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**GENDERED REPRESENTATIONS
IN SLOVENIAN AND SERBIAN MEDIA DISCOURSE**

Introduction

The underlining conceptualization of this research is built on the assumptions that printed media (re)produce collective gender identities through routine distribution of texts and that social transformation inevitably includes changes in gender discourses and practices. The first assumption is based on Anderson's account on 'imagined communities' (Anderson, 1983), and the other originates from comprehensive work of scholars on gendering of post socialist transformations who agree that gender plays a major role in the transition processes of East Central Europe (Gal and Kligman 2000, Verdery 1996, Papić 2002, Žarkov 1995, Đurić -Kuzmanović 2005, Slapšak 2002). In the process of making national states out of the multicultural socialist Yugoslavia, gendering of public space played a very important role. 'Gender and nation are mutually constructing each other', Rada Iveković pointed out claiming that 'at times of shattered international relations and of the reconfiguration of a world order (after 1989), the order of bodies is reconstructed too' (Iveković, 2006:53). According to Žarana Papić in times of crisis and social transformation the deconstruction of the previous gendered order is one of the most fundamental factors of change, and an effective instrument of the global restructuring of power (Papić, 2002:127-128). Verdery argues that parallel constructs of nation and gender form the discourse of 'the basic political form of modern times, the nation-state' which interpellate individuals into subjects as a member of a nation, and as a man/woman rendering the range of values, practices and social instructions to each of them (Verdery, 1996:62). Mass media play a profound role in the construction and naturalisation of collective gendered identities. As Lisbet van Zoonen stressed, media 'can be seen as (social) technologies of gender, accommodating, modifying, reconstructing and producing discipline

and contradictory outlook of sexual difference' (van Zoonen, 1994:41) The transformation of the public sphere with the appearance of the media market as salient trait of post socialist transitions has initiated a struggle for reader/consumer as a means of survival of the media on the market. Consequently, tabloid media flourished and the opposition between 'quality' (serious) press and tabloids became rather striking. While tabloids offer 'infotainment' and sensation, quality media is considered to be a site where democratic values, critical and open-minded debate on public issues are encouraged and the function of 'watchdog' is performed. Tabloids are known for their populist editorial policy with overtly objectified and sexualized images of women, while quality papers are supposed to represent universal or gender neutral points of view. This paper attempts to challenge the gender universal discourse of the quality press as legitimized institution for producing representations in the period of post-socialist changes.

Theoretical framework

From the epistemic viewpoint of the project, "representation" is defined as performative construction of cultural identities, which can be structured along the axis of gender, ethnicity, class, age, etc. The mass media are legitimized institutions for production of representations. Following the constructivist tradition, the mass media neither mirror realities nor reflect pre-existing 'true meanings'. Media texts rather produce and distribute, communicate meanings to the receivers/audience, who accept, reject, or negotiate them. Therefore, representation can be seen as a source for production of social knowledge deeply connected with social practices and issues of power (Hall, 1997).

By analyzing which discursive positions in media texts are voiced and which are silenced, the process of producing identities can be investigated. In other words, research can shed light on discursive production of 'reader' by media text in the sense of positioning of the subject or 'interpellation' of individual into subject by ideology (Althusser, 1980). Moreover, mediation can be seen as a crucial practice involved in the production of exclusive groups/communities which supply individuals with their social identity (Anderson, 1983). That exclusiveness may be based on ethnicity, race, class, age, gender, etc.

The notion of gender is considered as a discursive (cultural) construct, which is variable in different historical, social, cultural, and political contexts. Gender is 'a cultural construct' that mediates the relation between bodies, as anatomically or biologically given and social meanings about them (Verdery, 1996). The process of gendering identities is a process of discourse negotiations which differentiates men and women, and prescribes roles for each one of them as well as norms for their mutual relationship. In short, what it means

to be a man/woman is determined by a set of values, beliefs, and social instructions which profoundly depends on socio-cultural context.

