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# Delo's Orientalist Gaze: Framing the Images of the Iraq War

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## SUMMARY

*The paper analyzes the photographic representation of the U.S. attack on Iraq in the Slovene newspaper Delo. It shows how this representation was distinctly framed in the discourse of Orientalism with particular emphasis on the role of Delo's own, independent sources to show that such an ideological venture is not necessarily a consequence of the Western control over the images of war. Rather, it depends primarily on culturally specific patterns of (collective) self-identification, in this case the mechanisms of Slovene national identity construction and its relation to the Balkan context and specific socio-historical circumstances (operation Enduring Freedom started just before Slovenia held referendums on joining the EU and NATO).*

Key words: Orientalism, war photography, journalistic discourse, war in Iraq, national identity, Delo (newspaper)

Photography complements the discourse of news with visual proofs of the events. And while war reporting in general seems to be losing its aura of objectivity, with large shares of audiences considering it unreliable, biased and censored, war photography appears to have avoided this trend. War photographs continue to be perceived as "facts" or "factual records" and war photography continues to bring the war into our living rooms with a promise of enhanced realism, represented in popular collective memory by Robert Capa's *Death of a Loyalist Soldier*.<sup>1</sup> On the eve of the U.S. attack on Iraq, the Slovene

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main daily newspaper *Delo*<sup>2</sup> made a similar promise to its readers. Not only will it strive for a more objective coverage of the events through its two correspondents, but also by providing “our” vision of events. This was *Delo*’s promise of enhanced objectivity, as the photographs were not only mechanically transcribed eyewitness accounts but were seen by one of *Us*, a Slovene. However, as the analysis of *Delo*’s visual narrative will show, *Delo* failed to fulfil its promise: the visual representation of the conflict was decisively framed within the context of *Orientalism*, a phenomenon that, as I shall argue, must be evaluated against Slovene self-perception and specific Slovene socio-historical circumstances at the time of the U.S. attack.

### **The realism of press photography and the framing of news**

The notion of press photography as a medium of record rests not only on the 19th century positivistic concept of the photographic camera as a scientific tool for registering reality. It is, Zelizer (1995) argues, the direct outcome of a power struggle between journalists and photographers over the question of the primacy to interpret social reality. As Taylor notes, newspapers not only “use photographic realism as proof of authenticity but they also ensure its routine production” (1991: 2) by determining what is considered necessary to prove this type of evidence. This denial that news photographs are, like other (media) texts, always culturally determined forms of selective representation, plays important role not only in the process of structuring the reality of events but also when through the uses of media, they become personal as well as shared experiences. Press photographs are thus images of a collective memory of a society from where they flow to the consciousness of the individual, linking private and public life. (Hardt, 2003: 605). They create a “mnemonic frame within which people can remember with others” (Zelizer, 2002: 699) and act as signposts that direct rememberers to preferred meaning, but with a set of certain limitations (ibid.).<sup>3</sup>

But we should not assign this “communal” function of press photographs to realism. As Griffin points out, war photography as a genre is marked by “a fluid relationship between photographs as documentary records and photographs as mythic symbols.” (1999:130). The most enduring images of war, the photographs that have the power to define the war and symbolize it,<sup>4</sup> “are not those that exhibit the most raw and genuine depictions of life and death on the battlefield, nor those that illustrate historically specific information about people, places, and things, but rather those that most readily present themselves as symbols of cultural and national myth.” (Griffin, 1999: 123).

Griffin's finding is applicable not only to the "great" war photographs but to all those which incorporate a strong symbolic component, e.g. those with *Orientalistic* imagery. This symbolic component is often expressed in the form of a certain narrative allusion or "storytelling vision" (Fulton) and is articulated through the use of "scenes and compositions that resonate with a pre-existing stock of familiar scenes and compositions" (Griffin, 1999: 123).

