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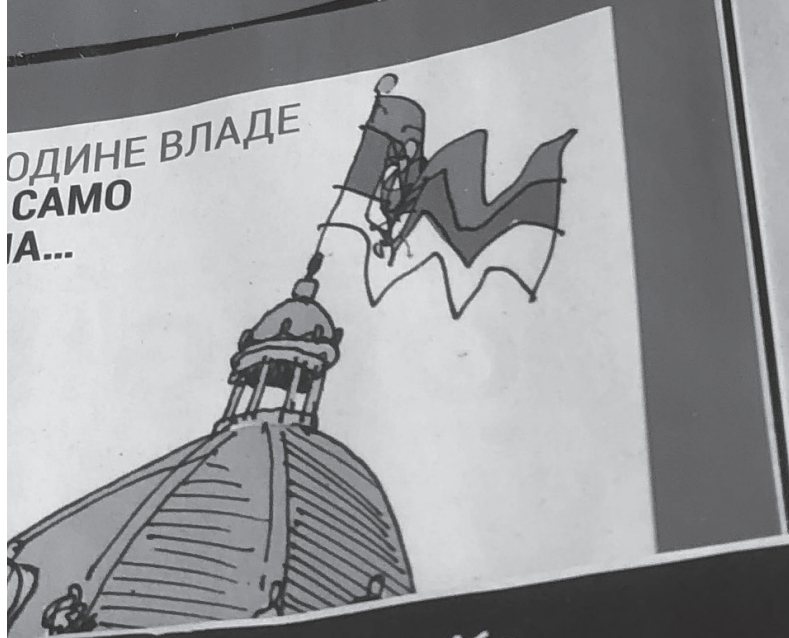
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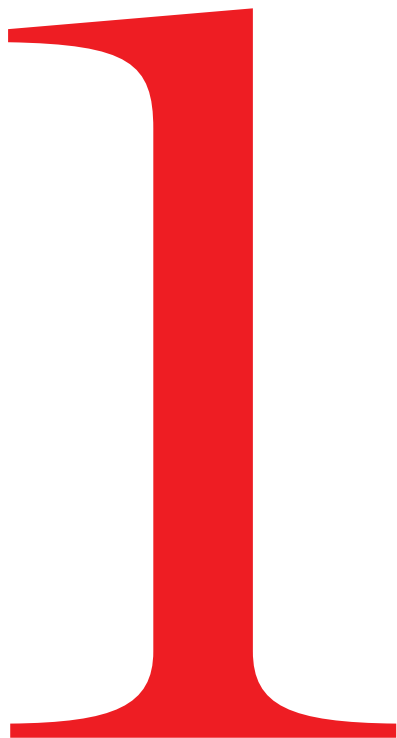
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Introduction

INTRODUCTION:

Political, Kosovo and Parliamentary issues

In the first chapter, the eighteenth issue of the Quarterly Medimeter sketches the outlines of the media scene of Serbian society. A cursory glance at the headlines of daily newspapers reveals the coordinates of print media editorial policies in Serbia, which shape a sensationalist approach, insufficient professional competencies and a penchant for spin.

This quarter, too, the media dealt with the usual topics: political life in Serbia and Kosovo / relations between Belgrade and Priština. The novelty is a sharp increase in media interest in issues related to religion and Montenegro.

Issues of faith, church, and religion are the third theme by representation in this quarter. The immediate cause of this was the turbulent session of the Holy Bishops' Council of the Serbian Orthodox Church in May, attended by Serbian President Aleksandar Vučić. Council itself and the period immediately following it were marked by conflicts and internal tensions at the top of the SOC. Hence the "explosion" of the number of actors in this group - 518 appearances, compared to 201 in the last quarter.

Montenegro is among the ten most represented topics. The smoldering conflict between Belgrade and Podgorica escalated in this quarter. One of the reasons is the draft of the Law on Freedom of Religion, which reviews property of religious communities, including the Serbian Orthodox Church in Montenegro. The specificity of media coverage on the subject is a distinctly negative tone. As many as 67.27% of texts were negatively connotated - in the daily newspaper *Alo!* 64.29%, in *Blic* 62.5%, *Politika* 72.22%, *Večernje novosti* 80%, *Informer* 100%. The only exception is *Danas*, which has no negatively connotated texts.

The report's share in the second quarter exceeds 80% and is the highest so far. The decrease of the participation of articles in favor of reports and interviews continues to be the most indicative sign regarding trends in today's journalism, characterized by a lack of analytical approach and research capacity.

