them varies across space and time, but it never ceases" (Mearsheimer 2017, 64). Unlike the classical realism of Hans Morgenthau, who considers power to be a goal of the state in itself because the human drive for power is rooted in its being, neorealists emphasize the instrumental nature of power, which is necessary to achieve the security and survival of the state, with particular reference to military power. They emphasize that the structure of the international system, anarchic in nature, is the primary source of state fear and the driver of its continuous thinking about the issue of survival and increasing its power.

Violence is undoubtedly the outcome of a state's defense mechanism, and it is applied in various ways. On the one hand, a state defends itself with violence from the violent threats of other states, and on the other, it uses violence to threaten the security of different states. The aforementioned fact requires a closer explanation of the paradoxical connection between the state's defense function and offensive, violent behavior. Namely, realists see the international system as anarchic and consider the state's security the central issue of international relations. The theory of offensive neorealism suggests that states preemptively use force to prevent rival states from becoming militarily stronger, thus becoming capable of threatening their survival. This explains the fact that a state's defensive action can also be offensive in nature. Such state action is primarily associated with extraordinary powers.

The previous considerations explain why, throughout the history of international relations, the defensive function of the state has been identified with the military function. Colin S. Gray calls this history the history of strategy, which is a military strategy (Gray 2007, 1–3). In other words, he believes that the history of international relations is the history of warfare. Although it cannot be wholly identified with the history of warfare, it is essentially so. That is why, within the state, as an institutional form of social organization, the role of the instrument of its defense mechanism has been assigned to the military. Thus, the military aspect of the overall protective function of the state is considered its defense function. This is where the essence of the state's defense function is recognized. It belongs to the corpus of the state's protective functions. Still, other functions of that type differ in that it is directed at violent (military) phenomena that threaten the survival and vital values of the state. In that, the way of its protective action is also violent (military).

CONTEMPORARY UNDERSTANDING OF THE STATE'S DEFENSE FUNCTION

In recent decades, there has been a significant departure from the traditional understanding and practice of the state's defense function. An indicator of this departure can be seen in developing and applying the strategic concept of comprehensive (total) defense. It differs significantly from the previous military-centric defense concept, as its logic is based on integrating and synchronizing the military component of national power with other non-military components. The explanation for developing and applying this concept is complex and requires unique research. However, referring to the logic of the operation of the state's defense mechanism, the fundamental reason for the change in the traditional understanding and practice of the defense function should be sought in the changing nature of the threats that endanger the survival and security of the state.

Today, it is unnecessary to apply military power to another state to occupy its territory, dispute its sovereignty, and exercise control over its resources and population. Military power is not even necessary to threaten the survival of other states. Such a fact is not a particular novelty of the modern era, but it is significantly more pronounced today than in the past. This has been contributed to by globalization and technological development, especially in information and communication technologies. Along with the democratization process of most of the world, they have produced greater openness, connectivity, and interdependence of states. This has made many states weaker in terms of survival and security or more vulnerable to the subversive activities of other states.

In contemporary reality, often described with terms such as the global or information society, values such as ethnic or religious affiliation, living standards, freedom of thought, speech, movement, the right to choose, participation in political life, etc., are increasingly gaining importance both within states and in their relations. The inability to meet the needs for these values in many states creates an internal dynamic that often reflects antagonistic relations between the bearers of political power and citizens, between different social

strata, and even between opposing political elites. Such internal instability represents a weakness of the state and is used as a focus of subversive activities of other states.

The security and survival of a state are threatened in this way, perhaps best indicated by the turbulent political period that began at the end of 2010 in the Arab states of the Middle East and North Africa (Maghreb), symbolically called the “Arab Spring.” In just six months, demonstrations resulted in the violent overthrow of governments in Tunisia, Egypt, and Jordan. It led to the government’s fall, and the Sudanese president and Iraqi prime minister announced elections. The Yemeni president offered to resign in exchange for immunity. At the same time, the Libyan leader refused to step down, leading to a bloody civil war in Libya and the *de facto* division of the state. The Syrian regime is still resisting the pressure of the rebels, which is why a civil war is still raging in this country, with massive casualties and loss of sovereignty over a large part of the territory. During this period, many states were threatened with disintegration to create another state on their territory. It started as a spontaneous mass protest of dissatisfied people who no longer wanted to live within the limitations imposed on them by authoritarian regimes, but it was not so spontaneous. Behind it were the geopolitical interests of Western countries that, directly or indirectly, encouraged and directed these events by applying a full spectrum of military and non-military power through armed interventions, violent regime change, weakening economic systems by imposing sanctions, anti-regime propaganda, etc. (Janković 2013, 74–90).

Such a way of threatening the security and survival of a state is also present between great powers. Namely, in today’s world, there are numerous limitations to direct conventional military conflict between great powers. In such circumstances, indirect warfare, often referred to today as hybrid or multidimensional, becomes dominant in their relations (Korybko 2015, 9).

One of the frequent claims in the current Russian narrative is that the West seeks to weaken, dismember, or even divide Russia into smaller parts to make it less relevant in international relations. Many Russian analysts believe that the economic sanctions imposed on Russia after the annexation of Crimea in 2014, and especially after

the outbreak of armed conflict in Ukraine in 2022, were seen as a means of its destabilization and disintegration (Hosoe 2023, 305–319). For this purpose, the West supports the so-called civil society through various non-governmental organizations and foundations. In the Russian narrative, these activities are often interpreted as an attempt to incite internal unrest, undermine the regime, and overthrow the state (Finkel and Brudny 2012, 1–14).

It could be said that in contemporary international relations, especially in relations between powerful and developed countries, the focus of conflict is shifting from action against the enemy's military forces to its weaknesses. Two key moments explain such a trend. First, the effectiveness of non-military instruments of power has become much more significant due to the impact of globalization and technological development on the nature of relations between international actors, and second, the use of military force is increasingly becoming counterproductive.⁷ If military power is applied, it is done so in integration with other elements of national power. Such action is multidimensional and comprehensive and relies on a more significant application of diplomatic, political, informational, economic, and other control instruments. By the nature of the threatening phenomena to the survival and security of the state, its defense requires a different way of opposing than the traditional military-centric way. Therefore, the contemporary understanding and practice of the state's defense function is changing and is increasingly viewed through comprehensive (total) defense (see Vangel and Božić 2023, 7–32).⁸

Suppose one were to search for an adequate definition of the contemporary defense function of the state. In that case, one should undoubtedly start from the conflict of the full spectrum, which, due to its actuality, is increasingly the subject of strategic studies. However, the discipline theory still does not define it clearly enough. Oscar

⁷ Since the end of World War II, and especially during the Cold War period, the use of military force has been losing its legitimacy and legality, and has increasingly become uneconomical (see Milenković and Vračar 2022, 157–175; Milenković and Vračar 2023, 387–405).

⁸ Besides acting on the enemy's military capabilities, in the concept of comprehensive defense, the protection of one's own vulnerabilities plays an important role, and it is achieved through non-military means of action.

Jonsson and Robert Seely provide a more straightforward definition of this type of conflict, saying that it represents “the use of military and non-military means under a single central command, directed towards the same political goal” (Jonsson and Seely 2015). In this definition, equal importance is attached to both military and non-military activities that can threaten the survival and security of the state. Accordingly, the contemporary defense function of the state could be understood as its protective function by which the state, applying military and non-military instruments of national power, both in peace and war, protects its survival and vital values from various threats of a military and non-military nature.

CONCLUSION

The essence of a phenomenon lies in those characteristics that make it what it is and different from other phenomena. The essential characteristics of the defense function of the state are recognized in its subject of defense, the phenomena by which it is threatened, and the state's response to the action of those phenomena. By analogy with the defense function of a human being, it is concluded that defense belongs to the category of protective functions of the state and that it differs from other functions of that type in that it is directed in its action to the protection of the survival and vital values of the state from violent threats, as well as in that its protective action is also violent. Therefore, until recently, the defense function of the state was equated with the military function. In recent decades, however, there has been a departure from the traditional military-centric understanding of the defense function of the state, and the reason for this is the increasing importance of non-military threats to its survival and vital values. This certainly affects how the state defends itself, which also leads to a change in the essence of its defense function. Namely, while the subject of state defense remains the same: its survival and vital values, the nature of the state's defense function changes in the dialectical relationship between defense and attack. Accordingly, the contemporary defense function of the state could be understood as its protective function by which the state, applying military and non-military instruments of national power, both in peace and war, protects its survival and vital values from various threats of a military and non-military nature.

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**A CONTRIBUTION TO THE DEBATE ON
THE POLICY OF SANCTIONING CORPORAL
PUNISHMENT OF CHILDREN IN SERBIA:
ATTITUDE INCONSISTENCY******

Abstract

The policy of introducing a prohibition on corporal punishment of children (CPC) into legal frameworks currently needs unanimous support among social actors in Serbia. This may reflect the instability and inconsistency of collective and individual attitudes toward CPC, which are in the process of changing. The subject of this research is the attitude toward CPC from the standpoint of social change theories and stages of the attitude change process. The aim was to examine the consistency of this attitude across different levels of generality and situational contexts to determine its stability. A quantitative study was conducted among 104 respondents. Data were collected through an online questionnaire designed for the research. The findings revealed

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that attitude toward CPC depends on situational context differences and the context's specificity level. For instance, while 79.8% of respondents hold a negative general attitude toward CPC, 54.8% believe that parents should legally be allowed to slap a child on the buttocks with an open hand when the child is disobedient. When presented with five different situations involving specific child misbehavior, only 1.9% to 6.7% of respondents approved of a parent's reaction involving a mild slap on the buttocks without further explanation, depending on the situation. Conversely, support for this reaction increased to between 7.7% and 31.7% if accompanied by an explanation of why the child's behaviour was inappropriate. The results of the inconsistency of attitudes toward CPC are discussed in light of the significance of the level of abstraction and situational context. The recommended approach advocates for a policy that respects the particularities of Serbian society by formulating legal provisions on CPC as precisely as possible.

Keywords: corporal punishment prohibition policy, children, upbringing, discipline, attitude change, law

INTRODUCTION

Attitudes toward corporal punishment of children (CPC) shape parental practices that directly affect a child's emotional, social, and cognitive development and thereby impact society as a whole. The current social context in Serbia reflects a complex interplay of traditional, patriarchal values, which regard CPC as an integral part of child-rearing, and contemporary values that oppose CPC, supported by empirical evidence of its harmful consequences (Fréchette and Romano 2015; Gershoff and Grogan-Kaylor 2016). This indicates that our society is undergoing a nuanced shift in attitudes toward CPC on both collective and individual levels.

