

# “Politically Correct” Hate Speech? Winter 2014/2015 Migration from Kosovo in Media Presentations in Serbia

## Povzetek

### »Politično korekten« sovražni govor? Migracije s Kosova pozimi 2014/2015 v srbskih medijih

Nekaj mesecev pred množičnim vstopom migrantov v Evropsko unijo leta 2015 so bili srbski mediji osredinjeni na drugačne migracije: pozimi 2014/2015 so bili polni poročil o migracijah s Kosova na Madžarsko. »Albanci množično zapuščajo Kosovo«, »21.500 Albancev je pobegnilo iz svobodnega Kosova«, »Rak in džihad praznita Kosovo«, »Panični pobegi Albancev s Kosova – kaj naj zares čaka?«, »Albanci zapuščajo Kosovo, kot da bi jim to nekdo ukazal«, »Albanci bežijo iz revščine in od islamistov« itd. V prispevku bomo analizirali medijske objave na to temo, da bi ugotovili, ali lahko takšno pisanje razumemo kot različico sovražnega govora, maskiranega v politično korektnost. Na prvi pogled lahko te medijske prispevke beremo kot izraz pristnega sočutja do nesrečnih Kosovarjev, ki so prisiljeni oditi, in skrbi, da bi lahko kaj podobnega doživeli tudi Srbi. Vendar pa jih lahko beremo tudi kot prikrite izraze bolj kontroverznega in celo revanšističnega odnosa, povezanega z nerešenim političnim statusom Kosova in njegovo simbolno vrednostjo za srbsko državo in nacijo.

**Gljučne besede:** migracije, Srbija, Kosovo, sovražni govor, javni diskurz

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## Abstract

A couple of months prior to the migration movements that shook the EU in 2015, Serbian media was focused on a different migration: in winter 2014/2015 it had been overwhelmed by the reports about migration from Kosovo to Hungary. "Albanians are massively abandoning Kosovo", "21,500 Albanians escaped from free Kosovo", "Cancer and jihad are emptying Kosovo", "Panic scuttle of the Albanians from Kosovo – what is really awaiting us?", "The Albanians are leaving Kosovo as if they had been commanded to do so", "Albanians are running from poverty and the Islamists", etc. In this paper I analyse these media reports in order to determine whether such expressions could be considered as a variant of hate speech, masked into the politically correct one. At their face value, the expressions appear to point to a genuine concern about misfortune of people from Kosovo, who are forced to flee, or people in Serbia, to which this misfortune could be transferred. They can also be seen as concealed expressions of more controversial and even revanchist attitudes which can be related to the disputed political status of Kosovo and its symbolic value in relation to Serbian state/nationhood.

**Keywords:** migration, Serbia, Kosovo, hate speech, public discourse

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A couple of months before the “refugee crisis” became the top headline in media, which has put the so-called Balkan Route at the centre of public interest in summer 2015, this part of the world had witnessed another massive migration movement, on a more “local” basis: during the winter 2014/2015, several tens of thousands of people left Kosovo in an attempt to reach the EU. The Western Balkan states are countries of origin of large numbers of the asylum seekers in the EU (Eurostat, 2016a) and Kosovo citizenship was indicated as one of the five main citizenships of the asylum applicants in Germany, Hungary, France, Luxembourg, Slovenia and Croatia in 2015 (Eurostat, 2016b). Therefore, this migration movement cannot be seen as a surprise. However, its high intensity, extreme temporariness, overall manner in which it has been practiced and, particularly, its presentation in media and reception in public, are the main features that distinguish it from the previous ones. It raised a lot of speculations about the possible triggers, stemming from general poverty and search for better life abroad to the “orchestration” of the movement by national or international political and economic actors. Particularly colourful have been reports and comments found in Serbian media: “Albanians are massively abandoning Kosovo”, “21,500 Albanians escaped from free Kosovo”, “Cancer and jihad are emptying Kosovo”, “Panic scuttle of the Albanians from Kosovo – what is really awaiting us?”, “The Albanians are leaving Kosovo as if they had been commanded to do so”, “Albanians are running from poverty and the Islamists”, etc. In this paper I analyse the discursive presentation of this migration in Serbian media and public, which I consider as significantly influenced by the disputed political status of Kosovo and its symbolic value in relation to Serbian state/nationhood. The question which I raise is whether the discursive elements present in the reports could be interpreted as a transposition of hate speech into the politically correct one that conceals controversial and even revanchist attitudes into some genuine concern about misfortune of people from Kosovo, who are forced to flee, or people in Serbia, to which this misfortune could be easily transferred.