In the latest issue of the *Quarterly Mediameter* empirical material was explored in the same standardized way. A single text was chosen for the subject of analysis. Analysis itself represents the combination of two research methods: (a) content analysis, which was guided by a „specific theoretical and hypothetical frame... creating an objective and systematic empirical collection of the social communication content, which enables the formation of relevant conclusions about the social context in which the communication takes part,”¹ and (b) a discourse analysis which enabled us to understand various, epistemologically and methodologically immeasurable,² authors’ interpretative strategies and editorial policies which reflect perceptions of different, primarily ideological and political, discourse realities, by analyzing their specific discourse meanings.

In the section devoted to the analysis of titles, the frequencies of previously normalized and lemmatized words from the title were measured, which were then graphically displayed using the “word-cloud” package from the R programming language.

In the interpretative sense, in order to offer better coherence of the text, the analysis is, as in the previous reports, divided into two wholes which refer to: (a) analysis of quantitative indicators collected using content analysis; and (b) discourse analysis of the qualitative content excerpted from texts which were included in the research sample.

1 S. Gredelj, *S onu stranu ogledala* [On the other side of the mirror], Beograd: Istraživačko-izdavački centar SSO Srbije, 1986, 19

2 G. Couvalis, *The Philosophy of Science*, London, Sage Publications, 1997.





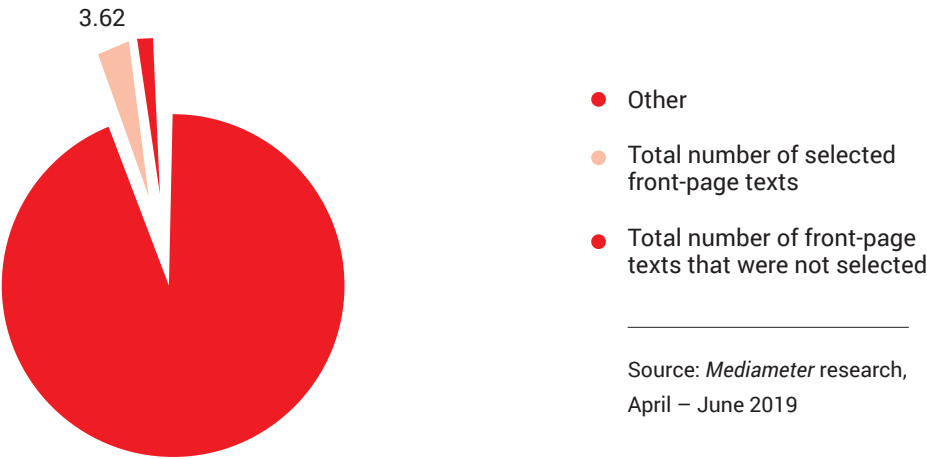
Sample

Sample

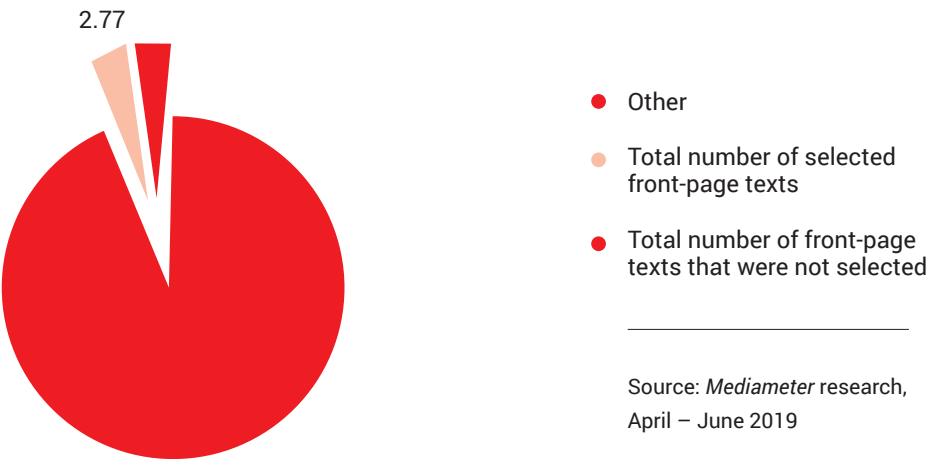
As stated in earlier publications, the basic idea of the project *Mediameter* is to try to reconstruct media reality of the dailies in Serbia, the way it can be defined considering the texts that are positioned (wholly or partially) on front pages, as various reflections of current political events and circumstances in both Serbia and the world. A sample of the dailies was composed in 2015 considering two selection criteria – the largest circulation and reputation of the print media. Newspapers *Alo!*, *Blic*, *Danas*, *Informer*, *Kurir*, *Politika* and *Večernje novosti* will compose the *Mediameter* sample in 2019, in order to facilitate parallel study of results. The front page is the part of the dailies that the readers connect the most with the identity/recognition of a media outlet. It is often responsible for the first impression, our potential affection or repulsion formed about some printed media. The front page comes into contact not only with the readers of that particular paper, but also the people who will perhaps never touch that paper. Through newspaper and TV advertising and shop windows, the front page reaches a wider auditorium than that forming the readers of individual dailies. The front pages, hence form, in a certain way, the public image of the newspaper which symbolizes its editorial policy, evaluative orientation and targeting of certain audiences. On account of the above-mentioned reasons, the front pages of dailies from our sample were in the focus of analysis of the project *Mediameter*.

