

Ivona Živković¹
Univerzitet u Beogradu
Fakultet organizacionih nauka
Dalibor Petrović²
Univerzitet u Beograd
Saobraćajni fakultet

Original scientific paper
UDK 329.055.1:004.738.1FACEBOOK
329.055.1/.2:004.738.5(497.11)
Submitted: 4.7.2023.
Accepted: 9.1.2024.
DOI: <https://doi.org/10.2298/SOC2401064Z>

POLITICAL (AB)USE OF THE INTERNET– FACEBOOK IN HANDS OF SERBIAN RIGHT-WING

Politička (zlo)upotreba interneta– Fejsbuk u rukama ekstremne desnice

ABSTRACT: *This paper explores the role the digital platform Facebook plays in mediating the operational dynamics of extreme right organizations in Serbia. Emphasizing the functional potential of this digital platform, we delve into its capacity to disseminate information, propagate political goals, mobilize members, construct collective identities, and orchestrate actions among right-wing extremists in Serbia. As political activism continues to thrive in the online sphere, and with the right-wing ideologies gaining increasing prominence in the last three decades, our study seeks to shed light on the essential role of the Internet in shaping these dynamic processes. The paper presents findings from a comprehensive qualitative and quantitative analysis of two Facebook pages, affiliated with one formal and one informal far-right political organization —Serbian Right and Serbian Honor. The objective is to gain insights into the different strategies employed by political organizations in utilizing digital platforms.*

KEY WORDS: *right-wing extremism, social movements, digital platforms, Facebook*

APSTRAKT: *U tekstu se bavimo ulogom onlajn platforme za društveno umrežavanje Fejsbuk, u posredovanju mehanizama delovanja ekstremno desnih organizacija u Srbiji. Fokus je stavljen na funkcionalni potencijal ove digitalne platforme za informisanje i propagiranje političkih ciljeva, mobilizaciju članstva, izgradnju kolektivnog identiteta i organizovanje akcija desnih ekstremista u Srbiji. Kako se politički aktivizam sve više ostvaruje online, uz kontinuirano jačanje desnice u protekle tri decenije, ova studija će pokušati da odgovori na pitanja kakva je i kolika uloga Interneta u ovim procesima. U radu su predstavljeni i rezultati kvalitativne i kvantitativne studije dve Fejsbuk stranice, čiji su nosioci*

1 ivona.zivkovic@fon.bg.ac.rs

2 d.petrovic@sf.bg.ac.rs

jedna formalna i jedna neformalna ekstremno-desna politička organizacija – Srpska desnica i Srpska čast sa ciljem da se razume na koji način i u koje svrhe ove političke organizacije koriste digitalne platforme.

KLJUČNE REČI: *desni ekstremizam, društveni pokreti, digitalne platforme, Fejsbuk*

1. Introduction

The wars of the 1990s, and close cooperation of Milošević's regime with right-wing extremists, together with disappointment in main opposition parties, had an impact on the affirmation of extremists' ideas in Serbia after the breakup of former Yugoslavia. Democratic changes after 5 October 2000 managed only partly to restrain the rising of right-wing extremism in Serbia but after the assassination of democratic Prime Minister Zoran Đinđić in 2003, it was just a matter of time before the right-wing populists took a firm grip on the country. The assassination of Đinđić further intensified national and social frustrations, making the new generations susceptible to far-right movements such as *Obraz*, *Nacionalni stroj*, *Krv i čast*, *Srpski narodni pokret 1389*, *Srpski narodni pokret Naši*, and *Srpska akcija* (Bakić, 2013b). Post-Milošević Serbian governments have exhibited considerable tolerance towards extreme-right actors, allowing them to gain significant political influence (Stakić, 2015). Today, 20 years after Đinđić's assassination and 10 years after populist right-wing Serbian Progressive Party took over all levels of power in Serbia, extremist organizations are flourishing again.

In parallel to the rise of the right-wing extremism and radicalism³ in Serbia, the last two decades are also characterized by an intensive expansion of digital technology use. The proliferation of inexpensive computer devices and smart mobile phones had led to the digitalization of almost all aspects of social life. Therefore, it is no surprise that one of the main tools for disseminating political ideas from the beginning of the 21st century in Serbia, as well as in the rest of the digitalized world, was the Internet. During that period, in many countries, social media has become an inevitable factor in shaping public sphere, if not the most important source of political information. Especially in those countries where traditional media are strictly regulated under firm state control, social media is emerging as a crucial avenue for political information dissemination and activism (Petrović and Bešić, 2019).

The utility value of the Internet for extremist groups is immense, ranging from simple community communication to the dissemination of propaganda, recruitment of new members, training, fundraising, and much more. This paper therefore focuses on the role of social media as a tool for spreading the political influence of right-wing extremists in Serbia.

3 Bakić (2019) points out that the terms far, extreme, reactionary, and radical right should be distinguished, whereby the first term is the broadest and includes the other two. Unlike the first two, the radical right, while occasionally covertly or potentially reactionary, fundamentally acknowledges the democratic political system but solely as a tool for establishing an authoritarian model of government.

Our analysis departs from the assumption that the Internet cannot be considered as the driving force behind right-wing extremism and radicalism in Serbia, but that its communicative features contribute to the expression and development of extremist and radical ideas, strengthening the collective identity, and mobilizing and recruiting supporters. Therefore, this paper will pay particular attention to understanding the importance of digital platforms, especially Facebook, for the actions of extremist organizations.

Our research will be enriched with qualitative and quantitative analysis of the content of Facebook pages of two political organizations that, at the time of the analysis, could be characterized as radical right-wing. These two organizations were chosen because they represent two different types of extremist right-wing organizations: one a formally structured political party, and the other, a social movement.

2. Navigating the rise of online extremism

2.1. *Digital Nexus:*

Unveiling the Interconnected World of Extremism

In its early years, the Internet created a relatively safe virtual environment where communication and gathering of like-minded individuals, and forming various groups were easily facilitated. The possibility that the Internet offered in terms of protecting individuals' identities and communication security contributed to an increase in communication intensity among members of certain groups (Pauwels, 2015). Additionally, the virtual world represented a more convenient environment for the development, networking, and integration of small and marginalized groups into larger and more formal organizations. The way these groups use the Internet has rapidly evolved in recent years due to new technological possibilities and the proliferation of digital platforms which enabled individuals and groups to espouse extremist views and ideas (Bartlett and Reynolds, 2015; Neo, 2019). More significantly, it allowed them to network with individuals whose interests they claim to represent, as well as to mobilize and network them towards the desired political action (Hatakka, 2019).

By 1999, almost all known extremist organizations in the world had established their presence on the Internet (Bartlett and Reynolds, 2015).⁴ By the mid-2000s, most of these groups had moved beyond text-heavy websites and redirected their activities to interactive forums. Soon, even these forums began to lose popularity, and the largest number of these groups moved to Facebook and Twitter (now X). These platforms began to face accelerated growth of extremism online and became significant channels for spreading propaganda materials and information, and recruiting new members (Bartlett and Reynolds, 2015; Hatakka, 2019).

4 Winter et al. (2020) propose a definition of "online extremism" as Internet activism that is related to, engaged in, or perpetrated by groups or individuals that hold views considered to be doctrinally extremist.

