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German press coverage of former Yugoslavia after the fall of Milošević¹

Kurzfassung: Jeder Krieg, der im Verlauf der letzten Jahrzehnte im Zentrum der öffentlichen Aufmerksamkeit stand (wie die Kriege in Vietnam, am Golf 1991, in Bosnien, im Kosovo, in Afghanistan oder im Irak), zog eine große Zahl an Forschungsarbeiten nach sich, in denen die Medienberichterstattung zu Zeiten des Krieges analysiert wurde. In auffälligem Gegensatz dazu sind Studien, die sich mit der Berichterstattung über Nachkriegsprozesse beschäftigen, rar gesät. Die vorliegende Arbeit stellt einen Versuch dar, diese Kluft ein wenig zu verringern. Es werden die Ergebnisse sowohl einer quantitativen wie einer qualitativen Untersuchung der deutschen Presseberichterstattung über das ehemalige Jugoslawien vorgestellt, die sich auf den Zeitraum vom Sturz von Milošević im Oktober 2000 bis zum Abkommen zwischen Serbien und Montenegro im März 2002 beziehen.

Während Deutschland im Jahr 1999 noch Teil der Militäralianz war, die Serbien bombardierte, um Miloševićs Politik im Kosovo zu stoppen, bedeutete der Sturz von Milošević einen Neuanfang in den Beziehungen zwischen Deutschland und dem sich nun demokratisierenden Jugoslawien. Im Zentrum der quantitativen Studie stand die Frage, wie die deutschen Medien diesen Prozess der Wiederannäherung, Demokratisierung und Versöhnung begleiteten. Wie flexibel reagierte die deutsche Presse auf die sich verändernde politische Situation? Unterstützten die Medien eine konstruktive Transformation des Konflikts mit dem ehemaligen Jugoslawien? Stellvertretend für die deutsche Qualitätspresse wurden hierfür 483 Artikel aus der *Frankfurter Rundschau* ausgewählt, welche mit der modifizierten Version eines Kodierschemas analysiert wurden, das von der Forschungsgruppe entwickelt und schon in früheren Studien angewendet worden war (Kempf et al., 1999). Die statistische Auswertung erfolgte mittels Latent Class Analysis. Die Ergebnisse zeigen, dass Berichterstattung über konfrontatives serbisches Verhalten und eine kritische Beurteilung der serbischen Seite in der Nachkriegszeit immer noch häufig vertreten sind, zugleich ist aber auch eine eindeutige Unterstützung und Anerkennung des demokratischen Wandels zu verzeichnen.

Die qualitative Analyse richtete einen besonderen Fokus auf die Identifikation von konstruktiven, deeskalationsorientierten Aspekten in der Berichterstattung. Aus fünf deutschen Qualitätszeitungen wurden 23 Artikel ausgewählt, die sich auf vier wesentliche Themenkomplexe innerhalb des besagten Zeitraums bezogen: die politische Wende in Belgrad; den Konflikt in Südserbien; die Verhaftung von Milošević und seine Auslieferung nach Den Haag; sowie das Abkommen zwischen Serbien und Montenegro. Die Ergebnisse weisen darauf hin, dass Journalisten prinzipiell über ein großes Repertoire an journalistischen Mitteln verfügen, welche eine konstruktive Berichterstattung ermöglichen, und dass sie davon auch Gebrauch machen, wenn Frieden auf der politischen Agenda steht.

Abstract: In the past few decades any war that received considerable attention in the Western public (like the wars in Vietnam, in the Gulf, in Bosnia, Kosovo, Afghanistan or Iraq) has been followed by numerous studies analyzing media coverage during the war. In marked contrast, studies examining the media's coverage of post-war or post-conflict processes are hard to find. This paper attempts to reduce this gap by presenting the results of both a quantitative and a qualitative study of German press coverage of former Yugoslavia from the fall of Milošević in October 2000 up to the agreement between Serbia and Montenegro in March 2002.

While Germany was part of the alliance that bombed Serbia in 1999 to stop Milošević's policy in Kosovo, the fall of Milošević implied a new beginning in the relationship between Germany and Yugoslavia that started a transition to democracy at that time. The aim of the quantitative study was to analyze how the German media covered this process of rapprochement, democratization and reconciliation. How flexible was the German press in covering changing political situations? Did the media contribute to the constructive transformation of the Yugoslavian conflict? A selection of 483 articles from the *Frankfurter Rundschau* – exemplary for the German quality press – were chosen for analysis with a modified coding scheme developed and used earlier by this peace research group (Kempf et al., 1999). Latent Class Analysis was used as the evaluation method. The results show that coverage of confrontational behavior and a critical evaluation of Serbia is still common in the postwar period, but there is also significant support for and recognition of the democratic transition.

The qualitative analysis gave particular attention to the identification of constructive, de-escalation-oriented aspects that journalists used in their reporting. A selection of 23 articles was drawn from five German quality newspapers, related to four important political issues in the named time period: the political transition in Belgrade; the conflict in South Serbia; the arrest of Milošević and his extradition to The Hague; the agreement between Serbia and Montenegro. The analysis indicates that journalists use a wide range of tools for constructive conflict coverage and that they are prepared to use them when peace is on the agenda.

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Introduction

In the past few decades any war that received considerable interest from the Western public (like the wars in Vietnam, in the Gulf, in Bosnia, Kosovo, Afghanistan or Iraq) has been followed by numerous studies analyzing media coverage during the war. In contrast to this, it is hard to find studies that examine the media's coverage of post-war or post-conflict processes. This paper is intended to help correct this deficiency by presenting the results of a quantitative and a qualitative study of German press coverage of former Yugoslavia from the fall of Slobodan Milošević in October 2000 up to the agreement between Serbia and Montenegro in March 2002. Germany was part of the alliance that bombed Serbia in 1999 in an effort to stop Milošević's policy in Kosovo. The fall of Milošević and the political transformation in Belgrade marked a new beginning in the relationship between Germany and Yugoslavia.

Earlier research has shown that during the Balkan wars of the 1990s the conflict parties were portrayed in a very partial way. In the international and the German coverage each conflict party was assigned a different role. Already at the beginning of the Yugoslavian conflict in the early 1990s Serbian confrontational behavior was covered much more frequently compared with that of the other conflict parties. This finding was consistent even up to the fall of Milošević. Moreover, in the course of the Kosovo conflict coverage of the Serbian side became more and more one-dimensional in portraying its aggression.

The aim of the quantitative study was to analyze how the German media covered the process of rapprochement, reconciliation and democratization after the fall of Milošević and to pose the following questions:

- How flexible is the German press in the coverage of changing political situations?
- Have the media contributed to the constructive transformation of the Yugoslavian conflict?
- In other words: Does it make a difference that peace is on the agenda now?

The qualitative part of the study placed special emphasis on the constructive aspects of coverage. Therefore the guiding questions of the study were the following:

- How do journalists cover processes of democratization, peacebuilding and reconciliation?
- What constructive aspects can be identified in their work?
- What can we learn from that with regard to the advancement of peace journalism or to constructive conflict coverage?

1. Methods and design of the studies

1.1 Design of the quantitative study

Earlier studies have shown that there are no significant differences in the way German quality papers covered Yugoslavia (e.g. Kempf, 1999, Sabellek, 2000, Wolfer, 2001, Keßler, 2002). We investigated a sample of articles in the *Frankfurter Rundschau* (FR) that are representative of the German quality press coverage of Yugoslavia after Milošević. This paper is especially interesting because its editorial office expressly put peace and reconciliation on its agenda. Thus we expected to find aspects of constructive coverage in this paper.

In the present study we analyzed 483 articles, selected according to defined criteria like catchwords in the headlines and the direct relevance of the articles to the conflict parties and themes of post-war Yugoslavia. The period covered begins on 6 October 2000 after the fall of Milošević and ends on 15 March 2002, just after the agreement between Serbia and Montenegro to form a new state called "Serbia and Montenegro." The coverage in this period was characterized by internal political changes and crises, the extradition of Milošević to The Hague, elections, the role of KFOR and the international community in this area, conflicts over Kosovo and the buffer zones, the independence movements in Kosovo and Montenegro and the new confederation which created Serbia-Montenegro.