However the use of "pre-existing stock of familiar scenes" is not characteristic only of photography but of the news in general.<sup>5</sup> Journalists often resort to *frames* in order to set particular events within their broader context. The applied concept of *frames* is derived from Entman's definition of *frames* as "information-processing schemata" (Entman, 1991: 7), operating through salience – "selecting and highlighting some features of reality while omitting others." (Entman, 1993: 53).<sup>6</sup> *Frames* "promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretations, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendations for the item described" (Entman, 1993: 52) through conscious or unconscious prioritising of selected concepts, keywords, symbols, metaphors and visual images. Frames influence opinions<sup>7</sup> by giving these "particularities" greater relevance than that which they would receive under an alternative frame. (Nelson et al., 1997: 569). Used extensively because of their power to tell and explain events in the limited space or air time, such stereotypes or "cultural types" essentially reflect and reproduce the distribution of power in society. The implications of the use of stereotypes to organise a recognisable typification (normally through *Us vs. Them* polarisation) are that "once a topic has been stereotyped it will always be presented in terms of the stereotype, and further, it will never be selected as newsworthy unless it does or says something that fits the stereotype." (Hartley, 1989: 116)<sup>8</sup>

Photography is particularly prone to framing – making only certain features salient – not only because of generic and aesthetic codes or the fact that every image is inevitably a cultural specific, conscious selection of reality but also because of the editorial decisions and newspaper practice in the use of photography – devoting very limited space to photography and hence publishing a limited number of photographs. In the light of salience, press photography can be particularly "problematic" as the apparent, unmediated realism of the photographs renders the use of pictorial stereotypes and typifications (frames) more natural and hence more pervasive, thus granting the predetermined or misinformed perceptions the weight of established facts.

### **Orientalism as a frame**

*Orientalism* is essentially a discourse for the articulation of differences, a *frame* that defines how *Occident* perceives and how it relates to the *Orient*. Said defines it as “a way of coming to terms with the Orient” based on “an accepted grid for filtering through the Orient into Western consciousness” (1994/1978: 1, 6). Essentially, it is “a discourse which creates typologies within which characters can be distributed” (Turner, 1994: 44). *Orientalism* is expressed in a series of binary oppositions that reduces the complexity of social relations to a set of simplified US vs. Them oppositions. Within this division, the *Orient* is essentially strange, exotic and mysterious, sensual, child-like, irrational and potentially dangerous, the West is considered rational, virtuous, mature and normal (Said, 1994/1978: 40-42). Such a network of categories produces images by which the *Orient* is simultaneously defined and controlled, it is a “Western style of dominating, restructuring, and having authority over the Orient” (Said, 1994/1978: 12). *Orientalism* creates an “imaginative geography” (Said) within which the world is unambiguously divided into two unequal parts and these contrasting conceptualizations not only maintain the asymmetry of power but also perpetuate the antagonisms between the *Orient* and the *Occident* in order to render the incompatibility of the two cultures an undeniable and self-evident fact.

Sandikcioglu argues that *Orientalism* as a cultural cognitive model serves two main functions: (1) to structure a complex political reality in terms of contrastive concepts of *Self* and *Other*; and (2) to activate an *Orientalist* conceptualization of the subject through the use of metaphors or myths. (Sandikcioglu, 1999: 6) This is achieved through the consistent use of contrasting and mutually exclusive images and themes that produce easily recognizable schemata of basic dichotomies. The study focused on *Delo*'s visual coverage to reveal whether *Oriental* subjects were framed within the four dominant *Orientalist* categories as: (1) *potentially dangerous (violent)*, (2) *irrational* (3) *backward*, and (4) *members of collectivity*, and whether such imagery was contrasted with the representation of non aggressive, modern and progressive West and its rational individuals.

### **Images of war**

The study of *Delo*'s coverage of the Iraq war<sup>9</sup> spans over the period of 14 weeks between February 21 and June 1, 2003 – the duration of the attack and a month of preparations and the aftermath respectively. Within this period *Delo*

published a total of 508 articles and 265 photographs (independent news and illustrations) related to the (forthcoming) war in Iraq.<sup>10</sup>

As I have argued elsewhere (see Tomanić Trivundža, in press), *Delo* depicted the war in a shifting discourse of *Orientalism*. This transition from the initial *U.S. vs. Them* opposition into the “standard” *Us vs. Them* frame was gradual and was marked by three phases that essentially corresponded with the advance of the U.S. and British troops. The deeper they advanced into Iraq, the more the Iraqis became visible. And the more the Iraqis became visible, the more they became *Orientalised*.