The emergence of platforms such as Facebook and Twitter contributed to the creation of new forms of political communication and elevated the possibility of networking individuals without any centralized or formal organization (Petrović, 2016). These platforms facilitated and allowed the establishment of more direct links with political leaders and likeminded individuals, who may be geographically distant in the analogue world (Lee and Shin, 2014). Simultaneously, the personalization of political activism has driven fundamental shifts in the organization of political actions. In addition to traditional forms of collective action observed in entities like trade unions or political parties, entirely new patterns of social connection and organization, grounded in the principles of connective action, are emerging (Bennett and Segerberg, 2011). Despite varying assessments of the social consequences of ICT use in the literature, there is a consensus among scholars about the escalating significance these technologies hold in the activities of social movements.

Connective action, as highlighted by Bennet and Segerberg (Bennett and Segerberg, 2011), is grounded on fundamentally different principles compared to collective action of the analog era. The reduction in coordination costs facilitated by new technologies has diminished the imperative for centralized organization (Castells, 2015; Agarwal et al., 2014). Consequently, in the digital age, the conventional organizational models characterized by a robust structure and strict division of labor within movement networks are no longer indispensable. Modern communication technologies have evolved to the point where they can effectively assume the functions traditionally fulfilled by these classic organizations.

However, it is crucial to recognize that connective action should not be perceived as a counterforce to collective patterns of political action; rather, it serves as a complementary element. Even amid the high degree of individualization and fragmentation in online interactions, collective identities persist in the digital age (Gerbaudo and Trere, 2015; Gerbaudo, 2015; Kavada, 2015). Consequently, alongside social movements, political parties are increasingly using digital communication channels. Their aim is to overcome media blockades, establish personalized connections with the younger generation, or simply reduce costs while enhancing communication efficiency. Particularly, smaller parties lacking sufficient resources or infrastructure are extensively utilizing digital platforms to engage with their members and supporters (Ward, 2011).

2.2. Digital platforms in the hands of right-wing extremists

According to the 2018 report by Europol⁵, online propaganda that spreads through digital platforms is still the most important channel for recruiting, radicalizing, and fundraising for extremist organizations. Internet and digital platforms have revitalized extremist organizations and led to a change in the structure of their operations. Specifically, the rise of the Internet and digital platforms has enabled extremist organizations, like other social movements, to

5 <https://www.europol.europa.eu/activities-services/main-reports/european-union-terrorism-situation-and-trend-report-2018-tesat-2018> retrieval date:17.2.2023.

coordinate and act without a single leader. Therefore, online activists can join forces while being potentially far apart in the physical world (Lavi, 2020).

Although the right-wing groups do not use the Internet and digital platforms much differently than other political organizations (Pauwels, 2015), the question arises as to why these platforms are receptive to extremist use. Firstly, these channels' utmost popularity among their target audience has turned them into a mainstream among young people (Weimann, 2014). Secondly, digital platforms are relatively easy to use, reliable and free. Finally, and perhaps most importantly, digital platforms have enabled modified door-to-door campaigns (Weimann, 2014).

According to some studies of the emergence of social movements, the Internet and digital platforms have the capacity to generate collective identity. Evidently, the Internet can facilitate the exchange of resources and information, and help create solidarity and action in line with the shared goals (della Porta and Mosca, 2006). Bakic argues that far-right extremists' virtual communities are special institutions of socialization through which language, ideology, themes, patterns of behavior, and desirable attitudes are adopted as the basis for the radicalization of individuals (Bakic, 2013a). Digital platforms of far-right organizations must embody a vision that involves releasing ideological materials such as speeches, music, books, and articles, which identify the most important enemies, and call for practical political action to materialize a desirable vision of the future (Bakic, 2013a). Waldman and Verga, (2016) believe that extremist organizations use digital platforms as channels for stimulating, organizing, and activating violent activities as well as for a specific type of promotion of undertaken activities that could reach potential supporters.

Interestingly, despite the fact that many extremist organizations have adopted numerous innovations brought by new technologies, some of them also employ survival techniques in the virtual space that involve the use of outdated communication channels. Although forums are considered somewhat outdated, a few of these platforms have been detected to remain active. This is particularly true for the extremist organizations with a history of violent activities. These organizations employ different tactics to maintain communication with new or existing members. They strive to maintain a strong connection between pages linked to popular digital platforms, which serve as gathering and redirecting points to forums that can be characterized as more secure and closed environments. The need for such behavior emerged as a response to the consistent shutdown of profiles of far-right organizations, such as Stormfront and Islamist organizations, on digital platforms. Therefore, instead of neglecting forums and transitioning solely to digital platforms, there has been a diversification in the use of resources provided by the online environment (Bartlett and Reynolds, 2015). While forums are still present, many extremist organizations use digital platforms to fulfill the basic needs of the group, such as promoting intra-group cohesion and facilitating informal communication and socialization of new group members. However, these platforms are also used as a tool for spreading propaganda beyond the core group, reaching other online communities, especially those known to include semi-radicalized individuals, extremist sympathizers, and individuals and media outlets prone to radicalization (Bartlett and Reynolds, 2015).

With the emergence of the Internet, there has been a change in the patterns of extremist movements' functioning. The Internet has become a source of non-relational, vertical diffusion of the movements' ideology, while digital platforms have become a relational, horizontal dimension of radicalization (Hafez and Mullins, 2015). This relational nature of digital platforms adds a new dimension to radicalization that is not present in vertical and asynchronous platforms like YouTube or online magazines. On the other hand, platforms like Facebook or Twitter allow horizontal communication that is interactive, highly personalized, directed, and easily achievable. As such, these platforms can help alienated individuals develop a sense of belonging to a particular community (Hafez and Mullins, 2015).

Another pattern detected among extremist organizations in the virtual world is that many of them use the specific tactic of swarm casting. This tactic involves posting the same content on multiple different profiles on different digital platforms to secure their content from deletion or censorship (Bartlett and Reynolds, 2015). Digital platforms also enable these groups to employ the tactic of narrowcasting. This tactic involves directing specific content to a carefully selected audience based on their values, preferences, or demographic characteristics. The content disseminated to such a narrowly defined audience is specifically tailored to align with the profile of a particular social group (Weimann, 2014).

2.3. *Online right-wing populism*

In the context of analyzing the right-wing extremists' online activities, it is crucial to consider an additional dimension of their engagement: their populist discourse in online communication.⁶ Among its numerous definitions, populism is chiefly observed as either a (thin) ideology or a communicative tool (Višić, 2020). Although the former view is far more popular, due to the nature of our study, we will follow Višić's line of thought to focus on the latter. Citing various authors, Višić defines populism as a discursive rhetorical style of political communication used by political actors and referred to the people; in other words, as a technique of engaging in politics (Jagers and Walgrave, 2007). It should be noted that Bakić (2019) describes populism as a demagogic practice, while Mueller (2019) sees it as a rhetorical tool without the potential to be a corrective for democracy, unlike Višić who is more optimistic about the potential democratic function of populism (Višić, 2020).