The lack of a clearly defined policy on CPC is evidenced by the fact that national initiatives that legally prohibit CPC have yet to be formally adopted. The UN Committee initiated a shift in attitude toward CPC on the Rights of the Child (UN CRC 2007), which defined "corporal" or "physical" punishment as any form of punishment involving the

use of physical force with the intent to inflict a specific, even minimal, degree of pain or discomfort (para. 11) and recommended that member states implement legal reforms to prohibit CPC. In February 2017, the Committee included in its recommendations for advancing child rights in Serbia a suggestion for the legal prohibition of CPC. Subsequently, in 2019, an initiative to legally ban CPC was launched. In 2020, the Strategy for the Prevention and Protection of Children from Violence for the period 2020–2023 was adopted, which stated that “it is necessary to define corporal punishment of a child as a form of violence against the child” (Strategija za prevenciju i zaštitu dece od nasilja 2020). In 2021, the Draft Law on Amendments to the Family Law was presented to the public, which proposed a ban on CPC by parents and defined corporal punishment as “any use of physical force with the intent to induce fear, pain, or discomfort in a child” (Advokatska komora Vojvodine 2021, Art. 10, para. 2). To date, this Draft has not been adopted. Public discussions on this issue have shown that opposing views on CPC are present among both professionals and the general public (Vujović 2020).

A better understanding of the process of shifting attitudes toward CPC – from positive to negative – is essential for defining future policies on CPC sanctions and relevant legal regulations. People tend to alter their attitudes under the influence of social factors – media and public discourse, political rhetoric, social movements, and group dynamics (Moussaid *et al.* 2013) – particularly when they identify with specific social groups (such as a political party, religious group, or social movement). In such cases, they align their beliefs with those prevailing in the group to foster a sense of belonging (Thomas *et al.* 2022). On the other hand, the most prominent individual factors in attitude change are cognitive mechanisms, especially cognitive dissonance, social learning (through imitation of role models), motivation, and beliefs (Festinger 1957; Montgomery 1992; Fazio *et al.* 1977; Moussaid *et al.* 2013; de la Sablonniere 2017; Cancino-Montecinos *et al.* 2018; Thomas *et al.* 2022). When society collectively moves toward a change in attitude, individuals tend to align their views with those of the majority (Moussaid *et al.* 2013; de la Sablonniere 2017). Individuals adopt new beliefs, especially in situations of uncertainty (Deutsch and Gerard 1955). The process of attitude change unfolds through a nuanced, dynamic interaction of individual and social mechanisms. The attitudes of the majority can be influenced by the personal attitudes of prominent

individuals or activists who lead shifts in public discourse, subsequently resulting in the adoption of new attitudes on a broader societal level (de la Sablonniere 2017; Thomas *et al.* 2022).

The Process of Collective Attitude Change

Attitudes toward CPC possess both collective and individual dimensions. As a collective attitude, it reflects and dictates how the community perceives this issue collectively, shaping the behaviour of group members (Turner 1991) and influencing how they respond to social change. Research indicates that collective attitudes evolve through specific stages that accompany the process of social change (de la Sablonniere 2017). The first stage is stability or inertia. Initially, societies often resist change. Members adhere to existing beliefs and norms due to a need for psychological and social stability, remaining unaware of, or indifferent to, the necessity for change. In the second stage, new information or social circumstances prompt a reevaluation of established norms, and people begin to experience cognitive dissonance. This tension between established beliefs and a new reality leads some individuals to question the *status quo*, with small groups slowly beginning to advocate for change (Thomas *et al.* 2022). In the third stage, a gradual shift in collective attitude occurs as more individuals align their views with new perspectives, usually due to social influence and exposure to new ideas. This change spreads slowly through social networks or movements (Moussaid *et al.* 2013; de la Sablonniere 2017). However, change can sometimes happen dramatically and quickly, often triggered by significant events such as political upheavals or rapid technological advancements. Such events disrupt social and normative structures, leading to an abrupt shift in collective attitudes, initially sparking some resistance as the changes may threaten cultural or group identities (de la Sablonniere 2017). The final stage is consolidation and institutionalisation, when a critical mass of society members adopts new attitudes, and the new norms become institutionalised within society (Centola 2018) by establishing new laws, policies, or social norms that reinforce the newly adopted attitudes. These stages may vary in duration and intensity depending on factors such as the nature of the change, the social groups involved, the role of media, and the influence of prominent individuals (della Porta and Diani 2006).

The Process of Individual Attitude Change

The attitude toward CPC also represents an individual attitude, varying from person to person (Eagly and Chaiken 1993). The Stages of Change Model, or Transtheoretical Model (TTM), outlines six phases of attitude change at the individual level (Prochaska and DiClemente 1983; Norcross and Prochaska 2002). In the first stage, precontemplation, the individual is either unaware of the need for change or actively resists it, denying the importance of the issue or resisting reconsidering their views because of the influence of social norms. In the second stage, contemplation, the individual begins to recognize that their attitude might require adjustment, weighing the pros and cons of change. Although open to new information, they have yet to commit fully to change. Next is the preparation stage, where the individual firmly decides that change is necessary, explores new perspectives, gathers information, and seeks advice from others before taking concrete action. In the fourth stage, action, the person actively works to change their attitude: they discuss the topic, question former beliefs, test new ones, expose themselves to various perspectives, and align behaviours with the new attitudes they seek to adopt. This phase is cognitively and emotionally demanding. Then comes the maintenance stage, where the person integrates the new attitude into daily life. In the final stage, a person may either achieve a lasting attitude change that becomes part of their belief system, requiring minimal effort to maintain; revert to their previous attitude, especially when confronted with opposing social pressures (de la Sablonniere 2017); or experience incomplete internalisation, where the attitude fails to fully integrate into daily life (Monin and Norton 2003).

Indicators of incomplete internalisation include low cognitive accessibility of the attitude when making decisions (Fazio 1990); emotional detachment from the attitude (Maio and Haddock 2010); hesitation to act consistently with the attitude (Fazio and Towles-Schwen 1999); sensitivity to social pressure, context, and authority figures (Cialdini and Goldstein 2004); selective application of the attitude only when socially reinforced (Petty and Krosnick 1995); lack of opportunity to practice the attitude-aligned behaviour, which would strengthen the link between attitude and action (Gollwitzer 1999); rationalisation to minimise dissonance between cognitively adopted attitudes and one's behaviour (Stone and

Cooper 2001); or even open ambivalence, where the individual is aware of making both positive and negative evaluations of the attitude object (Thompson *et al.* 1995). Additionally, the attitude may be context-sensitive, particularly when situations lack cues that trigger the specific attitude, and contexts exert different levels of pressure on the individual to exhibit that attitude (Lord and Lepper 1999).

In stages of attitude change where internalisation is incomplete, an individual may adopt a generalised belief on an abstract level but struggle to apply it consistently in the concrete contexts of daily experiences. This discrepancy between abstract and concrete thinking is grounded in the stages of the cognitive process of attitude adoption. An abstract or generalised belief is initially adopted, forming a cognitive schema (Fiske and Taylor 1991). The person develops a general attitude based on social norms, cultural values, or moral reasoning (Markus and Zajonc 1985). This abstract attitude serves as a cognitive shortcut or our way to make sense of our world, but it does not necessarily account for the complexities of real life (Lord *et al.* 1984; Eyal *et al.* 2008). In the next phase, the individual attempts to apply this general belief to a specific instance. However, situations often involve complexities, intense emotions, or values that conflict with that adopted general belief. The individual then tries to rationalise why the general belief does not fully apply in that particular case (Harmon-Jones and Mills 1999). In the following phase, the context is re-evaluated, and the person realizes that the abstract attitude cannot be applied universally, prompting an adjustment of their cognitive schema. A specific split between contradictory beliefs may arise, allowing the individual to support both the abstract attitude and its exception without triggering cognitive dissonance (Markus 1977; Fiske and Taylor 1991). In specific situations, emotional and contextual factors (urgency, perceived danger, stress) may lead the individual to make exceptions to the general attitude, revealing that the abstract attitude is not fully internalized for specific contexts (Tversky and Kahneman 1981; Forgas 1995). Over time, through reflection or daily experience, the individual may attempt to integrate the general attitude with its contextual exceptions, either by reinforcing the general attitude to apply without exception or by modifying it to fit concrete life contexts better (Greenwald and Banaji 1995; Chaiken and Trope 1999). If this integration is not achieved, the person will continue to apply one attitude on an

abstract level and another in specific situations without fully resolving the tension between them (Monin and Norton 2003).

The concept of incomplete internalisation and integration of attitudes into daily life is especially significant for understanding the complexity and duration of the attitude change process toward CPC in our society. In the face of opposing views, policies on CPC sanctions and related legal initiatives will not gain unanimous support, as the institutionalisation phase matures in society only after a sufficient number of members have stably adopted and internalised the new attitude. Evidence of a gap between the general attitude toward CPC and attitudes in specific daily situations will serve as an indicator of the insufficient internalisation of the negative attitude toward CPC in our research.

RESEARCH

Objective and Hypotheses of the Study

This study aims to identify attitudes toward CPC and assess their consistency across varying levels of generality and different situational contexts to determine whether this attitude is stable and fully formed. The specific objectives are: 1) to determine participants' attitudes toward corporal punishment of children; 2) to analyse the consistency of participants' attitudes toward CPC concerning the level of attitude specificity; 3) to analyse the consistency of participants' attitudes toward CPC across various situational contexts; and 4) to examine participants' attitudes toward the legal regulation of parenting practices and CPC sanctioning policies.

The general hypothesis assumes that there is inconsistency in expressed attitudes across different levels of generality and situational contexts. The specific hypotheses are: 1) that a statistically significant majority of the sample will hold a generally negative attitude toward CPC and that respondents will more readily accept milder forms of corporal punishment than severe or excessive forms; 2) that the percentage of negative attitudes toward CPC will vary according to the generality level of the questions (whether the attitude is generalised or related to a specific situation); 3) that the percentage of negative attitudes toward CPC will vary across different situational contexts; and 4) that the percentage of those supporting legal regulation of CPC will be lower than the percentage of respondents holding a generally negative attitude toward CPC.

Method

This research is quantitative and descriptive, focused on collecting and describing statistical data on attitudes toward corporal punishment of children.

Sample. The study sample included 104 undergraduate students from the University of Belgrade (Faculty of Political Sciences and Faculty of Special Education and Rehabilitation).

Instrument. Data were collected via a questionnaire designed for this study. The questionnaire consisted of five sections, four of which were used in this paper. The first section collected socio-demographic data. The second section included the CPC Attitude Scale (SFKD1), which covers attitudes toward corporal punishment of children, comprising 16 statements rated on a Likert-type scale (1 – strongly disagree, 5 – strongly agree). A high score on this scale indicates opposition to corporal punishment. The scale's reliability was high after reverse-coding statements supporting corporal punishment (Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.95$). The third section addressed attitudes toward legal regulations on corporal punishment and included four statements with binary responses (Yes = 1, No = 2). The fourth section presented five specific scenarios of child transgressions for ages 5, 7, 9, 10, and 12. These scenarios represent everyday parenting situations: crossing the street (age 5), material damage due to disobedience (age 7), physical (age 9), and verbal aggression (age 10) toward others, and lying with severe consequences (age 12). The chosen ages reflect an expectation that the child would be aware of the wrongdoing, and these behaviours are relatively common and of comparable severity for each age. Respondents were offered 10 to 13 possible reactions for each scenario, seven involving corporal punishment. Respondents indicated agreement with each reaction by selecting "Yes", "Not sure", or "No".