In order to detect possible changes in coverage during the period, the 18 months were divided into 6 blocks of 3 months each. To ascertain the data, we used a system of variables developed by Jaeger, Mattenschlager & Meder (1999), based on a model of conflict developed by Kempf, Reimann and Luostarinen (1996). This system was employed earlier in the peace research group at the University of Konstanz to analyze coverage in pre-war periods or during war-time. Because the present study focused on the post-war period in former Yugoslavia, the original system of variables had to be modified and expanded in some aspects.

In order to study whether the media recognized and appreciated changes in behavior over time, we distinguished whether the covered events, actions and evaluations were related to the past, the present, or both the past and present. For example, Milošević's behavior might be covered as being confrontational in both the past and the present. Because the press coverage is related to news being very current, it is quite normal that the articles in this study refer mostly to the present. Articles covering both the past and the present together are very rare.

Already in 1994 Vollmer found in her study of German press coverage of the war in Croatia that there was an increased

media build-up of a Serbian enemy image. This constitution of a fixed negative role for the Serbian conflict parties as being especially confrontational was confirmed in a study by Kempf (1999) of the Bosnian conflict and in subsequent research on the conflict in Kosovo. In three successive studies, Sabellek (2000), Wolfer (2001) and Keßler (2002) found that in the pre-war period, during the war and in the post-war period in Kosovo the Serbian conflict parties were covered as the most confrontational, with the highest value for military actions. Victims on their side were disregarded and their elite was dehumanized. None of the other conflict parties in the war was covered like this. Because of this consistent construction of an enemy image for a main party to the conflict, in this article we will bring into focus the results regarding the Serbian conflict parties.

1.2 Design of the qualitative study

In the time period from October 2000 until March 2002 four political processes were selected that seemed promising with regard to the research questions – the coverage of processes of democratization, peace-building and reconciliation. The selected issues were the following:

1) *Upheaval in Serbia (October 2000)*

This topic included the time span from the storming of the parliament in Belgrade on October 5 until the end of that month. In this time period major political changes took place that set the agenda for the democratic development of Yugoslavia.

2) *Conflict in South Serbia (November 2000 to May 2001)*

In the South Serbian area, Albanians form the majority of the population, while Serbs constitute only a minority. In November 2000 for the first time a so-called "Liberation Army for Presevo, Medvedja and Bujanovac" appeared, with initially unclear objectives, some of their members seemingly wanting these towns to become part of Albania, some of them just wanting more autonomy within Serbia. This was the first time that the new Yugoslavian government had to deal with a violent ethnic minority conflict. Hence, this problem could be seen as a first practical test of the young democracy.

3) *Arrest and extradition of Milošević (April to June 2001)*

Milošević was arrested on April 1; his extradition to The Hague took place on June 28. This issue was included in the analysis, because firstly the case of Milošević was the main topic of coverage on Yugoslavia over the whole time period, and secondly because linked to this were the questions of how the new Yugoslavian government would deal with international law, with the country's past and with the process of reintegration into Europe.

4) *Agreement between Serbia and Montenegro (March 2002)*

On March 14 the leaders of the two remaining Yugoslavian states, Serbia and Montenegro, reached an agreement to form a new state (called "Serbia and Montenegro") with a new constitution. By this agreement former Yugoslavia achieved a new status within the international community, hence again a good opportunity to study how the German press covered this process of change and possible reintegration.

The source material was a set of articles on these subjects selected from five German quality newspapers: *Die Welt* (conservative), *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* (conservative), *Süddeutsche Zeitung* (liberal), *Frankfurter Rundschau* (liberal/left-wing), *tageszeitung* (left-wing). From the source material, 23 articles were selected for qualitative analysis. The selection was based on the following theoretical and practical criteria:

- The first impression should suggest a constructive or creative article. This impression, in turn, was grounded in
 - knowledge of a checklist for escalation- and de-escalation oriented aspects of conflict coverage (Kempf, Reimann, Luostarinen, 1996; ASPR, 2003)
 - knowledge of Johan Galtung's model of peace journalism (2002)
 - theoretical sensitivity of the researcher (cf. Strauss & Corbin, 1998)
- Articles should consist of commentaries or reports rather than pure news
- Articles should not be too long (the average length was ca. 560 words)

A member of the research team made a pre-selection of the source material. The final selection was made in group discussion.

The main tool used for the qualitative analysis was the checklist for the escalation or de-escalation oriented aspects mentioned above. This checklist is a detailed and specific catalogue of possible escalation or de-escalation oriented conceptualizations of conflict, including intentions, actions, emotions and evaluations of the conflict as presented by the journalist. Apart from applying the checklist, we also tried to be aware of anything new and creative, i.e. to develop a sensitivity to constructive aspects that were not already included in the checklist.

2. Results of the quantitative study

2.1 Conflict parties and their frequency of appearance

Looking at the frequency of conflict parties' appearance in the coverage of the FR, we can say that the Serbian conflict party, including all its sub-parties, is the conflict party that gets by far the most media attention, being represented in over 80 % of the coverage. This is not very surprising, taking into account that the selection criteria of the articles focused on events and processes in which Yugoslavia played a key role. However, it is remarkable that the conflict party of Montenegro is covered very rarely, as it was also part of Yugoslavia at that time and as controversial political discussions were being held, particularly with regard to the question of independence. The lack of media interest in the development of Montenegro could be due to their position of not having been so much involved in the conflict in the past and thus of not having had the image in the West of a potential "troublemaker."

The following table shows the frequency of mention of the conflict parties that were part of the analysis:

A.0 International Community	N=286; 59.2% of all articles
B.0 Kosovo, including protagonists of the UCPMB/Albanian minority in Serbia	N=160; 33.1% of all articles
C.0 Montenegro	N=59; 12.2% of all articles
D.0 Serbia	N=389, 80.5% of all articles
D.1 Kostunica, including followers and army	N=130 (33.4 % of N=389)
D.2 Djindjic, including followers and Serbian police	N=84 (21.6 % of N=389)
D.3 Milošević, including followers und SPS (Socialistic Party of Serbia)	N=223 (57.3 % of N=389)
D.4 Serbian People (incl. Serbian minorities in Kosovo)	N=52 (13.4 % of N=389)
D.5 Remainder of "Yugoslavia" in general (e.g. in the past, history)	N=301 (77.3 % of N=389)

Table 1: Frequency of conflict parties' appearance in the articles

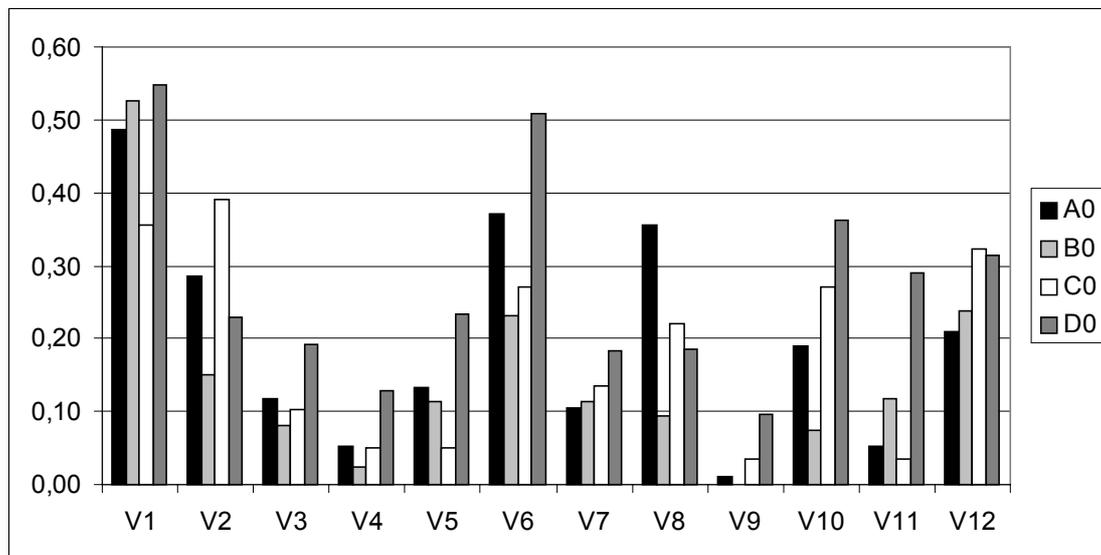
2.2 Variables and their frequency

Encoding the articles, we initially used 42 variables on 5 dimensions (cf. Bläsi et al., 2004), based on the escalation model constructed by Kempf, Reimann & Luostarinen (1996):

1. Conceptualization of the (conflict) situation
2. Conflict parties' rights and intentions
3. Conflict parties' actions
4. Interpunctuation of the conflict
5. Social distance versus social identification

Because of the low frequency of many of the variables, the least frequent ones were excluded from data analysis and variables with medium frequency were integrated into combined ones. Finally, 12 variables were analysed (see legend below).