In this context, Krämer's take on the role of the Internet in the hands of right-wing populists is interesting. He believes that we must consider a number of opposing tendencies concerning the functions of Internet platforms in the hands of right-wing populists (Krämer, 2017). First, they can be used to communicate publicly in order to organize and mobilizing people with fewer preconditions than in the past. Second, it may be characterized as a medium

6 Since the early 21st century, the term „radical-right populism“ has gained prominence, signifying the third wave in the transformation of far-right parties. These parties embrace the liberal-democratic order while strongly expressing anti-elitism, forming the basis of populism (Betz 1994, as cited in Bakić, 2019). According to Mudde, a key theorist on radical right-wing populism, these organizations share a core ideology that includes the combination of (at least) nativism, authoritarianism, and populism (Mudde, 2013).

suitable for confrontation, fierce debate, and attacks, anonymous or not. Third, Internet applications enable selective exposure and algorithmic filtering, which gives the opportunity to avoid confrontation and messages conflicting with one's own attitudes. Krämer's comparison between the general and specific function of online applications and platforms for right-wing populism can be seen in table 1.

Table 1. *Summary of the functions of the Internet for right-wing populism (Krämer, 2017)*

General functions of online applications and platforms	Specific function for right-wing populism
Prove and receive information on (social) reality, interpretations, opinions, and arguments (e.g., on static websites, news websites, and social media posts)	Presentation and elaboration of the ideology, framing and evaluation of issues and events in terms of the worldview (e.g., anti-elitism or exclusion of outgroups)
Present and negotiate personal identities (e.g., on social media platforms, while potential aspects of identities may be encountered on a variety of platforms)	Self-socialization into a right-wing populist worldview; adoption of beliefs, symbols, and practices of right-wing populism
Establish and entertain social relationships (e.g., on social networking sites)	Demonstrating the (plebiscitary and bonapartist) representation of "the people": top-down claims of leadership and acclamation (e.g., by liking and sharing)
Coordinate collective action: collaborative production of content (e.g., on collaborative platforms such as Wikis, collaborative maps) or organization of offline actions and events (e.g., via messaging/chat applications and platforms)	Interactive and collective organization of information on misconduct of elite and outgroup members; construction of threats by accumulation of anecdotal evidence
Automatically process (social) data in order to provide personalized services and content (e.g., recommender systems)	Confirmation of right-wing populist worldviews due to automated selective exposure to ideologically consistent content

Bearing in mind Krämer's view of the activities of right-wing populists on the Internet, one of the goals of our research will be based precisely on his understanding of the specific function of right-wing populism in the context of Serbian right-wingers on the Internet.

3. Research on the Use of Facebook by Right-Wing Extremists in Serbia

3.1. Contextual framework

According to the data released by Serbian Republic Statistical Office⁷, by the end of 2023, 85.4% of the population in Serbia was using the Internet, and 82.3% had accounts on social media platforms (Facebook, Twitter). The use of the Internet, particularly digital platforms, is more prevalent among younger individuals. The percentage of young people in Serbia, aged between 16 and 34, using the Internet is 100%, with very few of them not having a profile on

7 G202316018.pdf (stat.gov.rs) retrieval date:15.12.2023.

any social networking platform. Among the older population, the use of digital platforms decreases proportionally, with a significant decline observed only in those aged 55 and older.

Over the last decade, the Internet has been extensively utilized for political purposes. In Serbia, the percentage of citizens using social media as a main source of political information is 26.8% (Petrović and Bešić, 2019) and it serves as a primary means of communication for organizing social movements (Petrović, 2016). The use of digital platforms and the Internet for propaganda purposes is not limited to social movements but extends to political parties, such as the ruling Serbian Progressive Party (Petrović, 2018).

For radical right-wing parties, the Internet has become a crucial communication tool, particularly since 2010s. In that period, the right-wing in Serbia primarily shifted its focus to the online space, using it to disseminate its ideas and recruit members.

In Serbia, there are at least 23 active right-wing groups, with reported activities including violence, threats against migrants, and attacks motivated by hatred and ethnic identity (Petrović and Ignjatijević, 2022). Significant organizations like 1389, Serbian Party Zavetnici, and Serbian People's Movement Naši explicitly reject fascism. In contrast, Stormfront Serbia, Obraz, National Serbian Front, Krv i čast, and Serbian Action are categorized as either clero-fascists or neo-Nazis (Kelly, 2019). Despite their marginal role in political decision-making, right-wing organizations significantly influence public opinion and maintain close connections or indirect cooperation with political entities in power (Buljubašić, 2022). Right wing organizations, such as Nacionalni Srpski Front, openly embrace fascism, while others, like Serbian Right and Srpska Radikalna Stranka, adopt more ambiguous populist strategies. Non-party organizations, e.g. Nacionalna Avangarda and Srbska Akcija, advocate a more elitist vision of national politics. Right-wing groups also display varying attitudes toward the state. Some, such as Dveri and Konzervativni Pokret Naši, oppose the current political establishment. In contrast, others, for instance, Srbska Čast and Pokret Levijatan, perceive themselves as defenders of Serbian nation, irrespective of the ruling power, engaging in targeted „humanitarian“ activities (Bego, 2021).

The most influential leaders of far-right organizations in Serbia on social media include Milica Djurdjević – Srpska stranka Zavetnic (with over 64K followers on Facebook), Boško Obradović – Dveri (with over 62K followers on Twitter), Bojan Stojković – Srbska čast (with over 58K followers on Instagram), Jovana Stojković – Živim za Srbiju (with over 35K followers on Facebook), and Pavle Bihali – Levijatan (with over 25K followers on Instagram) (Bego, 2021). However, in the current political landscape, with the right-wingers staying out of the parliament, the online activities of the right wing are deemed insufficient to realize its engagement potential. The absence of significant mass movements that effectively utilize the Internet for recruitment and socialization of new members, as well as the transfer of their activities into the real world, prevents the existence of an active far-right presence (Bakić, 2013a).

3.2. Methodology

The study analyzes the Facebook⁸ posts of two organizations, which can be portrayed as extreme right-wingers based on their history of activities and advocated views: Serbian right (*Srpska desnica*) and Serbian Honor (*Srbska čast*).

In the process of collecting data, we used Facepager,⁹ a program which allowed a systematic and precise collection of data for further analysis. This program primarily enabled an accurate determination of the number of likes and comments. It then facilitated systematic and accurate data sampling for content analysis.

The key objective of the empirical study was to explain the main reasons why the analyzed organizations use Facebook. Our basic aim was to explore to what extent the analyzed organizations rely on Facebook in the processes of disseminating their ideas and information about the organization's activities, and inviting their members to participate in their rallies and other activities.

The research consisted of two phases. The first was a qualitative analysis of the post content by means of content analysis, which assumes that social reality is loaded into parts of the text or some other form of communication (Bešić, 2019). „Message“ is understood to mean certain symbolic content the followers of the Facebook page share with others, which contains some of the components that can be considered extremist, according to the classification framework. We will try to provide the social context of the content by answering who created the content, to whom it is primarily directed, at what time it happens, what means were used for its dissemination, what is intended by this communication, and what are its consequences (Bešić, 2019). In the second phase of the research, we analyzed quantitative indicators of the impact of the observed organizations' posts.

3.3. Analytical framework and criteria for selecting units of analysis

With only limited relevant population data available, we employed a purposive sample in our research, obtained by systematically monitoring posts on the official Facebook pages of the two organizations. We have analyzed only public posts on the official pages from May 2019 to May 2020. It's essential to note that due to resource limitations and an unknown total post count, the sample is not representative.

The focus of the analysis was based on systematic monitoring of posts on the official Facebook pages of two extreme right-wing organizations – *Serbian Right*¹⁰ led by Miša Vacić and *Serbian Honor*¹¹ led by Bojan Stojković.

