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MANAGEMENT OF MEDIA REPORTING AND COMMUNICATION WITH THE PUBLIC: A QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS

The presence of Turkey in the Western Balkans has a different media perception, which indicates the importance of differences within the regional and national context, regardless of the structural similarities resulting from historical development and common centuries-old belonging to the Ottoman heritage. This qualitative study presents a retrospective analysis of media content based on polarized coverage of the Turkish presence in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kosovo. The key goal is to point out the role of the media as the strongest potential against the spread of misinformation, which should be bound by strict ethical rules, ensuring freedom of expression and the fundamental right of citizens to obtain real and truthful information. The results of the research show that media coverage and the attitude towards public opinion in Bosnia and Herzegovina depend on the political climate in that country, while Kosovo media is dominated by the interest of the general public in getting to know the real background of the new Turkish foreign policy. Without going into the question of whether the renewal of Turkish influence in the Balkans resulted from ambitions to join the European Union or existed independently of it, from the point of view of Brussels and Ankara it is clear that Türkiye's role in international relations is inevitable, and that this country will continue to position itself more and more as an active partner of the countries of the Western Balkans and the European Union.

Keywords: media management, communication with the public, reporting, Türkiye, B&H, Kosovo

1. Introduction

As the center of the Balkan Peninsula, an important geostrategic area and a point of contact between East and West, the area of today's Bosnia and Herzegovina has always been fertile ground for the intertwining of different influences. One of the material proofs of cultural and religious diversity in this area is the Bosnian medieval tombstones – *stećci* [the name for monumental medieval tombstones]. While some of their motifs point to Catholic iconography, others are a reflection of the Orthodox tradition. Certain motifs, such as the anthropomorphic scene of an enlarged hand, are specific to both traditions (one of the anthropomorphic motifs of Bosnian *stećak* tombstones is a man with an enlarged hand, significantly disproportionate to the rest of the body; such motifs were found in the area of the Radimlja necropolis near the town of Stolac in Herzegovina, and today they are in the courtyard of the National Museum of Bosnia and Herzegovina). *Stećci* is just one illustrative example of the diversity in these areas during the Middle Ages.

With the fall of Bosnia under Ottoman rule in 1463, a time synchronous with the European renaissance, the period of the Bosnian Middle Ages formally ended. Bosnia and Herzegovina was part of the Ottoman Empire until 1878 when it fell under Austro-Hungarian rule. In almost five hundred years, the Ottoman legacy has become an integral part of the cultural image of these areas.

In its history, primarily during the 20th century, the territory of today's state of Kosovo was organized into different political entities, starting with the Turkish pashaluka (Vilayet of Kosovo), and after the Balkan Wars and the First World War. In this long, past period, until independence, Kosovo was decided by other nations and other regimes, starting with those imperialistic European pretensions and then through Greater Serbian projects and aggressive political ambitions for dominance in the Balkans and the imposition of laws derived from Byzantine feudal rights destroyed by the penetration of the Ottomans on the Balkans.

Kosovo society has an important patriarchal tradition. Epics and heroic ballads, as well as oral prose, played an important role in transmitting the history and legends of Kosovo's ethnic groups. They were recited to the sounds of traditional instruments such as the one-stringed violin. These stories and songs remain an important basis of national identity for both Albanians and Serbs. Among the most significant historical sights in Kosovo are the Serbian Orthodox medieval churches in Dečani (declared a world heritage site by UNESCO in 2004), Gračanica (near Pristina), and Peć. The two oldest Muslim sites are Xhamia e Çarshisë and Xhamia e Mbretit (Fatih) mosque

in Priština from the 15th century. During the 1998–1999 war, many Muslim sites were destroyed, including the 18th century Xhamia e Kuqe in Peć and the Ottoman-era bazaar in Đakovica. Many cultural and archaeological artifacts from Kosovo remained in Belgrade, Serbia, where they were first moved after the 1998–99 war (Young, n. d.).

2. Research framework and methodology

This research aims to determine in what way contemporary media in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kosovo report on Türkiye. To give a comprehensive answer to that question, when it comes to Bosnia and Herzegovina, one should first keep in mind its complex ethnic, religious, and cultural picture. This country got its current administrative-territorial structure with the Dayton Peace Agreement, initialed on November 21 at the Wright Patterson Airport near Dayton in the American state of Ohio, and signed on December 14 in Paris. By this agreement, Bosnia and Herzegovina was divided into Republika Srpska, Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Brčko District. The Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina is further divided into ten cantons, which represent separate administrative-territorial units. The power of post-Dayton Bosnia and Herzegovina is distributed exclusively by ethnic key. The presidency has three members, whereby three members must be from the three constituent nations – Bosniaks, Serbs, and Croats. The legislative body at the state level is represented by the bicameral Parliamentary Assembly of Bosnia and Herzegovina. There are a total of forty-two deputies in the House of Representatives, of which a third must also be from the constituent nations. There are a total of fifteen delegates in the House of Peoples of the Parliamentary Assembly of Bosnia and Herzegovina, of which five are Bosniaks, five are Croats and five are Serbs. It is similar at lower levels of government, but for the sake of illustrating the general picture, it is enough to stay at the state level. In such circumstances, it is natural to expect different media influences. That is why, to give the most complete picture of how the Bosnian media reports on Türkiye, the following method is chosen:

Several daily newspapers were selected: *Dnevni Avaz*, *Oslobođenje*, *Dnevni list*, *Nezavisne novine*, and *Glas Srpske*. *Dnevni Avaz* and *Oslobođenje* are the most-read daily newspapers in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, and their editorial offices are in Sarajevo. *Nezavisne novine* and *Glas Srpske* are published in Banja Luka, and *Dnevni list* in Mostar. The city of Banjaluka is the administrative seat of the Republika Srpska entity. The very name of the newspaper *Glas Srpska* illustrates the ethnic bias of this media. On the other hand, Croatisms in the linguistic style of the Mostar newspaper

Dnevni list point to Croatian national commitment. *Dnevni Avaz* and *Oslobođenje* are published in Sarajevo, the administrative center of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, where Bosniaks form the national majority. When it comes to how all the mentioned dailies report on Türkiye, it is not the intention to be guided by these facts. All conclusions derive exclusively from the material offered by the selected newspaper articles.

