

Abstract

Early in the 21st Century, the European Union began to grow in influence in the South-Eastern European region. Thus, a discourse of transition defined by the proclaimed shift of the country from the Dayton Peace Agreement, which ended the war in 1995, to Euro-Atlantic integration, began to intensify in BiH. The discourse of transition is therefore simplistically referred to as 'from Dayton to Brussels'. At the same time up until the middle of the decade, British politician Paddy Ashdown was serving as the High Representative of international community for Bosnia and Herzegovina. It is, therefore, unsurprising that he co-constructed the discourse himself. This diploma thesis examines mainly the process of legitimization of the discourse of transition by Paddy Ashdown. Specific legitimization strategies are examined by means of critical discursive analyses and decolonial approach. The main aim of the thesis is to investigate whether the legitimization strategy of Paddy Ashdown is embedded in colonial matrix of power. Based on analyses of Ashdown's speeches, an overarching legitimization strategy was detected – mythopoesis (referring to myths and stories) rooted in colonial matrix of power. The entire argumentation of the High Representative is built around a fairytalelike story about Bosnia and Herzegovina wandering on a path full of challenges towards the glorified gates of European Union. The roots of this tale are localised in a colonial matrix of power based on linguistic analyses of the way Bosnia and Herzegovina and EU are constructed. Bosnia and Herzegovina is described as being late in the evolution process, which will be completed by entering the EU. European Union is thus constructed as the endgame of the evolution. This legitimation strategy is found to be problematic due to neglect of local context, detachment from reality, and inherent tendency to engage "the end justifies the means" approach.