8 There are at least two reasons why the analysis focused on Facebook. Research shows that Facebook is still the most used digital platform in Serbia (Social Serbia 2022 (pioniri.com). Besides, both organizations are the most active on this digital platform. Also, architecture of the platform allows easier access to and analysis of the data.

9 Facepager: A publicly available tool for data collection from Facebook – DigitalMediaLab (ruc.dk)

10 <https://www.facebook.com/srpskadesnica.rs/> retrieval date:12.5.2023.

11 <https://www.facebook.com/srbskacastcom/> retrieval date: 12.5.2023.

The criteria for classification into groups were the posts on the selected Facebook pages. After that, the selection of units from each group was determined by subjective judgment.

Judging by these organizations' dominant features, their main representatives, the actions they have carried out so far, the themes, symbols, and characters they promoted, classification of these organizations as extreme right is justified by many of the mentioned criteria (Kuljić, 2002; Bakić, 2007; Bakić, 2019). *Serbian Right* is a duly established political party, with a defined structure, a formal president, a goal, and a plan of action, as spelled out in their Informator (Fact Sheet)¹². On the other hand, *Serbian Honor* is a less structured grassroots organization, which does not have clearly defined goals, organizational structure or plan of action, but it does have a leader.

Key indicators of the Facebook platform's importance for these movements were analyzed in terms of the number of followers these organizations have, the content of their posts and the engagement such posts attract. Units of analysis included in this research were as follows: theme, symbols, and characters.

Theme: In the absence of much space for creative expression, right-wing organizations' posts are straightforward and intended for broad audiences. The themes are readily visible, typically featuring negative depictions of specific enemies, groups, or nations.

Symbols: Given these organizations' ideological orientation, posts are likely to focus on nationalist symbols like territorial integrity, farmers' dignity, the flag, the anthem, and friendly relations with Russia. Anticipated symbols include those rooted in extreme racism/nationalism, clericalism, anti-Semitism, anti-Islamism, anti-liberalism, anti-socialism, anti-anarchism, anti-communism, homophobia, sexism, xenophobia, anti-Americanism, anti-Masonry, hostility towards globalization, and the study of past fascist and right-wing authoritarian regimes. An emphasis on authoritarianism, envisioning a mono-racial, mono-confessional, and mono-ethnic society, is to be expected (Bakić, 2007: 35 according to Kuljić, 2002). Derogatory remarks against opponents, dissenters, ethnic minorities, and foreigners are also commonplace, along with a penchant for uniforms.

Characters: The study focuses on Serbian historic figures glorified for their significance in national history and preservation of Serbian identity.

The classification system constituted of the following elements: calling for safeguarding Serbia's territorial integrity, particularly to keep Kosovo within its borders; calling for ethnic and confessional uniformity; negative attitude towards migrants; glorification of historical personalities and important dates in Serbian history; informing supporters of the organization's activities; attracting and mobilizing supporters.

3.4. Description of the subjects of the analysis

3.4.1. Serbian Right

Even though the organization was founded in January 2018, its president Miša Vacić, had been active in various right-oriented organizations from early 2000s. Namely, in 2005, Vacić became a member of the right-wing organization

12 <https://www.spskadesnica.rs/data/files/Informator-srpske-desnice.pdf> retrieval date: 12.5.2023.

SNP 1389, in which he acted as a spokesman from 2006 to 2014.¹³ During this period, Vacić participated in many actions, such as involvement in a protest against the Pride march in Belgrade in 2008, during which he was arrested. In his statements after the Pride event, he spoke in extremely offensive terms about LGBT population. In 2012, the Constitutional Court of the Republic of Serbia deliberated on a possible ban of SNP 1389.¹⁴ However, the final verdict acquitted the organization, allowing it to continue its existence. According to the former public prosecutor, this movement persistently posed threats to fundamental human rights and freedoms, engaging in acts of violence and inciting hatred towards certain individuals and members of the LGBT population. The movement was also accused of causing disruption prior to the 2010 Pride event, supporting individuals indicted by the ICTY, and commemorating the Srebrenica genocide as the day of Srebrenica's liberation.¹⁵

When it comes to his activities within the *Serbian Right*, Miša Vacić stepped into the limelight again during the establishment of municipal committees in Bujanovac and Šabac. Public Prosecutor brought new charges against him because of his statements directly advocating violence against political opponents. In the Bujanovac incident, he referred to „domestic traitors associated with Shqiptars“ and threatened them with “exile” for obstructing the Serbian Right. Shortly after that, Vacić made similar threats to the Šabac Mayor, suggesting that he and his associates would be plunged into the Drina river and drowned. According to the Serbian Right website, the organization emerged following the Assembly of Serbian Right, uniting various nationalist and patriotic groups. Stressing their faith in both war veterans and youth, they proclaimed their readiness to defend Serbian holy sites and the future of Serbian children. The organization's activities in recent years, as they say, demonstrated their willingness to fight for Serbia on the „streets and barricades,“ but today they advocate institutional struggle as the only effective way. Primary goals of Serbian Right include protecting a patriarchal society, Orthodox faith, national identity, and promoting symbols like national heroes, the father-protector, the mother as the pillar of a healthy family, a strong defense army, and patriotic values. This organization supports reinstating military training in schools, claiming it is an essential course in the future generations' curriculum. In addition to its website, Serbian Right also maintains active profiles on social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram, where they post daily. At the time of the analysis, the organization had 13,637 followers on Facebook, 867 followers and over 2,000 posts on Twitter (X), and 708 followers and over 700 posts on Instagram.

3.4.2. Serbian Honor

In absence of an official website, the organization's Facebook page served as the main source of first-hand information. Describing themselves as a patriotic organization, they express love for Serbia, emphasizing values such as honor

13 <https://www.istinomer.rs/akter/misa-vacic/> retrieval date:7.4.2023.

14 <http://www.politika.rs/scc/clanak/215567> retrieval date:7.4.2023.

15 <https://www.021.rs/story/BBC/228014/Ko-je-Misa-Vacic-Srpski-Julije-Cezar-ili-politicka-starleta.html> retrieval date:7.4.2023.

and heroism over hatred. *Serbian Honor* apparently strives to protect family values "Serbhood", and Orthodoxy. They aim to establish a network in cities across Serbia, Republika Srpska, and Montenegro to strengthen brotherhood and harmony. Interestingly, the president of this organization, Bojan Stojković, appropriates the last name of Miloš Obilić, an epic hero from Serbian medieval tradition, as his last name.¹⁶ Furthermore, the organization urged a swift assembly of a larger group, extending an open invitation to football fans from any club to join them. The organization's activities caught public attention several times in the past few years. On one such occasion, its members took away a horse from a young Roma, under the pretext that the owner did not take good care of the animal.¹⁷ In a brief video¹⁸ addressed to the President of the Republic of Serbia, the organization's president declares the members' preparedness for full mobilization to defend Serbian population in Kosovo. They underscore their voluntary commitment, expressing readiness to sacrifice their lives for this cause.