Procedure. The study was conducted in 2023. Participants completed the anonymous questionnaire online via Google Forms. The survey link was distributed via email (mailing lists obtained from faculty staff) and shared on social networks in the following Facebook groups: FPN – Social Sciences 19/20; FPN – Social Sciences 20/21; FPN – Social Sciences 2021/22; FPN – Social Sciences 22/23; FASPER (Faculty of Special Education and Rehabilitation); and Students of Belgrade Universities – SBU.

Data Analysis. Data were processed using descriptive and inferential statistical methods with IBM SPSS 25.

RESEARCH RESULTS

Attitudes Toward Corporal Punishment of Children on the CPC Attitude Scale (SFKD1)

The presence of statistically significant differences in respondents' attitudes across different statements was examined and confirmed using the Friedman test ($\chi^2(15, N = 104) = 245.18, p < .001$). Nearly 80% of respondents believe that corporal punishment of children directly violates children's rights and harms their development and well-being (Table 1, Statements 1 and 2), with only 10–11% of respondents disagreeing. These two statements are the most abstract on the scale. Given the intense level of agreement with these, a firmly established attitude against CPC would predict a similar level of agreement with statements tied to specific contexts of corporal punishment and consistency in responses across these contexts. However, agreement levels are notably lower for all other statements, ranging from 41–68% across different contexts (Table 1, Statements 3–16).

It is noteworthy that while 80% of respondents agree that CPC is harmful and infringes on children's rights (Table 1, Statements 1 and 2), only 62.5% believe that CPC should never be used as a parenting method (Table 1, Statement 6), 57.7% consider it wrong to physically punish a child (Table 1, Statement 16), and as many as 47.1% of respondents find it acceptable to give a mild slap on the buttocks when a child is disobedient (Table 1, Statement 5). These responses indicate a significant discrepancy from the general negative attitude toward corporal punishment. A striking indicator of inconsistency is the difference between Statements 1 and 8: while only 10.6% of respondents believe that "corporal punishment does not harm children's development and well-being", this number rises to 28.8% when the statement is slightly contextualised only with the word "fair" (Table 1, Statement 8). This example illustrates how a single word can trigger rationalization mechanisms that allow for the coexistence of conflicting attitudes. These results show significant inconsistencies in attitudes toward CPC across statements that vary in generality and contextual specificity.

Further evidence of respondents' insufficiently firm attitude toward CPC can be seen in the high prevalence of "unsure" responses (Response 3). Examining the statements with the highest levels of indecision, it is apparent that they are contextualised (rather than abstract) and involve emotionally charged circumstances. For example, Statement 10, which refers to using CPC on one's own child, had 14.4% of respondents unsure. Similarly, Statement 7, referring to physical punishment of adults, had 14.4% unsure; Statement 13, which mentions the term "violence", had 16.3% unsure; and Statement 15, which addresses the state's right to intervene in child-rearing practices (a highly emotional topic), had as many as 20.2% of respondents unsure.

Table 1. Results on the CPC Attitude Scale (SKFD1)

No.	Statement	M	SD	Agree (%) (responses 4 and 5)	Unsure (%) 3	Disagree (%) (1 and 2)
1	Corporal punishment of children directly violates children's rights.	4,21	1,10	79,8	8,7	11,5
2	Corporal punishment harms children's development and well-being.	4,24	1,03	79,8	9,6	10,6
3	The state should legally ban corporal punishment of children.	3,93	1,24	67,3	14,4	18,3
4	Parents have the right to physically punish their children when they feel it is necessary for proper upbringing.	2,28	1,39	26,0	10,6	63,5
5	A mild slap on the buttocks is acceptable when a child is disobedient.	3,02	1,56	47,1	11,5	41,3
6	Parents should never use corporal punishment as a child-rearing method.	3,75	1,34	62,5	14,4	23,1

7	Just as it is forbidden to punish adults physically, the same should apply to children.	4,00	1,30	68,3	14,4	17,3
8	Fair corporal punishment does not negatively impact children.	2,27	1,41	28,8	6,7	64,4
9	Corporal punishment of children contributes to building parental authority.	2,22	1,37	25,0	9,6	65,4
10	As a parent, I would apply corporal punishment to my child when I deem it necessary.	2,09	1,34	19,2	14,4	66,3
11	Corporal punishment of children is not the same as physical abuse.	3,02	1,62	46,2	9,6	44,2
12	Corporal punishment of children is justified if previous disciplinary methods have failed.	2,49	1,47	31,7	11,5	56,8
13	Corporal punishment increases the likelihood of children experiencing violence from their parents.	3,57	1,37	63,5	16,3	20,2
14	Corporal punishment of children is an effective way to curb disobedience.	1,93	1,17	13,5	13,5	73,1
15	The state has no right to interfere in how parents raise their children.	2,09	1,18	12,5	20,2	67,3
16	It is always wrong to physically punish a child.	3,51	1,42	57,7	12,5	29,8

Source: Authors

Attitudes Toward Legal Regulation of Various Forms of CPC

In the previous section of the questionnaire, it was noted that, despite a generally negative attitude toward CPC, as many as 47.1% of respondents find it acceptable to give a child a mild slap on the buttocks when they are disobedient. However, when this same question is framed within the context of legality and parental rights (Table 2), an inconsistency emerges, with an even higher percentage of respondents (54.8%) agreeing that parents should be legally permitted to slap a child on the buttocks. A significantly smaller percentage of respondents believe they should be legally allowed for other, more severe forms of CPC.

Table 2. Attitudes Toward Legal Regulation of Specific Forms of CPC

Parents should be legally allowed to...	(%) Yes	(%) No
...slap a child on the buttocks with an open hand when the child is disobedient.	54,8	45,2
...slap a child on the head with an open hand when the child is disobedient.	5,8	94,2
...strike a child on the buttocks or legs with an object (e.g., slipper, wooden spoon, belt) when the child is disobedient.	12,5	87,5
...strike a child on the head with an object (e.g., slipper, wooden spoon, belt) when the child is disobedient.	2,9	97,1

Source: Authors

Responses to these statements are especially inconsistent with those on the scale (Table 1). Although a very large percentage of respondents (80%) have a negative general attitude toward CPC (Table 1, Statements 1 and 2), the percentage of those who think the state law should prohibit CPC is significantly lower (67.3%; Statement 3). Here, when the question is further specified to include the severity of corporal punishment, an even smaller percentage (45.2%) believes that mild forms of CPC, such as slapping a child on the buttocks, should be legally prohibited (Table 2).

Attitudes Toward CPC in Specific Hypothetical Situations

The responses across all situations indicate significant differences in participants' agreement with various parental reactions (Table 3).

Table 3. Significance of Differences in Attitudes
Toward Parental Reactions by Situation

Situation (N=104)	χ^2	df	p
Situation 1	578,07	9	0,001
Situation 2	682,39	11	0,001
Situation 3	712,98	11	0,001
Situation 4	635,01	10	0,001
Situation 5	790,60	12	0,001

Source: Authors

Of all the parental responses offered in the first hypothetical situation: “A 5-year-old child lets go of their parent’s hand and starts to run across the street while the pedestrian light is red”, participants agree mostly (98.0%) with parents’ action of catching the child’s hand firmly and explaining that the action was wrong and why it was dangerous (Table 4, Statement 2). However, 31.7% of respondents agreed with the parental response of mildly slapping the child on the buttocks once and explaining the danger of the action (Statement 5). On the other hand, nearly all respondents (90.4%–99%) disagree with any other parental reaction that involves hitting the child (regardless of mild or severe, single or multiple strikes, on the buttocks, head, or body) (Statements 4, 6, 7, 8, 9, and 10).

Table 4. Attitudes Toward Parental Reactions
in the First Hypothetical Situation

No.	Parental Reaction	Responses (%)		
		Yes	Unsure	No
1	The parent holds the child’s hand and keeps walking once the light turns green without addressing the child’s behaviour.	4,8	11,5	83,6
2	The parent holds the child’s hand and firmly explains why the behaviour was wrong and dangerous.	98,0	1,0	1,0
3	The parent yells at the child.	24,0	23,1	52,9
4	The parent mildly slaps the child on the buttocks without saying anything.	3,8	5,8	90,4
5	The parent mildly slaps the child on the buttocks and explains why the behaviour is dangerous.	31,7	13,5	54,8
6	The parent mildly slaps the child on the cheek or head.	1,0	0	99,0

7	The parent gives the child a hard slap on the buttocks.	2,9	1,9	95,2
8	The parent gives the child a hard slap on the cheek or head.	1,0	0	99,0
9	The parent gives the child several hard slaps on the buttocks.	1,9	1,9	96,2
10	The parent gives the child several hard slaps on the body.	1,0	0	99,0

Source: Authors

Results for the second hypothetical situation: “*After the parent has repeatedly told the child not to run around the house, a 7-year-old child breaks a crystal vase*” (Table 5) indicate that out of all parental responses, respondents mostly (98.0%) agree with the parent’s action of holding the child’s hand and explaining firmly why the behaviour was wrong and undesirable (Statement 1). However, 32.7% of respondents agree with the parent mildly slapping the child on the buttocks once and explaining why the behaviour was wrong (Statement 7). Again, nearly all respondents (87.5–100%) disagree with any other response involving hitting the child (Statements 6, 8, 9, 10, 11, and 12).

Table 5. Attitudes Toward Parental Reactions
in the Second Hypothetical Situation

No.	Parental Reaction	Responses (%)		
		Yes	Unsure	No
1	The parent explains to the child what was wrong and why the behaviour was undesirable.	98,1	1,0	1,0
2	The parent punishes the child by sending him to a corner.	31,73	32,7	35,6
3	The parent punishes the child by taking away his tablet/mobile phone.	50,0	18,3	31,7
4	The parent yells at the child.	16,3	26,0	57,7
5	The parent threatens to hit the child.	5,7	5,7	88,5
6	The parent mildly slaps the child on the buttocks without saying anything.	5,7	6,7	87,5
7	The parent mildly slaps the child on the buttocks and explains why the behavior was wrong.	32,7	13,5	53,8
8	The parent mildly slaps the child on the cheek or head.	1,0	0,0	99,0
9	The parent gives the child a hard slap on the buttocks.	1,9	2,8	95,0

10	The parent gives the child a hard slap on the cheek or head.	0,0	0,0	100,0
11	The parent gives the child several hard slaps on the buttocks.	1,0	1,0	98,0
12	The parent gives the child several hard slaps on the body.	0,0	0,0	100,0

Source: Authors

Results for responses to the third hypothetical situation: “A 9-year-old child hit another child at the neighborhood playground because the other child wouldn’t share the ball” (Table 6) show that out of all parental responses, respondents mostly (96.2%) believe the parent should explain to the child why the behaviour was wrong and undesirable (Statement 1). However, 22.1% of respondents agree with the parent mildly slapping the child on the buttocks once and explaining why the behaviour was wrong (Statement 8). Again, almost all respondents (91.4–100%) disagree with any other response involving hitting the child (Statements 7, 9, 10, 11, and 12). Interestingly, a somewhat smaller percentage (82.8%) disagree with the parent hitting the child in the same way the child hit the other to help the child experience the same pain and develop empathy (Statement 5).