The media were selected based on readership, scope, and accessibility to the media audience. A standard research matrix was used, divided into different categories, and the texts on the mentioned portals were analyzed using the discourse analysis method. By analyzing the media content, all articles were classified into specific thematic categories. Based on the mentioned categories, the following were examined: *general characteristics of the texts, value orientation, and critical attitude of the media towards the relations between Türkiye and Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Kosovo.*

To illustrate the way contemporary Bosnian media reports on Türkiye as precisely as possible, three significant events from 2013, 2014, and 2015 were selected. The most significant event that happened in 2013 was the official visit of the then Minister of Foreign Affairs, Ahmet Davutoğlu. In 2014, it was the first direct presidential election in Türkiye, which was won by Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, while when it comes to bilateral relations between the two countries, in 2015 the most significant event was the first arrival of Recep Tayyip Erdoğan in Bosnia and Herzegovina as president. In addition to the aforementioned dailies, an analysis of the articles on the Al Jazeera Balkans portal was carried out, as well as the reports available on the website of this media.

In 2008, Kosovo became independent. After decades of bans, Albanian-language media in Kosovo is on the rise. Some of them are financed by parties, others by foreign sources. In this context, the former defend their financiers, while the latter pays little attention to political parties, and their information seems more independent. From a political point of view, in general, the media is divided along a divide analogous to that which divides political parties.

The Kosovo media did not pay significant attention to the policy of the Republic of Türkiye towards Kosovo after the declaration of independence. This was the result of inertia from the period when UNMIK (Interim Administrative Mission of the United Nations in Kosovo established on June 10, 1999, by Resolution 1244 of the United Nations Security Council) was the main administrator of the government in Kosovo and while Türkiye was not so present in this area, neither political nor economic. After 2008, the Turkish presence in Kosovo became more intense, especially on the economic and

cultural level, which led to an increase in the interest of the main media about Türkiye's policy not only towards Kosovo but also towards the Western Balkans in general. Such an increase in interest has resulted in more and more frequent inscriptions about the most important segments of this policy, and lately also in-depth analyzes and research on this topic.

In most cases, the media in Kosovo are under the direct influence of the leading political parties, since in the Western Balkans public media have to absorb public funds and usually do not criticize the government, and government structures even finance private media with public funds. In this way, the public debate fades. In recent decades, there have been strong anti-Turkish media currents in Kosovo, but also weaker ones and individuals who openly promote the effects of Erdoğanism on the lives and political attitudes of citizens. Following the assassination attempt on Erdoğan and the mass imprisonment of his opponents, Erdoğan's popularity and media presence in Kosovo is reviving, with the Islamic Religious Community of Kosovo and its officials on social media strongly reflecting an anti-Turkish and pro-Arab orientation.

For the analysis of Kosovo media reports on the more intensive Turkish presence in Kosovo, three years were selected as a sample: 2013, 2014, and 2015. In each mentioned year, one significant event was selected in the context of the relations between Türkiye and Kosovo. The most significant event in 2013 was Erdoğan's visit to Kosovo. In 2014, the background of the projects of the TIKA organization was especially followed, while in 2015 the most significant event was Türkiye's focus on the restoration of the heritage of the Ottoman Empire in Kosovo. Analogous to the research of the Bosnian media, several daily newspapers were selected for Kosovo: the *Bota sot* daily, the *Express* news portal, the *Kosovapress* news agency, *Gazeta Arbëria*, the *Lajmi.net* news portal, *Indeksonline*, and *Zëri*. Daily *Bota sot* and *Gazeta Arbëria* are the most-read daily newspapers in the Republic of Kosovo, and their editorial offices are in Pristina. Also, in terms of visits and provision of information, the mentioned portals are the leaders in Kosovo. The key goal is therefore to extract meaning and realistic conclusions from the selected articles, at the same time indicating the background of media information management in its transmission to the general public.

3. Bosnia and Herzegovina media

3.1. Visit of former Minister of Foreign Affairs Ahmet Davutoglu to Bosnia and Herzegovina

The Minister of Foreign Affairs of Türkiye, Ahmet Davutoglu, visited Bosnia and Herzegovina on May 8, 2013. A trilateral meeting was held with the head of Serbian diplomacy, Ivan Mrkić, and Zlatko Lagumdžija, the head of Bosnian diplomacy. During his visit to Sarajevo, Ahmet Davutoglu ceremonially opened a newly built *tekija* [place of worship]] in Sarajevo's Kovači neighborhood, the construction of which was financed by the Municipality of Seldžuk from Konja.

On the day of the visit, *Dnevni avaz* announced that the mayor of Sarajevo's *Stari grad* Municipality, Ibrahim Hadžibajrić, and the Turkish Minister of Foreign Affairs, Ahmet Davutoglu, will jointly open a *tekija* in Kovači: „The municipality contributed to the realization of these projects by establishing strong friendly ties and signing the Twinning Agreement with the Municipality of Seldžuk from Konja“ (*Dnevni avaz*, 2013: 14). *Avaz*'s title of the following date sufficiently illustrates the intimate relationship between the two countries: *Türkiye's new gift for brotherly B&H* (Tunović, 2013: 9).

Here is how *Avaz* further conveys Davutoglu's words: The proud people of Sarajevo were killed and tortured, but they did not hate. For centuries, Turks and Bosnians have spoken with their hearts and talked cordially, and it will remain so forever and no one can prevent it (Tunović, 2013: 9).

Avaz does not transmit information about the trilateral diplomatic meeting, while information about it can be found in *Oslobođenje*. A day after Davutoglu's visit, *Oslobođenje* reports the words of Valentin Inzko, at the time the high representative of the International Community in Bosnia and Herzegovina, in which he thanked Davutoglu for Türkiye's commitment to the stability and development of Bosnia and Herzegovina, stressing that Türkiye has taken an invaluable role in promoting positive relations in the region, including the political crisis in B&H, as well as challenging the Dayton Agreement and the rule of law (Godinjak, 2013: 2).

The day after Davutoglu's visit, the front page of *Dnevni list* read: „B&H, Serbia, and Türkiye have a common future“ (*Dnevni list*, 2013: 5). However, *Nezavisne novine* and *Glas Srpske* do not report on the visit of the Turkish foreign minister.

Al Jazeera Balkans did not pay special attention to this visit in terms of publishing articles in the *Opinions* or *Topics* sections. On the date of Ahmet Davutoglu's visit, May 8, news about the visit and its protocol was published, and transmitted from other agencies.