Post-socialist reinvention of gender identities

The ideology of multiethnic society, which was imposed by the socialist state in Yugoslavia, was deconstructed through processes of formation of national states. Nationalist ideology inevitably absorbs a conservative ideology of state, nation, and religion which is crucially based on the strategies of re-traditionalization, instrumentalization, and naturalization of women's identities, their social roles and their symbolic representation (Papić, 2002: 128). Gender and nation are based on exclusivity; 'both claim 'nature' essentializing the inequality as natural' (Iveković, 2006:65). The reinvention of nationalistic discourses prescribes and popularises an extremely patriarchal position for women, glorification of the 'natural' role of women as mothers and wives. This was motivated by one of the main characteristics of the post-socialist process in ex-Yugoslavia: extreme decline in standards of life. With growing unemployment, the woman, who was during socialism a working woman, had to abandon the working place, i.e. the public sphere and go back to the space of home and family.

The re-patriarchalization of women's status comes to be a direct consequence not only of the economic condition but also of extremely nationalistic discourses as both a precondition and consequence of the wars in ex-Yugoslavia. In Serbia, an image of a male-warrior was construed, along with the discourse which prescribes for women the equally traditional role of mothers who can contribute to the national project by giving birth and thus contribute to the enlargement of "the national body". Along with very patriarchal role models, an extremely different role is fostered by the media – the role of sex symbol. Mother and sex symbol were the most popular roles which were ascribed to women during the transition in Serbia. The best example for this hybridisation of gender identities are singers of the popular 'turbo-folk' music.¹ In Slovenia, public requests for abrupt and intrinsic break with the socialist images result in the creation of new dominant images of women in the media as overtly sexualised and alluring. As opposed to those favorable and popular images of women, there is a strong stigmatising of any woman's or man's (female or male) identity that does not fit into the proclaimed gender positions. Verdery (1996: 78) points to "one outstanding commonality" which is evident in nearly all post-socialist societies: "increasingly visible ethno-nationalism, coupled with antifeminist and pro-nationalist politicking". In post-socialist

1 Serbian superstar singer of turbo-folk music Svetlana Ceca Ražnjatović has been represented in media as a good and devoted mother, and a sex symbol at the same time.

Serbia and Slovenia 'identities' such as 'feminist', or 'peacemaker' are systematically marginalized and depoliticised.

The transformations of social reality trigger a collective identity crisis for men too. While we witness the construction of a radically macho warrior in Serbia, in Slovenia, as more successful transitional country, 'the collective male identity crisis seems to be resolved – or at least sedated – by adopting a Westernlike professional image and a 'new individualism' (Štulhofer A. and Sandfort T, 2005:4).

The reinvention and hybridisation of gendered identities are maintained through discursive and institutional strategies, and mass media discourses come to be a decisive part of these strategies.

Media genre and gender

The key attribute of the quality press is 'a high public significance' and 'democratic spirit, political rationality, in-depth-debate, analyticity and high journalistic culture' (Spasov, 2004:9). It is a cultural form, which is conceived as information service carrying reliable political information for the audience. The genre of quality press includes opinion journals, news, intellectually based articles, and texts that address debated issues of state politics. The 'gender-neutral' and 'universalistic' address to the reader of serious press is opposed to the 'feminized, lighter, less demanding and more entertaining address' (Holland 1998:22) which is ascribed to women's magazines and tabloids. The same distinction is made within the serious press, where hard news and demanding themes of hard politics, state politics, economy, and finance are relegated to men journalists, while soft themes, marketing and reviews are mainly reserved for women journalists. The distinction is gendered (gender-marked), 'with women providing the color and the human touch, and men seeking out the reliable facts' (Sebba 1994, quoted in Holland 1998:22). Consequently, the news discourse is seen as a 'masculine narrative form', where 'woman' always sign 'woman' and 'man' function as unique sign due to the cultural assumption of maleness as given (Rakow and Kranich, 1991).

Object of research

The focus of this paper is the analysis of weekly newspapers in Serbia (*Vreme/Time*) and in Slovenia (*Mladina /Youth*) in the time scope of five years (2000-2005), from the perspective of mass-media (re)construction of gender roles and identities in post-socialist societies.