Table 6. Attitudes Toward Parental Reactions
in the Third Hypothetical Situation

No.	Parental Reaction	Responses (%)		
		Yes	Unsure	No
1	The parent explains to the child why the behavior was wrong and undesirable.	96,2	1,9	1,9
2	The parent punishes the child by taking them home.	67,3	18,3	14,4
3	The parent punishes the child by banning playground visits for a few days.	44,2	20,2	35,6
4	The parent yells at the child.	13,5	25,0	61,5
5	The parent hits the child in the same way the child hit the other child, so the child experiences the same pain and develops empathy.	8,6	8,6	82,8
6	The parent threatens to hit the child.	4,8	4,9	92,3
7	The parent mildly slaps the child on the buttocks without saying anything.	3,8	4,8	91,4

8	The parent mildly slaps the child on the buttocks and explains why the behaviour was wrong.	22,1	10,6	67,3
9	The parent mildly slaps the child on the cheek or head.	1,0	0,0	99,0
10	The parent gives the child a hard slap on the buttocks.	1,0	0,0	99,0
11	The parent gives the child a hard slap on the cheek or head.	1,0	0,0	99,0
12	The parent gives the child several hard slaps on the body.	0,0	0,0	100,0

Source: Authors

Results for responses to the fourth hypothetical situation: “*A 10-year-old child uses vulgar language in front of older people (swearing or insulting words directed at them)*” (Table 7) show that out of all parental responses, respondents mostly (99.0%) agree that the parent should explain to the child why the behaviour was wrong and undesirable (Statement 1). However, 25.0% of respondents agree with the response of the parent mildly slapping the child on the buttocks once and explaining why the behaviour was wrong (Statement 6). Again, almost all respondents (90.4–100%) disagree with any other response involving hitting the child (Statements 5, 7, 8, 9, 10, and 11).

Table 7. Attitudes Toward Parental Reactions
in the Fourth Hypothetical Situation

No.	Parental Reaction	Responses (%)		
		Yes	Unsure	No
1	The parent explains to the child why the behaviour was wrong and undesirable.	99,0	1,0	0,0
2	The parent yells at the child.	22,1	17,3	60,6
3	The parent insults the child in the same way the child insulted others.	1,9	1,9	96,2
4	The parent threatens to hit the child.	4,8	4,8	90,4
5	The parent mildly slaps the child on the buttocks without saying anything.	6,7	2,9	90,4
6	The parent mildly slaps the child on the buttocks and explains why the behaviour was wrong.	25,0	8,6	66,4
7	The parent mildly slaps the child on the cheek or head.	2,0	0,0	98,0

8	The parent gives the child a hard slap on the buttocks.	2,9	1,0	96,1
9	The parent gives the child a hard slap on the cheek or head.	0,0	0,0	100,0
10	The parent gives the child several hard slaps on the buttocks.	2,9	1,0	96,1
11	The parent gives the child several hard slaps on the body.	0,0	0,0	100,0

Source: Authors

Results for responses to the fifth hypothetical situation: “A 12-year-old child receives a failing grade (1) on a math test and lies to his parents, claiming he got a passing grade (3). The parents later learn from the teacher that the child must take a remedial exam as this was his third failing grade” (Table 8) show that out of all parental responses, respondents mostly (100%) agree that the parent should explain to the child why the behaviour was wrong and undesirable (Statement 1). In this situation, a smaller number of respondents (7.7%) agreed with the response of the parent giving the child a mild slap on the buttocks and explaining why the behaviour was wrong (Statement 8). Nearly all respondents (97.1–100%) disagreed with any other response involving hitting the child (Statements 7, 9, 10, 11, 12, and 13).

Table 8. Attitudes Toward Parental Reactions
in the Fifth Hypothetical Situation

No.	Parental Reaction	Responses (%)		
		Yes	Unsure	No
1	The parent explains to the child why the behaviour was wrong and undesirable.	100,0	0,0	0,0
2	The parent practices with the child to help them pass the remedial exam without reacting to their behaviour.	44,2	25,0	30,8
3	The parent yells at the child.	14,4	20,2	65,4
4	The parent punishes the child by taking away their mobile phone.	49,0	20,2	30,8
5	The parent bans the child from going out for a week.	38,5	19,2	42,3
6	The parent threatens to hit the child.	1,9	1,9	96,2
7	The parent mildly slaps the child on the buttocks without saying anything.	1,9	1,0	97,1

8	The parent mildly slaps the child on the buttocks and explains why the behaviour was wrong.	7,7	3,8	88,5
9	The parent mildly slaps the child on the cheek or head.	1,9	0,0	98,1
10	The parent gives the child a hard slap on the buttocks.	1,9	0,0	98,1
11	The parent gives the child a hard slap on the cheek or head.	0,0	0,0	100,0
12	The parent gives the child several hard slaps on the buttocks.	0,0	0,0	100,0
13	The parent gives the child several hard slaps on the body	0,0	0,0	100,0

Source: Authors

Analysis of Attitudinal Differences Toward CPC Across Five Hypothetical Situations

An analysis was conducted to examine significant differences in attitudes toward CPC in the five hypothetical situations, aiming to assess the influence of contextual factors and the type of child misbehaviour on the stability of attitudes toward CPC. The analysis revealed no statistically significant differences in agreement with severe forms of CPC across the five situations, suggesting that attitudes toward severe forms of CPC are stable and resistant to context, remaining unacceptable regardless of the child's actions.

However, the analysis showed that the number of respondents agreeing with milder forms of CPC (slapping the child on the buttocks with an accompanying explanation of why the behaviour is unacceptable) varies across situations and depends on the type of child misbehaviour (Table 9). This indicates that attitudes toward mild CPC accompanied by verbal correction are sensitive to context [$\chi^2(4, N = 104) = 96.16, p < 0.001$].

Table 9. Attitudes Toward the Parental Reaction of Mildly Slapping the Child on the Buttocks with an Explanation Across Five Hypothetical Situations

No.	The parent mildly slaps the child on the buttocks and explains why the behaviour was wrong.	Responses (%)		
		Yes	Unsure	No
1	Running across the street	31,7	13,5	54,8
2	Causing material damage due to negligence	32,7	13,5	53,8
3	Physical aggression toward others	22,1	10,6	67,3
4	Verbal aggression toward others	25,0	8,6	66,4
5	Lying with severe consequences	7,7	3,8	88,5

Source: Authors

DISCUSSION

The study confirmed all initial assumptions. The participants have a negative general attitude toward CPC (79.8%). Still, the attitude toward CPC varies depending on the level of generality of the question and different contexts. Overall, attitudes toward CPC are predominantly negative, with 79.8% of respondents expressing general opposition towards CPC and nearly unanimous rejection toward severe and excessive forms of CPC (97.1–99%). However, opposition to milder forms of CPC ranges from 53.8% to 91.4% across different specific contexts. This inconsistency also appears in views on legal regulation, with 67% supporting a legal ban on CPC – noticeably less than those expressing a general negative attitude toward it. Notably, 54% of respondents believe that parents should be legally allowed to slap a child on the buttocks with an open hand if the child is disobedient. Interestingly, when parents' options include non-violent verbal communication with the child in five different situations, significantly fewer respondents endorsed slapping a child on the buttocks. Agreement with this mild form of CPC without explanation ranged from 1.9% to 6.7%, while agreement increased to 7.7–32.7% if a parental explanation accompanied it.

Thus, the general hypothesis is confirmed: attitudes toward CPC are transitioning from a traditional patriarchal perspective to modern views of this disciplinary practice. The observed inconsistencies in applying these attitudes across different contexts suggest that respondents have adopted a general belief against CPC as an inappropriate method of discipline. However, cognitive integration of abstract and concrete

applications of this belief and its complete internalisation has not yet occurred. Offering non-violent verbal alternatives for parents substantially aids this integration.

The findings confirm the relevance of cognitive, emotional, and social factors previously identified as sources of attitude instability across different situational circumstances (Moussaid *et al.* 2013). Data analysis revealed several instances of rationalisation mechanisms, which reduce cognitive dissonance, allowing those with a general negative attitude toward CPC to support it in certain circumstances. For instance, if the word “fair” is added to a statement about physical punishment, the percentage of those with a positive attitude toward CPC increases. Evidence of rationalisation in changing attitudes toward CPC is also seen in the analysis of the five-hypothetical child misbehaviour scenarios. Respondents uniformly opposed all forms of CPC, including mild CPC – a single slap on the buttocks. However, physical punishment becomes more acceptable when contextual elements that enable rationalisation are added (e.g., the parent explaining why the behaviour is wrong or unsafe). Responses to the third scenario, where a child displays physical aggression toward another, reveal that more respondents are willing to endorse CPC if it is rationalised by the idea that the parent wants the child to experience pain and thereby develop empathy.

Regarding emotional factors, more emotionally charged contexts lead to greater indecision among respondents, such as statements involving one’s own child, those using the word “violence” or those addressing the sensitive issue of the state’s right to intervene in child-rearing practices. The impact of emotional factors on CPC attitudes is also evident in the analysis of differences in views toward mild physical punishment across five child misbehaviour scenarios. Respondents most support CPC in emotionally charged situations, such as when a child runs into the street, endangering their safety, or when they cause material damage. This finding aligns with previous research on the influence of emotional factors on attitude inconsistencies (Festinger 1957; Forgas 1995; Harmon-Jones and Mills 1999).

The analysis of attitudes toward mild CPC across five situations provides significant insight into the prevailing societal value system. Respondents most agree with mild CPC when the child endangers their safety or causes material damage, but are less supportive when the child

is physically or verbally aggressive toward others or lies. This pattern reflects a value system common in societies facing economic challenges, where personal safety and material wealth are prioritised over the safety and well-being of others, as well as honesty.

The findings suggest that our society is in a phase of shifting collective attitude toward CPC, where small groups advocate for change (de la Sablonniere 2017), while the majority exhibit incomplete internalisation of the negative attitude and inconsistency in its application at a concrete level (Harmon-Jones and Mills 1999). This phase may progress to a stage of consolidation and institutionalisation, where the negative attitude toward CPC becomes normalised and institutionalised through progressive yet culturally sensitive policies and laws (Centola 2018). According to the results of this study, this integration would be significantly supported by offering alternative non-violent verbal disciplinary practices.

A limitation of this study is the convenience sample of young people who are not parents, which somewhat reduces the generalizability of the results. Future studies could include parents of children of various ages.