### Stage 1 – images of Us

The overall *Orientalisation* of Iraq had already been firmly established during the Gulf War (1991). “Orientalist metaphors conceptualised the enemy, Iraq, in terms of traditionally rich associations with *the Orient*, and Islam as an integral part of it, in order to justify the war as a way to protect *Western civilization and its way of life*.” (Sandikcioglu, 1999: 27) The image of Saddam Hussein as the incarnation of evil, dangerous madman and the new Hitler, established by the Western media in 1991 (e.g., Kellner, 1995; Philo & McLaughlin, 1995; Shaw, 1996; Sandikcioglu, 1999; Shohat & Stam, 1994, etc.) has never completely left the vocabulary of the U.S. administration and was frequently evoked in the Western media since the end of the Gulf War. Thus the first phase that spans one month prior to the attack was not needed to demarcate the category of *Them* but was used to consolidate the image of *Us*. *Delo* focused almost exclusively on the Western side of the conflict, showing photographs of military preparations for the attack (the West as modern and powerful), key figures of the diplomatic “war” (the West as rational, negotiators) and anti-war demonstrations (the West as rational and unthreatening). At the same time, the contrasting *Oriental* side was virtually nonexistent (3 out of 76 photographs).

In addition to this, the pattern of *Delo's* preference for the symbolic portrayal of the conflict began to emerge. The photographs of the anti-war movement did not depict the demonstrators in a manner of realism – *they never* focused on the scale of the demonstrations or the demonstrators but on conveying visual comments through the portrayal of their symbolic messages – signs, placards, flags, statues, puppets, etc.

The *Orientalist* frame of the U.S. and British military preparations for the war – maneuvers, training and transportation of armory to the Gulf area – accounted for well over a third of all photographs of the first stage and, as a rule, the “coalition” soldiers were shown in small groups or at close social distance

that stressed their individuality;<sup>11</sup> a well coordinated team, not only in combat practice but also in leisure time activities (e.g., playing football on an aircraft carrier). The only photograph depicting Iraqi soldiers was in stark contrast to this – a chaotic mass in their battle gear cheering and shouting on support of Saddam Hussein, positioning the Iraqi army as an irrational, violent and threatening mob (compare with Van Leeuwen, 2002).

## **Stage 2 – images of violent and collective Other**

The 100 photographs of the second stage (ending with the fall of Baghdad) show how *Delo*'s editors were not in favor of “snatched images taken to uncover and disseminate the truth” (Modell) of the tradition of realism. They were reluctant to show the graphic face of the combat and preferred a clean war of advancing troops, tanks and airplanes on aircraft carriers instead. Not a single photograph of the actual fighting was published and very few of the destruction it caused.<sup>12</sup> *Delo*'s strategy was not to show the destruction, or, in cases when it did, to diminish its effect by printing it very small. Similarly, casualties and refugees were not used to show the human suffering. In the second stage *Delo* published only one photograph depicting victims of war although the reports of casualties were featured daily and the official body count was presented in an info box on the front page of the newspaper.<sup>13</sup> This was in sharp contrast to the Arab version of the conflict, as well as to the reports of Iraq-based Western journalists who reported on the catastrophic state of the overcrowded hospitals and the extensive killing of civilians.<sup>14</sup> *Delo* preferred the symbolic depiction of the war instead, showing advancing U.S., British and Kurdish forces capturing or destroying the symbolic markers of Hussein's regime. As an embodiment of the abstract evil, Saddam Hussein was not depicted in person but through his omnipresent and versatile imagery of murals, statues and placards. The desacralisation of the regime's symbols was a potent ideological message, as it depicted not only the actual crumbling of Saddam Hussein's power but also provided the badly needed images of support by the liberated people of Iraq, who were shown tearing down and hammering the statues of their former leader.<sup>15</sup>

The *Orientalist* imagery started gaining prominence as soon as it became obvious that Iraqis were not passively waiting to be liberated and that the U.S. troops will have to fight their way to Baghdad. As such resistance was not in line with the underlying ideological and moral underpinnings of the war (liberating the poor and oppressed people of Iraq), it could only be coherently explained in terms of *Otherness* of the native population. Hence, the *Orientalist* imagery resurfaced, repositioning the oppressed people into a threatening mass

or even a dangerous mob – a category of the *dangerous Orient*. The latent violent character of the *Orient* is depicted either through violent behaviour, threatening appearance, or images of armed civilians which implied the lawless character of the country.<sup>16</sup> This was followed by the introduction of the second *Orientalist* category: of Iraqi population as a *collective* entity, the *Other* which is relieved of its individual traits to be presented in large and homogenous groups (two thirds of photographs depicted Iraqis in groups, over half of them in groups larger than ten). Images depicting the asymmetry of power and numbers gradually began to dominate the pages of the newspaper – larger groups of Iraqis being arrested, captured, searched or guarded by a small number or individual U.S. soldiers.