While discussing Serbian legal framework related to hate speech, legal experts describe hate speech in general terms as an expression which contains messages of hatred or animosity directed toward certain racial, national, ethnic or religious group or their members, but also toward gender and sexual differences as well as those related to political opinion (Yucom.org). The message aims to produce a negative consequences for targeted individuals or group members, such as: creation of contempt toward them; creation of negative stereotypes; encouragement of discrimination and animosity; public condemnation; inducing the feeling of uncertainty and fear to them; hurting them physically or psychically; threatening them; encouragement of violence toward them; creating an atmosphere in which such behaviour is accepted and justified; creating an atmosphere in which such behaviour would be tolerated and not persecuted. The messages conveyed by hate speech are aimed to certain personal or group traits, such as race,

nationality/ethnicity, religion, gender, mother tongue, sexual choice, political opinion, social background, and other personal traits. The characteristic that makes difference between hate speech and, for example, various conservative opinions, is exactly its perlocutionary force (Austin, 1990), that it aims to production of real negative consequences for the targeted individuals or groups.

In the paper I present the media coverage of this migration movement in national printed media as well as national and Serbian editions of foreign online outlets from winter 2014/2015. In order to specify the socio-political context in which the discourses are embedded, in the beginning of the paper I will describe complex relations between Belgrade and Priština, which led to the administrative changes that enabled this migration. It is necessary to stress that Kosovo has an important symbolic role for Serbian nation-statehood (for detailed account see Čolović, 2016). In related narratives, it is deemed as the cradle of Serbian nation-state, the heart of Serbia, destination of Serbian pilgrimage (many important objects of Serbian Orthodox Church are in Kosovo). In modern Kosovo, the majority of inhabitants declare themselves as Albanians of Muslim religion (Isufi, 2016). This certainly has very interesting consequences for the political relations between Kosovo and Serbia: in rightist discourse, contemporary Albanians living in Kosovo are easily seen as usurpers of something that is genuinely Serbian and Serbs are presented as victims of foreign forces, alliances and plots (compare Stakić, 2013).

After specification of the context, I will examine relevant news and opinion pieces using major analytical tools from speech act theory and critical discourse analysis (Verschueren, 2001; Wodak, 2015). I will first analyse the prevailing discursive elements which serve as the predications of the concept of *Albanians from Kosovo, about whom it is spoken*, which are the object (reference) of speech. The concept of *Albanians from Kosovo* can be considered as a reference (expression that is identifying something) and a predication (what is 'predicated' or said about the reference) (Verschueren, 2001: 245). The ones *who speak, the producers who are offering an interpretation*, are Serbian media and Serbian public. The third actor, the one *to whom it is spoken*, is twofold: the recipients with juridical power are in the final instance the EU and wider international community, while the recipient who lacks juridical power is public from Serbia and Kosovo. After the predications had been elicited, they would be linked to macro- and meso-level of contextualization, that is, to the relevant elements of socio-political and historical context (compare Wodak, 2015: 50–53).

Finally, I will compare the results of the conducted discourse analysis with the key elements of the legal definition of hate speech in Serbian legislation. Here I would move to the more pragmatic aspect of the analysed discourses, in order to indicate how they are being instrumentalized. I would draw attention on how discursive elements, including hate speech, can be used to justify certain political attitudes and improve/disapprove political standings of the involved political actors, Serbia and Kosovo, which are put in the uneasy negotiation process by the third actor, the EU.