A few years ago, on the Republika Srpska National Day, members of the organization paraded through the streets of Banja Luka in military uniforms. This was interpreted by foreign media as an indication of separatist intention to establish a paramilitary group.¹⁹ The organization has its own uniforms featuring its logo.²⁰ Members wear black t-shirts or sweatshirts decorated with the organization's emblem, paired with dark pants. Many members also wear special caps covering their faces or hoods. Notably, the organization's leader and some members publicly wear red berets, evocative of the uniforms worn by military and special units, like those of the special operations unit of the State Security Department of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Republic of Serbia, led by Milorad Ulemek Legija, who was convicted for assassination of Serbian Prime Minister Zoran Đinđić in 2003. It is also important to note that the Facebook page of *Serbian Honor* was followed by 53,677 users at the time of the analysis. This organization also had an active profile on Instagram, with over 43,000 followers.

4. Results

The qualitative content analysis was focused on posts that could be classified into four main categories: recruitment and mobilization of members, identity building, extremist rhetoric against political opponents and the representation of the leader's personality in the posts.

16 <https://www.facebook.com/srbskacastcom/about> retrieval date:7.4.2023.

17 <https://www.danas.rs/drustvo/za-mnoge-srpska-cast-spasila-tucenog-konja-demokrate-upozoravaju-na-krsenje-ustava-srbije/>retrieval date:17.2.2023.

18 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ONNUzSnjcyQ> retrieval date:17.2.2023.

19 <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/jan/12/russian-trained-mercenaries-back-bosnias-serb-separatists> retrieval date: 24.5.2023.

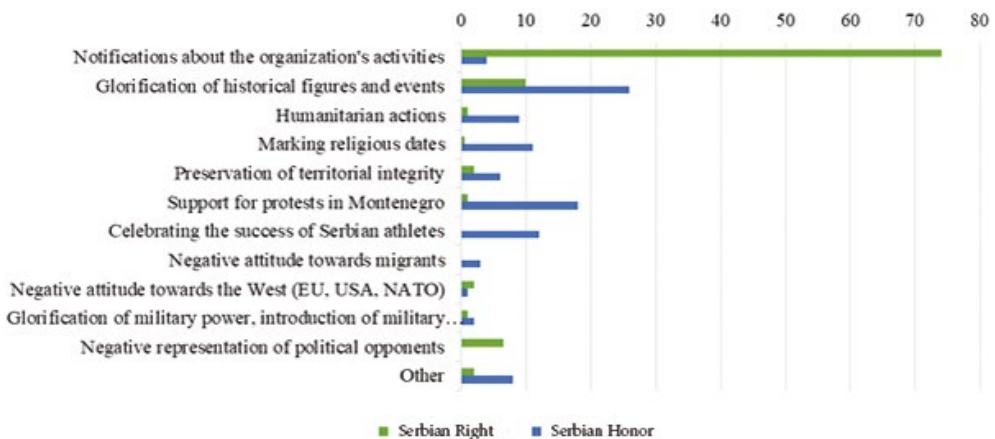
20 <https://www.facebook.com/Majice-Duksevi-%D0%A1%D1%80%D0%B1%D1%81%D0%BA%D0%B0-%D0%A7%D0%90%D0%A1%D0%A2-Prodaja-1673039366257993> retrieval date: 24.5.2023.

4.1. Mobilization of supporters

It appears that the *Serbian right* mostly uses its social media platform to disseminate general information about its activities, particularly focusing on the formation of municipal boards, and organizational events. Many posts in this category aim to inform the followers about the organization’s structure and activities, constituting 74% of total page activity (Figure 1.). However, the posts that encourage followers, especially those identifying as patriots, to be on standby for the defense of peace in the Republic of Serbia, merit particular concern. They suggest a willingness to use force to achieve the intended goals, indicating a potential for inciting to violent actions. On a more positive note, the organization also encourages followers to participate in humanitarian actions. Seven such posts were identified, making up 75% of the content related to recruiting new members and mobilizing supporters. This indicates a dual nature of the organization’s messaging, with both potentially violent and humanitarian aspects.

In contrast to the *Serbian Right* page, the administrators of *Serbian Honor* more frequently invite their followers to various actions, including participation in humanitarian activities. However, they directly mobilize their supporters in less than 2% of their posts. The first analyzed post involves an invitation to citizens to gather and show support for the people of Montenegro. While the post aims to mobilize supporters, it doesn’t embody the right-wing rhetoric of the movement. In the second part of the announcement, members explicitly distance themselves from right-wing tendencies and urge their supporters to join the rally without any political, national, fanatical, or racial affiliations. However, further analysis of other posts reveals a crucial announcement shedding light on the extreme right-wing ideology characterizing a significant part of this organization’s work. This announcement relates to an invitation to participate in „People’s patrols“ (Narodne patrolne). In February 2020, the organization urged their followers to take to the streets as part of the *People’s patrols* to protest against migrants. In conclusion, approximately 13% of the posts focus on recruitment and mobilization of movement members, which is significantly lower compared to the 75% observed on the previously analyzed page. Neither post from the analyzed pages encourages followers to directly join the movement.

Figure 1. Content Prevalence Percentage in Posts (%)



4.2. Identity building

The establishment of a collective identity among community members is crucial for effective functioning of organizations. The Internet and digital platforms play a significant role in generating this collective identity. The Internet facilitates the exchange of resources and information, aiding in the creation of solidarity and alignment with common goals (della Porta and Mosca, 2006). The analyzed organizations employ various techniques to construct collective identities, by e.g. glorifying historical figures and events, commemorating religious dates, insisting on the preservation of territorial integrity, expressing support for protests in Montenegro, celebrating the success of Serbian athletes, glorifying military power, and advocating the reintroduction of military service.

Both organizations primarily focus on commemorating significant dates in Serbian history and glorifying the actions of notable Serbs. Although they glorify different persons, the pattern is nearly identical. Common symbols are evident, with notable mentions including the NATO bombing in 1999, the victims, prominent individuals, and important dates related to this event, as well as the battle of Košare. There are 10% posts on the page of *Serbian Right* related to marking historical events and glorifying significant historical figures. The most frequently mentioned event is the NATO bombing of FR Yugoslavia in 1999, with a particular focus on the battle for Košare. Additionally, historical figures such as Dragoljub Draža Mihajlović, Gavrilo Princip, Miloš Obrenović, Prince Mihajlo, and Milunka Savić are often aggrandized. On the other hand, the analysis identified 26% of announcements that glorify historical figures and commemorate important dates in Serbian history on the page of *Serbian Honor*. Similar to the *Serbian Right*, the most frequent posts concern the battle of Košare and the glorification of soldiers who participated in military operations in Kosovo at the end of the last century. In addition to frequent mentions of Miloš Obilić, characters such as Gavrilo Princip, Nikola Tesla, Sveti Sava, Stefan Nemanja, and King Dušan are also prominent. Figures like Vladimir Putin and Nikolay Romanov are often cited as great friends of the Serbian people.

Analyzed organizations symbolically link a substantial segment of their activities to Orthodox holidays and generally express their national identity through Orthodoxy. The analysis of *Serbian Honor* page reveals 11% of announcements celebrating Christmas and Easter, as well as baptismal celebrations. In case of *Serbian Right* party, these make only 0.5% of all analyzed posts.

Members of both organizations strongly advocate the preservation of territorial integrity of Serbia, specifically by refusing to recognize the independence of Kosovo. Though sporadic, their activities, humanitarian or otherwise, predominantly concentrate on the southern regions of Serbia. Two percent of *Serbian Right's* posts focus on the theme of safeguarding the territorial integrity of Serbia. This is three times less than in the case of *Serbian Honor* (6%). These posts often draw on historical ties of Serbian people to the territory and reference events from the 1990s.