Figure 1 shows the contingent frequency of the variables with regard to the various parties.



Legend

Names of variables

V1	Confrontational Behavior	V2	Cooperative Behavior
V3	Presumption of Bad Intentions	V4	Belief in Good Intentions
V5	Justification of Behavior	V6	Critical Evaluation of Behavior
V7	Logic of Competition/Willingness for Confrontation	V8	Logic of Peace/Desire for Peace
V9	Calls for Democracy	V10	Emphasis of Acceptance of Democracy
V11	Behavior directed against Democracy/Human Rights	V12	Democratic Behavior/Defense of Human Rights

Names of conflict parties

A0	International Community
B0	Kosovo
C0	Montenegro
D0	Serbia

Figure 1: Contingent frequency of variables regarding the various parties

The first variable, "Confrontational Behavior", dominates the coverage of all sides. This may indicate that the media in general covers more confrontational than cooperative behavior.

In 55 % of all articles this result applies to the Serbian side. They also have the highest value in variable 6, "Critical evaluation of behavior" (about 50 %). On the other hand, however, there are reports of democratic willingness and behavior of the Serbian side (V10, V12) as well.

2.3 Main results of the latent class analysis concerning the Serbian side

Latent class analysis (see Rost, 2004) of the Serbian data resulted in five latent styles. Taking the one-dimensional coverage of Serbia before and during the Kosovo conflict into account, this shows a remarkable diversity or plurality in the coverage of the Serbian side after the fall of Milošević.

Style 1: "General undertone of press coverage"

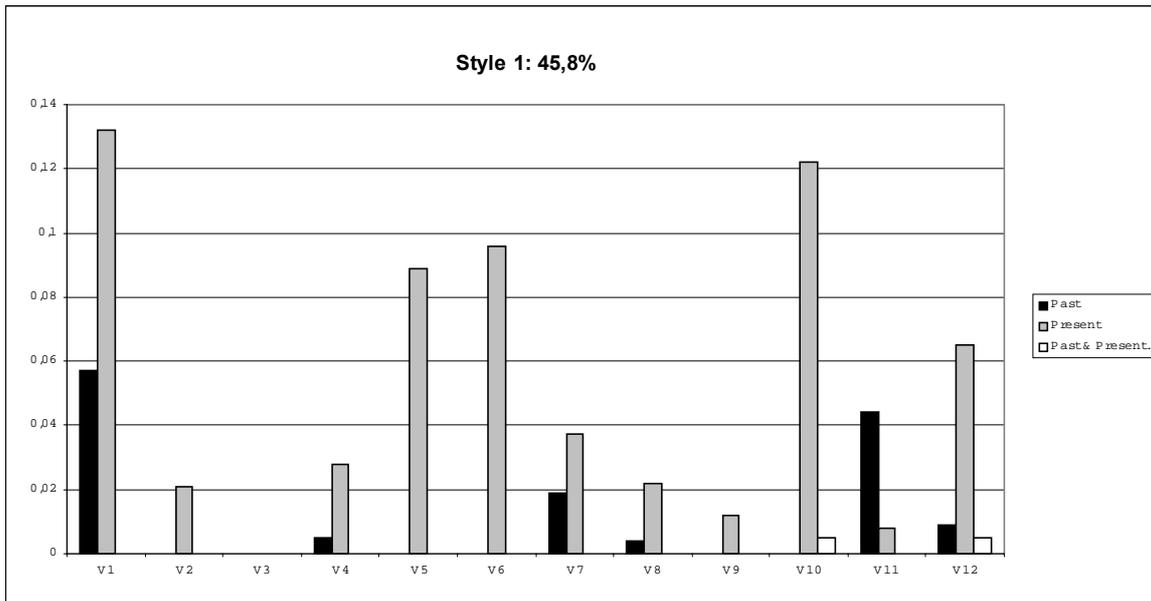


Figure 2: Style 1 (coverage of the Serbian side)

This main style of coverage in about 46 % of all articles shows the general tone.

The coverage does not report at all or just reports a little about the Serbian side. All variables are used very rarely. If the press reports anything, it is – on the one hand – about present Serbian confrontational behavior (V1, 13 %) and gives a critical evaluation of Serbian behavior (V6, ~ 10 %) and, on the other hand, refers to a willingness for democratic change (V10, 12 %) and sometimes democratic Serbian behavior (~ 6 %) in the present, and there is also some justification of Serbian behavior (V5, 9 %).

Even if this style seems to be balanced, the existing image of the Serbian side as confrontational is still maintained.

Style 2: "Condemnation of actions"

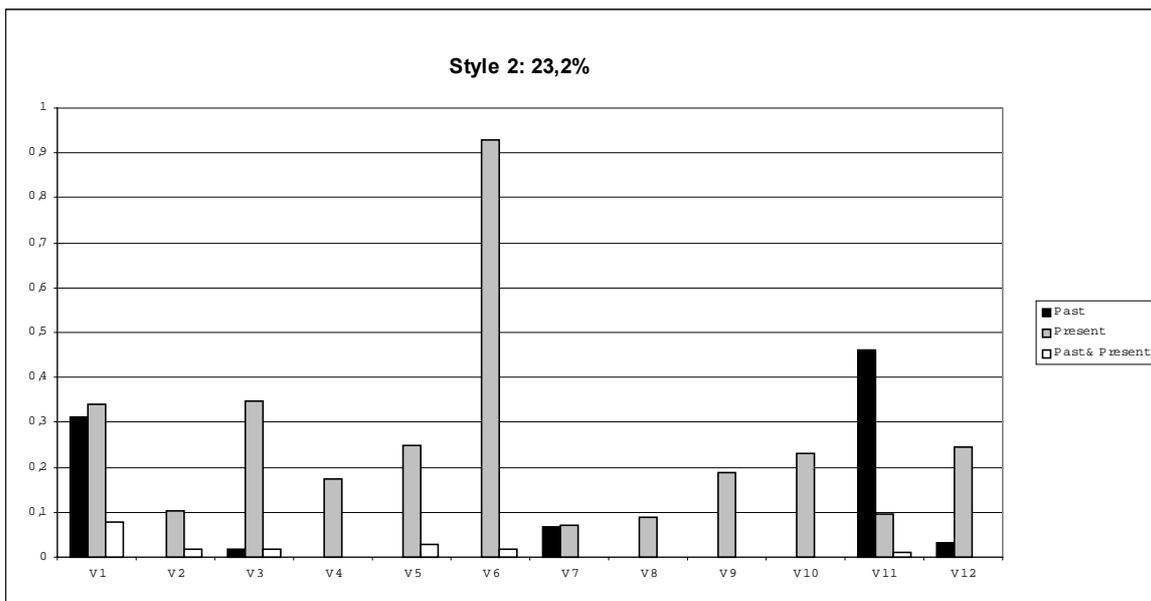


Figure 3: Style 2 (coverage of the Serbian side)

This style, found in 23 % of all articles, is dominated by a critical evaluation of the Serbian side in the present (V6, 93 %). A separate analysis focusing only on Milošević (as one part of the Serbian side) has shown that this effect is mainly due to the evaluation of Milošević's behavior and the accusations against him.