In conclusion: Emphasizing the opening of the *tekija* in the foreground, *Dnevni avaz* emphasizes the common cultural climate of the two countries, in the shadow of which even an important political event, such as a trilateral diplomatic meeting, remains. Conversely, for the *Dnevni list*, the information that Türkiye financed the construction of the *tekke* is completely irrelevant. The indicator of this is that the Bosniak political currents insist more on the cultural unity of Türkiye and Bosnia and Herzegovina. However, Davutoglu's statement also shows that it is the same when it comes to the way Turkish political leaders see Bosniaks in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The epithet „proud people of Sarajevo“ is a reference to historical unity (*Tuks and Bosnians have spoken to each other for centuries and had a heart-to-heart conversation*) and the creation of a common fraternal future, separating Davutoglu's rhetoric from a neutral diplomatic one.

3.2. The victory of Recep Tayyip Erdoğan in the first direct presidential election

Recep Tayyip Erdoğan became president by the will of the Turkish people in the first presidential elections in Türkiye, on August 11, 2014, winning 52%, or the absolute majority of votes. At the time when the world media reported this news, the promotion of a book about Recep Tayyip Erdoğan was held in Visoko, near Sarajevo, where the then Bosniak member of the Presidency, Bakir Izetbegović, was staying. Through a video link, he said that Erdoğan's victory is simultaneous with „our victory“ and that the new Turkish president is the leader of all Muslims. (*Glas Srpske*, 2014: 5). This statement caused different reactions in the Bosnian media.

The day before Erdoğan's victory, on August 10, *Dnevni avaz* published the following *Reuters* subtitle in the *Globus* column: „Erdoğan's victory would concentrate more power in the hands of a man who has divided Turkish society along secular and religious lines and worried Türkiye's Western allies“ (*Dnevni avaz*, 2014: 18). And the next day, on the day of Erdoğan's victory, *Avaz* broadcasts a text from AFP – an international news agency based in Paris (*Agence France-Presse*) in which it is written that the opponents of the new president claim that Erdoğan wants authoritarian and Islamist powers, and accuses him of undermines the secular legacy of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk (*Dnevni avaz*, 2014: 10). It is indicative that in the following days most

Bosniak leaders send congratulations to Erdoğan, which speaks to the extent to which the relations between Bosniak political currents and Recep Tayyip Erdoğan are being nurtured. A few days later (August 12), the then-president of the Democratic Front (DF), Željko Komšić, stated that he believes that Erdoğan will not change anything in relations with B&H (*Dnevni list*, 2014: 5), and the day after, reisu-l-ulema of the Islamic community in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Husein Mr. Kavazović, congratulated the new Turkish president on his victory in the elections: „With congratulations and wishes for health and stronger momentum in Türkiye’s progress, Reisu-l-ulema also expresses the desire of the Islamic community in B&H to continue and intensify the existing good cooperation with the competent institutions of Türkiye“ (*Dnevni avaz*, 2014: 5).

A few days before and on the day of the election itself, the daily newspaper *Oslobođenje* reported texts from world agencies that Recep Tayyip Erdoğan is the absolute favorite (*Oslobođenje*, 2014: 12).

Mostar’s *Dnevni list* reported the text of the news agency HINA: „Despite corruption scandals, protests by the young liberal middle class and accusations of authoritarian rule, Erdoğan has great chances of winning on Sunday“ (*Dnevni list*, 2014: 15).

On the very day of the victory, the words of the President of Republika Srpska, Milorad Dodik, were broadcast that by Izetbegović’s support for Erdoğan, he was once again „calling for Turkish rule in B&H“ and that Izetbegović was calling for Erdoğan’s victory in the elections so that the Bosniaks would „count with the Serbs and Croats in Bosnia and Herzegovina“. The most important quotes are highlighted:

Gostimir Popović, a military-political analyst, believes that Izetbegović’s ties to Türkiye are very dangerous, and he sees the danger in the fact that many politicians from Sarajevo are trying to bring Türkiye into the big door to use it to discipline the Orthodox (Bradvica, 2014: 4–5).

Hamdija Lipovača’s comment published on his Facebook profile is also quoted, in which he writes that Türkiye is not our reserve country, as well as the comment of professor at the Faculty of Political Sciences and political analyst Šaćir Filandra, in which he says that the presence of Türkiye in B&H (...) more used in the national dimension, and less so in the economic sense, and he hopes that this (...) will change and that Bosnia and Herzegovina will receive more concrete help from Türkiye (Bradvica, 2014: 4–5).

Emir Suljagić from the Democratic Front (DF) party wrote on his Facebook profile that the statement in which Izetbegović claims that Erdoğan carries the same flag as Alija Izetbegović is shocking. At the same time, as reported by *Dnevni list*, the then president of Republika Srpska, Milorad Do-

dik, stated that Izetbegović's statement was [actually] a demonstration of the „pan-Islamic movement“ (Bradvić, 2014: 2–3).

Banja Luka's *Nezavisne novine* also foregrounds Bakir Izetbegović's statement about Erdoğan's victory, but in a fairly neutral way, without additional comments. The title of the text on the cover reads: „Izetbegović: Erdoğan the leader of all Muslims“, while the subtitle can be read: „Chairman of the B&H Presidency publicly supported the Turkish Prime Minister“ (Šajinović, 2014: 5). Unlike *Dnevni Avaz* and *Oslobodjenje*, *Nezavisne novine* fully conveys information about how Bakir Izetbegović supported the Turkish president. *Nezavisne novine* reports the words of Dušanka Majkić, representative of the Serbian Democratic Party (SDS) in the House of Representatives of the Parliamentary Assembly of B&H, who states that such statements show that Bosnia and Herzegovina is an impossible state because Bosniak politicians see B&H as a Bosniak country to the detriment of the other two peoples who live in it (Šajinović, 2014: 5).

About the victory itself, *Glas Srpske* reports agency information, while more attention is paid to Bakir Izetbegović's statement. *Glas Srpske* adds that Erdoğan „in the last few years has caused a big scandal with his statements, the most famous of which is that Alija Izetbegović left B&H to him“ (*Glas Srpske*, 2014: 2). This newspaper writes that Erdoğan victory was celebrated in Sarajevo, although it is not stated that the Turks living in Sarajevo celebrated that victory, as reported by other sources. The transmitted statement of the President of Republika Srpska, Milorad Dodik, in which he says that Bakir Izetbegović is Erdoğan's poltroon and that Izetbegović wants „Turkish interference and rule“ (*Glas Srpske*, 2014: 2) is also noteworthy.