### Stage 3 – the unbridgeable civilisation gap

But it was only with the fall of Baghdad that *Orientalisation* became the dominant frame of representing the conflict. The turning point that supplied the West with undisputable proof of the *Otherness* of Iraqis was the looting that followed the fall of Baghdad and some of the northern cities (Kirkuk, Mosul). One of the reasons behind this “delayed” *Orientalisation* was that Iraq was not distinctly *Oriental*. It was neither prominently Islamic<sup>17</sup> nor predominantly rural; in addition to that, it was not that backward or stagnant to be governed by archaic customs, rituals and distinctive ethnic dress codes, as was for example the case with Afghanistan. But the looting produced the proof of absolute and systematic difference, an unbridgeable cultural gap between the cultivated West and the inborn barbaric and, violent spirit of the Iraqi population as even children and elderly women were participating in the looting.<sup>18</sup>

If anything, the 90 photographs reproduced during the third stage reflect the explanatory power of *Orientalism* as a particular ideological form of representation. They also indicate the self-fulfilling nature of its underlying structure – the *Orientalisation* of Iraq did not and indeed could not stop with establishing the categories of *danger* and *collectivity*. The picture had to be completed with images of *backwardness* and *irrationality*. If the former sees the *Orient* against a backdrop of ruralness and stagnancy, the latter considers it to be governed by emotions, passions, religions, and antagonistic disputes. This *irrationality* can in fact be seen as the source and precondition of the *Orient's* potentially *dangerous* character. *Delo's* use of the four *Orientalist* categories achieved salience through selective focus, creating three sets of structured absences:

1) *Absence of diversity*. Through this last stage, *Delo's* focus was primarily on Shia Arabs and their newly won freedom of religious practice. The news

agencies as well as *Delo's* staff photographer supplied an extensive coverage of the subject, providing the editors with images of pilgrims in emotionally charged groups, and wearing distinctly non-Western clothing. In this way, the Shia Arabs provided the missing religious link between the categories of *danger*, *collectivity* and *irrationality*...

2) *Absence of non-veiled women*. Contrary to Afghanistan, where “liberation” from the oppressive regime was symbolized by the unveiling of women, the U.S. triumph over Saddam Hussein’s regime brought just the opposite – the “photographic veiling” of Iraqi women. Once regarded as being “among the most progressive in the Arab world” (Lutz & Collins, 1991: 182), not a single (non veiled) young or middle-aged Iraqi woman appeared on the pages of *Delo*. Instead, they were replaced by stereotyped images of elderly women with kerchiefs, innocent little girls, or as shapeless black silhouettes covered from head to toe. On the whole, there is a remarkable absence of women in *Delo's* photographs from Iraq.<sup>19</sup> Female or predominantly female subjects appear only in 10 percent of the photographs.

3) *absence of active subjects*. Apart from a policeman directing traffic and a shepherd with his herd, not a single image appears showing the Iraqi population at work or in possession of the means of production. They are depicted as passive subjects, either demonstrating or performing religious rituals or mourning; when they are shown in active mode, they are destroying, not creating, new value (looting, robbing, burning, destroying the symbolic markers of the former regime is featured in nearly a third of these photographs). Iraqis are not presented as active (co)creators of their future but as (passive) victims of the brutal regime. Symptomatic for this frame is a lack of stories on Iraqi dissidents and intelligentsia.<sup>20</sup>

This negative representation of *Other* was contrasted with a favorable portrayal of mostly U.S. troops. On the pages of *Delo*, the soldiers were shown in accessible, familiar mode, talking to groups of Iraqis, securing the law and order (guarding buildings, arresting criminals, etc.). Fishman and Marvin found that such images repeatedly “camouflage the role of U.S. soldiers as agents of violence” (2003: 38), layering their public depiction with active interpersonal engagement and approachability.