## Political and Administrative Changes in Relations Between Serbia and Kosovo

Serbia, as one of six constitutive republics of the Social Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (SFRY), was comprised of three parts: inner Serbia and two Socialist Autonomous Provinces, Vojvodina in the north, and Kosovo and Metohija in the south. Separation of Yugoslavia in 1990s did not pass by Kosovo. Kosovo was considered to be the least economically and industrially developed area in SFRY. In a typical manner of stereotype creation, class differences were masked into some cultural or even primordial stereotypes (on racialization/culturalization of poverty/class, see, for example, Wodak, 2015; Gilens, 2003). Attempts to overturn political rule of Serbia had been existing for decades in Kosovo. For example, the protests have been happening since the 1960s, with escalation in 1980s (Maliqi, 2014). In 1999, NATO bombed Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY), comprised from Serbia and Montenegro, until the agreement was reached that Yugoslav army would withdraw from Kosovo and UN peacekeeping operation would be established. While NATO considered this operation a humanitarian intervention in order to protect Albanian residents from persecution by FRY forces, FRY considered it as an unlawful aggression against a sovereign state. Albanian leaders from Kosovo presented the operation as recognition of their struggles for independence. During this bombing, depleted uranium was used by NATO. The number of casualties is still not known (Ristić, 2013). This campaign did not get approval from the UN Security Council. However, it resulted in substantial geopolitical transformations in the region. Serbian rule has practically ended, but the status of Kosovo has not been settled yet.

In 2008, Kosovo declared independence from Serbia, which still officially considers it as its own integral part, according to the Resolution of the UN Security Council 1244 from 1999 (S/RES/1244 (1999)). Kosovo as an independent state has been recognized by many countries, but its status is still not defined. Four municipalities in the north of Kosovo are integrated in political system of Kosovo, but keep autonomy in relation to certain domains, such as economic development, education, health, etc. They are inhabited by population that is identified as Serbs. This is the result of the so-called Brussels agreement (RTS, 2013). In order to stabilize relations between ruling structures in Serbia and in Kosovo, EU mediated toward the conclusion agreement in 2013, which would make possible the "normalization of relations between Belgrade and Priština", as it is usually presented in Serbian media (Zejneli, Zorić and Džozvijak, 2013). This euphemistic phrase is used in order not to define the status of Kosovo as an independent state and to put focus on regularization of functioning on everyday basis. We see that even the use of the name Kosovo is avoided. The agreement is very interesting, since it does not define parties, has no date of entering into force, and, even though it has only two pages, it is generally ambiguous, which allows flexible interpretations (Elmehed, 2016). Elmehed notices that this ambiguity enables pursuing practical arrange-

ments while leaving political disputes aside and providing silence in respective *internal* political scenes (ibid.). He identifies that ambiguity secures additional time to negotiate, isolates contentious issues, increases room for manoeuvre, initiates a sustainable negotiation process, and functions as a safeguard against internal criticism (ibid.: 16–17). The agreement enabled negotiation on the substantial administrative transformations. One of these was the trigger for the migration movement which is the topic of this text.

Within the framework of the Brussels agreement, in September 2014, it was agreed that people from Kosovo, who do not hold identity cards issued by Serbian Ministry of the Interior, could travel through the territory of the central Serbia.