Al Jazeera Balkans devoted a large part of its media space to the candidacy and victory of Recep Tayyip Erdoğan. Their reporter Ivan Pavlović reported for *Al Jazeera Balkans* from Türkiye. In the attachment, he discussed possible constitutional changes and privileges that Erdoğan could use as president, among other things, to hold government meetings once a month. Like daily newspapers, *Al Jazeera Balkans* did not deal with Bakir Izetbegović's comment. It could be said that because of the different views it cites, *Al Jazeera* gives the most objective picture of everything. On August 9, 2014, a comment appeared on the *Al Jazeera Balkans* page regarding an emotionally colored discourse, when it comes to the relationship between Türkiye and Bosnia and Herzegovina:

When it comes to the interests of the Western Balkans, especially Bosnia and Herzegovina and its closest neighbors, changes could certainly be reflected in the fact that the strong Turkish economy receives injections that would help revive the failing economies of all countries in the region. Simply

put, and the interlocutors of *Al Jazeera* will agree with this, it is expected that *talkative rhetoric* will be replaced by concrete investments (Obrenović, 2014).

The words of economist Tarik Zaimović are also cited: „(...) Nevertheless, I would like to see less emotion towards Bosnia and Herzegovina, and more use of business terms“ (Obrenović, 2014). As he goes on to say, he is aware that Türkiye does not hide its sympathy for Bosnia, especially the Bosniaks, and that Turkish investors will repair the bridge and rebuild the mosque out of love, but to open a factory, however, a little business logic is needed (Obrenović, 2014).

Dušan Spasojević, at that time the ambassador of Serbia in Ankara, notices that Erdoğan's talkative rhetoric very often knows how to „ignite“ the political scene of the Balkans, so his words create a sense of security and protection in some people, while in others they cause anger and nervousness (Obrenović, 2014).

In conclusion: The news that Recep Tayyip Erdoğan is the absolute favorite in the first direct presidential election in Türkiye was reported mainly by world agencies in most media. However, the views on the relationship between Bosnia and Herzegovina and Türkiye differ. Sarajevo's *Oslobođenje* and *Dnevni avaz* do not attach importance to Bakir Izetbegović's statement, unlike Mostar's *Dnevni list* and Banja Luka's *Nezavisne novine* and *Glas Srpske*. Izetbegović's words that Türkiye's victory is at the same time „our victory“ are controversial in the eyes of these media and are interpreted in the context of fostering relations between Bosniak political leaders and conservative Turkish political parties.

3.3. Official visit of Recep Tayyip Erdoğan to Bosnia and Herzegovina

Recep Tayyip Erdoğan visited Bosnia and Herzegovina on May 20, 2015, for the first time as the President of Türkiye. The goal of this official visit was a series of agreements on economic and foreign trade cooperation between the two countries. Among other things, Tuska increased the quota for the import of meat from Bosnia and Herzegovina. On the day of the visit, Erdoğan met with members of the Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as with deputies and delegates of both houses of the Parliamentary Assembly of Bosnia and Herzegovina [the House of Representatives of the Parliamentary Assembly of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the House of Peoples of the Parliamentary Assembly of Bosnia and Herzegovina] and members of the Council of Ministers. They discussed Turkish investments in Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as financial support and loans for Bosnian small and

medium enterprises. At the bilateral meeting between the two countries, it was concluded that joint efforts will be made in the fight against terrorism. Among other things, the reconstructed *Careva džamija* [Emperor's Mosque] in Sarajevo and *Isa-beg's Hamam* was opened. On this occasion, the Turkish president also visited the grave of the first president of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Alija Izetbegović, and ended his official visit with a walk through the old part of the city.

On May 19, *Dnevni Avaz* mentions the Turkish president in the context of the Albanian Parliament's relationship with Erdoğan. The title of the article is *Albanian Parliament to Erdoğan: We are not a Turkish colony* (Vele, 2015: 9). One sentence below the article reads:

As *Avaz* previously wrote, Turkish President Erdoğan has repeatedly asked the member of the B&H Presidency, Bakir Izetbegović, to do what is necessary so that schools and other institutions close to Hizmet are also closed in B&H... (Vele, 2015: 9).

It should be noted that the then owner of *Dnevni avaz*, Fahrudin Radončić, was the first man of the Party for a Better Future (SBB). Until then, Radončić was a political opponent of Bakir Izetbegović, a Bosniak member of the Presidency and president of the Party of Democratic Action (SDA). By the way, the two leaders entered the coalition government at the level of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, when the SBB party replaced the Democratic Front (DF) party at the federal level. Thus, until the formation of the SBB-SDA coalition, newspaper articles directed against Bakir Izetbegović were a regular feature in *Dnevni avaz*. Therefore, newspaper articles about the relations between Bosnia and Herzegovina and Türkiye, when it comes to this newspaper, should also be viewed in the context of the relations between Fahrudin Radončić and the SBB on the one hand, and Bakir Izetbegović and the SDA on the other.

On the day of Erdoğan's visit to Bosnia and Herzegovina, *Avaz* publishes a neutral text about the protocol of the visit, as well as the opening of the reconstructed hammam and mosque. However, a day later, a text appears in *Avaz* with the following subtitle: *Will the announced credit arrangements turn into an opportunity for Turkish banks to make money in Bosnia and Herzegovina once again?* (Degirmendžić, Nuhanović, 2015: 2–3). In the commentary of academician Enver Kazaz, also reported by *Avaz*, it was stated that Erdoğan was presented as a kind of Bosniak leader by Bakir Izetbegović (*Dnevni avaz*, 2015: 2). „At the same time, Izetbegović openly carries out autocolonization of Bosniaks and develops, instead of rational policies, emotional identification between Bosniaks and Turks“ (*Dnevni avaz*, 2015: 2).

Liberation puts the opening of *Isa-bey's hammam* and mosque in the foreground. It is stated that the Vakuf Directorate of the Republic of Türkiye invested 2,600,000 KM in its restoration, that the works were carried out by the Turkish company Er-Bu, which also worked on the restoration of the *Stari most* [Old Bridge] in Mostar, *Stari kameni most* [Old Stone Bridge] in the town of Konjic, and which is reconstructing *Most Mehmed-paše Sokolovića* [Bridge Mehmed- Paša Sokolović] in Višegrad (Bećirović, 2015: 2). *Oslobođenje* reports the statement of Izetbegović, a Bosniak member of the Presidency and the president of the Democratic Action Party, in which he states that Türkiye can help B&H to get out of the economic stagnation. Contrary to *Avaz's* comment that Erdoğan's visit is an opportunity for Turkish banks to once again make money in B&H, the main headline in *Oslobođenje* on May 21 reads: *The seeds of cooperation that will bear fruit* (Berimac, 2015: 2).