Texts from front pages reflect best the coordinates of editorial policies of daily print editions. Though this involves a small percentage of texts, editorial identity of a daily can be most easily identified through messages conveyed through front pages. The ratio of the total number of texts in each daily individually and the number of texts from the front pages that were included in the sample of our research are shown in the graphs 1-7, for the period from April 1st to June 30th 2019.

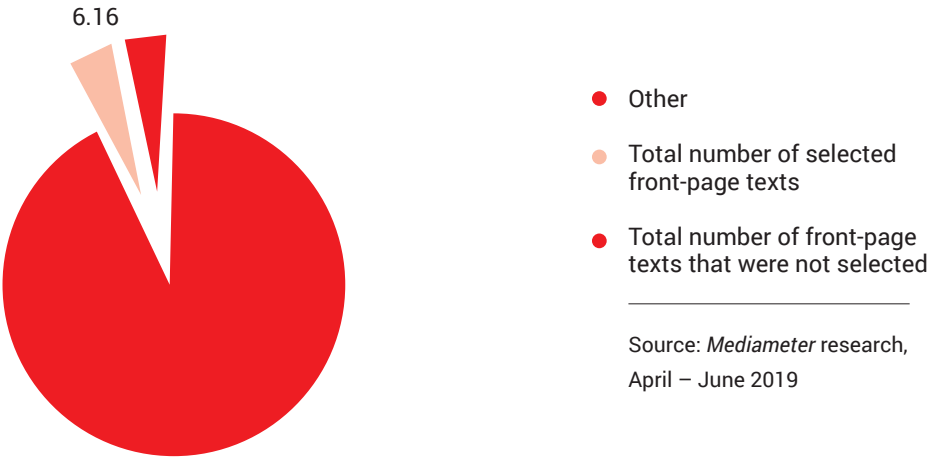
Graph 1. – Alo!