The sample has been chosen on the following bases: a) *Mladina* and *Vreme* are 'quality' weeklies with similar political/institutional affiliations. The two weeklies are 'opinion-maker' journals with a strong editorial direction of rational-critical debate, targeting similar audiences, and supportive of similar narratives (democratic-minded, liberal and non-nationalistic orientation); the two weeklies are considered as very influential and important, as well as independent and known for investigative journalism; b) The time frame illuminates a particularly important period for Serbia and Slovenia. The totalitarian regime of Slobodan Milosević was replaced in October 2000 by a democratic government. This turning point in the political history of Serbia has tremendous implications not only on state (regime) media, but also on independent media such as the political weekly *Vreme*. Slovenia joined the European Union in 2004 and therefore formally ended the transition² from the previous socialist to the 'welfare state'; c) The comparison between Slovenian and Serbian media is motivated on the one hand by common tradition gained under decades of coexistence in the federal state of Yugoslavia, and on the other hand by the opposite paths that the two countries took after the dissolution of Yugoslavia. This resulted in a very 'successful story' of the Slovenian transition (join the European Union in May 2004), and a very 'unsuccessful' Serbian transition (in May 2006 the European Union suspended the negotiations on association with Serbia).

Methodology

The analysis is conducted on the levels of:
gender roles and identities (2005)³
representational strategy of the cover-page (2000-2005)⁴

Every individual text (written text or photograph), where a representation of women is emphasized, is codified. The analysis is conducted on the level of frequency of particular roles and identities and on the level of their characteristics. The third level of research employs questions of what meanings, beliefs and values do particular roles and identities convey.

- 2 According to some scholars, the term transition has negative connotations, since "it assumes evolutionary progress from one well known 'stage' of history to another. It thereby inadvertently continues the Cold War morality tale (...), one that pitted two 'sides' against each other in an implicit contest for who was 'ahead'", Gal and Kligman (2000: 10). It has been pointed out that "in East Central Europe, in contrast to Latin America and other regions, the processes were not only 'transitions' to democracy but were simultaneously political, economic, and social 'transformations'" (Ibid. 121).
- 3 The weeklies *Vreme* and *Mladina* are analyzed from January 2005 until the January 2006 (*Vreme* No 732-No782/783 and *Mladina* No 02/2005 – No52/2005)
- 4 *Vreme* is analyzed from January 2000 until December 2005 (No 469- No 782/783) and *Mladina* from July 2000 until December 2005 (No 28/2000 – No 52/2005)

Research of media representations hopefully sheds light on ‘what is ‘defined as ‘normal’, who belongs and therefore who is excluded’ (Hall, 1997:10) in the influential and reliable periodical press of post-socialist transformations. In other words, this paper aims to investigate which gendered roles and identities are fostered and which are marginalized, neglected, or stigmatized. Furthermore, it attempts to challenge the standpoint according to which democratization of society and economic progress bring emancipation of gender and to challenge the ‘universal’, ‘gender neutral’ position of quality press.

Gender structure in media production

Although we witness the trend of more and more women holding journalist positions especially in visual media in the region, the political weeklies in focus seem to be some of the last islands of man domination in media production and journalism.

Comparing gender distribution in the two weeklies of *Mladina* and *Vreme*, one can notice that women come to be underrepresented in the newsroom and especially on editorial positions. Women in *Vreme* are minority in the newsroom (out of 38 journalist, 18 are women)⁵. Only one management position is taken by a woman and it is financial director, which is the position with no influence on the editorial policy of the weekly. Editor-in-Chief and assistant of the Editor-in-Chief of *Mladina* are men. As far as gender distribution in newsroom is concerned, 3 journalists are women out of a total of 14 journalists.

However, gender production structure cannot be decisively seen as affecting the production of media texts because of other identities of the communicators, such as organizational and professional identity, ethnicity, race, class, sexuality, etc. as well as broader political context, organizational routines, editorial policies, institutional requirements, etc., which decisively interfere with identity discourses (cf. Van Zoonen, 1994).⁶

Distribution of gender roles and identities within thematic sections

Intervju [Interview] is a thematic section which appears in both weeklies. This thematic section has central position and can be characterized as most

5 Data are taken from the end of 2005.

6 The ‘identity of professional is confronted with the cultural norms and standards of femininity’ (van Zoonen, 1994:63-64).

influential. *Intervju* represents 'direct speech' or the 'direct voice' of persons who are involved in public affairs. The interviewees are allowed to speak for themselves, without journalist's (direct) interference as is the case with reported speech in articles or reports. Hence, the interviewee gets complete and direct access to the media discourse and to the audience. It is therefore of crucial importance to analyze who has such a privilege and priority in accessibility to the weeklies in focus.