Mostar's *Dnevni list* is the only one that states that the Turkish president is coming to support Bakir Izetbegović, on the eve of the party congress of the Party of Democratic Action. In addition, the *Dnevni list* also provides a chronology of bilateral relations between Türkiye and B&H when Bakir Izetbegović and Recep Tayyip Erdoğan were the leaders of the two countries. It was stated that Bakir Izetbegović met with the Turkish president in March 2015, who hosted him on board the *Savaron Mustafa Kemal Atatürk*, as well as the fact that the Bosniak member of the presidency supported Erdoğan in the first presidential elections in August 2014 (Bjelica-Čabrilo, 2015: 2–3).

Izetbegović is the first politician that Erdoğan received on the yacht *Savaron*. This yacht, in which Atatürk spent his last days of life, became Turkish property in 1938. The Turkish Ministry of Tourism and Culture has renovated the yacht, which now hosts some important meetings and receptions.

On April 18, *Dnevni list's* website also wrote the following: Izetbegović's close relations with Erdoğan are not sympathetic to Serbian and Croatian officials. But no one except the president of Republika Srpska, Milorad Dodik, ventured to comment on them. Dodik assessed Izetbegović's support for Erdoğan as an aspiration aimed at resuming Turkish interference and rule, and that Izetbegović expects the support of Islamic leaders to deal with other nations in Bosnia and Herzegovina (Bjelica-Šagovnović, 2015).

Nezavisne novine provides only basic information about the protocol of the visit, while *Glas Srpska* is the only newspaper that does not contain information about the Turkish president's visit to Bosnia and Herzegovina on its front page. The day after the visit, this sheet provides basic information about the protocol.

Al Jazeera Balkans reported the details of the visit and its protocol from the agencies, but also broadcast special thematic features, which were later

published on the portal. The domestic political climate was completely overshadowed by concrete economic analyses. On the day of the visit, reporter Nadina Maličbegović appeared live on the *Al Jazeera Balkans* program, reporting exclusively on Turkish investments in B&H and economic exchange (Al Jazeera, 2015).

In conclusion: The fact that during the ribbon cutting at the opening of the complex of *Isa Bey's Hammam* and Caraeva džamija [Emperor's Mosque], a girl appeared dressed in a traditional Bosniak Ottoman-era costume speaks volumes about the nurturing of Bosnia and Herzegovina's cultural relations with Türkiye. This *subtle cultural reference* shows that in addition to economic relations and foreign political cooperation, the common cultural ground of the two countries is particularly emphasized. At the same time, the fact that the visit to the grave of the first president of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Alija Izetbegović, was an integral part of Erdoğan's protocol, speaks of Erdoğan's affection for Bosniaks in B&H. When it comes to the way of reporting on the visit, one should keep in mind the climate of the individual media that reported on it, as well as the political relations in Bosnia and Herzegovina itself. Some articles, such as *Avaz's* article entitled „*Albanian Parliament to Erdoğan: We are not a Turkish colony*“, show that this visit was also placed in the context of the current political situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

4. Kosovo media

4.1. Eminent Kosovo media coverage of Erdoğan's visit to Kosovo

In his capacity as Prime Minister of Türkiye, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan visited Kosovo on October 23, 2013, on the occasion of the ceremonial opening of the newly built airport in Pristina. In addition to participating in this ceremony, Erdoğan also visited Prizren on this occasion. The Kosovo media gave this visit considerable space and attention.

Reporting on this visit, the *Bota Sot* daily (October 23, 2013) reports that Erdoğan called the then Kosovo Prime Minister Hashim Thaçi and the Albanian Prime Minister Edi Rama brothers in his speech (Bota Sot, 2013). *Bota sot* also emphasizes that Erdoğan did not fail to praise one of the greatest heroes of recent Kosovo history, Adem Jashari, after whom the airport was named. On that occasion, he said that „Adem Jashari is in the hearts of the Turks“, and he also mentioned Kosovar Mehmet Akif Ersoy, who is the author of the Turkish national anthem.

Objecting to the then Prime Minister of Kosovo for failing to mention the family of Adem Jashari, who was present at the ceremony, *Bota Sot* quotes

Thaçi's reminiscence of the night before the declaration of independence and the message he received from Erdoğan. „The night before we declared the independence of Kosovo, [Erdoğan] called me and said that he had a decision ready on the recognition of Kosovo and that tomorrow he would follow the moment [declaration of independence]“, said Taçi.

At the end of the report, *Bota sot* reported that in 2010 the airport in Pristina was given a concession to the Turkish-French consortium „Limak Aeroport de Lyon“ and that the concession will last for 20 years, during which the Turks undertook to invest 100 million euros in expansion and modernization of the airport.

In a special report dedicated to Erdoğan's visit to Prizren, *Bota sot* first conveys the words of welcome addressed to the then-Turkish leader by the hosts. In this context, the words of the then Prime Minister Taçi are cited, according to which Erdoğan „was the first world leader to recognize the independence of Kosovo“, as well as that „cooperation between the two countries will forever be great and brotherly“. According to the daily *Bota sot*, the speech of the Albanian Prime Minister Edi Rama was of the same nature, they said that the peoples of Albania, Kosovo, and Türkiye are „brotherly peoples who are trying to build their future together“. Among other things, Erdogan emphasized on this occasion that he feels at home in his brotherly country (Bota Sot, 2014), the then Prime Minister of Turkey is quoted on this occasion.

Reporting on the Turkish Prime Minister's visit, the *Express* news portal begins the report by stating that Erdoğan's speech drew cheers from the citizens who gathered to welcome him in the city square. *Express* also adds that Erdoğan called Kosovo his second homeland on this occasion while addressing the President of Prizren Municipality Ramadan [Muja] as „Ramazan“ (*Express*, 2013). „Our cultures may be different, but we belong to the same country“, Erdoğan said, adding that Kosovo and Türkiye have the same culture, history, and civilization. „Don't forget, Türkiye is Kosovo, Kosovo is Türkiye! We are so close that the author of the Turkish national anthem is Mehmet Akif Ersoy from Kosovo, from Peć... This national anthem makes us part of one people and one nation. We are close to each other because the people and nations of this region built [they're] future together. Like our grandfathers, we will continue our future“, *Express* quotes the words of the then Turkish Prime Minister.