Both groups support the return of mandatory military service and a strong military with modern weapons. There are 14 announcements on the *Serbian Honor* page boasting the strength of Serbian army and detailing information about its weapons and capabilities. In several announcements, members of the organization stress the importance of reintroducing military service as the best way to educate younger generations. Half as many announcements from this category were found on the *Serbian Right's* page.

Additionally, they endorse traditional family organization, preferably with multiple children, specific gender roles, and a hierarchical structure led by a strong paternal figure. Overall, they promote traditional values in family life, governance, and social relations. In May 2019, members of *Serbian Honor* opposed the right to termination of pregnancy with a straightforward announcement reading „Stop abortions.“ In contrast, a significant number of posts on this page glorify the role of mother as family pillar, commending her sacrifice and significance.

Approximately 18% of announcements on the *Serbian Honor* page are related to events in Montenegro. More specifically, they report on protests against the adoption of the Law on Freedom of Religion and express support to Montenegrin people in their opposition to the law. Many of these posts, like others on the page, feature photos of protests and participants. A prevalent theme in many posts is the defense of Orthodoxy and unity of Montenegrin and Serbian people. Conversely, on the *Serbian Right* page, only 1% of posts fall into this category.²¹

Finally, the *Serbian Honor* page features 71 posts dedicated to celebrating successes of Serbian athletes. In these posts, athletes are promoted as heroes and true representatives of Serbian people, who inspire a strong sense of pride across the nation. Notably, Novak Djokovic stands out as the Serb in whose success the nation rightfully revels. No posts from this category were found on the *Serbian Right* party's page.

4.3. Extremist rhetoric

Another important characteristic of right-wing organizations is that they routinely aim to dehumanize and demonize their opponents. Group members are presented as freedom fighters in a war against a cruel enemy. Often, these groups use the substitution of concepts, spin, and dissemination of fake news in the

21 These general aspects were also mirrored in the way the far-right reacted to the political events that affected Serbia and the adjacent region in 2020. The beginning of the year was marked by a confrontation between the Serbian Orthodox Church and the former Montenegrin government. Far-right groups are sensitive to religion, as most of them place Orthodoxy at the core of their nationalist ideology. Tensions grew in the mid- April when Montenegrin authorities arrested the bishop Amfilohije for violating anti-Covid laws. The president of Srbska Desnica Miša Vacić claimed that the attack on Serbian church was an attack against Serbia and demanded a strong response by Serbian president Aleksandar Vučić. Other far-right activists evoked the ghosts of “civil war”, provoked – in their opinion – by the divisive politics of Montenegrin president Milo Đukanović (Bego, 2021)

fight against their imaginary enemies (Hale, 2012). This rhetorical construction is also present in both analyzed organizations, which do not hesitate to use derogatory terms and much more serious insults directed at their opponents. This is exemplified in Miša Vacić's speeches in Bujanovac and Šabac, as well as in *Serbian Honor's* attitude towards migrants. On the page of *Serbian Honor*, an openly hostile attitude towards migrants is evident. The analysis indicates that over a year, this organization expressed a strong anti-migrant sentiment in 16 posts. This is not the case with Serbian Right's page, where we didn't come across any such posts. The situation is reversed when it comes to denigrating political opponents. We came across 38 Serbian Right's posts in this category, particularly against Nebojsa Zelenović and the Democratic Party in general, Aleksandar Šapić, and Dragan Đilas. It's worth noting that certain number of posts praise Serbian President Aleksandar Vučić, often glorifying his actions and supporting his policies in Kosovo. In ten posts of Serbian Right, we found negative attitudes toward the West, in form of disapproval of the European Union, NATO, and the United States of America. Conversely, there is a positive attitude towards Russia, the Eurasian Union, and the last Russian royal family, the Romanoffs. We detected around seven *Serbian Honor's* posts from this category.

4.4. Leader figure

We have previously pointed out the differences between the Serbian Right, a political party, and *Serbian Honor*, a grassroots social movement. Traditionalist parties typically rally behind a charismatic leader. Supporters of these parties are generally comfortable with a strong leader and do not expect to be extensively involved in the party's activities (Spasojević, Stojiljković, 2020). Social movements, on the other hand, influenced by various factors, are growing increasingly reluctant to place too much weight on their leaders. More specifically, the rise of the Internet and digital platforms has facilitated the organization and operation of extremist groups without the imperative to excessively highlight a single leader (Lavi, 2020).

These distinctions become evident when examining the prominence of official leaders in the posts. In the context of the Serbian Right party, the strong presence of Miša Vacić, the president of the Serbian Right, is evident, overshadowing other members who receive limited public attention. This creates the perception that the entire organization is personified by one individual. In contrast, while the president of *Serbian Honor* is also prominently featured, the organization projects a sense of cohesion—a group of individuals ready to work together toward a specific goal. To be more specific, Miša Vacić was mentioned in 32.25% of all analyzed posts, and often referred to as the „leader,“ whereas Bojan Stojković featured in less than one percent of all analyzed posts (0.14%). However, even though the percentage of posts directly mentioning Bojan Stojković is significantly lower compared to the number of posts mentioning Miša Vacić, this result should be taken with caution. Namely, the *Serbian Honor* page frequently publishes pictures featuring the official leader of the organization, so even if he is not directly mentioned, his image is visually prominent on the page.

4.5. Quantitative analysis

In addition to the content analysis of the posts, a quantitative analysis of the influence of these organizations' posts was also performed (Table 2). If we consider the number of followers of each profile and, even more significantly, the engagement each page produce, we could say that Facebook serves as a significant resource for the organizations to spread their ideas, and recruit and mobilize members. The data presented below appears to indicate that the visitors to these pages exhibit completely different patterns of engagement; however, these disproportions can be justified by the number of followers. *Serbian Right's* posts are expected to attract fewer comments, likes and sharing than *Serbian Honor's*.

The average number of reactions on *Serbian Right's* page is 78 per post. The most liked post featured the statement by President Miša Vacić about the results achieved in the municipal elections in Medveđa and the number of seats the party won in municipal assembly. The average number of comments on the posts of this organization is 3, and it should be noted that many posts, over 200, do not have any user comments. On average, each post on this page is shared by 13 followers. The most shared post concerns the marking of the beginning of the battle at Košare, which was shared by 151 users of the page.

The *Serbian Honor* page has a significantly higher average number of likes, which is expected, given the significantly larger number of its followers. Average number of likes per post is 508. The most liked post is, in fact a reference to a proverb, where an image of a pack of wolves was supposed to illustrate how the group and their leader should function. This post was liked by 4,359 users. The average number of comments per post is 13, while the post with the highest number of comments is the death notice of Stefanos Panagiotis²², which has 484 user comments. On average, each post on this page was shared 78 times. The most shared post that concerns the success of Serbian athletes, which was shared by 5,046 users.