Mladina

Analysis of gender distribution, or the frequency of occurring of men and women, has shown that women appear in the section of *Intervju* very rarely (only 5 times). Women who appeared on the pages of *Intervju* are representatives of public spheres that are traditionally connected with women: school and teaching, or the phenomenon of 'the first woman' in some profession. Women politicians appeared only twice in *Intervju*: one from domestic and one from international politics.

Men appear in *Intervju* 46 times, which is almost 10 times more frequent than women. Most of the male interviewees are involved in politics. Politicians appear 18 times, out of which only 3 times as foreign politicians. The next most frequent role of men represented in *Intervju* is businessmen (6 times). These categories often overlapped.

In *Mladina*, opposite to the thematic section of *Intervju* is the thematic section with the title *Parada* [Parade]. This is the section where different happenings during the previous week are represented. The dominant feature of this section is the photographs. The persons who are represented do not speak at all, since their voices are neither represented through the institutionalized voices (journalists, editors, reporters), nor through the direct voice of themselves. There are only short texts accompanying the photographs which direct our attention to the particular reading of the image, or simply explain what or who are on the photograph. The primary function of the images on the two very variegated pages is to entertain.

In *Parada* section women are represented in predominantly 'tabloid' discourses and mostly involved in show business, beauty, fashion, and sex industry. They appear as beauties, fans, brides, models, striptease dancers, playmates, popular singers, dancers. Very rarely women occur as artists or deputies, and in the case of the latter they are connected with fashion or some other women's discursive space. With overtly sexualized images of women in provocative postures, *Parada* often gets close to the (a) pornographic discourse. Very often women are represented as nudes or half-naked and in poses which overtly resemble pornographic magazines (No 06, 15, 22, 36, 40). The occupation of women represented in such a way is dancer in night-bar, playmate,

or even porn-film star. Some popular singers are also represented in provocative postures and in a rather tabloid manner.

Men in *Parada* section appear in quite different roles and occupations than women. They are represented as sportsmen, politicians, artists, businessmen, journalists, managers, etc. Very seldom men are represented in frames reserved otherwise for women: striptease dancers, scantily dressed or undressed (No 9, No 11 and No 48). The photograph of a naked man appeared only ones (No 29) but in a different context: as a body performance by one of the members of a controversial popular music band (Croatian rock band – Let 3). We couldn't find any photograph of a known public man figure in sexualized posture or image, which is very characteristic for representations of women.

Vreme

Intervju [Interview]

As it has already been stressed for *Mladina*, the *Intervju* thematic section is a constant and very important feature in *Vreme*. Very often the announcement for the interview is placed on the cover page: the photograph of the interviewee accompanied with a text which stresses the main statements and messages from the interview. The analysis has shown that the interviewees are predominantly males (65 male interviewees). More than a half of them (40) are positioned in the thematic section of *Politika [Politics]*. In *Kultura [Culture]* section there are 18 interviews, predominantly with writers, film directors, actors, musicians, philosophers. We have traced only 13 female interviewees, which is five times less than men. The represented women are writers, architects, singers, politicians and arts selectors.

It could be said that the thematic section opposite to the *Intervju* is *Ljudi i vreme [Time and People]*. *Intervju* represents serious conversations with some of the public figures who, according to the editorial of the weekly, have something to say to the readers. As we have already emphasized, this section grants the interviewees a voice, they have access to the direct speech, without journalist's interference as is the case with reported speech in articles. The purpose of the *Intervju* section is to inform and to educate, whereas the exclusive purpose of *Ljudi i vreme* section is to entertain its readers. *Ljudi i vreme* section also represents voices of public figures, but there are crucial differences. *Ljudi i vreme* represents short statements, which are taken from other press releases, mainly from tabloids. Generally, the statements made are on trivial issues. The voices are accompanied with photographs, often also taken from tabloids. They are colored photos, depicting actors in their private life or emphasizing sexualized images of women. This section could be compared with the section 'Parada' in *Mladina*, by its characteristics of 'tabloid'

representation. This is the section which brings some 'soft news' and entertainment into the 'seriousness' of the weekly. Females are highly represented in this thematic section. They are mostly represented as involved in show business. They appear in roles of singer, journalist – TV anchor, actor, fashion model, artist, striptease dancer, fashion designer, writer, opera singer. Very often females are represented in highly sexualized images, scantily dressed or half-naked in provocative postures. Women in the role of politicians appear 23 times and in the role of experts/professionals only 3 times.