According to this news portal, Erdoğan listed the countries with which Türkiye wants to continue the common path. „Kosovo, Albania, Macedonia, and Bosnia will look to the future, we will all move forward together, regardless of the color we have“, he said on this occasion. During the speech, Erdoğan explained how Türkiye recognized Kosovo's independence, claiming that his country was the first to do so.

The news agency *Kosovapress*, in its report on the stay of the then-Turkish Prime Minister in Prizren, quotes his promise at the top of the report that Türkiye will continue to help Kosovo in all aspects because „Kosovo and Türkiye are one“ (*Express*, 2013). Also, as the main accents of Erdoğan's address to the citizens of Prizren, *Kosovapress* cites his words that tears can no longer be allowed to be shed in the Balkan region, but that the Balkans need peace, friendship, and brotherhood to become a region of peace and solidarity.

Speaking about the relations between Türkiye and Kosovo, according to *Kosovapress*, Erdoğan said (...) that Türkiye will continue to live in brotherhood with Kosovo. In the continuation of the report, *Kosovapress* transmits part of Prime Minister Erdoğan's speech, which illustrates Türkiye's policy towards Kosovo. „(...) Don't forget, Türkiye is Kosovo, and Kosovo is Türkiye! (...). Differences should be put aside so that we all (...) move towards the future“, *Kosovapress* quotes the words of the Turkish Prime Minister. However, this is more than diplomacy, another tendency and critical thinking result in the opinion that Erdoğan is promoting neo-colonialism here and that it is a distant past when Türkiye was the ruler of the Balkans. „We are one“ or „brothers“ has many historical meanings.

4.2. Kosovo media on increased Turkish presence in Kosovo in 2014: ***Research on the background of TIKa Organization projects***

As one of the most important events in the Turkish policy towards Kosovo, which was extensively reported by the Kosovo media in 2014, the claims that TIKa [Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency] enables the penetration of radical Islam within the framework of its projects in Kosovo stand out. TIKa has often been the target of criticism by Albanian intellectuals and indeed restores the Ottoman and Kosovo cultural heritage. However, there is a tendency to build glass. The people of Kosovo have many existential problems and do not need many mosques. Cooperation with people who have been exposed to radical Islamic views makes TIKa's mission very problematic and ideological.

4.2.1. Gazeta Arbëria: „Arrests in Kosovo cause a debate in Türkiye“

In the text entitled „*Tika finances terrorism? Arrests in Kosovo spark a debate in Türkiye*“, on September 25, 2014, the *Gazeta Arbëria* news portal reported that the arrest of several hodjas and the closure of several non-governmental organizations in Kosovo (which were financially supported by TIKa) „sparked great debates in Türkiye“. In this context, *Gazeta Arbëria* cites the writing of the Turkish media, according

to which members of radical Islamic groups that enjoyed financial support from the Government of the Republic of Türkiye were arrested in Kosovo. „Who does TIKa support? The answer to this question comes directly from the action against ISIS and the Al-Nusra Front in Kosovo [the Syrian branch of Al-Qaeda]. One of the associations supported by the TIKa agency was the Association for Culture Education and Learning Association (AKEA), which is under the influence of people from the AKP“, reported *Gazeta Arbëria*.

„These people often go to Türkiye to meet with their Turkish leaders. The connections of this association with the agency TIKa and the Institute for Culture „Yunus Emre“ are visible. Ilir Gashi, the main figure of the AKEA organization, stated back in 2012 that their activities are carried out with the support they receive from the TIKa agency... ‘We felt honored that Ahmet Davutoglu and other Turkish personalities visited us’“, *Gazeta Arbëria* quotes the words of Ilir Gashi.

4.2.2. *Lajmi.net*: „TIKA has nothing to do with ISIS“

The news portal *Lajmi.net* in a report dated September 27, 2014, entitled „*Kurtulus: TIKa operating in Kosovo has no connection with ISIS*“, publishes the denial of Numan Kurtulus, the then deputy prime minister of Türkiye, in which it is emphasized that TIKa has nothing to do with the terrorist organization ISIS and that accusations of this nature represent „fabrication and subterfuge“ (*Lajmi.net*, 2014). In this context, *Lajmi.net* also conveys the denial published by TIKa. In it, TIKa rejects accusations that it is connected to ISIS and at the same time distances itself from Imam Shefqet Krasniqi (*the imam of the largest mosque in Pristina*), as one of the most significant figures who was arrested on suspicion of working to propagate Islamic radicalism in Kosovo. „Some media have published false claims regarding the activities of our agency in Kosovo. These claims were intentionally aimed at organizations that focus on people’s well-being, security, and building a safe, fraternal, and friendly environment where people of all affiliations can live“, TIKa assessed in its response.

Lajmi.net reminds us that these accusations came about after Kosovo police arrested 30 imams in a broad action against members of radical Islamic groups, who are suspected of having participated in organizing and mobilizing jihadists for the war in Syria and Iraq. The portal adds that as part of the same action, 16 non-governmental organizations and foundations were closed on suspicion of having ties to ISIS and Al-Nusra Front.

4.2.3. *Express: Kurtulus announces the continuation of the construction of mosques and madrasas in Kosovo*

In a report published on September 27, 2014, the *Express* news portal points out that after a series of headlines in the Kosovo media that TIKa was connected to terrorist organizations, the Government of Türkiye reacted, denying these connections and accusing some media of working against Türkiye (*Express*, 2014). In this context, the portal reports the statement of the then Deputy Prime Minister of Türkiye, Numan Kurtulus, in which it is said that Turkish foundations in Kosovo are not connected to extremist and jihadist groups operating in Syria and Iraq, nor do they finance terrorism.

Kurtulus said that this case is about „fabrication and distortion of facts“, and he announced that „Türkiye will continue to help Kosovo and other Balkan countries“ through government foundations. „They [Turkish foundations] are building mosques and madrasahs, as well as new buildings. They conduct cultural diplomacy for the improvement of culture in Kosovo, as well as relations between Türkiye and Kosovo“, Kurtulus said.

According to Kurtulus, Turkish foundations even aim to prevent the spread of extremism and organizations like ISIS in Kosovo and that all those who distort reality „act in a shameful way against Türkiye“.

In the same article, *Express* reports the TIKa agency's denial regarding media reports that it helped organizations in Kosovo that were related to Islamic radicalism, in which it states that „it carried out all its activities by Turkish laws“. In the context of the claim that TIKa supported the imam of the Sultan Mehmet Mosque in Pristina, Shefqet Krasniqi, who is among those arrested for inciting Islamic radicalism, this agency further adds that [it] „cannot be held responsible for a single religious person appointed by of local officials“. These findings show that the public opinion in Kosovo largely sees the activities of TIKa and other governmental and non-governmental organizations as a risk for the inauguration of neo-Ottomanism and *Erdoğanism*, while a smaller number of people of Islamic and radical orientation support the influence. The majority of Turks in the political, economic and spiritual life of Albanians in Kosovo and the Balkans.