Confrontational behavior in the past or in the present is often reported (V1, 31 and 34 %).

One theme of the past is behavior directed against democracy and human rights in nearly half of the relevant articles (V11, 46 %). Another theme is the presumption of bad intentions in the present (V3, 35 %).

Concerning the other variables, there is only rudimental coverage of democratic behavior or acceptance of democracy. Sometimes Serbian behavior is justified.

To a much greater extent than in the first style, a negative image of the Serbian side is maintained.

The next two less common styles (3 and 4) focus on democratization of the Serbian side and draw a more hopeful picture.

Style 3: "Struggle for democracy"

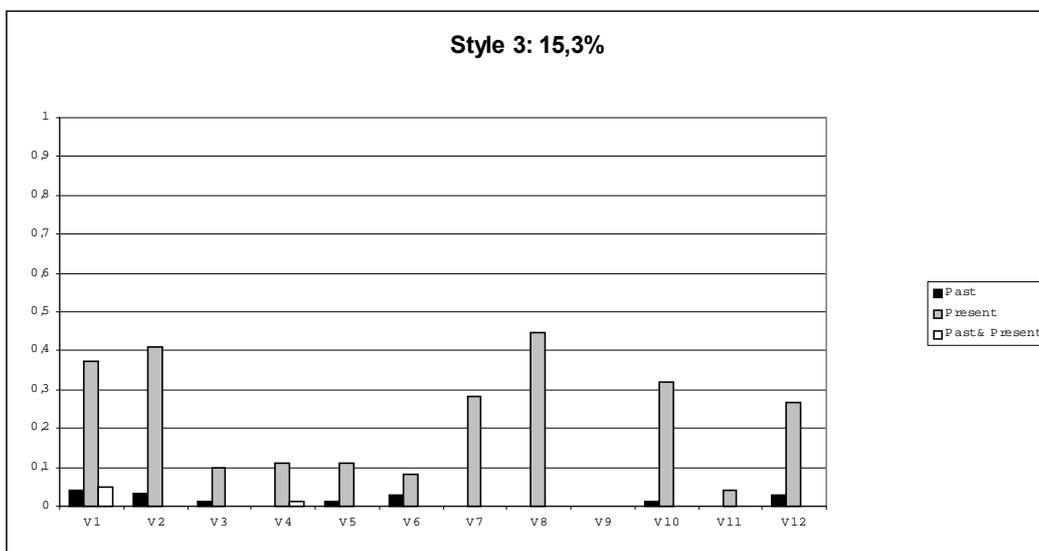


Figure 4: Style 3 (coverage of the Serbian side)

In about 15% of all articles positive aspects in the present are dominant, although coverage is ambivalent. Efforts are made to cover both sides of the present process.

Nearly half of the articles in the third style include the main themes of the logic of peace and desire for peace (V8, 45 %). Cooperative behavior (V2, 41 %), acceptance of democracy (V10, 32 %) and democratic behavior (V12, 27 %) are reported frequently. Calls for democracy are completely absent. Presumptions of bad intentions (V3, 10 %) and critical evaluations of behavior (V6, ~8 %) occur rarely, in comparison with the other styles. However, there are higher figures for confrontational behavior (V1, 37 %) and the logic of competition (V7, 28 %) in the present, as well. This indicates that in spite of good will and efforts to promote democracy, there is a struggle and a debate within the Serbian side.

This style – in contrast to the others – is a mere description of the process, without providing explanations or intentions.

Style 4: "Balanced coverage in present and past"

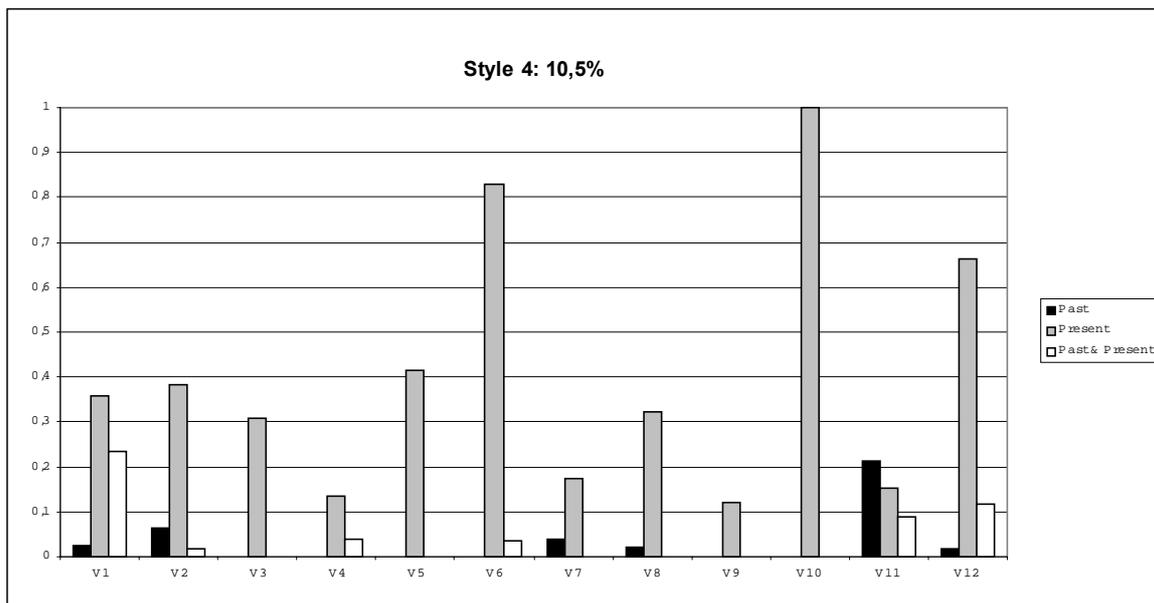


Figure 5: Style 4 (coverage of the Serbian side)

In 100 % of the relevant articles (~11 %) in this style the coverage reflects the present acceptance of democracy in Yugoslavia (V10), and in many of the articles current democratic behavior on the Serbian side is covered (V12, 66 %). Quite often the articles mention current Serbian cooperative behavior (V 2, 38 %).

A critical evaluation of Serbian behavior (V6, 83 %) is also dominant. At the same time, many articles justify Serbian behavior (V 5, 42 %). On the other hand, a third of the articles contain coverage of confrontational behavior (V1) in the present (past and present together: ~ 60 %), as well as presumptions of bad intentions (V 3), and 21 % of the relevant articles cover behavior directed against human rights (V11) in the past, mainly due to Milošević's policies.

With the fourth style we found balanced coverage concerning all variables, with a focus on both sides (emphasis on acceptance of democracy and critical evaluation). This applies especially to the description of the present and also sometimes of the past and the present at the same time.