### **This photograph was taken by our reporter in the region of the conflict**

But what happened with *Delo's* promise of enhanced objectivity of the photographic imagery, supplied by “our reporter in the region of the conflict”? I suggest that Eržen’s photographs were the turning point in *Delo's* depiction



of the conflict in terms of *Orientalism*, however the extent to which this *Orientalisation* was the result of the photographer's work or editorial policy and after lens decisions remains to be solved by in a subsequent study.

What the current study shows is that only 11 out of 26 Eržen's published photographs (nearly 10 percent of all published images of the conflict) fully comply with generic conventions of photojournalism, with the criteria of newsworthiness and its inherent emphasis in time and place. But this is not to say that Eržen did not deliver "good" photographs. On the contrary, most of them are well-executed, reveal the dynamics of the scene or comment on it through framing, juxtaposition of subjects or aesthetisation. As Lutz and Collins conclude, "a 'good picture' is a picture that makes sense in terms of prevailing ideas about the other, including ideas about accessibility and difference" (1991: 201). And this is precisely what most of his images delivered – the illustration of a preconceived set of images of Arabs and the *Orient*. They bear distinctive marks of another genre that also tries to convey a sense of place and culture, but achieves that through the use of typical and more timeless images – reportage and travel photography.

Through the use of decontextualised, aestheticised subjects, ethnic types, children and elderly in traditional garb, performing religious rituals etc., this type of photography constructs and appropriates the *Other* in a reproduction of historically specific power relations of which *Orientalism* is a constituent part – colonial domination (Ramamurthy, 2003). While it offers a more "sympathetic" image of the *Other*, it does so only if the *Other* is presented in terms of accessibility, abundance, conquest, control, (sexual) availability etc. (e.g. Urry, 1990; Scherer, 1992; Landau & Kaspin, 2002; Alloula, 1987). The illustrative example is Eržen's depiction of Iraqi women – while it could hardly be called unsympathetic, all of the depicted women are kerchiefed or veiled and are often reduced to abstract black silhouettes. They are young girls, older women, or women of undistinguishable age due to their dress and presented as passive subjects (grieving silhouettes on graveyards, waiting pilgrims, etc.).

But the central question remains why the Orientalist imagery is so abundant in a newspaper of a country that is not directly involved in the conflict? And why did the trustworthy and "independent" source fail to fulfill its promise? There are at least three major sources of influence that can help explain *Delo's Orientalist gaze*. As Scheufele (1999: 117) points out – framing is not simply a unidirectional 'top-down' process and research has suggested that journalists are equally susceptible to the very frames that they use to describe events. The second source of influence deals with the specific socio-historical moment – the U.S. attack on Iraq came at the time when Slovenia was about to hold the referendums on joining the EU and NATO. The latter was the subject of a

fierce ideological struggle between the “pro-NATO” government and a loose network of intellectuals, groups and movements, for the large part linked only by their “anti-NATO” sentiment. Drawing on the ideology of national interest, fear (defenselessness due to its size) and permanent threat of the violent region (Balkan powder keg), the government officials and the government information office launched a massive propaganda campaign using all available media channels. Within that campaign, the opposing voices were publicly delegitimised, either by biased reporting resulting from over reliance on official sources (see Poler Kovacic, in press) or by public attacks that not only labeled them unpatriotic but openly questioned their sanity. The Slovene foreign minister, Dr. Dimitrij Rupel, described the opponents of NATO literally as “not too smart individuals, persons that have gone mad.” (Rupel, quoted in Basic Hrvatin 2003: 14) In a similar manner, the opponents were publicly attacked as being “radical pacifists and environmentalists [...] antiglobalists, anarchists, neomarxist dogmatists [...] xenophobes, chauvinists, nationalists [...] Austrophiles, Russophiles, Serbian nationalists [...]” (Bebler, quoted in Basic Hrvatin 2003: 14) Similarly to the U.S. justifications of military interventions after 9/11, which was framed as a clash of civilizations, the Slovene government officials framed the issue of joining NATO as a Huntingtonian civilization choice between the civilized West and the dangerous, barbaric *Orient* of the Balkans.<sup>21</sup>