CONCLUSION

The study reveals a negative but inconsistent general attitude toward CPC, which remains highly sensitive to contextual factors, such as situational complexity, intense emotions, or values that may not align fully with the broadly adopted belief against CPC. Findings show that individuals with a negative general view of CPC may still support its use in certain circumstances, especially when situational factors provoke strong emotional responses or rationalisations for CPC. Confirming relevant theoretical frameworks (Prochaska and DiClemente 1983), the results suggest that the process of changing attitudes toward CPC is underway, with most respondents currently in the action phase, where attitudes are actively evolving, or in the maintenance phase, where attitudes have changed but are still being internalised and integrated into daily life. As such, these attitudes remain sensitive to situational pressures, ambiguity, emotions, and stress.

When considering legislation to prohibit CPC, it is essential to recognise that, according to theoretical models of individual and societal change, such a phase may only fully mature after the majority of society has wholly accepted, internalised, and consistently applied this new attitude across a range of real-life situations and experiences. Given the study's findings, it may be prudent to consider whether the definition of CPC as "any punishment in which physical force is used and intended to cause some degree of pain or discomfort, however light" (UN CRC 2007, para. 11) might be too restrictive for the current cultural moment in our society. This is underscored by the finding that not more than two-thirds of young respondents support a legal ban on CPC, while over half believe that parents should legally be allowed to slap a child on the buttocks with an open hand if the child is disobedient.

The stabilisation of a collective shift toward a negative attitude toward CPC would be aided by legal provisions that would clearly and concretely define, in alignment with existing cultural characteristics, when corporal punishment constitutes child abuse and when it does not, specifying the forms and circumstances under which CPC would be prohibited or allowed. A bylaw providing detailed, highly practical, context-sensitive guidelines on alternative disciplinary methods would support this direction. Changes in legal regulations should be accompanied

by public campaigns highlighting the harmful aspects of CPC while acknowledging the emotional and situational pressures parents face, providing them with strategies for managing the demands of disciplining a child without resorting to physical punishment. Appropriate policies could reinforce the negative attitude toward CPC, facilitate the practical application of this attitude in concrete situations, and thus increase the consistency and integration of this attitude in everyday life.

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FAMILY IN DISPLACEMENT AND ITS ROLE IN CULTURAL ADAPTATION AND NATIVE LANGUAGE PRESERVATION

Abstract

This paper analyzes the challenges and opportunities faced by families in a diaspora regarding cultural adaptation and native language preservation. In the modern world, where migration becomes more frequent, families that move into new cultural environments often face a dilemma between integrating into the host country and preserving their own cultural identity through nurturing the native language and tradition of the countries from which they originate. In the context of globalization, the family proves to be a critical unit that not only transmits language and cultural values but also forms the identity of each of its members, providing him/her with the possibility to develop multiculturally in all personality aspects. Through the review of relevant literature and published studies, this paper examines factors that affect the success of the adaptation of new generations, including the role of social support, educational institutions, and intergenerational relations. The paper also explores the strategies families use to preserve their native language, which is critical in maintaining cultural identity. Daily communication in the native language, cultural events, manifestations, and participation in educational programs ensure that younger generations remain connected to their roots. Families often take an active role in creating communities that support language and culture preservation, thus contributing to the richness of

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multicultural societies. This paper contributes to the understanding of the dynamics of identity in the diaspora and emphasizes the educational role of family structures in the process of cultural adaptation and openness in accepting other cultures. The paper's conclusions suggest that language and culture preservation is possible through a combination of individual efforts, community support, and adapted educational programs. The paper provides guidelines for future research and practice, emphasizing the need to develop effective diaspora family support models to preserve linguistic and cultural heritage.

Keywords: the expatriate family, cultural adaptation, native language

INTRODUCTION

The family plays a vital role in the process of all forms of adaptation of the child, including the cultural one, but also in the process of the native language preservation, both for children who live outside their home country and for their members in the multicultural environments in which they exist. In a time of increasingly frequent migrations, the family is responsible for preserving its members' linguistic and cultural identity. As migration is associated with the challenges of adapting to a new cultural environment, the fear of cultural assimilation and the potential loss of linguistic and cultural identity complicates this critical task of the family. In these circumstances, the family becomes the primary source of support, providing emotional security and preserving cultural values, traditions, customs, and language as the central aspect of cultural identity. This adaptation (integration) process often implies a two-way dynamic of multiple significance because migrant families simultaneously adopt elements of the host culture but also strive to keep the original culture, leaving it as a legacy to the next generation. The specificity of this dynamic is reflected in the transmission of elements of one's own culture to the members of the multicultural society in which individuals and families are currently located, resulting in the interaction of cultures and traditions, as well as the enrichment of the cultural landscape of the host country communities. Seen in this way, adaptation places particular emphasis on the native language, which, as one of the most important

aspects of a nation's cultural identity, plays a central role in this process. The family, as the primary cell of society, and family education in the group of the population living outside the home country thereby gain in complexity and significance in the formation of a young individual with all the qualities of the ethnic group from which they originate, but also in the skill of interaction, they enter into with members of other ethnic groups in the country where they live. In this way, the family contributes to preserving its own cultural values and active participation in constructing a new, multicultural society in terms of understanding, tolerance, and cultural wealth. The function of the family presented in this way in the process of adaptation indicates its increasing importance in creating a connection between the past and the future, preserving the cultural heritage, and adapting to the circumstances in which it finds itself, with the aim of the successful functioning of its members in the (multicultural) community.

METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK

In the paper, we defined vital concepts such as diaspora, migrants, cultural adaptation, and native language and dealt with the issues of preserving the identity of migrant families from the aspect of native language preservation and cultural adaptation in the host country. The available literature and research conducted with the same or similar topics were reviewed, and the strategies used by families to preserve their identity in foreign countries were pointed out. The paper also points out the factors that affect the level of successful integration of younger generations, emphasizing the importance and role of the social environment in which that integration takes place, educational institutions, and intergenerational relations. Given that the lives of individuals take place primarily in families, its older members often take on the role of organizers in creating associations that support language and culture preservation. In a separate part of the paper, more will be said about the support of the social community of the host country and of the home country of migrant families in the form of organized programs to preserve their own culture, tradition, and language.

DEFINING TERMS

Although the terms diaspora, migrants, adaptation, and native language are more or less known and frequently used in everyday speech, we should not forget that their definition is often different from the meaning and context in which these terms are used. Therefore, we also decided to provide an overview of some definitions in this paper.

A Diaspora (scattered seeds) is a word of Greek origin and denotes members of a nation who live apart from their home country (Wikipedia 2024a). According to Princeton University (n.d.), the diaspora consists of “groups of persons of the same ethnonational origin who themselves, or their ancestors, voluntarily or under compulsion, migrated from one place to another, or several other places, settled in those other places, and maintain their identity and different types of contacts with their place of origin”.

Historically speaking, this term primarily meant the forced displacement of Jews from Israel and their settlement around the world (Cohen 1997). Sociologists define diaspora as a transnational community that, despite the spatial distance from the home country, retains a sense of shared identity and belonging (Safran 1991). Contemporary definitions provide an overview of globalization, emphasizing that diaspora is a significant factor in international relations, economy, and cultural exchanges (Castles and Miller 2009). From the above definitions, the diaspora is clearly seen as a newly formed and dynamic community of members of the same ethnic group outside the homeland.

A migrant is usually defined as someone who moves from one place to another for economic, educational, and/or political reasons and due to natural disasters, regardless of international borders (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization [UNESCO] 2020). Migrants can be permanent or temporary, returning or seasonal. The International Organization for Migration again considers that the critical aspect of migrant status is crossing geographical borders (International Organization for Migration [IOM] 2020). According to Milan Mesić (2002, 425), a migrant is a person who moves and changes the political area of his habitual residence. This definition includes both border crossing and change of residence. According to Wikipedia (2024b), people who are in migration are called migrants, and depending

on the context of the observer, they can be expatriates or emigrants, i.e., incomers or immigrants. Depending on the context, therefore, any movement of persons can be classified into emigration (leaving one's country), immigration (arriving in another country to settle), and internal migration, i.e., relocation within the home country.

The concept of *family* can be defined and viewed from several aspects, so the sociological, psychological, and cultural elements interest us here. From a sociological point of view, the family is defined as the primary cell of society. It is a basic social unit comprised of people living together and in a blood, marriage, or partnership relationship (Giddens and Sutton 2017).

Our well-known sociologist Marko Mladenović (1995) defines the family as a historically changing social group, i.e., the bond between a man and a woman that ensures the reproduction of society in a biological sense, contributes to the moral and psychological development of personality, establishes kinship relationships and performs certain economic activities. Seen through the eyes of a psychologist, the family is the basic emotional unit in which children develop social and emotional skills that later serve as a foundation for building interpersonal relationships (Bowlby 1969). Pedagogy, similar to psychology, puts the role of parents in the foreground in the development of values, norms, and skills that shape the child's later life. With this, we see the role of parents and family upbringing in preserving the cultural identity of the ethnic group from which it originates, which is also a cultural aspect of defining the family.

Adaptation means any form of adjustment, and different authors (depending on the field and context) define this word differently. In this paper, we will examine cultural adaptation as one of the segments of informal integration. Cultural adaptation refers to the process of adapting new migrants to the cultural norms and values of the society in which they live. Berry's model of acculturation implies that migrant families go through certain adaptation stages (Berry 1997). In this context, the family has a significant role because all its members must decide how they will relate to the new culture they are integrating into and develop strategies for preserving their identity in the new culture. The family's strategy and its actions in the adjustment process depend on the age of the family members. Thus, families with younger children will definitely

try to secure a place in preschool institutions for their offspring, therefore providing them with equal chances for success in further development (Trifunović 2023). How children will fit into the new life system is one of the most critical questions of every parent. The dilemma of how much migrants should adapt and how much they should keep their own identity is always current. One study of Vietnamese families in Australia shows that traditional values are preserved through generations despite the integration of Vietnamese families into the new society (Nguyen and Minh 2023). Individuals can manage their cultural identity in interaction with individuals of different origins, which constitutes the richness of interculturality, thus forming multiculturalism. According to Young Yun Kim (2008), cultural identity is not static and monolithic, as is prevalent in the literature of social sciences, but is complex and evolving. Therefore, the identity has a dynamic character.

The term *native language* is a term that defines itself, so in this paper, we treated it as a language used in a family, provided that all members of that family belong to the same ethnic group. It is “the first language a person encounters as a means of spoken communication in life” (*Veliki rečnik manje poznatih reči i izraza* 2024). Most often, it is the language spoken by the mother in the family, and in connection with that, its terminological definition is like this. Linguistically speaking, the native language enables the child to develop phonology, morphology, syntax, and semantics (De Houwer 2009). Psychologically, the native language provides the child with emotional security because parents use it to express love, attention, and emotional support, which are the basis of healthy emotional relationships and social skills (Bowlby 1969). Preserving the native language and identity proved to be the most critical factor in cultural adaptation, especially in maintaining communication between different generations (Nguyen and Hoang Bao 2020). Research shows that families who actively use their native language in everyday life more successfully pass that language on to their descendants, thereby contributing not only to preserving the language but also to preserving their cultural identity (Fishman 2001). The native language is not only a means of communication but also one of the essential elements of an individual’s socialization. Through its constant application, values, behavioral norms, culture, and traditions are adopted and transmitted within the family and the wider community (Baker 2021). Therefore,

language preservation is closely related to the cultural values and identity parents pass on to their children in daily communication and through social activities within the community.