When a resident of Kosovo, holding the identity card on which it is written “Republic of Kosovo” arrives at the spot of Serbian police, that is, on the administrative crossing between Kosovo and Metohija and central Serbia, the police officer is obliged to issue the certificate which basically functions as an identity card, and transforms it into a status neutral document. On that piece of paper, the following text is written in Cyrillic letters: “Ministry of the Interior (the issuance of this document does not prejudice status), Document about entrance and exit”, and the rest are personal data. It is notable that there are no state symbols and the document makes it obvious that its issuance falls under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of the Interior, which enables movement of citizens on the territory for which it is responsible. (Politika, 2015)

The rhetoric used by Serbian officials in relation to this agreement follows narratives which deny independence of Kosovo. For example, head of the Serbian Government Office for Kosovo said that the agreement would allow those with personal identification cards, but not passports, issued by the provisional authorities in Priština, to cross the border at a number of additional places while in transit, such as the crossings at the Belgrade airport and a number of others. In other words, a Serbian document is what is needed for Serbian residents to cross into Serbia (B92, 2014). By this, presentation of Kosovo as an integral part of Serbia is sustained. The phrases which are used to relate to Kosovo administration are: provisional authorities, provisional government in Priština, self-proclaimed country of Kosovo, etc.

When asked why he [head of the Serbian Government Office for Kosovo, author’s comment] was referring to the Kosovo institutions as provisional and the government as provincial, when the latest election in Kosovo had not followed Serbian laws, he replied that he was following the Serbian Constitution. “We use the terminology prescribed by our Constitution, which sees Kosovo solely as an autonomous province within Serbia, and that is the policy we maintain and believe in,” he stated. (ibid.)

This agreement on movement facilitation for the residents of Kosovo was scheduled to come in force in late autumn 2014, when the technical requirements would have been met (RTS, 2014).

## Public presentations of the migration movement

In the beginning of the year 2015, Serbian media increasingly report on large numbers of Albanians from Kosovo, who are entering Hungary near Subotica, the northernmost city in Serbia, through the 'green border' (i.e. not through an official border-crossing) or, in the language of administration – illegally. First attributions ascribed to the movement are its *massiveness, suddenness, and illegality* (Table 1).

Table 1: Movement is massive, sudden, and illegal

Massive	<p><i>Albanians from Kosovo are arriving to Subotica massively</i> (Subotica, 2015)</p> <p><i>The Albanians are massively abandoning Kosovo</i> (RTV, 2015)</p> <p><i>From Kosovo into the EU 37,900 asylum applications arrived</i> (Blic, 2015a)</p> <p><i>21,000 Albanians ran away from "free Kosovo"</i> (E. V. N., 2015)</p>
Massive and illegal	<p><i>Albanians from Kosovo are massively fleeing, the Hungarians are arresting them</i> (Mondo, 2015)</p> <p><i>Young Albanians are running away from Kosovo through the forest</i> (Đorđević, 2014)</p>
Massive, sudden, and illegal	<p><i>In three days more than 4,000 arrested migrants</i> (Medić, 2015)</p> <p><i>The Albanians continue to run away from Kosovo: the crossing of the 159 illegals is prevented at the border with Hungary</i> (Telegraf, 2015)</p>

The interest of Serbian media and public in the migration movement gained a prominent dimension of a spectacle. The spectacles are condensed multisensory scenes fulfilled with meanings originating from different historical and social circumstances, which can be (re)interpreted according to the current epistocratic relations (compare Lukić Krstanović, 2010). Furthermore, the face-value of migration spectacles is linked to the spectacle of misery, which settles the elitist position of the observer (compare Andrijasevic, 2007). As Stuart Hall puts it: "Looking is often driven by an unacknowledged search for illicit pleasure and a desire which cannot be fulfilled." (Hall in Andrijasevic, 2007: 39) The *gaze of Serbian spectator*, to

use the same rhetoric, is what adds specific ethno-national, that is, political layer on the observed scene, where the bodies of Albanians from Kosovo in distress represent “a site where anxieties about the changing European landscape are played out and where it is possible to detect a yearning for a return to a familiar and reassuring” nation-state order in Europe, to boldly paraphrase Andrijasevic (2007: 27).

The spectacle focused on two major subtopics: *the chaotic flight from Kosovo* and *corporeality of illegal border crossing* at the Hungarian border (Table 2).