This was in line with the ongoing construction of the Slovene national identity as a set of two opposing narratives: stressing its (Central) European origin and proximity to its cultural milieu and simultaneous by denouncing the nations’ geographical and historical ties with the Balkans. Thus the national identity construction of the Slovene “imagined community” (Anderson) appears as the third force of influence. More than a decade after its “separation” from the Balkans, Slovenia is still fighting its way out of the *Other* side of Western collective imagination through a project of continuous *Occidentalisation*. The Slovene national identity is characterized by a simultaneous coexistence of cultural inferiority towards “superior cultures of the West” and cultural superiority towards “inferior Balkan cultures.” As already described above, it draws its ideological strength from contrasting the positive frames of *self-presentation* (European origin) and the negative frames of *Other-representation* (Balkan *Other*). In the light of Todorova’s argument that the Balkans are primarily defined by being nothing more than a reflection of the *Orient* (Todorova, 1997), the Balkan *Other* is a potent (*Oriental*) imaginary force of evil in the popular imagination of the Slovene public, drawing its historical roots from the Ottoman war campaigns and raids into the Christian inlands. This perceived *Oriental* threat is surprisingly stable if compared to the shifting

borders of the “imaginary geography” of the *Other* (Slovenes, Croats and Serbs all claim to have historically been Europe's easternmost bastion against the barbaric *Orient*). As Bakic-Hayden argues, on the territory of the former Yugoslavia, *Orientalisation* is “a *subjectivational practice* by which all ethnic groups define the ‘other’ as ‘East’ of them” (1995: 919) and in so doing not only *Orientalise* the *Other* but also *Occidentalise* themselves as the West of the *Other*. *Delo's* embracement of the discourse of *Orientalism* can therefore be seen as part of Slovenia's continuous project of *Occidentalisation*, particularly if it is viewed in the light of the official interpretation of the decision whether or not to join NATO.

The study attempted to highlight how photographic narrative in the Slovenian leading daily newspaper *Delo* helped structure the “reality” of the Iraqi war to the national audience. It revealed how *Delo* used *Orientalism* as a structured cognitive model that framed the representation of the conflict, thus reducing the complexity and specifics of events into easily recognizable and commonly shared schemata – a frame that “determines whether most people notice and how they understand and remember a problem” (1993: 53). It further suggests that such framing cannot be dismissed simply as yet another case of “colonization of the subconscious” by the West and its economic and political power structures. Instead, the case of *Delo* clearly indicates that the ideological framing depends primarily on the culturally specific patterns of (collective) self-identification.

## ENDNOTES:

- <sup>1</sup> But the Death of a Loyalist soldier implied another shift in the understanding of war photography, epitomized by Capa's most famous statement “If your pictures aren't good enough, you aren't close enough”. As Ritchin notes, “one was now expected to risk one's life in the line of fire while trying to empathize with those on the other side of the lens.” (1998: 591)
- <sup>2</sup> *Delo* is the largest “quality” daily newspaper in Slovenia. It is an important information and opinion making media for the intellectual elite, students and top management. With its average daily circulation of 87.145 copies, it reaches 13,1 percent of Slovene population between 10 and 75 years of age, while its intellectual showpiece *Sobotna priloga* (Saturday supplement) is read by 15,1 percent of Slovenes (National Readership Survey 2002).
- <sup>3</sup> Zelizer notes that collective memory photographs “at best offer arbitrary, composite, conventionalized and simplified glimpses of the past. (Zelizer, 2002: 669).
- <sup>4</sup> Examples include the already mentioned Robert Capa's *Death of a Loyalist soldier*, *Old Glory Goes Up on Mt. Suribachi*, *Iwo Jima* by Joe Rosenthal, Eddie Addams' *Moment of execution* or Nick Ut's girl fleeing from napalm bombing, both from Vietnam, to name just a few of the famous (Western) examples.