Style 5: "Incorporating the past"

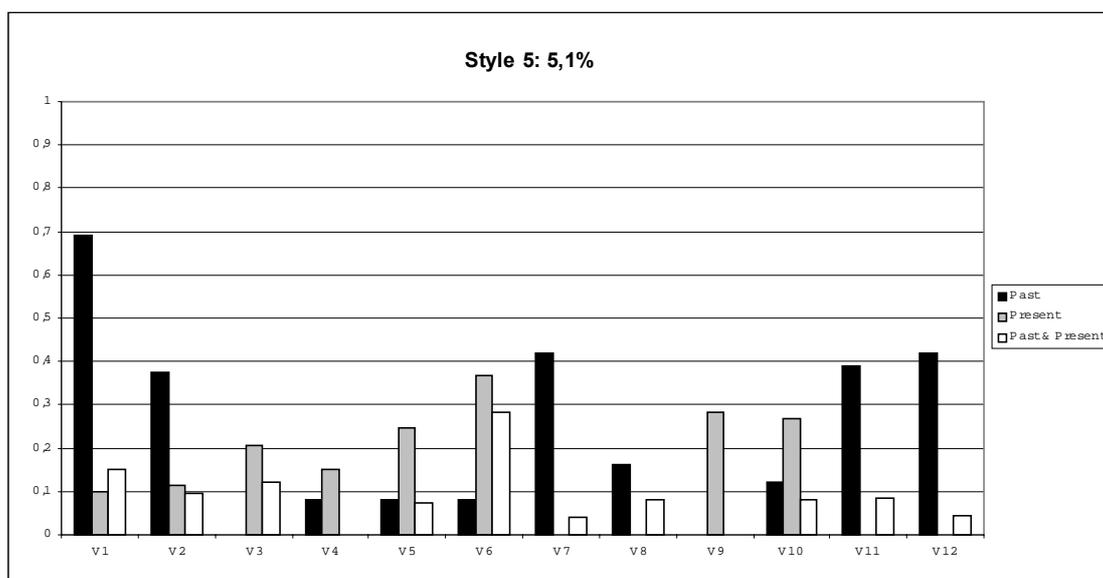


Figure 6: Style 5 (coverage of the Serbian side)

Some 5 % of all articles deal with the past in an intense and controversial manner.

The least common style uses the past, the present and both past and present at the same time. When reporting on the past, the main variable is confrontational behavior (V1, 69 %). The logic of competition/willingness for confrontation (V7, 41 %) and behavior directed against democracy (V11, 39 %) as negative variables (mainly concerning Milošević's behavior) are reported very often, as well as cooperative behavior (V2, 38 %) and democratic behavior (V12, 41 %) as positive ones.

Concerning the present, both aspects are reported: critical evaluation of behavior (V6, 37 %) and calls for democracy (V9, 28 %), and on the other side, justifications of behavior (V5, 25 %) and acceptance of democracy (V10, 27 %).

Interpretations of the past and present concerning the relevant variables are open to both sides.

2.4 Change in coverage: Time series of style usage

To investigate whether and how the usage of the different styles has changed over time, we have constructed six time periods of three months each.

2.4.1 Periods of time, significant events, and number of articles

The following table shows the relevant themes and the number of articles in each period.

T 1: October – December 2000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fall of Milošević, Kostunica becomes new president • Democratic development of Serbia • Confrontation between UCPMB, Serbian police and KFOR in South Serbia • Elections in Serbia (December 2000), success of DOS • Three-party coalition in Montenegro breaks up due to controversy about issue of independence 	137 articles
T 2: January – March 2001	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Djindjic becomes prime minister • Ongoing violent confrontation between UCPMB and Serbian police in the buffer zone in South Serbia • NATO agrees with conflict parties on ceasefire in South Serbia • Beginning of internal controversy in Serbia about extradition of Milošević 	91 articles
T 3: April – June 2001	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arrest of Milošević, controversy about his extradition • UCPMB agrees on decommissioning weapons • Financial aid for Belgrade from EU and USA • Ongoing debates about independence in Montenegro • EU, Montenegro and Serbia in dialogue concerning the treaty between Serbia and Montenegro • Extradition of Milošević to The Hague 	106 articles
T 4: July – September 2001	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decreased coverage due to September 11 and its aftermath • Government crisis in Yugoslavia • First examination of Milošević in The Hague, protests of his supporters in Belgrade • Disarming the UCK (Kosovo Liberation Army) 	48 articles
T 5: October – December 2001	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Power struggle between Kostunica and Djindjic • Power struggle in Serbian parliament, Serbian coalition in new crisis • Rugova's party wins elections in Kosovo • Rugova pleads for independence of Kosovo, which is rejected by foreign ministers of the EU 	65 articles
T 6: January – March 2002	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Power struggle in Kosovo, Rugova eventually becomes president • Agreement between Serbia and Montenegro with the mediation of the EU, "Serbia and Montenegro" replaces Yugoslavia 	36 articles

Table 2: The time periods with relevant themes and number of articles

2.4.2 Change of style usage over the time period

Change in style usage over the time is significant (alpha = 5 %).

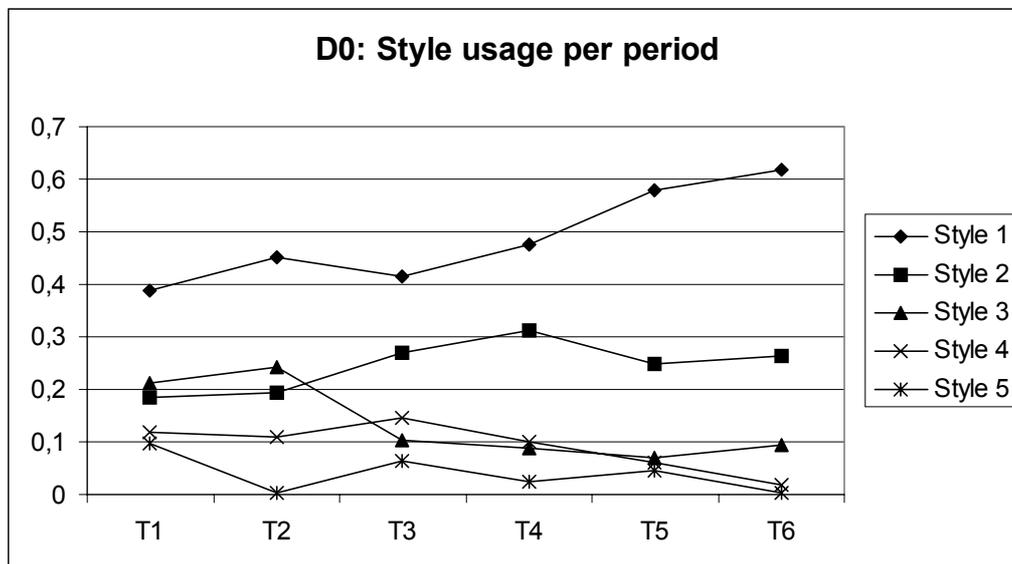


Figure 7: Time series of style usage

The general tone of the press – *Style 1* (~ 46 % of all articles), characterized by infrequent reporting – increases over time and reaches a peak in the sixth and last phase, when democratization and consolidation are already progressed, and the press turns towards events with more obvious current interest.

Style 2 (~ 23 % of all articles), explicitly negative reportage, peaks in the fourth phase. In this period major internal conflicts took place, both among the different Serbian conflict parties and within the Yugoslavian government. In over 90% of the articles using this style we can find a critical evaluation of the Serbian side, which at first glance might suggest substantial skepticism in the *Frankfurter Rundschau* regarding the ongoing democratization process. However, as the category “Critical Evaluation of Behavior” also incorporated demands for bringing charges, trial or conviction, and as the forthcoming proceedings against Milošević were also on the agenda in this period, it remains unclear which issue mainly accounts for the critical evaluation.