It is interesting that women are depicted also in strictly family roles as wife, daughter, and mother in law. Men do not appear in such roles.

The most frequent representation of men is in the professional role of a politician – statesman – minister – deputy (152). The field of show business is very much represented in the case of male as opposed to female representation. Business is the field within which males are represented 25 times, and this is the only professional role in which females are not represented at all, along with the role of film director, whereas men as film directors are represented 8 times.

The thematic sections of *Kdo je kdaj* [Who is when] in *Mladina*, as well as *Portret savremenika* [Portrait of the contemporary] in *Vreme*, are used to represent some of the important actors on the public scene at the moment.

Mladina

Kdo je Kdaj thematic section contains large articles which present the biography of different public persons, along with illustrations which in a funny way describe some moments of the person's biography. The analysis of the number of women and men appearing in the section has shown that men are in great majority: 50 biographies of men are represented vs. 6 biographies of women. The occupations of the presented women are in politics, journalism/show business. The majority of the presented men have the occupation of politician-statesman-deputy.

While private lives of women are highlighted along with their professional engagement, private lives of men are not mentioned. Information on children and husbands is obligatory element in biographies of women, while this information is very rare in the biographies of men.

Vreme

The thematic section *Portret savremenika* [The portrait of the contemporary] in *Vreme* has a very similar structure to the *Kdo je kdaj*. The biography of

some public figure from the world of politics, economics, and culture is represented in a very detailed manner along with photographs of the person. Men are represented 16 times and women only 2 times. Besides that, very unusual choices are made in representing females: a singer of popular turbo-folk music (Svetlana Ceca Raznatović , No 750) and an outstanding woman politician and activist (Vesna Pešić , No 744). Men are represented in the professional roles of politician (11 times). The biography of Vesna Pešić , besides data on her professional achievements, stresses her private life/feelings.⁷ The second represented woman in this section is Svetlana Ceca Raznatović , Serbian turbo-folk superstar, also well-known as the widow of Željko Raznatović Arkan, who was charged for war crimes in the Balkan wars in 1990s by ICTY. The item predominantly consists of the data on her private life. The photographs accompanying the item are also unusual for this kind of quality press and more characteristic for the tabloids: the spectacular wedding with Arkan and a large-size photograph of the singer (scantly dressed, during one of her concerts)⁸.

Construction of gender roles and identities⁹

The role of a wife:

Mladina

Women have appeared 21 times during the period in question in the role of 'wife'. The wife is represented on the photograph with her husband, who is involved in politics or in some other public business. In most cases, women as wives are not identified, they are not acknowledged by their name or occupation. They appear with only one identity and role – 'wife'. Admittedly, there are few cases where the name and the occupation of the wife are revealed. For example, the news item on the wife of Donald Trump Melania brings a story of her immense business success. As it is emphasized in the item, her business success is her marriage to Trump. This item appeared in the section *Posel tedna* [Business of the week].

7 'The position of Ambassador to Mexico enabled her to deal with politics near by a rediscovered old love of her youth'

[Ambadorska funkcija u Meksiku, naime, omogućila joj je da se politikom bavi u blizini ponovo pronađene ljubavi iz mladosti...] (Didanović Vera, Vreme, No 744:21)

8 The fascination with Ceca can be traced both in Vreme and in Mladina. There are many articles, photographs, and items in both weeklies. Mladina: No 21, 12, 49; Vreme: No 637, 638, 639, 646, 650, 655, 684, 734, 745, 753, 762, 767, 770, 776, 785, 789, 796;

9 The analysis includes most dominant representations of female roles and identities, whereas some of the representations which appear very rarely, as for example 'sportswoman,' are not taken into consideration. Representations which have been already discussed above as a part of analyzed thematic section are also not taken into consideration.

Another item, with the same theme, but from the opposite angle, is the item about the wife of a Slovenian well-known extreme right-wing politician, who got a better job position thanks to her marriage to the politician (No35/2005). According to these representations, it could be argued that woman's marriage is still seen through very traditional and sexist glasses as a 'business step' or enterprise, which could bring women social and financial emancipation.