IDENTITY PRESERVATION STRATEGIES

Identity preservation in an environment where a second language is used is primarily carried out by preserving the native language. Some of the strategies used by families and the social environment, as well as the home country of the ethnic group, can be classified as follows:

Family communication and intergenerational language transmission as a strategy for preserving identity and language are among the most important links. As we have said before, the native language is the first language an individual encounters, the first means of spoken communication. This is why the constant use of language in the family environment is essential. Parents are the most important factor in this strategy because they play a crucial role in passing on the language to their offspring in everyday communication, in the oral transmission of folk tales and storytelling, through reading and singing songs of the community from which they originate (De Houwer 2009). In this way, parents create a rich language environment for their children and contribute to maintaining tradition through the native language. One study on the use and preservation of the Lithuanian language in Sweden illustrates the very challenges that families face. It emphasizes the need to encourage children to identify with the native language and involve them in the decision-making process related to problems arising from reducing its daily use (Bissinger 2021). Similarly, Fishman (2001) states that language transmission is a critical factor in preserving the ethnic identity of people outside the motherland, while Cummins (2000) links the positive attitude of parents towards the native language with the cognitive and emotional development of children. Migration often leads to linguistic pressure on younger generations to accept the dominant language of the new environment, while older family members usually remain tied to their native language (Portes and Rumbaut 2001). We have witnessed that with some migrant children, the native language is used passively, so they understand what is said to them in the native language, but they answer in the language of the host country because

it is easier for them. The fact that most children still actively use their native language at home, especially when communicating with older family members, is encouraging.

Education in the native language is one of the strategies used in the function of identity and language preservation, as well as gathering an ethnic group around the motherland. Through education in their native language, children develop linguistic and cultural competencies, enabling them to preserve the language and pass on traditions, customs, and values to the next generations. In addition, research has shown that children who learn in their native language achieve better academic results and have higher self-confidence (Cummins 2000). This strategy is most often organized by one of the Ministries and managed through the consular institutions of the home country in the diaspora. One such example is supplementary schools organized by Serbian communities in the diaspora. This form of teaching contributes to language learning and promotes cultural activities, such as folk dances and learning about national history (Ministarstvo spoljnjih poslova Republike Srbije [MSPRS] n.d.). The organization of Serbian supplementary schools in the diaspora is governed by the Rulebook on the realization of educational work abroad (Pravilnik o ostvarivanju obrazovno-vaspitnog rada u inostranstvu 2023) which precisely specifies the way of realization of educational work, a unique program with a framework plan for teaching and learning in primary education and upbringing abroad, the textbooks in use, the selection and conditions for the engagement of teachers-professional staff, their duties, and the evaluation of students and the way of keeping records of educational work. From the above, it can be seen that the implementation of Serbian supplementary schools abroad is not left to chance and is under the watchful eye of the home country. In the school year 2023/2024, supplementary schools in the Serbian language were organized in 22 countries with more than 8,000 participants aged from the first to the eighth grade of primary school (Ministarstvo prosvete Republike Srbije [MPRS], n.d.). A study by Bissinger (2021) on the preservation of the Lithuanian language in Sweden indicates that supplementary schools in the native language significantly contribute to the preservation of the linguistic and cultural identity of the community. Parents who actively support such programs influence social cohesion within the community with their attitude. Research by Nguyen and Minh (2023) on the Vietnamese community in Australia,

which highlights the importance of educational initiatives to connect children with the linguistic and cultural heritage of their country of origin, showed a similar result. In addition to the organization and attendance of supplementary schools in the native language, native language courses and weekend schools for children and adults are also present in the practice of the diaspora as a particular form of preserving identity and language. Bilingual schools or weekend schools offering courses in the native language can significantly contribute to language preservation among the younger generations (Cummins 2000). In this strategy category, we also include reading books, newspapers, and magazines in the native language, as well as watching movies and listening to “local” music. It is a strategy that parents can develop and nurture, which contributes to the enrichment of passive and active vocabulary and keeps the native language alive. In the same category of strategies, we can add encouraging writing and creating content in the native language. Such activities include writing blogs, poetry, and prose and making videos and content in the native language.

Cultural manifestations, the organization of festivals, and joint events are also considered part of the strategy of preserving cultural identity and native language. These strategies are supported by the social community of the host country and the motherland, which creates the possibility of cultural adaptation without the feeling of losing one’s origin. The development of multiculturalism also depends on the openness of the host countries’ culture, so one of the constant tasks of the host country is to facilitate the organization of cultural manifestations and festivals of ethnic groups within it. This strategy enables community members to nurture language, culture, and tradition. Traditional festivals and celebrations of important dates, such as National Day, religious holidays, Flag and Unity Days, etc., allow members of an ethnic group to connect with their mother culture. Such events include traditional music with the participation of folklore groups, various handicraft workshops, gastronomic festivals of traditional foods and drinks, but also other segments of cultural identity, which are closely related to the native language – theater performances and concerts, celebrations of important dates of significance for ethnic groups. This approach to cultural identity affects the creation of a “collective cultural memory” that protects cultural heritage from oblivion and preserves it for new generations (Zujić 2023). Given that older family members often feel

nostalgic and more pressured to preserve traditions, their influence on younger members increases, leading to a balance between their identity and integration into a multicultural society among new generations. Such manifestations enrich both communities, both ethnic and the host community, and thus contribute to multicultural dialogue and exchange of values within the various communities of the host country.

Visits to the country of origin also represent a significant strategy in preserving the native language and cultural identity in the diaspora, as it enables concrete use of the native language and direct interaction with the culture. At the same time, the native language is continuously used with relatives, in shopping, and everyday activities (Fishman 2001). When these visits are regular, which is most often the case with emigrants, connecting with relatives, community, and culture gains importance even among the younger generations because they strengthen the feeling of belonging to the ethnic group. Homeland visits can also be organized by institutions that work to preserve the language and culture of the home country, which we consider a targeted visit, such as, for example, visits to language camps for children. The visits organized in this way include several segments of language and tradition preservation – language, music, and folklore workshops, as well as handicraft workshops and sports activities that strengthen the spirit of the collective and belonging to the ethnic group. One example of such a language camp is the Project *The Summer in the Homeland – Tršić*, organized by the Ministry of Education of the Republic of Serbia for several years following the Strategy for the Development of Education and Training until 2030. The language camp is held in the Scientific-Educational Cultural Center “Vuk Karadžić” in Tršić, in three groups for 7 days each during the summer vacation. *The Summer in the Homeland* program achieves a particular goal –improving attitudes towards the Serbian language and literature as essential elements of national and cultural identity and improving education in the Serbian language in the diaspora. In the framework of the activities, students are enabled to learn the Serbian language in the context of national culture through speech and game activities, art, culture and tradition, and other cultural and sports activities and contents (MPRS, n.d.). Participation in this program is adapted to the students’ summer vacation in the countries they come from. Each group includes students from different countries, so it is possible to use the

native language in everyday use, considering that these students can communicate with each other only in the Serbian language. The goal of such camps or programs is precisely the preservation and improvement of the language skills of the native language, the promotion of cultural identity through language and cultural activities, and the connection of language camp participants with cultural heritage and tradition. Studies show that children who participate in such camps and/or regularly visit their homeland are more motivated to preserve their language and develop a more profound sense of belonging to their home community. De Houwer (2009) points out that such activities increase intergenerational language transmission. In its very structure, such a program includes intensive classes in the native language with a focus on grammar, vocabulary, and literature, then workshops on folk customs, historical content, music, traditional dance, and art, all the way to practical skills that involve the participation of children in workshops of traditional crafts of the region in which language camp is organized, about cooking and other cultural skills. In addition to these regular activities, we should not forget the possibility of organizing excursions and visits to historical and cultural places and objects in the environment, such as religious buildings, museums, libraries, squares, etc. All of the above indicates that these types of programs develop skills that help young generations preserve their identity in multicultural societies, which suggests the importance of this strategy. As we live in the era of technology and witness digital expansion, this segment of strategic action in preserving language and identity is gaining importance every day.

Thus, *social networks and online communities* are also included in the strategies, which enable contact with the community and constant use of the native language through daily use. Online forums imply oral and written communication, contributing to using letters in practical and informal situations. Paola Katić (2023) indicates that social networks enable young people to connect with peers who speak the same language, which contributes to the preservation of linguistic identity. Young people create their own “online identities” on social network platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, Snapchat, WhatsApp, and similar applications. In this way, they exchange language structures in the form of written and spoken words and cultural content. Using media such as radio and television, social networks, and language learning apps can help

preserve the language. At the same time, we must not forget the creation and sharing of multimedia content and blogs, which can preserve the language through entertaining and contemporary educational content. By creating your own or downloading existing content in your native language with the support of digital media, the spread and use of the language are enabled. In the role of creators, local communities often contribute to the preservation of cultural identity through the presence of their native language in the digital space. This strategy is undoubtedly closer to new generations, and additional attention should be paid.

FINAL CONCLUSIONS

In the modern world, where globalization and migration inevitably lead to cultural exchange, language, and cultural identity preservation is a challenge. The process of cultural adaptation, through which individuals and communities go, is often perceived as a balancing act between integrating into a new environment and preserving one's linguistic and cultural roots. This paper emphasizes that language and identity preservation strategies are essential for preserving cultural diversity and strengthening individual and collective identities within communities. Although cultural adaptation can lead to changes in language use and cultural habits, language preservation plays a crucial role in identity preservation. Language is both a means of communication and a carrier of cultural values, tradition, and collective memory. Strategies that include intergenerational language transmission in the family, formal education in the native language, cultural manifestations, digital media, and institutional support have proven to be effective in language preservation in various social contexts, both in the motherland itself and even more in the diaspora.

The success of these strategies is not guaranteed by itself and depends on several important factors. The first and perhaps the most important factor is recognizing the value of language preservation by communities and active work on its transmission to younger generations. Family communication, supported by the educational systems, provides a solid foundation for developing language skills and cultural awareness of the ethnic group to which the family belongs. Another critical factor without whose support there would be no institutional assistance in organizing and implementing native language and culture preservation is the role of governments and international organizations in creating policies that support the values of linguistic diversity. Without institutional support, the communities' efforts would be limited and ineffective. The third factor is technology and the media, without which the new generations could not imagine their everyday life. Thus, they play a significant role in language preservation, especially among young people. We must see digital tools and platforms as a bridge between tradition and a new way of life, enabling us to use language continuously in everyday life. Finally, this paper highlights the need for an integrative approach to the

problem of language preservation as a factor in identity preservation. An integrative approach should combine individual, family, educational, cultural, and institutional efforts to preserve language and identity. Only through coordinated and comprehensive strategies is it possible to nurture linguistic diversity and preserve cultural identity in a time that brings with it the challenges of multiculturalism and our adaptability to it. Writer and Nobel laureate Ivo Andrić said the following about the language: “Language is a living force with which not only culture but also the existence of a nation is connected” (Institut za moderno obrazovanje, n.d.).