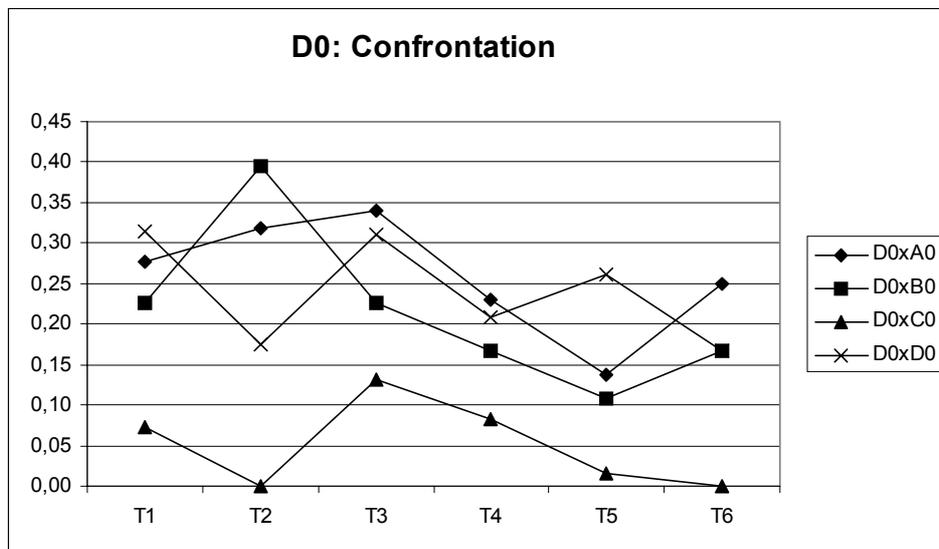
Style 3 (~15 % of all articles), which covers events in an ambivalent but more positive manner, is quite often used at the beginning and increases in the second phase, when KFOR and Serbian police took joint actions against Albanian rebels barricading the buffer zone. In these cases the Albanian confrontation is contrasted with the cooperation of the international community and the Serbian police. Moreover, the beginning of the internal Serbian debate on how to deal with Milošević, which was highly controversial in itself, might also have contributed to the ambivalent media coverage of the FR. After this phase, style 3 declines.

Style 4 (~11 % of all articles), indicating balanced coverage, has a slight peak in the third phase, when the EU called for a dialogue between Serbia and Montenegro, and the extradition of Milošević to The Hague was eventually agreed upon. Democratic change and cooperation were recognized. On the other hand, skepticism and caution were voiced again, especially in the period before Milošević’s extradition. This style declines and disappears towards the end.

Style 5 (~ 5 % of all articles), reporting about confrontational behavior in the past and perceptions of democratization in the present, has a peak in the first phase, when – just after the fall of Milošević – the negative events of the past and the hopeful ones of the present are very current and topical.

2.4.3 Time series of confrontation and cooperation

We were interested in the media description of confrontational and cooperative relations going beyond Latent Class Analysis. The following data were collected in another matrix on the coding sheet to investigate the frequency of confrontational or cooperative behavior among the Serbian protagonists and the protagonists of all other conflict parties and within the Serbian side and the influence of time period on this frequency.



Legend: A0=International Community, B0=Kosovo/Albania, C0=Montenegro, D0=Serbia; T1-T6 = Time Periods

Figure 8: Confrontation

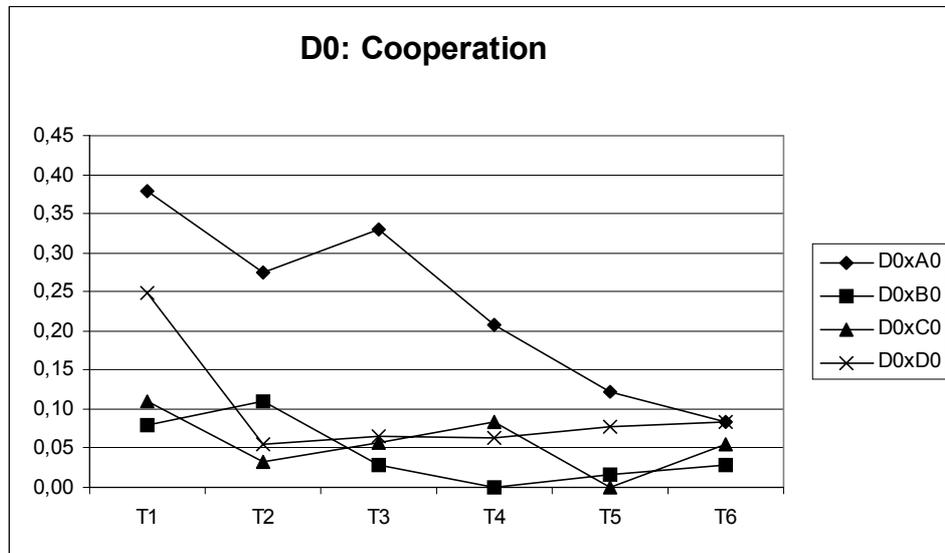
The most frequent description of confrontation concerns the relationship between the international community and the Serbian side, followed by coverage of confrontation within the Serbian side. The latter is largely due to the interaction between Milošević and his supporters and other Serbian protagonists. Confrontation between the Serbian side and the Kosovo Albanian side is also reported very often.

The confrontation, meaning a debate (not a violent clash) between Serbian conflict parties and the international community, peaks in the third period, when the EU called for dialogue between Serbia and Montenegro, and the international community called for Milošević's extradition. In the following periods we can see decreasing confrontation and an increase in the sixth and last period, when the government in Kosovo was formed. However, the latter finding should be treated with care because of the very small database concerning the sixth period, which makes it difficult to interpret.

The internal confrontation rises and falls, it is high in the first period (mainly due to confrontation between the old and new political powers) and also in the third period (mainly due to the controversy about the extradition of Milošević). Not surprisingly the confrontation between the Serbian party and the Kosovo conflict party (that in our study included the Albanian minority in Serbia) had its peak in the second period, when violence between UCPMB and the Serbian police culminated, and decreased after the ceasefire and disarming of the UCPMB.

Remarkably little confrontation over all time periods is reported between the Serbian and the Montenegrin sides.

Summarizing the data on confrontation, we can say that the coverage gives an image of the Serbian side as mired in permanent controversies with its own members and with other conflict parties.



Legend: A0=International Community, B0=Kosovo/Albania, C0=Montenegro, D0=Serbia; T1-T6 = Time Periods

Figure 9: Cooperation

The description of cooperation is less common overall, but the coverage of cooperation between the international community and the Serbian party was as frequent as the coverage of confrontation. In the first time period, directly after the fall of Milošević, coverage of cooperative behavior was at its highest point (38 % of all articles), decreasing during the confrontation in the buffer zones in South Serbia in the second time period, and increasing again when Milošević was turned over to The Hague (third time period) and the USA extended financial support.

Cooperation within the Serbian conflict parties is covered often at the beginning (first period), when democratic consolidation was of topical interest. This perception decreases rapidly after the second period, because the processes of consolidation and stabilization were no longer news topics. The occurrence of styles characterized by reporting about democratization and cooperation in a positive manner decreases, and media interest in cooperation declines over time.

Taking into account that conflicts among the Serbs and the other conflict parties decreased and cooperation increased, decreased coverage of cooperation suggests a lack of interest.

3. Results of the qualitative study

3.1 Coverage of the selected political issues

As mentioned above, the four "time spots" in the qualitative analysis were not defined by equally long and successive time periods, but by important issues that dominated the political agenda over a substantial period of time: the upheaval and political change in Serbia, the conflict in South Serbia, the case of Milošević and the agreement between Serbia and Montenegro. The aim of this analysis was to get a deeper understanding of how the German press constructed these processes and to explore the content and structure of coverage in more detail than could be done in the quantitative analysis. Related to selected issues, the essence of the German press discourse can be described as follows:

Issue 1: Upheaval in Serbia

- The upheaval is welcomed by all the papers; the commentaries are full of hope for a "new era," for a real partnership between Serbia and the West, and for "Serbia's return to Europe."
- The role of the people is acknowledged. This includes both coverage of the significance and influence of certain protest groups like the student movement "Otpor!" ("Resistance!") and the engagement of large parts of the population who were prepared to continue strikes in spite of threats by the old government and to take part in mass protests that eventually led to the storming of the parliament building on October 5.
- The new political leaders are portrayed in a rather positive way. Although commentators suggest that they still have to prove their seriousness and that only time will tell if they have the capability to bring about real change, they describe them as generally rather trustworthy and reform-oriented. Compared to the German press coverage of the former Milošević government (Sabellek, 2000; Wolfer, 2001; Keßler, 2002), a clear turn can be observed from disap-

proving or even demonizing reports on the intentions and actions of the old Serbian leaders to a sympathetic and supportive attitude towards the new political elite. The new government is no longer regarded and treated as an enemy, but rather as a potential new friend.