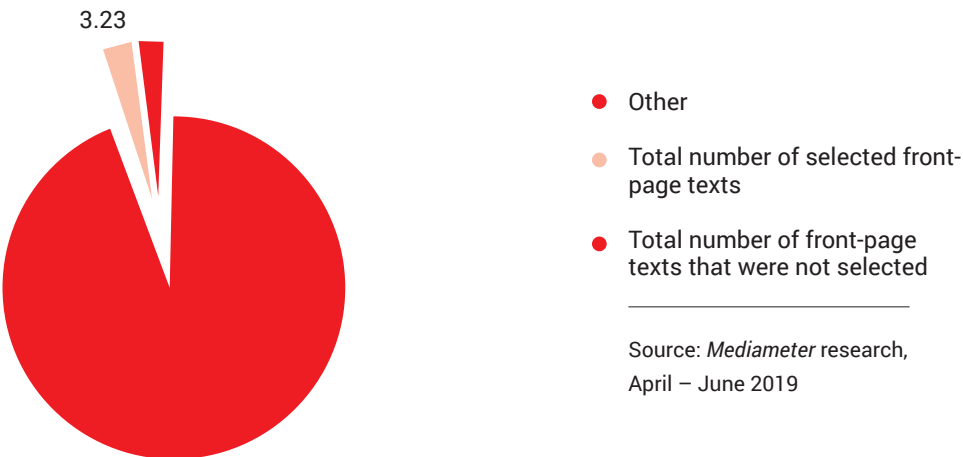
Graph 2. – Blic



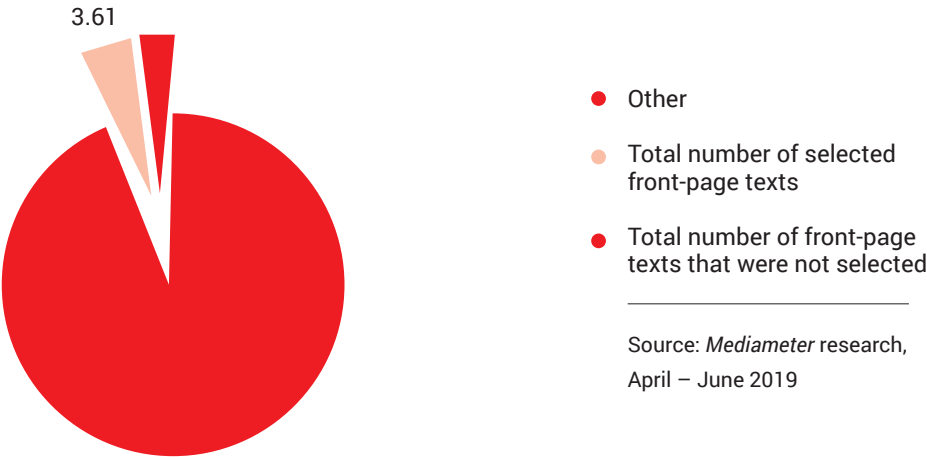
Graph 3. – *Danas*



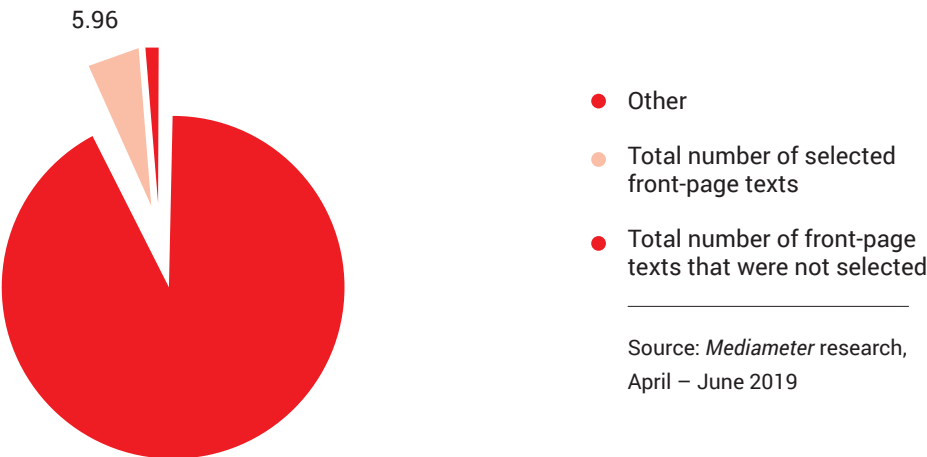
Graph 4. – *Informer*



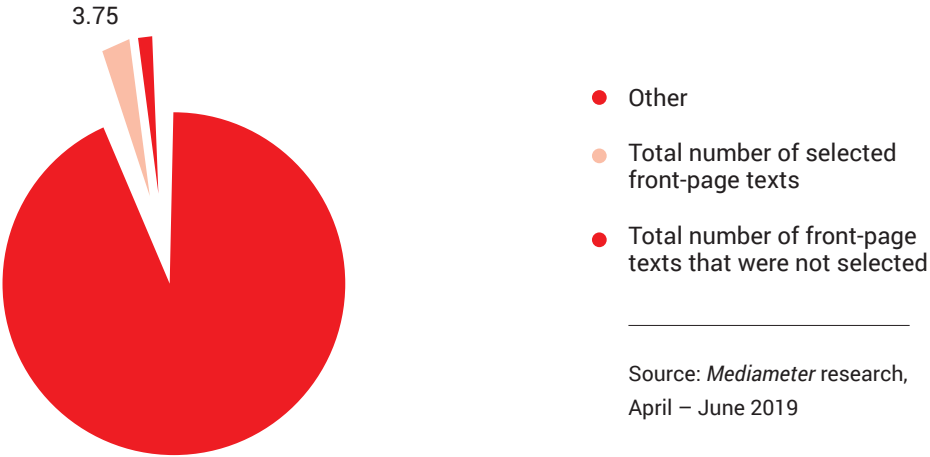
Graph 5. – Kurir



Graph 6. – Politika



Graph 7. – *Večernje novosti*



Source: *Mediameter* research,
April – June 2019

The total number of analyzed texts in all the media that entered the sample of our research is 2274, and this number makes on average 58.30% of headlines and 4.23% of the total number of texts.