4.2.4. *Indeksonline: „Turkish government funds radical Islam in Kosovo“*

In a report entitled „*The Turkish government finances radical Islam in Kosovo*“ (September 30, 2014), the *Indeksonline.net* news portal writes that the Association for Culture Education and Learning (AKEA) inexplicably stopped working in Pristina, following news reports that were associated with rap-

dical Islamic organizations (Indeksonline.net 2014). *Indeksonline.net* claims in this report that the then prime minister of Kosovo, Hashim Thaçi, did not allow the opening of a madrasa whose construction was financed by Türkiye and which enjoyed the direct support of Bilal Erdoğan, the son of the Turkish president, Recep Erdoğan. By the way, the imam of the Muslim Religious Community (MVU), Husamedin Abazi, received 1.5 million dollars from the Murat Ülker fund for the project of building this madrasa. Also, according to the claims of the same portal, AKEA represents a branch of the *Muslim Brotherhood* organization that was closed „due to suspicion of its links with the Islamic State in Syria and the Al-Nusra group“.

Arguing that top Turkish officials have special ties to the AKEA organization, *Indeksonline.net* illustrates this assessment with an unusual event from 2012 that is linked to the then-Turkish foreign minister, Ahmet Davutoglu. In 2012, Davutoglu made a very important visit to Kosovo inaugurating the opening of the „Yunus Emre“ Foundation... It was the month of Ramadan and he was expected to be with the Kosovo hosts. However, he chose to dine at the premises of the AKEA organization, even though Kosovo officials were waiting for him to continue the official program, *Indeksonline.net* reported.

According to this source, in 2009 the Government of Türkiye financed the renovation and furnishing of the office of the AKEA organization in Pristina, and the question arises why Ankara is „interested in helping the AKEA organization through the Turkish Agency for International Cooperation and Coordination [TIKA] (which is the Turkish state agency) if it [TIKA] is under constant surveillance due to its links with radical groups“. AKEA is also said to be closely related to Erdoğan's AKP party. In response, this portal states that AKEA was formed in 2004 and that it was headed by Imam Husamedin Abazi, who was educated in Saudi Arabia. AKEA is also said to be closely related to Erdoğan's AKP party. However, AKEA was never definitively closed, but only its activities were suspended.

4.2.5. *Zëri: „Türkiye focused on restoring the legacy of the Ottoman Empire in Kosovo“*

In the reports and analyzes of Türkiye's policy towards Kosovo, especially on the economic and cultural level, of all the Kosovo media, the daily *Zëri* went the furthest, which, in addition to regular and mostly protocol news and information about the statements and activities of Turkish government officials during their visit to Kosovo, devoted significant space to analyzing the background of the policy that contemporary Türkiye leads towards Kosovo.

The biggest breakthrough in this direction was made by Zëri in the analysis of „*Erdoğan's Secret Millions in Kosovo*“ (Xharra, 2015: 1, 4–5), which this newspaper published in two installments, after several months of research by a team of journalists from this daily newspaper. In the first part of the analysis (August 17, 2015), it is stated that „with Erdoğan's ‘blessing’, Kosovo has been flooded with millions of investments, but not in the economy or development and investment projects, but the construction and restoration of religious buildings“.

„The money comes in an illegal way (...). There is no transparency in most [Turkish] investments, so suspicions are growing about (...) laundering of Erdoğan's money in Kosovo. Dozens of new mosques throughout Kosovo, as well as the restoration of almost all mosques and religious buildings built during the Ottoman Empire, are being returned today by the main donor – the *Turkish Agency for Cooperation and Coordination* (TIKA). It was formed by the Government of Türkiye, and in Kosovo, it is managed by the Turkish Embassy“, says this analysis.

Zëri claims that the journalists of this daily investigated Türkiye's activities in Kosovo for two months and that based on this investigation, they established that TIKA „keeps its finances secret and does not officially reveal how much money it invests“, (...) „it is suspected [is] that money is brought in illegally and not through banks“.

„On the list provided by Zëri in the Central Bank of Kosovo (CBK), the investments that appear as donations from the TIKA agency amount to less than 3 million euros for the period from 2009 to 2014, while Türkiye is only in the main mosque in Prizren, „Sinan Pasha“ invested around 1.2 million euros“, this paper further claims.

Zëri further in this analysis claims that the backbone of Turkish policy towards Kosovo is the restoration of the legacy of the Ottoman Empire in this area, but also the expansion of the infrastructure to strengthen Islam in Kosovo. „From 2001 to the present, together with several other Turkish investors, TIKA has renovated and restored around 30 mosques and other religious buildings left over from the time of the Ottoman Empire. Meanwhile, Türkiye has invested in the construction of around 20 new mosques in the country“, this newspaper reports.

„Although the inscriptions ‘TIKA’ can be seen all over Kosovo on the mosques of Kosovo, there is no clear data from the state or the Islamic Community of Kosovo (IZK) as to how many mosques are being built or restored by the Turkish state“, confirms Zëri, concluding that about an activity about which its main protagonists (TIKA and the Government of Türkiye) do not want much to be known in public.

„The TIKa organization was kept waiting for two months by *Zëri* to receive answers (to the pre-asked questions), but it did not receive them. Also, it does not present data on the details of investments even on its official web-site“, says *Zëri*.

In the following, this newspaper writes about another new tendency of Turkish policy towards Kosovo. „Türkiye does not stop only at investments. After the construction or restoration of religious Islamic buildings, it continues to manage some of them by bringing its people inside these buildings“, *Zëri* claims, adding that „Türkiye managed to appoint imams from of Türkiye, by Idriz Keshin“.

„Albanians of the Islamic faith in Prizren, who pray in this mosque, have for several years been obliged to pray and listen to lectures in the Turkish language since their imam does not know a single word of Albanian“, writes *Zëri*.

In addition to the restoration of the „Sinan Pasha“ mosque, TIKa also restored the „Emin Pasha“ mosque in this city and financed the restoration of the city's hammam. Daily *Zëri* claims that, in addition to these buildings, TIKa sought to restore several other buildings from the time of the Ottoman Empire, such as the building known as „Namazxhahu“, which served as a school during the Ottoman Empire.