- On the other hand, commentators warn that "the old regime" is not definitely beaten but could still strike back. Concern is expressed that the fall of Milošević was only a "half revolution" and that the old forces still have too much influence.
- Only a few days after the upheaval the first calls are voiced to prosecute Milošević and to extradite him to The Hague. As time passes, these calls become louder and more numerous; in fact, they become one of the main underlying themes of German coverage until Milošević is finally arrested and turned over to The Hague.

Issue 2: Conflict in South Serbia

- The attempt of the Serbian government to resolve the conflict by peaceful means is acknowledged by the German press. Especially the role of president Vojislav Kostunica is described as constructive, while prime minister Zoran Djindjic's aggressive statements on the Albanian rebels are criticized. In fact, this is one of the rare occasions in German press coverage where Kostunica seems to be the "good guy" and Djindjic the "bad guy." Normally Djindjic is portrayed as a modern, pragmatic, reform and Western-oriented manager of transformation, while Kostunica is described as reserved, skeptical about the West, rather nationalistic, and holding relatively old-fashioned political ideas.
- There are no clear-cut sympathies for a certain side in the German press coverage. Some correspondents seem to favor the Serbian, others the Albanian point of view and accordingly they focus on the rights, good intentions and hardships of the respective side. Nevertheless, taking into account the coverage of all papers there is no overall tendency for or against a single party; instead, the positions and interests of all conflict parties are mentioned and, at least partly, also acknowledged.
- However, the longer the conflict lasts, the more it becomes stereotyped as a "typical" Balkan conflict. After a decade of wars in the Balkans, this stereotyped picture is one of hardened positions, irreconcilable conflict parties, irrational protagonists for whom violence seems the only means of ending a conflict, and where in the end international intervention is always needed to resolve conflict, because people in the Balkans are unable to make peace on their own.

Issue 3: Arrest and extradition of Milošević

- Most of the commentators argue that Milošević must be extradited to The Hague as soon as possible. In their perception any other considerations indicate a reluctance to cast off the old regime.
- Some commentators (interestingly mainly guest commentators) explicitly argue for a trial in Belgrade on the grounds that this would have a positive effect on the democratization process in Serbia and also would be essential for Serbia's process of coming to terms with its past (e.g. Avineri, 2001, in *Die Welt*, I. Ivanji, 2001, in *die tageszeitung*).
- Extremely rare are articles that really take into account all relevant perspectives – that of the Serbian people, that of the people in Bosnia, Croatia and Kosovo and that of the international community (e.g. Paasch, 2001, in *Frankfurter Rundschau*). Accordingly, creative proposals on how to meet the interests of all conflict parties (e.g. a first trial by a Serbian court and a second trial by a UN court, as suggested by Paasch) are hard to find.

Issue 4: Agreement Serbia-Montenegro

- The agreement gets little attention in the German press. In most of the analyzed newspapers coverage is limited to the news and a short commentary on the day after the agreement.
- The prevailing stance towards the agreement is skeptical. It is seen as a provisional solution and therefore as a perpetuation of the old problems.
- However, it is not so much the Serbian or Montenegrin sides that are criticized, but rather the international community. It is blamed for imposing the agreement, for favoring short-term stability instead of long-term solutions.

These results of the qualitative analysis agree with those of the quantitative analysis. Just as in the quantitative study, the qualitative study shows that the German press's interest in the political development of Serbia decreases over time, as can be seen in the limited attention that the agreement between Serbia and Montenegro gets in the press, compared to the enormous amount of coverage during the period of political change and the still relatively intense coverage about the conflict in South Serbia and the Milošević case. The extradition of Milošević to The Hague obviously constitutes a turning point in the interest of the German press. It seems that for the German press the most important problem is tackled with this issue and that after this attention can be directed to other parts of the world. This appears to be true even if we take into account that certainly the events of September 11, 2001 also played a crucial role in the decline of interest in Serbia.

Moreover, both studies reveal that, compared to coverage before the fall of Milošević, the images of Serbian leaders become more positive, and Serbian government policies are evaluated in a more affirmative way. Most of the German press is prepared to trust the intentions of the new government to build a democratic and peaceful Yugoslavia. Even in the course

of the conflict in South Serbia it is not the old stereotypes of the aggressive and hostile Serbs that turn up, but instead we can find an altogether balanced coverage of the Albanian and Serbian conflict parties. However, the evaluation of Serbian actors in most cases depends heavily on the question of whether they are acting in the interest of the international community. When Serbian politicians do not conform to what Western politicians demand (like Kostunica in the case of Milošević), they are usually evaluated negatively. Thus, in the end it remains unclear whether the – on the whole – more positive evaluation of the Serbian protagonists is grounded in a real recognition of the Serbian democratization process (which actually should also imply the acknowledgement of the Serbs' right to have their own aims and objectives and not to be simply the puppets of Western politics) or whether it arose simply because the new Serbian government conforms much more to the agenda of Western politics than did the old Milošević regime.

3.2 Coverage of democratization, peace building and reconciliation

In studying the four political issues described above, we were especially interested in how the processes of democratization, peace building and reconciliation were covered, i.e. how these rather general developments were reflected in the coverage of day-to-day-politics.

The term peace building is normally used in a rather broad sense, denoting economic and developmental aid, as well as processes of democratization and encounters and reconciliation (Schweitzer, 2004). In order to facilitate a differentiated analysis, in the subsequent section we focus on the coverage of those processes under the three headings of democratization, peacebuilding and reconciliation, defining the terms as follows: By democratization we mean the process of developing democratic structures and democratic awareness within a country, measures like the organization of elections, democratic reforms, the development of a civil society, the implementation of free media, the implementation of human rights standards, etc. By applying the term peacebuilding, we focus on processes of economic and developmental cooperation and of (re-)establishing official relations. By reconciliation we mean efforts to build trust between former enemies, including the process of coming to terms with the common past. The main emphasis hereby is on activities in civil society of people from both sides, from the grassroots or intermediate levels, and not so much on political and economic elites.

Democratization

The main focus of German newspaper coverage of Yugoslavia in the studied time periods is on the process of democratization in Serbia. This includes comprehensive coverage of elections, the development of law, human rights, democratic institutions, parties, media, etc. It also encompasses the conflict in South Serbia that receives a fair amount of attention in German coverage. While this attention might to a considerable extent be due to violence and the threat of another war, the treatment of a minority conflict also touches on the actual state of democratic developments in Serbia. Another aspect that can be summarized under the issue of democratization is the question of how the Serbs deal with their own past. However, when the German press addresses this topic, it is mostly related to the case of Milošević and the actions and non-actions of the Serbian government in this regard. Many commentators consider the Serbian government's position on extraditing Milošević as the crucial indicator of Serbian preparedness to come to terms with the past. Other possible indicators for this process – like changes in the Serbian media, change of school curricula, development of human rights groups, etc., play only a marginal role in coverage.

Peacebuilding

Another focus of coverage is on the process of the economic, political and cultural reintegration of Serbia into Europe. Typically, articles dealing with these topics are not explicitly written under the label "peacebuilding." They rather, for instance, deal with an announcement that a German company is going to invest in Serbia, with a decision of the EU to spend a certain amount of money to rebuild the Serbian economy or with meetings of President Kostunica or Prime Minister Djindjic with Western politicians. However, as any effort to build new civic ties between Serbia and the West can be regarded as furthering peaceful relationships between former enemies, the coverage of such events falls in the category of reporting the steps of peacebuilding.

Reconciliation

Reconciliation is not an issue of special interest in German press coverage. This applies both to the process of reconciliation between Serbia and its neighbors and also to the process of reconciliation between Germany and Serbia (or the West and Serbia). While there is comparatively much reportage about current actions and the interaction of Serbian and Western political leaders aiming at establishing a "normal" working relationship and starting to integrate Serbia into Europe, there is hardly any coverage of trust-building activities between people on the grassroots level. Nor is there any attempt to come to terms with the common past – that after all included NATO's attack on Serbia in 1999.