Table 2. Activity of analyzed organizations on Facebook (May 2019– May 2020)

	SERBIAN RIGHT	SERBIAN HONOR
number of followers	13,637	53,677
number of analyzed posts	648	700
Reactions		
total number of reactions to all analyzed posts	50,319	355,448
average number of reactions per post	78	508
maximum number of reactions per post	1,660	4,359

22 The post states that during the NATO bombing of the FR Yugoslavia in 1999, this man organized the blocking of airports throughout Greece, preventing NATO planes from taking off and bombing Serbia. However, this information is inaccurate according to many sources. (<https://www.nedeljnik.rs/ne-stefanos-panajotis-nije-blokirao-grcke-aerodrome-tokombombardovanja-jugoslavije-ne-zbog-toga-sto-nije-hteo-nego-jer-nije-postojao/>) retrieval date: 24.5.2023.

Share

total number of shares of all analyzed posts	8,381	54,333
average number of shares per post	13	78
maximum number of shares per post	151	5,046

Comments

total number of comments on all analyzed posts	1,590	8,714
average number of comments per post	3	13
maximum number of comments per post	67	484
TOTAL	60,290	418,495

Both pages published an average of two posts per day. Therefore, considering how often new content is posted by administrators and the engagement of other users or followers on these pages, it is evident that Facebook is an important tool for spreading the ideas of these organizations. Considering the nature of the posts, the fact that *Serbian Honor* does not use any other digital platform or website, except for Instagram, and that news about most of the activities in which members of the organization participated (such as the National patrols) were shared on Facebook, we could deduce that Facebook is the primary tool for spreading ideas and information, mobilizing, and organizing supporters. This confirms that social movements, being less formal organizations compared to political parties, pay much more attention to networks due to more limited funding, but also because they recognize the significance of interaction with supporters.

Although the *Serbian Right* has a website which is relatively up-to-date, the architecture of the site itself does not provide enough space for communication with followers. Its members often used Facebook to organize certain actions and events, as well as to announce their future activities. Therefore, we could also agree that Facebook is a primary tool in the process of spreading ideas and information, mobilizing, and organizing supporters. By way of confirmation, at the time of this analysis, this organization's political campaign focused almost solely on Facebook, where the majority of actions were organized and promoted.

Discussion and conclusion

By analyzing the obtained data, we can draw several conclusions about the role of Facebook based on research of two right-wing organizations. First, it should be noted that these organizations use this platform for different purposes or, to be accurate, they exploit different communicational features of Facebook. *Serbian Right* primarily use this platform for mobilizing supporters by informing them about the organization's activities (members' meetings, signature collection, the number of mandates won in municipal committees, times and places of promotional events). On the other hand, most announcements made by *Serbian Honor* are intended to help build collective identity, which is in line with Betz and Johnson's (2004) characterization of right-wing populism as a nostalgic

ideology. Adoption of beliefs and symbols is just one element characteristic of radical right-wing populists on the Internet, according to Krämer's (2017) understanding of the Internet's function for right-wing populists (Table 1). Additionally, we observe other elements typical of right-wing populists in online environment, such as emphasizing and elaborating on radical right-wing ideology, criticizing elites, and advocating the exclusion of groups like migrants. However, it should be noted that none of the analyzed organizations criticizes elites, which may indicate their support for the current government in Serbia. This stance is confirmed by both organizations, as they have directly expressed support for the president and his decisions in several posts, primarily regarding Kosovo.

On the other hand, *Serbian Honor* exhibits an extremely negative attitude towards migrants and openly calls for their exclusion from society, which is a significant populist characteristic of this movement. Additionally, there is a pronounced plebiscitary and Bonapartist tendency (Krämer, 2017) in glorifying the leaders of these movements, especially when it comes to the Serbian Right, as clearly evidenced by the above analysis of posts.

It is also important to note that online platforms serve as a vital communication tool for social movements types of organization such as *Serbian Honor*, especially in view of their limited alternatives for mobilizing supporters (Bennett and Segerberg, 2011; Castells, 2015). This claim is reinforced by the previously mentioned research findings (Petrović, 2016) on five social movements in Serbia, highlighting the Internet as their primary instrument for disseminating information about their activities. On the other hand, political parties such as Serbian Right represent a classic type of 20th-century collective organization comparing to connective types of ad-hoc organizations such as social movements. As such, political parties have better infrastructure and organization for party activities both online and offline. For them, the Internet is primarily viewed as an instrumental mean of communication, while for social movements, it serves as a tool for community building within the movement. Another difference supporting this argument is that *Serbian Right* principally constructs its identity around the party president, following the common model of party identity formation since the introduction of multi-party system in Serbia. On the other hand, although *Serbian Honor* also identifies with their leader, he is not the sole or even the key element in constructing their identity. Instead, elements of right-wing ideology such as nation or religion take priority.

The role of digital platform from the perspective of *Serbian Honor* as a social movement can be better understood if we rely on Petrović's concept of digital platform's utilization by the social movement organizations. In his 2016 article analyzing how social movements utilize online social networks, after empirically studying five social movements, he concludes that at least three distinct patterns of using online social networks for the purposes of social activism on the Internet can be identified: 1. Portal-type, 2. Forum-type and 3. Protest-type. Without delving into detailed explanations of all three types of activism, which should be understood as analytical ideal types, we can argue that *Serbian*

Honor is closest to the Portal-type activism. As Petrović (2016) defines this type of activism as characterized by many followers, many daily posts on different topics based on extremely harsh and indiscriminate criticism, and a relatively low participation of originally created posts. In certain aspects, this model differs from the operational approach of *Serbian Honor*. As mentioned earlier, this movement typically publishes an average of two posts per day, which is not very high. Furthermore, the majority of their posts does not exhibit extremely right-wing rhetoric in an overly harsh and indiscriminate manner. However, although few, such posts do exist, particularly to express their attitude towards migrants. Also, most of their posts are originally created, which deviates from the mentioned model. We rarely, almost never, encounter satirical content and slogans. Although tendencies toward organizing protest activities are not overly frequent, we can remark that this organization does have such tendencies, as can be seen in the example of People's Patrols.

Another question that this research touched upon is why right-wing populists are turning to digital platforms and whether these platforms encourage extremist actions. The answer to the first part of the question derives from the fact that these organizations have realized the potential of digital platforms, as free channels for spreading information. On the other hand, the establishment of virtual communities, which represent one of the basic functions of the digital platforms, can contribute to strengthening the collective identity of the group and easier adoption of extremist ideology. Most researchers agree that completing the process of radicalization and turning an individual into a violent extremist is almost impossible without the influence of certain factors that come from the physical environment. Therefore, by analyzing the followers' posts and comments, most commentators support the ideas these organizations advocate. However, considering the Facebook algorithm, as well as its data protection policy, it is difficult to determine with certainty whether the virtual environment of these individuals promotes the adoption of extremist ideas and attitudes. Also, echo chambers should be considered (Flaxman, Goel and Rao, 2016), which allow individuals to consume only the content that will contribute to the affirmation of already adopted beliefs and attitudes.

There can hardly be any doubt that digital platforms will continue to count among the most important communication channels for extreme right-wing organizations in the future, especially for grassroot social movements. In Serbia, however, many extremist right-wing organizations, and the two we studied in particular, are at least implicitly supported by the right-wing populist and Serbian President Aleksandar Vučić, who has been the most influential political figure in Serbia for at least a decade. This is why the right-wing organizations, although largely ignored by the mainstream media, do not have to hide their activities in deep web. Instead, they are allowed to rather openly divulge their extremist ideas on platforms such as Facebook or former Twitter. Since the control of communication flows is one of the crucial elements of keeping the current regime in power, this implicit support of right-wingers' actions serves the purpose of polluting the public space (Petrović, 2018) to prevent political

opponents of the regime to efficiently run opposition campaigns on the Internet or discourage average Internet users from getting involved in them.