These considerations also provide broader implications for researchers, current decision-makers, and communities dealing with the issue of language preservation in multicultural societies. Future research should focus on the long-term effects of the strategies presented in this paper and on developing new integrative approaches and procedures that would enable the maintenance and constant revitalization of the language in the light of continuous social changes. This will ensure the linguistic and cultural legacy survives without merging into cultural adaptation with new cultures, putting their own stamp on the global mosaic of cultures.

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REVIEWS

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Book review

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TITOISM IN YUGOSLAVIA



Milanov, Kajica. 2021. *Titovština u Jugoslaviji*. Beograd: Društvo za ekonomsku istoriju i Institut za evropske studije, 350 str.

The philosopher Kajica Milanov belongs to those Serbian minds that can be said to have been almost completely forgotten. Because a space burdened by wars, occupations, uprisings, bloody changes of rulers, and ideological reckonings demands warriors more than pedantic intellectuals, this oblivion can be understood, although not justified. On the contrary, viewed from that perspective, the trivialization of significant figures of intellectual life proves to be especially harmful to a culture already burdened by discontinuities. Kajica Milanov himself was a victim of the radical break with tradition and heritage that occurred in 1945, from which Serbia has not recovered even to this day. In the newly established order, Milanov remained silent, not only because he was a civic philosopher but also because he consistently remained a political opponent of

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the new state, eventually leading him to emigration. He was at least fortunate not to suffer the fate of some of his colleagues who, at the time of revolutionary “justice,” paid for their beliefs with their lives. Thanks to the Society for Economic History and the Institute for European Studies, the emigrant works of Kajica Milanov have become available to a broader readership. This has taken an important step to bring the name of Professor Milanov out of oblivion and into the light of day.

The book “Titoism in Yugoslavia” (*Titovština u Jugoslaviji*) reveals Milanov as an exceptionally insightful political writer. It can be safely stated that, under different circumstances, if there had been no Second World War and the establishment of a communist dictatorship, he would have made a valuable contribution on the intellectual plane. In that case, however, he would certainly not have dealt with Titoism and the analysis of the anatomy of the communist regime, but with some other topics. In any case, this book reappears 60 years after its initial publication in emigration.

The title is quite clear, and at first glance, it may seem to the reader like a well-known criticism of communism in Yugoslavia, which

could have been compiled by any émigré based on their experience with the power established in 1945. However, things are much different, and Kajica Milanov offers much more. In the first chapter, the significance of Yugoslavia for the communist penetration of Europe is examined. This brief overview also presents a review of the foreign policy situation or a tiny geopolitical study in which Milanov demonstrates an incredible talent for recognizing the position or the circumstances in which he lives. After that, he writes about the reality of Yugoslavia. He describes in detail everything he experienced and saw in the country until 1947. This description might not be so interesting if Milanov did not work methodically and also show the transformation in the social and economic spheres. He leaves nothing untouched, so he writes about the state of intellectuals, experts, or peasants and workers. Special attention is paid to propaganda, education of the people, and enlightenment. Within this section, Milanov also gives a short terminological dictionary of communist Yugoslavia with some witty remarks.

In the seventh chapter, the mood of the people living in Yugoslavia is examined in detail,

as well as parties and political currents and the position of the emigration. These expositions have exciting moments and valuable data. It is striking that Milanov, even in emigration, still counts on Yugoslavia and the Bulgarians within the framework of a genuinely democratic Yugoslavia. In this sense, he is willing to compromise with the Croats in Bosnia or with the Bulgarians in Macedonia. Milanov also discusses with great attention those who could benefit from Tito's regime, who have been "leveled up," and who will therefore stand with the regime and against a return to the old state. Suppose his views on the survival of Yugoslavia and the inclusion of Bulgaria have proven to be mistaken in the part that deals with the forces that could stand out of their interests with the Tito regime. In that case, the author writes with a great deal of realism.

From there, the discussion moves on to the question of Titoism as a theory and Titoism as the practice of communist Yugoslavia (201). In this part, Milanov is quite precise, as he seeks to separate theory from practice and show how communism in Yugoslavia differs from communism in the USSR. At the same time, it should be emphasized that this is not an attempt to portray communism

in Yugoslavia as more humane or more liberal than the Soviet model. Milanov deals in detail with the causes and consequences of the conflict between Tito and Stalin and considers the possible development of the situation. He analyzes in detail the accurate and inaccurate Cominform accusations against Tito and Titoist's attempts at defense. It must be admitted that the depth of his insights is impressive. Even during emigration, Milanov clearly recognized that the West could support Tito to weaken the Soviet bloc.

In the book's ninth chapter, the discussion then moves on to a consideration of the great communist promises, and particular attention is paid to the illusion of the withering away of the state. This part is perhaps the most interesting. There, Milanov also demonstrates his knowledge of communist doctrine. It is noticeable that Milanov, as a critic of communism, does not appear as a typical conservative but also holds some conditionally speaking left, progressive positions.

Finally, in part dealing with the brief history of Yugoslavia, the creation of the Independent State of Croatia, the war situation, and Tehran, Milanov provides an excellent description of the problem

in a few pages. Regarding the civil war, he notes the existence of three fronts: social, Serb-Croat, and occupation. The sides differed according to what was of primary importance to them. Thus, it turns out that the Chetniks and Ljotić's movements were primarily fighters against communism and that, in that sense, the fight against the Germans was of secondary importance. On the other hand, Draža Mihailović and his movement emphasized the fight against the occupiers, while the battle against communism remained in the background for them. On the other hand, the Croatian Ustaše were focused on the extermination of Serbs. Milanov concludes that Yugoslavia was handed over to the communists and that it had nothing to do with the partisan strength. If Serbia had happened to be located geographically in the west of the country, the annexation of Yugoslavia to the communist bloc would have been impossible since, as Milanov convincingly shows, Serbia was anti-communist. This is a critical moment that refutes all those theses that have been in circulation in Europe for too long, according to which there is some inherent tendency of Orthodox peoples towards communism. The fact that similar ideas can be heard

today among domestic advocates of a specific type of national communism, only with the opposite sign and valuation, only confirms that such bold theses should not be stated lightly, especially not before consulting relevant literature, including Kajica Milanov's book.

Finally, the book concludes with a short conclusion in which Milanov once again warns of the total nature of the communist transformation and their desire for world domination. Although Milanov does not differ from many authors who have written about communism, one gets the impression that he nevertheless arrived at these conclusions independently.

The book is supplemented by an important article by Milanov in which he examines Dušan Nedeljković's attempt to interpret the history of Serbian philosophy in a communist key and Djilas's criticism of that book. From this short but valuable article, it can be seen how strong Nedeljković's legacy is today, or rather that our histories of political ideas are still written from a predominantly leftist perspective, as can be seen even from the choice of personalities who are included in such presentations. Also, Milanov recognized that the

conflict between Nedeljković and Djilas reflected the divergence on the line between communist internationalism, embodied by Djilas, and Stalinism (Nedeljković). In addition to the preface by Slobodan Jovanović, the book is accompanied by two essential

contributions by Boris Milovanović. In the first, Milovanović deals with the dispute over Serbian history between Nedeljković and Djilas, while the second contribution is a more than helpful biography of Kajica Milanov.

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AUTHOR GUIDELINES

The academic journal *Serbian Political Thought* publishes articles that result from the latest theoretical and empirical research in the field of political science. Authors should refer mainly to the results of scientific research published in academic journals, primarily in political science journals.

Manuscripts should be submitted in Serbian (Cyrillic script) with a mandatory English translation, or in English.

The journal is published six times a year. The deadlines for submitting the manuscripts are February 1st, April 1st, June 1st, August 1st, October 1st, and December 1st.

Two consecutive issues cannot contain articles written by the same author, whether single-authored or co-authored.

Papers are submitted to the Editorial Board by uploading them to the CEON platform using the following link: <https://aseestant.ceon.rs/index.php/spm/login>.

Authors are obliged to submit a signed and scanned declaration of authorship when submitting their works. The declaration form can be downloaded from the journal's website: https://www.ips.ac.rs/en/magazines/srpska-politicka-misao/authors_directions/

All submitted manuscripts are checked for plagiarism or auto-plagiarism. Various forms of chat boxes and other artificial intelligence software cannot be (co)authors of the papers under consideration. These tools can only be used for stylistic language editing, not for writing sections of the paper, and authors who use them are obliged to specify the purpose of using such tools at the point where they are used.

Authors are required to provide their ORCID numbers along with their (preferably) institutional email addresses, which they include in the manuscript text in a footnote alongside their names and surnames.

Research articles can have up to 40,000 characters with spaces, including footnotes. When counting the characters leave out the reference list. Exceptionally, a monographic study can be larger in scope in accordance with the provisions of *the Rulebook on procedure, method of evaluation, and quantitative presentation of scientific research results*.

Reviews can have up to 15,000 characters with spaces.

Book reviews can have up to 10,000 characters with spaces.

CITING AND REFERENCING

The journal *Serbian Political Thought* uses a partially modified Chicago style of citation (17th edition of the *Chicago Manual of Style*), which implies specifying bibliographic parentheses (brackets) according to the author-date system in the text, as well as a list of references with full bibliographic data after the text of the paper.

Data in bibliographic parentheses and the list of references should be written in Latin script.

Below are the rules and examples for citing the bibliographic information in the reference list and in the text. For each type of source, a citation rule is given first, followed by an example of citation in the reference list and bibliographic parenthesis.

The bibliographic parenthesis is usually set off at the end of the sentence, before the punctuation mark. It contains the author's surname, the year of publication, and page numbers pointing to a specifically contextual page or range of pages, as in the following example: (Mearsheimer 2001, 15–17).

Books

Books with one author

Surname, Name. Year of publication. *Title*. Place of publication: Publisher.

Mearsheimer, John J. 2001. *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*. New York: W. W. Norton & Company.

(Mearsheimer 2001)

Books with two or three authors

Surname, Name, and Name Surname. Year of publication. *Title*. Place of publication: Publisher.

Brady, Henry E., and David Collier. 2010. *Rethinking Social Inquiry: Diverse Tools, Shared Standards*. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers.

(Brady and Collier 2010, 211)

Pollitt, Christopher, Johnston Birchall, and Keith Putman. 1998. *Decentralising Public Service Management*. London: Macmillan Press.

(Pollitt, Birchall and Putman 1998)

Books with four or more authors

Surname, Name, Name and Surname, Name and Surname, and Name and Surname. Year of publication. *Title*. Place of publication: Publisher.