Grassroots initiatives that work towards mutual understanding, like school exchanges or town partnerships are covered

only during the upheaval in Serbia (e.g. Hoffmann, 2000, in the *Frankfurter Rundschau*; Ciesinger, 2000, in the *Süddeutsche Zeitung*), possibly because during that time the media felt there was a need to change readers' perceptions of the Serbs as "bad and ugly" into images of people with whom good relationships are also desirable. Later such and similar projects obviously were of less or no interest for the media. At least they did not show up in media coverage.

There are various possible reasons why the issue of reconciliation is rarely covered. Firstly, in contrast to the development of new democratic structures or political and economic steps toward rapprochement, reconciliation is a less concrete topic. Building trust is a long-term process and not necessarily connected to any observable events. However, the media generally tend to be much more event-oriented than process-oriented. Thus, process-related issues like reconciliation are more likely to pass unnoticed even in the quality press.

With regard to the relations between Serbia and neighboring countries like Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia and Kosovo, the process of reconciliation as such had not progressed very far at that time, so this might also account for the lack of coverage. However, this does not explain the almost complete absence of any coverage about the development of the current relationships among those countries, after a decade in which the Western public was extremely preoccupied with the conflicts in the Balkans.

Concerning the relationship between Germany and Serbia, perhaps there is not much interest in the reconciliation process with Serbia because from the German perspective there is no urgent need for reconciliation with Serbia. In contrast to the reconciliation process between Germany and France after World War II, where Germany had to rely on the French partnership and where the press accordingly gave a considerable amount of attention to the process of reconciliation (cf. Jaeger, 2004), there is no similar dependency on a reconciliation process with Serbia. Whilst Germany and France had no other rational choice – either in political or economic terms – than to develop friendly relationships and take active steps towards reconciliation after World War II, this is apparently not the case between Germany and Serbia. Germany, on the one hand, is in a completely different situation nowadays, despite the current economic crisis still a wealthy country, politically one of the leading nations of Europe. Serbia, on the other hand, is relatively small, not a neighboring country, and with a weak economy. Thus, it comes as no great surprise if these differences in relations are mirrored in press coverage.

Lastly, when interviewing German correspondents in Belgrade, one of the authors was confronted several times with the opinion that reconciliation was not on the agenda because there had been no actual enmity between Germany and Serbia. This point of view is certainly controversial, given that the two states had been at war against each other only one year before. However, it reflects how Germany's role in this conflict was constructed by many journalists: as if Germany had nothing really to do with it, as if it had been only a neutral arbitrator that was eventually forced to intervene for the sake of human rights. In this construction the fact is neglected that Germany had been a party to the conflict with interests going beyond human rights issues. However, this belief on the part of journalists offers another reason why there has been no postwar coverage of reconciliation.

3.3 Constructive aspects: General findings

Apart from specifically analyzing the coverage of democratization, peacebuilding and reconciliation, the aim of the study was to identify generally constructive elements of the articles. A detailed overview of the constructive aspects found in this and a parallel study about the coverage of the French-German peace process after World War II have been published elsewhere (Bläsi & Jaeger, 2004). Only the general findings will be noted here:

1. *Events related to de-escalation, peacemaking, negotiation, cooperation, etc. can become headlines and the subject of editorials or commentaries.*

This may not be very surprising, as one might know from daily newspaper reading that this indeed occasionally happens. Nevertheless, this finding seems worth mentioning because it shows that Galtung & Vincent's model of news factors (1992) does not account for the selection process in every case. If they want, journalists can place peace-oriented issues on the agenda, even if non-elite countries are involved (Serbia and Albania), the message is positive and structural aspects are prominent (e.g. Rüb, 2001, in FAZ). Indeed, in pure news pieces the focus is mainly on the actions or statements of elite persons. However, this is not representative of the whole of coverage. In reports or background articles, the opinions and concerns of non-elite persons often receive considerable space.

2. *Constructive aspects can be found in all of the analyzed newspapers.*

This means that constructive conflict coverage is in principle possible irrespective of the political orientation of a newspaper. As all the analyzed papers belong to the category "quality press," one might speculate as to whether the potential for constructive conflict coverage is an implicit criterion for what is called the quality press.

4. *Most of the examined articles are neither wholly constructive nor completely destructive.*

Often some paragraphs of an article, some accounts and arguments presented there, can be labeled "constructive," but other aspects of the article conflict with this good impression. There are many alternative ways in which constructive and destructive aspects can stand side by side or be intertwined in one article. For instance, critical, but fair and insightful coverage of one party may be accompanied by biased and one-sided coverage of another. In other cases it is not the presented information itself that makes an article destructive, but rather the emphasis the author places on it through the structure and order of the given information or by the selection and framing of quotations (cf. Bläsi & Jaeger, 2004).

4. Conclusion

The media focus on new events that are current and topical. Accordingly in this study, too, it becomes apparent that interest in developments in Yugoslavia and the involved conflict parties decreased over the time and dropped whenever events in Yugoslavia seemed to be normalizing. Over time, the total number of articles decreased and the main style of non-reporting increased. The agreement between Serbia and Montenegro that marked the end of the period studied and that meant important political changes for former Yugoslavia also ranks last in media interest.

The results of the quantitative analysis show that coverage of confrontational behavior and critical evaluation of the Serbian side is still frequent. However, as this finding can to a considerable extent be ascribed to controversies between Milošević and the new Serbian government or the international community, it does not necessarily reflect a persisting negative image of the Serbians as a whole. The qualitative analysis suggests that the German press has persisted in its condemnation of past Serbian policy and accordingly any semblance of unwillingness to dissociate from Milošević and his actions. Yet, as both studies show, at the same time there is significant support and recognition of the democratic change and the willingness to move towards democracy.

A big difference between coverage during and directly after the war and the results of this study concerns the plurality of styles. While Keßler (2002) found only one style with which the Serbians and their conceptualization of the conflict situation were portrayed in the immediate post-war situation, we could find a significantly greater plurality of views and perceptions after the fall of Milošević.

Hence, referring to the research questions posed in the introductory section, we can state that the German press was in the main prepared to react to the changing political agenda with a changing style of coverage that implied a gradual deconstruction of the previous enemy image of Serbia. This is still far from constituting a stable and proactive contribution to the transformation process in former Yugoslavia. Entirely constructive articles were still found only sporadically. Still, that the media started to dismantle their previous biases and stereotypes about the former enemy as soon as peace was put on the political agenda can be regarded as a sign of progress.

Moreover, the study shows another remarkable result regarding one of the other conflict parties: the confrontational behavior of the Kosovo-Albanians continued to be covered quite often. One possible interpretation of this finding is that with the fall of Milošević the media had lost their former enemy image. Consequently, there was no longer a need for stereotyped black-and-white coverage. As a result, the actions of Albanians were portrayed more critically than before. While earlier coverage – mainly in the pre-war period – had functionalized the Albanian people in Kosovo as victims, this stereotyped victimhood of the Albanians already began to erode after the Kosovo war (Keßler, 2002) and might eventually have vanished with the political transformation in Belgrade. In our study period the UCK and UCPMB as Albanian liberation armies with their own goals may have threatened the international community and its interest in maintaining peace and tranquility in this region. The media seem to have accepted this interest of the international community.

After the Dayton peace accords, until October 2000 Milošević and his policies were regarded as the main obstacles to peace and human rights. Nowadays this role tends to be ascribed to anyone who disturbs the (illusory) quiet in the Balkans.

To sum up, journalists are flexible enough to adapt their coverage to a changing political agenda. Furthermore, as the qualitative analysis shows, journalists are in principle able to draw on the repertoire of constructive conflict coverage. Unfortunately, these abilities manifest themselves only seldom and often to only a limited degree in actual conflict coverage. Thus, while there is undoubtedly a lot to learn from the already existing creativity of journalists in covering post-war and post-conflict processes (cf. Bläsi & Jaeger, 2004), future research should also focus on the question of what prevents journalists from using their skills in constructive coverage more often and more intensively.

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