Absurdly, digital platforms, with their internal policies and rules of content posting, presently act as the only relatively efficient barriers to political online extremism in Serbia.

References

- Agarwal, S. D., et al. (2014). A model of crowd enabled organization: Theory and methods for understanding the role of twitter in the occupy protests. *International Journal of Communication*, (8):27.
- Bakić, J. (2007). Politički ekstremizam u savremenoj Srbiji. *HERETICUS-Časopis za preispitivanje prošlosti*, (02), 31–66.
- Bakić, J. (2013a). Delanje organizacija srpske krajnje desnice u cyber prostoru, u: J. Jeličnčić, S. Ilić (ur.) *Politički ekstremizam u cyber prostoru Srbije*, Centar za razvoj civilnog društva, Zrenjanin.
- Bakic, J. (2013b). Right-wing extremism in Serbia. *International Policy Analysis*. Berlin: Friedrich Ebert Stiftung.
- Bakić, J. (2019). *Evropska krajnja desnica 1945–2018*. Clio. Beograd.
- Bartlett, J., & Reynolds, L. (2015). *The State of the Art 2015: a literature review of social media intelligence capabilities for counter-terrorism*. London: Demos.
- Bego, F. (2021). Serbia. in: J. Mulhall and S. Khan-Ruf (Eds.), *State of hate. Far-right extremism in Europe 2021* (pp. 107–111). Hope not Hate, Amadeu Antonio Foundation and Expo Foundation.
- Bennett, L.W, & Segerberg, A. (2011). Digital Media and the Personalization of Collective Action. *Information, Communication & Society* 14(6):770–799.
- Bešić, M. (2019). *Metodologija društvenih nauka*. Akademska knjiga. Novi Sad.
- Betz, H. G. (1994). *Radical right-wing populism in Western Europe*. Springer.
- Betz, H. G., & Johnson, C. (2004). Against the current—stemming the tide: the nostalgic ideology of the contemporary radical populist right. *Journal of Political Ideologies*, 9(3): 311–327.
- Buljubašić, M. (2022). *Nasilni desničarski ekstremizam na Zapadnom Balkanu: Pregled izazova pojedinih zemalja u oblasti P/CVE*. European Commission.
- Castells, M. (2015). *Networks of outrage and hope: Social movements in the Internet age*. John Wiley & Sons.
- Della Porta, D. & Mosca, L. (2006) 'Democrazia in rete: stili di comunicazione e movimenti sociali in Europa', *Rassegna Italiana di Sociologia*, (4): 529–556.
- Flaxman, S., Goel, S., & Rao, J. M. (2016). Filter bubbles, echo chambers, and online news consumption. *Public opinion quarterly*, 80(S1): 298–320.
- Gerbaudo, P. (2015). Protest avatars as memetic signifiers: political profile pictures and the construction of collective identity on social media in the 2011 protest wave. *Information, Communication & Society*, 18(8): 916–929.

- Gerbaudo, P., & Treré, E. (2015). In search of the 'we' of social media activism: introduction to the special issue on social media and protest identities. *Information, communication & society*, 18(8), 865–871.
- Hafez, M., & Mullins, C. (2015). The radicalization puzzle: A theoretical synthesis of empirical approaches to homegrown extremism. *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, 38(11):958–975.
- Hale, C. W. (2012). Extremism on the World Wide Web: A research review. *Criminal Justice Studies*, 25(4):343–356.
- Hatakka, N. (2019). Expose, debunk, ridicule, resist! Networked civic monitoring of populist radical right online action in Finland. *Information, Communication & Society* (1–16).
- Jagers, J., & Walgrave, S. (2007). Populism as political communication style: An empirical study of political parties' discourse in Belgium. *European journal of political research*, 46(3): 319–345.
- Kavada, A. (2015). Creating the collective: social media, the Occupy Movement, and its constitution as a collective actor. *Information, Communication & Society*, 18(8): 872–886.
- Kelly, L. (2019). *Overview of research on far right extremism in the Western Balkans*. K4D
- Helpdesk Report. Brighton, UK: Institute of Development Studies.
- Krämer, B. (2017). Populist online practices: The function of the Internet in right-wing populism. *Information, Communication & Society*, 20(9): 1293–1309.
- Kuljić, T. (2002). *Prevladavanje prošlosti—uzroci i pravci promene slike istorije krajem XX veka*. Helsinški odbor za ljudska prava u Srbiji.
- Lavi, M. (2020). *Do Platforms Kill*. Harv. JL & Pub. Pol'y, (43): 477.
- Lee, E. J., & Shin, S. Y. (2014). When the medium is the message: How transportability moderates the effects of politicians' Twitter communication. *Communication research*, 41(8), 1088–1110.
- Mudde, C. (2013). Are populists friends or foes of constitutionalism? Policy Brief for The Foundation for Law, Justice and Society
- Mueller, A. (2019). The meaning of 'populism'. *Philosophy & Social Criticism*, 45(9–10): 1025–1057.
- Neo, L. S. (2019). An Internet-mediated pathway for online radicalisation: RECRO. In *Violent Extremism: Breakthroughs in Research and Practice*. IGI Global (62–89).
- Pauwels, L. (2015). *Explaining and understanding the role of exposure to new social media on violent extremism*. Academia Press.
- Petrović, P., & Ignjatijević, M. (2022). *Migranti odlaze, mržnja ostaje: antimigrantska ekstremna desnica u Srbiji*. Beograd: Beogradski centar za bezbednosnu politiku.
- Petrović, D. (2016). Društveno-aktivistički potencijal onlajn platformi za društveno umrežavanje. *Sociološki pregled*, L(3):397–430.

- Petrović, D. (2018). Upotreba digitalnih platformi za potrebe političke propagande: Slučaj lažne Fejsbuk stranice protesta Protiv diktature. *CM Komunikacija i mediji*, 13(44): 1–30.
- Petrović, D., & Bešić, M. L. (2019). Political informing through social media across Europe-factors and effects. *Sociologija*, 61(4):565–584.
- Spasojević, D. & Stojilković, Z. (2020). *Između uverenja i interesa: ideologije i organizacija stranaka u Srbiji*. Fabrika knjiga. Beograd.
- Stakić, I. (2015). Serbian Nationalism and Right-Wing Extremism. in Ejodus, F. and Jureković, P. (eds.) *Violent Extremism in the Western Balkans*, Belgrade: Regional Stability in Southeast Europe Study Group (133–148).
- Višić, M. (2020). Can populism and how be a new strategy for renewing the left?. *Sociologija*, 62(3):330–353.
- Waldman, S., & Verga, S. (2016). Countering violent extremism on social media. *Scientific Report*. Ottawa: Defence Research and Development Canada-Centre for Security Science.
- Ward, I. (2011) Does the internet encourage small parties? A case study of the minutiae of BC politics, 1996–2009. *Australian Journal of Political Science*, 46(2):229–242.
- Weimann, G. (2014). *New terrorism and new media* (Vol. 2). Washington, DC: Commons Lab of the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars.
- Winter, C., et al. (2020). Online extremism: research trends in internet activism, radicalization, and counter-strategies. *International Journal of Conflict and Violence (IJCV)*, (14):1–20.