Vreme

Women appear as wives 16 times and these representations can be divided in several groups: a) women who are represented as wives and also identified with their names and their deeds: (No 744, 776, 752, 745, 756, 761, 758, 740); b) women who are represented without personal identification only as wives of important public figures: politicians, businessmen, and army officers: (734, 735, 744, No737, 745, No777, No 735 No743); c) woman as brides (No739) d) first ladies (No734, No 749, No 748). Only once the opposite situation could be found, when a man is represented as the husband of a well-known public person (No 737).

The role of a professional:

Mladina

Women appear as a *business professional* 5 times (No 02, 09, 21, 27, 36). These items are very short and they present only main information, without any comments or in-depth analysis. News on women in business appears two more times in larger articles and in very negative coverage (No 34, No 45). In the section *Posel tedna* [Business of the week] there are only three representations of women: Melania Knavs, wife of Donald Trump (No 9), singers of turbo-folk music group Atomik Harmonik (No 12) and only one business woman – manager (No 10).

Vreme

Female experts-professionals are represented only 7 times. Women are represented in the role of a media expert (No737), a manager of cultural centre (No745), a manager of association of artists (No750)¹⁰, and economists (No756, No777).

10 The same article presents two opposite views on 'alternative institutions of culture in Belgrade'. One view is that of a woman director of 'Nezavisna asocijacija umetnika Remont' [Remont – Independent Art Association], and the other comes from a man, 'gradski sekretar za kulturu' [city secretary of culture]. This dichotomy of the civil sector as predominantly women's place and official/state institutions as predominantly men's place is very significant for the public sphere in Serbia.

*The role of a politician:**Mladina*

Women politicians represent a major sub-group of representations of women, since there are 40 representations of women in politics. Nevertheless, the different types of representation of men and of women politicians are recognizable, which can be traced not only in formal aspects (position and length of the article), but also in the content of the articles and photographs (in highlighting the different characteristics of the person and his/her work). Women politicians appear mostly in short news items placed in sections reserved for overviews, short notices, or entertainment. Women politicians are covered in larger articles 10 times, whereas 6 times in very negative coverage. It is important to note that positive or neutral coverage is reserved for representations of women in foreign affairs and foreign women politicians. There are several characteristic ways of representation of women politicians, which can be singled out as: a) highlighting of 'looks' b) representing women politicians as assistants of men politicians; d) negative representations of domestic women politicians.

Vreme

Women appear as politicians 20 times. The most represented female politician is the first woman Chancellor of Germany. Here, we can see the phenomenon of 'first woman' as very strong and appealing for media representation (Angela Merkel has been presented 7 times). The representation of women involved in nongovernmental politics appears only twice, although in the transition society and politics of Serbia they have very important positions.

Woman with no name

When it is necessary to represent some anonymous group of people, it is predominantly women who will be on such photographs, while men are mostly represented as individuals and identified with name, occupation, etc. Personalized representation is connected with personal knowledge, authority and social power, while women mostly represent 'groups with no authority' (cf. Vogrinc, 2003)

Mladina

In the role of a participant in street protests women appear 16 times. The represented protests in which women take part are organized on different oc-

casions, but mainly concerning civil and human rights, animal protection, or ecology (No 09, No 44, No13), 24, 23, 23, 32, 51, 48).

Although women are represented as a majority in street protests, a representation of a woman as individual activist is very rare. For example, within the period in focus we have found only one large and detailed article on a woman activist (No 49).

Vreme

It is interesting that women and men appeared almost equally when street protests or happenings were covered in *Vreme*. While photographs with exclusively male figures are represented 4 times, female figures in the protests are represented 3 times.

The role of a victim:

Mladina

The role of victim is a highly gendered representation and very much stereotyped at the same time. In almost all cases of reporting and commenting on wars, disasters and refugees, the dominant identity of a victim is ascribed to a woman. The woman represented as a victim is predominantly an old woman or a young mother, who suffers from the war devastations (Srebrenica No 29, Kosovo No 48, Holocaust No 40, Knin No 32) or from other kinds of oppression.