The cries of the children who have no idea what is happening, the screams of the mothers who try to protect their offspring, while wriggling in order to take a seat in the bus which is taking them ‘Nowhere’, the fathers who turned their back on Kosovo, with their emotions betrayed. (SrbijaDanas, 2015)

Both spectacles are situated *at the edges of Serbian state*, in Kosovo in the south, and border region with Hungary in the north. The extraordinary situation is thus maximally removed from the area of Serbian political and operational influence. As de Genova points out, the border spectacle physically displaces ‘illegality’ from its point of production—the processes of law making—to the so-called ‘scene of the crime’ (de Genova, 2015). In this case, the order is kept within the nation-state borders, from which Kosovo self-willingly has excluded itself (‘illegalized’), and now its residents face the consequences for which Serbian state has no responsibility.

Table 2: Chaos and corporeality

<p>Chaotic flee from Kosovo</p>	<p>The texts are followed by photos and video reports of people getting on the busses, with typical images of crowd, people shouting, smiles or tears on faces, parents holding their children up in the hands trying to get them on the bus, which one of the reports colourfully describes as “cry of children, screams of mothers”.</p> <p>Media also report about introduction of the extra bus lines toward the north of Serbia, often commenting that the bus tickets to Subotica had been sold out (Lemajić, 2015).</p> <p>“This is not the people smuggling anymore, this looks more like a stampede,’ one of the state officers, who is confronting the problem of the illegal crossing of the border of Serbia with Hungary on daily basis, describes the situation.” (Politika, 2015)</p> <p>The expressions which are used were <i>exodus</i> (Blic, 2015b), <i>stampede</i>, <i>getaway</i> (Pressonline, 2015), <i>avalanche</i> (Blic, 2015c), etc.</p>
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Physical aspects of illegal border crossing	Media reported about situation at the border with Hungary. Some journalist went to the border not to simply report about the situation, but to <i>demonstrate</i> the manner in which the border had been illegally crossed (Zorić and Šinković, 2015; Kurir, 2014; B92, 2015). We encounter detailed descriptions of the process of border crossings, with photos and videos of migrants, often families with small children, walking through the forests, reeds and water-ditches, followed by the comments of wet clothes, bare feet, ways of protecting food and clothes, etc. They also reported about the vehicles used for smuggling, and number of people that were caught in the attempts of the border crossing without permissions.
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Serbian media have also discussed reasons for migration. These can be divided in several overlapping subtopics such as *economic deprivation*, *radioactive pollution*, *extremist mobilisation*, *smuggling networks*, and the *attempt to make pressure on the EU for political goals*.

These reasons are often connected with the topos of *deception* of Kosovars by local and international (especially USA) leaders, who supported them in their strivings for independence, but only to achieve some personal gain, and not to help the inhabitants. The same topos is used in relation to smugglers, who lie to the people from Kosovo, telling them “that Germany is waiting” (Table 3). This topos is usually presented as *lamentation by people from Kosovo for being gullible* and is sometimes related to *exulting (glee) over misfortune of people from Kosovo* by Serbian public/media.