- <sup>5</sup> The underlying set of assumptions is that the news media constitute their objects through the use of professional concepts and techniques; they set the agenda for public attention and lay the groundwork for public opinion, defining not only where public attention is focused but also the importance that is to be attributed to a certain topic.
- <sup>6</sup> For a synoptic overview of the effects and dimensions of framing and its connection to the journalistic professional practice see Scheufele, 1999.
- <sup>7</sup> Studies have shown that the influence of frames depends on the issue in question (e.g. Iyengar 1991), but that frames generally exert significant influence on audience cognitive responses (e.g. Price et al. 1997) and can even lead a person to switch support from one side of an issue to another (Zaller & Feldman, 1992; Nelson et al., 1997).
- <sup>8</sup> Hartley further warns that once a certain topic has been assigned "a place on the negative (them) side of the basic opposition, its doings cannot be seen in positive (us) terms." (Hartley, 1989: 116)
- <sup>9</sup> *Delo* covered Iraq-related daily events primarily through agency sources and its standard network of U.S., Europe and Asia-based correspondents that also supplied some of the background information and commentaries. In order to provide a more thorough insight of the events, *Delo* had three non-embedded reporters to cover the war. Two of them were "hinterland" war reporters located in Eastern Turkey (Boštjan Videmšek) and Jordan (Barbara Šurk) that gradually advanced into Iraq and supplied interviews and general "impressions and accounts from the region". Along with the staff photographer Jure Eržen they gradually advanced into Iraq with the moving of the front line.
- <sup>10</sup> It should be noted that *Delo* uses photographs to supplement rather than replace text. Even with photographs featured as independent news, the caption is usually extended to a short news item of 30 to 80 words. The notable exception to this practice is the use of photographs in *Sobotna priloga*, where large photographs are not anchored by captions but address the reader purely by visual means.
- <sup>11</sup> On the other hand, their military hardware was depicted either aestheticised or in large numbers, implying the military might of the West.
- <sup>12</sup> For example, damage to civilian objects, caused by the massive bombings was shown in three photographs, with only one of them indicating that the ruins were in fact a civilian home.
- <sup>13</sup> The photograph of a wounded woman in Iraqi hospital was published as late as the 20th day of the war.
- <sup>14</sup> The Internet provided an influential channel for those in search of images from the other side of the conflict. The Web sites of the Arab media as well as those of the Western anti-war organizations carried shocking photographs of civilian casualties and devastation.
- <sup>15</sup> It was later found that most of these images were staged, particularly those depicting the dismantling of Hussein's statue on Baghdad's Firdos Square.
- <sup>16</sup> *Delo* even went so far as publishing a typical propaganda shot of an Iraqi boy, wearing a helmet and a real, loaded Kalashnikov machine gun – the archetypal image of the inherent, even inborn violent character of the *Orient*.
- <sup>17</sup> As Baram notes, Hussein's regime only turned to Islam in 1991 in hope of winning support from other Arab countries while the 80-year-old tradition of secularism was reversed as late as 1994 with the adoption of Shari laws: "Islamization had the added benefit of providing the regime with yet another means of terrorizing its fear-stricken population." (2003: 46).
- <sup>18</sup> For a contrasting story of looting as organized and prepared group venture and U.S. army unwilling to protect other sites and buildings than those of their interest see for example Fisk, 2003 a, b, c.
- <sup>19</sup> While this may to a certain extent be the result of non-western women being less accessible to Western male photographers (see Lutz and Collins 1991), Hardt (2003) also points out a remarkable absence of women in *Delo*'s depiction of Slovenia's brief armed struggle for independence.

<sup>20</sup> Although *Delo* featured reportage on literary intelligentsia by the same correspondent less than six months before the attack.

<sup>21</sup> Curiously enough, while servility of Slovene diplomacy (e.g. signing of the Vilnius declaration of the so called New Europe) and warmonger rhetoric of the US went in favor of the anti-NATO side, the U.S. attack appears to have shifted the ballot in favor of joining the NATO.

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**Ilija Tomanić Trivundža**

## **Delov pogled na istok: uokvirene slike Iračkog rata**

### **SAŽETAK**

Članak govori o fotografskoj prezentaciji američkog napada na Irak u slovenskoj tiskovini *Delo*. Pokazuje kako je ta prezentacija bila uokvirena diskursom *Orijentalizma* s posebnim naglaskom na ulozi Delovih vlastitih, neovisnih izvora kako bi se dokazalo da ideološki sukob nije nužno posljedica *zapadnjačke* kontrole nad prikazivanjem rata, već da prvenstveno ovisi o kulturološki specifičnim uzorcima kolektivne samoidentifikacije (u ovom slučaju mehanizmi konstukcije slovenskog nacionalnog identiteta i njegova povezanost s balkanskim kontekstom) i posebnim društveno-povijesnim okolnostima (operacija *Enduring Freedom* počela je prije nego što su u Sloveniji održani referendum o pristupanju EU i NATO-u).

Ključne riječi: orijentalizam, ratna fotografija, novinarski diskurs, rat u Iraku, nacionalni identitet, Delo (novine)