In Đakovica, TIKa started the construction of a small madrasa and a bookstore within the mosque „Hadum“. The newspaper quotes Ali Tafarihiku, adviser to the president of the municipality, who says that the municipality [Đakovica] does not have data on the activities of the TIKa agency before 2009, but that they were informed that this Turkish agency, in addition to the two listed buildings, will finance the restoration of 3 mosques in the city, as well as 12 mosques in the villages belonging to the Municipality of Đakovica.

According to the findings of the newspaper *Zëri*, the construction of a religious school began in Peja in November 2014, the foundation stone of which was laid in the presence of the then-Turkish ambassador to Kosovo, Mr. Songül Ozan. The investor is the Municipality of Yalovo from Türkiye, which has twinned with the Municipality of Peć. The president of the Islamic community in Peja, Musli Arifaj, did not know how this school would function in the future. „When [the school] is completed, we will see how the classes will be conducted, who will lead them, and whether [the teachers] will be paid or will work without compensation“, he said.

Also, in April 2014, the President of the Islamic Community in Kosovo, Naim Trnava, signed a Protocol on Cooperation with the Administration of Waqfs in Türkiye, which provided for the restoration of a significant number of religious buildings in Kosovo: Small madrasas in Đakovica, Kutubhan „*Hadum Aga*“, *Sahat-kula* [Clock Tower] in Mamuša, „*Alaudin*“, „*Pirinazi*“

and „*Viçi*“ mosques in Priština, the „*Bajrakli*“ mosque in Peja, as well as the „*Gazi Ali Beu*“ mosque in Vučitrn.

According to this newspaper, the Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports of Kosovo has signed six agreements with the TIKa agency on its involvement in Kosovo. According to Vjollca Aliu, who was in charge of the cultural endowment in this Ministry, in addition to the mentioned facilities, according to these agreements, TIKa will also work on the restoration of the „Jashar Pasha“ mosque in Priština, on the decoration of the courtyard of the *Velika džamija* [Great Mosque] in Priština, as well as on the restoration of the building known as „Turbe Barjaktara“ in the village of *Mazgit*. However, these agreements do not mention any financial sums or arrangements.

In the end, the question arises, how do expert and observer circles evaluate the policy of restoring the legacy of the Ottoman Empire in Kosovo, which is currently led by the Government of the Republic of Türkiye? Historian and president of the National Association for the Preservation of Historical and Cultural Heritage in Kosovo, Mr. Enver Baftiu assessed that „it is clear that the goal is the return of Turkish influence in Kosovo and the Balkans“. He also added that „it is painful that the MVZ [Muslim Religious Community] and the Government surrendered to this pressure“ (Xharra, 2015: 1, 4–5).

In conclusion: Although sporadic, unsystematic, and often unethical in reporting to the public, Kosovo media articles and reports on current Turkish policy and priorities towards Kosovo show that there is a great interest in learning more about this policy in all media. A realistic assessment shows that previous media articles on this topic reflect Türkiye's planned and long-term policy towards Kosovo, which, in addition to strengthening economic ties, aims to improve citizens' perception of the time when the Ottoman Empire ruled Kosovo and the entire region.

5. Concluding remarks

The media has a positive role in listening, evaluating, and exchanging information. For these reasons, they should have their autonomy, creating space and a climate of trust in relations with citizens. It also includes avoiding conflicting discourses and opposing unprofessionalism and unethical and biased reporting.

Lack of professionalism, ethics, and objective access to events and information, as well as an exaggeration of the importance of certain events, are present in media in both countries. When it comes to Türkiye's influence on Bosnia and Hercegovina and on Kosovo in the analysis period, it is interesting

that in some media circles, especially in Kosovo, the attitude towards Türkiye's protectionist role in the region is perceived and treated in the same way as the hostile orientation towards everything Turkish, whereby the historical past under the Ottomans is interpreted as the dark age of their existence.

Unlike Kosovo, media centers under the influence of Bosniak political parties in B&H, especially the SDA party, see Türkiye as existential support, thus supporting all kinds of Turkish cultural and media influence, which leads to division and mistrust of other peoples in that area. In this context, there are opinions that, despite modest Turkish investments to achieve economic goals, Türkiye's political ambitions are also hidden.

So, when it comes to Türkiye's relations with Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kosovo, the media express their political commitment, i.e. the current political climate and the interests of those they represent, becoming not only their spokesmen but also accomplices in the spread of censored information. However, despite the emotional discourses or divisions such as those in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and the repulsion or prejudices present in Kosovo, the realistic assessment is that the strengthening of the overall power of the Republic of Türkiye opens up space for its deeper influence not only in the Balkans but also in Europe in general.

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UPRAVLJANJE MEDIJSKIM IZVJEŠTAVANJEM I KOMUNICIRANJEM S JAVNOŠĆU: KVALITATIVNA ANALIZA

Prisutnost Turske na Zapadnom Balkanu ima različitu medijsku percepciju, što ukazuje na važnost razlika unutar regionalnog i nacionalnog konteksta, bez obzira na strukturalne sličnosti proizašle iz historijskog razvoja i zajedničke višestoljetne pripadnosti osmanskome naslijeđu. Ova kvalitativna studija predstavlja retrospektivnu analizu medijskog sadržaja na temelju polariziranog izvještavanja o turskoj prisutnosti u Bosni i Hercegovini i na Kosovu. Ključni cilj je ukazati na ulogu medija kao najsnažnijeg potencijala protiv širenja dezinformacija, koji bi trebali biti vezani strogim etičkim pravilima, osiguravajući slobodu izražavanja i temeljno pravo građana na dobivanje pravih i istinitih informacija. Rezultati istraživanja pokazuju da medijska pokrivenost i stav prema javnom mnijenju u Bosni i Hercegovini ovise o političkoj klimi u toj zemlji, dok kosovskim medijima dominira interes šire javnosti za upoznavanjem stvarne pozadine nove turske vanjske politike. Ne ulazeći u pitanje je li obnova turskog utjecaja na Balkanu proizašla iz ambicija za ulazak u Europsku uniju ili je postojala neovisno o njoj, iz vizure Bruxellesa i Ankare, jasno je da je uloga Turske u međunarodnim odnosima neizbježna, te da će se ova država i dalje sve više pozicionirati kao aktivni partner zemalja Zapadnog Balkana i Europske unije.

Ključne riječi: *upravljanje medijima, komuniciranje s javnošću, izvještavanje, Turska, B&H, Kosovo*