Vreme

A victim almost always has a female face. Women appear as victims on photographs 13 times. They are mothers (764), refugees (No736, No750, No754, No761, No763, No 756), victims of ethnic conflicts (No 743, No752), victims of war crimes (No 737), victims of discrimination (No 742), old women, beggars (No776), and victims of natural disasters (746).

It seems that one of the salient features of journalist representational strategy and ideology is to represent victims as women and children in order to provoke compassion and identification. It is also clear that the representational strategy which is used excludes male victims. Consequently, this strategy supports dominant discourses of masculinity that inevitably includes power as its constitutive element.

*Pornographic representations:**Mladina*

A significant feature of *Mladina* is a thematic section with articles on pornography. Such section in a quality paper is a controversy by itself. It can be read as an attempt of the weekly to inscribe pornographic issues into mainstream culture and economy. The ambition to 'normalize' the discourse of pornography and make it a part of quality papers can be considered as an attempt to liberate the portraying of sexuality. Nevertheless, the representation of pornography (re)produces beliefs and myths about female submissiveness and supports a gendered 'social and cultural formation that has defined women's bodies as sexual objects.' (van Zoonen, 1994:21)

Roles ascribed to men

Men appeared mostly in the roles of politicians. The roles of a businessman, a manager, and a professional take the second place by frequency of their appearances. Women politicians are, as we already discussed, represented in small news items, and in marginal sections, while men politicians have access to the most prominent sections of the weekly, they have a central position in the media outlet and they are central figures of the columns and commentaries.

Gendered representational practices on cover pages

The analysis of the representation of gender on cover pages of the two weeklies is differentiated through categories of qualitative, semiotic, and discursive inquiry. The research is structured by: Frequency of images of women. Roles and identities ascribed to women and men.

From the perspective of frequency of appearance of women, in the analyzed sample which comprised five years of publication of the magazines *Vreme* and *Mladina*, it could be said that women are intrinsically underrepresented. Women appear on *Vreme* cover pages only 35 times and on *Mladina* cover pages 33 times.

In *Vreme* women involved in politics appear on cover-pages only 8 times for a period in focus. In *Mladina* women politicians are represented on cover pages even more rarely than in *Vreme*, only twice. On the cover pages of *Vreme*, women in general occupy less space than men. Images of men mostly have the central position occupying the central space of the cover-page. Images of women are mostly framed, small, and positioned in the background of the cover-page.

A 'wife' is more often present at the cover pages of the weekly *Vreme* than any other gendered role model. The same photography code is employed every time when 'the wife' is represented. She is standing close to her husband, holding his arm or smiling at him or looking at the side, not directly looking towards the spectator. In the 'anchorage' to the image, the woman is not even mentioned. Hence, the only identity ascribed to her is that of 'a wife'.

The representation of a 'victim' is very similar in both weeklies. The representational technique of fragmentation and depersonalization of the female body is employed in covering two themes: family homicide and sexual violence. To live aside the scarcity of representation of the problems (only one on the cover page of both of the weeklies), the representation is conventionalized; the woman is reduced to various parts of the body.

The conventional gender representation, which supports the traditional myths of women as close to nature, to impulse, and to emotion, as opposed to the spirituality and morality of men, is introduced several times on the coverpages. The photos of ecstatic women in a crowd (on concerts, street rallies, women as fans) evoke such myths.

The salient difference in depicting men on the cover page is that men (in *Vreme*) are represented in a scene which evokes working atmosphere, importance, and seriousness of the represented person. They are usually photographed with serious look on the face and looking towards the spectator. They are set in working offices or assembly rooms, with the iconography of flags, books, working table, computers, working papers, and portraits of famous politicians or other men from the history of the country. Women as a rule are depicted with a facial expression which articulates some emotion and in a posture and scenery which is not connected to their status and their work.

Representational practices, which include irony, satire and humor, are a distinctive feature of *Mladina's* cover pages. Politicians are travestied to carnival figures, whereas the ridiculing is very often performed from the perspective of gender roles and identities. Politicians are put in a scenery which directly ridicules their 'right' or 'proper' masculinity (for example, in homoerotic relationships with other politicians *Mladina* No6, 2003; in woman 'costume' No 28, 2004; in 'baby costume' No 9, 2005, etc).