Table 3: Reasons for migration according to Serbian media

Economic deprivation and deception	<p>“We [people from Kosovo, author’s comment] have been deceived and led to the bottom, a lot of families are starving. In Kosovo, only politicians live well, former high officers from KLA [Kosovo Liberation Army, author’s comment] and mafia. America used us, it pushed us into the war with Serbia, and then, when it did not need us any more, it pushed us to go down the water to wander across the globe as the last wretches, as Kurds, Syrians, and Afghanis. In vain we built a monument to Clinton in Priština, and gave Madelaine Albright’s and Richard Holbrooke’s name to the streets.” (Petrović, 2015)</p> <p>“The Albanians had great expectations after 1999. However, even after the state proclaimed independence, the situation is not better, and they [leaders, author’s comment] told them that Kosovo would become the land of milk and honey. The fact that they literally have nothing to eat is the reason for their mass leaving.” (Briza, 2015)</p>
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<p>Radioactive pollution from bombs thrown by NATO air force in 1999</p>	<p>“NATO planes threw numberless bombs with depleted uranium on Kosovo, the number of people with cancerous diseases is rapidly growing, the culmination is expected in years to come. A lot of Albanians, in fear for their children, are trying to move from Kosovo, so the children could breathe air and drink water that are not enriched by uranium and other dangerous materials sent from the sky by their ‘uncle Clinton’, to whom they even built a monument in the centre of Priština.” (Petrović, 2015)</p> <p>“According to the data from the Institute of Public Health of Kosovo, only in the first half of the last year 1,170 new cases of cancer have been registered.” (Zečević, 2015)</p>
<p>Smuggling networks</p>	<p>“Behind mass migration of the Albanians from Kosovo lies ‘organized business’, in which criminal structures, members of police forces, and local politicians from both sides of the administrative line are involved.” (Jelovac and Lazarević, 2015)</p> <p>“On the social networks the information that ‘Germany, Switzerland and France had opened their doors for migrants from Kosovo’ has been presented, followed by the stories of various Albanians who went there and ‘achieved better future for their children’. Even the way of travelling and the persons who might help are described and listed.” (ibid.)</p>
<p>Pending IS mobilization in Kosovo</p>	<p>“I went with my family. Only God knows where. To Subotica, and then further. Even uncertainty is better, because everything is grim in Kosovo. Economic situation, but also these terrorists from the Islamic State which recruit people to go to the frontlines in Syria and Iraq. I have a family, so I am going somewhere safe.” “They offer money and everything we need to convince us to fight for them. If you do not accept, they see you as someone who is against them.” (Zečević, 2015)</p> <p>“They offered me big money to go and fight for ISIL in Syria and Iraq. Kosovo is flooded by Wahhabis and activist of the Islamic state, there are a lot of emissaries from Macedonia, Albania and from the south of Serbia, they all want to recruit for their units. When you say no, they usually take it badly, they are often willing to use threats.” (Petrović, 2015)</p>

<p>Pending KLA mobilization in Kosovo and the south of Serbia</p>	<p>“At the beginning of this week, at the bus station in Bujanovac, some thirty young Albanians went on the bus that travels from Skopje to Belgrade. One of the travellers, who understands Albanian, confirmed that they were talking about fleeing from the south of Serbia because ‘the mobilization of Liberation Army of Preševo, Bujanovac and Medvedja was expected.’ They were going to Belgrade, but it is not known what was their final destination.” (E. V. N., 2015)</p> <p>“Armed Albanian forces are expected to strike on Serbian territories in the north of Kosovo and Metohija, and in the enclaves.” (Pressonline, 2015)</p>
<p>Political pressure on the EU to enhance visa liberalization, improve position of Priština in the process of negotiation between Belgrade and Priština, and complete recognition of independence</p>	<p>“Germany would do well if it recognizes Kosovo as a safe country of origin. [...] The EU had adopted regulations on visa liberalization for countries such and Colombia and Moldova. It is not fair that the same has not been done also for Kosovo.” (Blic, 2015d)</p> <p>“Ivanović said the last demonstrations in Priština showed that the Albanians are not doing anything by chance. He warned against mass flights to the Western Europe, saying it could be a way of putting pressure on the EU to gain better positions in the negotiation process between Priština and Belgrade. ‘This could be a message to Brussels that, for example, Albanians need Trepča to have jobs.’” (Lemajić, 2015)</p> <p>“The message could be that prolonging the negotiations is preventing Kosovo to function as a state. Therefore, the people are left on their own, fighting for bare survival. This is why they are running away.” (Briza, 2015)</p>

The mobilization, either by Islamic state and/or Kosovo (or Preševo, Medvedja and Bujanovac) Liberation Army, was presented as a pending *threat* for the rest of Serbia and *peace* in the region. Similarly, migration as a political pressure on Brussels jeopardizes position of Serbia as a state in the negotiation process between Belgrade and Priština. Therefore, this migration movement is perceived as potentially becoming a *threat for Serbian state interests*.