Pollitt, Christopher, Colin Talbot, Janice Caulfield, and Amanda Smullen [Pollitt *et al.*]. 2005. *Agencies: How Governments do Things Through Semi-Autonomous Organizations*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

(Pollitt *et al.* 2005)

Editor(s) or translator(s) in place of the author(s)

Surname, Name, Name and Surname, ed. Year of publication. *Title*. Place of publication: Publisher.

Kaltwasser, Cristobal Rovira, Paul Taggart, Paulina Ochoa Espejo, and Pierre Ostigoy [Kaltwasser *et al.*], eds. 2017. *The Oxford Handbook of Populism*. New York: Oxford University Press.

(Kaltwasser *et al.* 2017)

Chapter in an edited book

Surname, Name. Year of publication. "Title of the chapter." In *Title*, ed. Name Surname, pages range. Place of publication: Publisher.

Lošonc, Alpar. 2019. "Discursive dependence of politics with the confrontation between republicanism and neoliberalism." In *Discourse and Politics*, eds. Dejana M. Vukasović and Petar Matić, 23?46. Belgrade: Institute for Political Studies.

(Lošonc 2019)

Journal Articles

Regular issue

Surname, Name. Year of publication. "Title of the article." *Journal* Volume, if available (issue): page range. DOI.

Ellwood, David W. 2018. "Will Brexit Make or Break Great Britain?" *Serbian Political Thought* 18 (2): 5?14. DOI: 10.22182/spt.18212018.1.

(Ellwood 2018)

Newspapers and magazines

Signed articles

Surname, Name. Year of publication. “Title of the article.” *Newspaper/Magazine* Date: page range.

Clark, Phil. 2018. “Rwanda’s Recovery: When Remembrance is Official Policy.” *Foreign Affairs*, January/February 2018: 35–41.

(Clark 2018)

Unsigned articles

Title of the newspaper/magazine. Year of publication. “Title of the article.” Date: page range.

New York Times. 2002. “In Texas, Ad Heats Up Race for Governor.” July 30, 2002.

(*New York Times* 2002)

Corporate Author

Name of the corporate author [acronym if needed]. Year of publication. *Title of the publication*. Place of publication: Publisher.

International Organization for Standardization ?ISO?. 2019. *Moving from ISO 9001:2008 to ISO 9001:2015*. Geneva: International Organization for Standardization.

(International Organization for Standardization ?ISO? 2019) – *The first in-text citation*

(ISO 2019) – *Second and all subsequent citations*

Legal and Public Documents

Sections, articles, or paragraphs can be cited in the parentheses. They should be appropriately abbreviated.

Constitutions and laws

The title of the legislative act [acronym if needed], “Official Gazette of the state” and the number of the official gazette, or the webpage and the date of last access.

The Constitution of the Republic of Serbia, “Official Gazette of the Republic of Serbia”, No. 98/06.

(The Constitution of the Republic of Serbia, Art. 33)

The Law on Foreign Affairs [LFA], “Official Gazette of the Republic of Serbia”, No. 116/2007, 126/2007, and 41/2009.

(LFA 2009, Art. 17)

Succession Act [SA], “Official Gazette of the Republic of Croatia”, No. 48/03, 163/03, 35/05, 127/13, and 33/15 and 14/19.

(SA 2019, Art. 3)

An Act to make provision for and in connection with offences relating to offensive weapons [Offensive Weapons Act], 16th May 2019, www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2019/17/pdfs/ukpga_20190017_en.pdf, last accessed 20 December 2019.

(Offensive Weapons Act 2019)

Legislative acts of the European Union

The title of the legislative act, the number of the official gazette, the publication date, and the number of the page in the same format as on the *EUR-lex* website: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/homepage.html>.

Regulation (EU) No 182/2011 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 February 2011 laying down the rules and general principles concerning mechanisms for control by Member States of the Commission’s exercise of implementing powers, OJ L 55, 28.2.2011, p. 13–18.

(Regulation 182/2011, Art. 3)

Web sources

Surname, Name, or name of the corporate author [acronym]. Year of publication or n.d. – if the year of publication cannot be determined. “The name of the web page.” *The name of the website*. Date of creation, modification, or the last access to the web page, if the date cannot be determined from the source. URL.

Bilefsky, Dan, and Ian Austen. 2019. “Trudeau Re-election Reveals Intensified Divisions in Canada.” *The New York Times*. <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/10/22/world/canada/trudeau-re-elected.html>.

(Bilefsky and Austen 2019)

Institute for Political Studies [IPS]. n.d. “The 5th International Economic Forum on Reform, Transition and Growth.” *Institute for Political Studies*. Last accessed 7 December 2019. <http://www.ips.ac.rs/en/news/the-5th-international-economic-forum-on-reform-transition-and-growth/>.

(Institute for Political Studies [IPS] n.d.) – *First in-text citation*

(IPS n.d.) – *Second and every subsequent citation*

Associated Press [AP]. 2019. “AP to present VoteCast results at AAPOR pooling conference.” May 14, 2019. <https://www.ap.org/press-releases/2019/ap-to-present-votecast-results-at-aapor-polling-conference>.

(AP 2019)

Special cases of referencing

Citing editions other than the first

Surname, Name. Year of publication. *Title*, edition number. Place of publication: Publisher.

Bull, Hedley. 2012. *The Anarchical Society: A Study of Order in World Politics*, 4th edition. New York: Columbia University Press.

(Bull 2012)

Multiple sources of the same author

1) *Multiple sources by the same author* should be arranged chronologically by year of publication in ascending order.

Mearsheimer, John J. 2001. *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*. New York: W. W. Norton & Company.

Mearsheimer, John J. 2010. “The Gathering Storm: China’s Challenge to US Power in Asia.” *The Chinese Journal of International Politics* 3 (4): 381–396. DOI: 10.1093/cjip/poq016.

2) *Multiple sources by the same author from the same year* should be alphabetized by title, with lowercase letters attached to the year. Those letters should be used in parenthetical citations as well.

Walt, Stephen M. 2018a. *The Hell of Good Intentions: America’s Foreign Policy Elite and the Decline of U.S. Primacy*. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux.

(Walt 2018a)

Walt, Stephen M. 2018b. “Rising Powers and the Risk of War: A Realist View of Sino-American Relations.” In *Will China’s Rise be Peaceful: Security, Stability and Legitimacy*, ed. Asle Toje. 13–32. New York: Oxford University Press.

(Walt 2018b)

3) *Single-authored sources precede multiauthored sources beginning with the same surname* or written by the same person.

Pollitt, Christopher. 2001. "Clarifying convergence. Striking similarities and durable differences in public management reform." *Public Management Review* 3 (4): 471–492. DOI: 10.1080/14616670110071847.

Pollitt, Christopher, Johnston Birchall, and Keith Putman. 1998. *Decentralising Public Service Management*. London: Macmillan Press.

4) *Multiauthored sources with the same name and surname* as the first author should continue to be alphabetized by the second author's surname.

Pollitt Christopher, Johnston Birchall, and Keith Putman. 1998. *Decentralising Public Service Management*. London: Macmillan Press.

Pollitt Christopher, Colin Talbot, Janice Caulfield, and Amanda Smullen. 2005. *Agencies: How Governments do Things Through Semi-Autonomous Organizations*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Special cases of parenthetical citation

Exceptions to the rule of placing the parenthetical citation at the end of a sentence

1) If the *author is mentioned in the text*, even if used in a possessive form, the year must follow in parenthesis, and page numbers should be put in the brackets at the end of the sentence.

For the assessment, see Kaltwasser *et al.* (2017) ... (112).

According to Ellwood (2018) ... (7).

2) When *quoting directly*, if the name of the author precedes the quotation, the year and page numbers must follow in parenthesis.

Mearsheimer (2001, 28) claims that: "...".

3) When *using the same source multiple times in one paragraph*, the parenthetical citation should be placed either after the last reference (or at the end of the paragraph, preceding the final period) if the same page (or page range) is cited more than once, or at the first reference, whereas the subsequent citations should only include page numbers.

Do not use *ibid* or *op. cit.* with repeated citations.

Using brief phrases such as “see”, “compare” etc.

Those phrases should be enclosed within the parenthesis.

(see: Ellwood 2018)

Using secondary source

When using a secondary source, the original source should be cited in parenthesis, followed by “quoted/cited in” and the secondary source. The reference list should only include the secondary source.

“Its authority was greatly expanded by the constitutional revision of 1988, and the Court of Arbitration can now be regarded as a ‘genuine constitutional court’” (De Winter and Dumont 2009, 109 cited in: Lijphart 2012, 39–40).

Lijphart, Arend. 2012. *Patterns of Democracy: Government Forms and Performance in Thirty-Six Countries*, 2nd edition. New Haven & London: Yale University Press.

Multiple sources within the same parentheses

1) When *multiple sources* are cited, they should be separated by semicolons.

(Mearsheimer 2001, 34; Ellwood 2018, 7)

2) When *multiple sources by the same author*, but published in different years are cited, the name of the author is cited only the first time. The different years are separated by commas or by semicolons where page numbers are cited.

(Mearsheimer 2001, 2010) or (Mearsheimer 2001, 15–17; 2010, 390)

3) When *different authors share the same surname*, include the first initial in the parenthesis.

(M. Chiti 2004, 40), (E. Chiti 2004, 223)

Chiti, Edoardo. 2004. “Administrative Proceedings Involving European Agencies.” *Law and Contemporary Problems* 68 (1): 219–236.

Chiti, Mario. 2004. “Forms of European Administrative Action.” *Law and Contemporary Problems* 68 (1): 37–57.

TEXT FORMATTING

General guidelines for writing the manuscript

The manuscript should be written in Word, in the following manner:

- Paper size: A4;
- Margins: Normal 2.54 cm;
- Use Times New Roman font (plain letters) to write the text, unless specified otherwise;
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- Footnote line spacing: 1;
- Title font size: 14 pt;
- Subtitles font size: 12 pt;
- Text font size: 12 pt;
- Footnote font size: 10 pt;
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- Use Paragraph/Special/First line at 1.27 cm;
- Text alignment: Justify;
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- Page numbering: Arabian numerals in lower right corner;
- Do not break the words manually by inserting hyphens to continue the word in the next line;
- Save the manuscript in the .doc format.

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* Footnote: E-mail address: The institutional e-mail address is strongly recommended. ORCID:

Affiliation

*Name and surname of the second author***

** Footnote: E-mail address: The institutional e-mail address is strongly recommended. ORCID:

Affiliation

TITLE OF THE PAPER***

*** Footnote: if necessary, specify one of the following (or similar) data: 1) the name and number of the project; 2) the proceeding where the manuscript was presented under the same or similar title; 3) statements of gratitude.

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Abstract, within 100–250 words range, contains the subject, aim, theoretical and methodological approach, results and conclusions of the paper.

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Use in-text references according to *Citing and referencing.*

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- all the references should be listed together, without separating legal acts of archives;
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Установа запослења

Име и презиме другог аутора**

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