In some other cases, the masculinity of politicians is hyperbolically highlighted with the same effect – ridiculing of the politician's attributes which are regarded as masculine: courage, decisiveness, enterprise, etc. The photomontage represents politicians in extremely masculine rolls (cowboy *Mladina* No7/ 2003, Rambo 15/2003, Superman No38/2003, football player 46/2003 etc). Hence, playing with gender roles comes to be a polygon for irony and criticism of the politician's work. In *Vreme* this is achieved by photographs

in paparazzo style, where some moment of the scene is ‘caught’ and this moment in some way compromises the politician, or serve as symbolical resource for representation of him and his work.

Conclusion

The research brought to light some of the ways in which gender identities are imagined in the “quality press”. The structural similarities in representing gender in *Mladina* and *Vreme* weeklies need to be elaborated in twofold relation: in relation to the genre (quality press) and in relation to the context (postsocialist transformations). While fostering critical debate and contributing to the pluralization of the media and public discourses, *Mladina* and *Vreme* seem to represent gender in traditional and stereotypical ways, leaving little space for different, alternative or emancipative imagining of female and male roles and identities. It may be argued that the gender divide is deeply rooted in cultural tradition and public and private discourses, and it is even more emphasized in times of social changes, being one of the strategies for maintaining social order.

Gender divisions of roles and identities are a dominant feature of the weeklies in focus. This conclusion is made on the basis of distribution of particular roles and identities between males and females, on the basis of size and position of particular representation of man or woman within thematic sections, on the basis of type of item (articles, columns, etc.), as well as on the basis of affirmative or negative covering of man-centered and woman-centered stories. Since the weeklies in focus are political magazines, men and women are mostly represented in the role of politicians. Nevertheless, particular conventions are employed in depicting of women politicians, which are not used in the case of men politicians. The representation of a woman politician is mostly positioned in ‘short items’ and without any deep considerations, analysis or comments. Secondly, representation of women politicians is mostly positioned within thematic sections which are not at the forefront of the weeklies, as for example the Intervju [Interview] section where women (politicians) are considerably under-represented. Moreover, the looks of the woman politician is often highlighted, she is represented as assistant of some man politician, and very often in negative coverage. It has also been noted that foreign women politicians are more present than domestic ones. This is not the case in representation of men politicians.

A gender specific role is the stereotypical role of wife with successful husband. Men are not represented in the role of husbands (we found only one representation of a man as husband of a well-known public woman in *Vreme*).

The role of a professional and especially a professional in business is reserved for men. Women rarely appear in this role. Moreover, this representation is

marginalized by its position and manner of covering. Items on business-women are very short without any comments or in-depth analysis. News on women in business, negative covered, appears very often. On the other hand, women often appeared on the pages of the weeklies within spaces traditionally reserved for women, such as for example teaching, or show business.

It has already been noticed by media theorists that women are often represented in media as professionals in professions that have no real social power or fall into traditional female fields of activities: medicine (nursery, care), education (care for offspring), cooking (laboratory), service, etc. (cf. van Zoonen, 1991; Vogrinc, 2003, Bourdieu, 2001)

Men not only dominate the two weeklies, but also appear in roles assigned to public space. Women are assigned to private space and domesticity. They are visible as wives, but they are marginalized as professionals.

Anonymous groups of people are mostly represented by women, while men are predominantly represented as individuals with their name and status. A group of anonymous people is a 'group without authority' since they don't have any social, political, or economic power and don't represent any expert knowledge. These groups are in passive position since they are the object of journalistic observation (Vogrinc, 2003). Therefore women are represented in roles that don't convey any social power. Instead they are represented as passive objects. Objectification of women, fragmentation of the female body, sexualized images of women in the weeklies reveal a male view point which creates representations and for which the representations are created.

According to the analysis of thematic sections, men have a voice, and women are voiceless. They are predominantly reduced to their bodies. Two stereotypical female roles or models of femininity are highlighted and hybridized: the role of family wife/mother and the role of sexual object. These are the main roles in which women appear in the public sphere, while other roles and identities are neglected or marginalized.

According to representation of gender, it seems that the quality press in focus functions as masculine institution, representing reality through male perspective. The media make a decisive part of the public sphere, creating and reflecting it, and therefore can shed light on other social and state institutions in post-socialist Serbia and Slovenia legitimized for producing collective identities.

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