## Conclusion: Can We Speak of a “Politically Correct” Hate Speech?

As illustrated in the paper, the presentation of migration movement from Kosovo to Hungary in winter 2014/2015 in Serbian media had some crucial elements of spectacle. Visual, auditory and, at least for journalists who followed

migrants, corporal scenes, were filled with meanings connected to political status of Kosovo. Interestingly, dominant spectacles of misery, of chaotic flee from Kosovo, and of illegal border-crossing were situated at the edges of Serbian state's rule, implying rejection of responsibility for misfortune of the Kosovars. Furthermore, discussion about reasons for migration (i.e. push factors) was often related to the discussion about *traits of Albanian people from Kosovo*. In media, people from Kosovo are presented as *gullible* (they believed to the promises of their political leaders), *determined* (using all means available to reach the EU though the forests and swamps or make pressure on the EU to reach the political goal for their state), *obedient* (to *their* political interests), and *organized* (leaving Kosovo in the same period and in the same manner). Their *morality is put under question* (they are willing to use criminal structures), they are *resigned* due to the betrayed expectations, etc. These elements of racialization (Gilens, 2003) can lead to creation of negative stereotypes and public condemnation.

Further analysis of narrations shows that these often conflicting traits are always interpreted in relation with *Serbian statehood* and *Serbian people*. Independent identity of Kosovo is something that is always discussed, or, better, questioned. If it is not put in the foreground, as in the narrations discussing political instrumentalization or exultation over the misfortune of the Albanian people, it is contained in the background of the narrations. By speaking about migration movement, Serbian public speaks about Kosovo and its specific relation to it. When the independence of Kosovo is denied, its government and institutions are labeled as provisional. When changed status of Kosovo is acknowledged, Kosovo as independent from Serbian rule is presented as a grim place to be, where people are hungry, getting ill from cancer, where criminals are ruling, and government is not protecting people, where there is no perspective for some brighter future, and which can become *a threat* not only for the region, but for whole Europe. The migration spectacle opened a space for Serbian public to show disagreement with political developments in the region in a manner that would not jeopardize fragile stability or incriminate it if situation changes.

The characteristic that makes difference between hate speech and at face-value similar conservative opinions, lays in its perlocutionary force, that is, whether there exists the intention to produce real negative consequences for the targeted individuals or groups or not. Therefore, what can be achieved by talking like this about Kosovo and its "gullible" people? When the context of speaking is examined, we see that the speaker is Serbian public, the object is Kosovo as independent from Serbia, but the receiver of the message is complex: besides public from Serbia and Kosovo, the messages are sent to the EU, the only party with juridical power to influence objective changes. The messages are not communicated directly, but concealed into a general concern for the future of people from Kosovo, Serbia and the EU. This indicates the power position of the speaker, which is not favourable. The perlocutionary force of the messages is improvement of this position but with simultaneous deterioration of the position of the opposing

party, Kosovo as independent from Serbia, and thus changing the balance of the standings in the ongoing negotiation process. The answer to the question whether these expressions can be interpreted as concealed hate speech depends on our interpretation of the concept of "real/objective negative consequences" as well as whether they had been intended or not, which are, due to the lack of juridical power and concrete indicators, only indirect. More likely, the interest of Serbian media and public in this migration is to be related to a self-affirmation in an "I told you so" manner: "The warnings of the Serbian state that the independence would not bring any good in the final instance have been ignored, but now the warnings have been proven right," to paraphrase it. Therefore, it can be read more as an attempt to rehabilitate the past political role of the Serbian state in the region as well as to give a boost to its present standings rather than a buffered hate speech.

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