Table 1. – *Alo!*

<i>Alo!</i> / section	Total number of front-page texts	Total number of selected front-page texts	Total number of front-page texts that were not selected
current affairs	71	69	2
news	14	13	1
politics	76	75	1
society	69	25	44
chronicle	87	22	65
v.i.p.	113	11	102
sport	55	16	39
world	9	5	4
interview/interview of the week	7	7	0
Belgrade	6	1	5
reportage	4	2	2
supplement	20	0	20
UKUPNO	531	246	285

Source: *Mediameter* research, April – June 2019

Table 2. – Blic

<i>Blic</i> / section	Total number of front-page texts	Total number of selected front-page texts	Total number of front-page texts that were not selected
politics	48	48	0
current affairs / interview	3	3	0
topic of the day / issue	83	66	17
society	82	39	43
chronicle	57	12	45
economy	10	7	3
culture	9	2	7
sport	78	1	77
destinies	4	0	4
world/planet	5	3	2
men/women	4	0	4
research/dossier	5	2	3
feuilleton	1	1	0
phenomena	2	1	1
entertainment	44	1	43
Belgrade	4	1	3
scene	8	0	8
pop & culture	4	0	4
TOTAL	451	187	264

Source: *Mediameter* research, April – June 2019

Table 3. – Danas

Danas/section	Total number of front-page texts	Total number of selected front-page texts	Total number of front-page texts that were not selected
Danas business	6	6	0
Danas special supplement	30	25	5
Danas weekend	34	20	14
event / topic of the day	3	3	0
society	125	119	6
economy	46	45	1
Globe	25	25	0
culture	37	18	19
interview	0	0	0
front page	21	21	0
politics	150	150	0
Belgrade	2	1	1
sport	29	3	26
last page	0	0	0
dialogue	23	22	1
pomodoro	3	2	1
rule of law	3	3	0
region	3	3	0
chronicle	0	0	0
Novi Sad	0	0	0
periscope	1	1	0
scales	0	0	0
TOTAL	541	467	74

Source: *Mediameter* research, April – June 2019

Table 4. – Informer

<i>Informer/ section</i>	Total number of front-page texts	Total number of selected front-page texts	Total number of front-page texts that were not selected
breaking news	132	130	2
news	136	58	78
showtime	90	11	79
sport	59	5	54
supplement	45	2	43
TOTAL	462	206	256

Source: *Mediameter* research, April – June 2019

Table 5. – Kurir

<i>Kurir/section</i>	Total number of front-page texts	Total number of selected front-page texts	Total number of front-page texts that were not selected
news	371	234	137
interview	1	1	0
stars	76	17	59
culture	18	4	14
sport	47	5	42
supplement	18	2	16
TOTAL	531	263	268

Source: *Mediameter* research, April – June 2019

Table 6. – Politika

<i>Politika</i> /section	Total number of front-page texts	Total number of selected front-page texts	Total number of front-page texts that were not selected
world	55	44	11
society	75	29	46
economy	48	39	9
politics	29	28	1
event of the day	31	30	1
culture	37	3	34
chronicle	30	21	9
daily supplement	47	4	43
Serbia	24	9	15
sport	26	1	25
topic of the week / day	2	1	1
personalities	1	0	1
region	19	19	0
front page	303	266	37
views	22	21	1
consumer	23	6	17
Belgrade / Belgrade chronicle	16	5	11
feuilleton	4	2	2
TOTAL	792	528	264

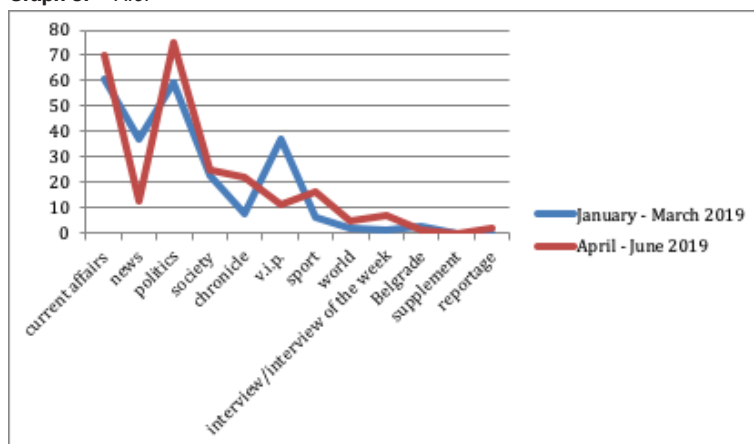
Source: *Mediameter* research, April – June 2019

Table 7. – Večernje novosti

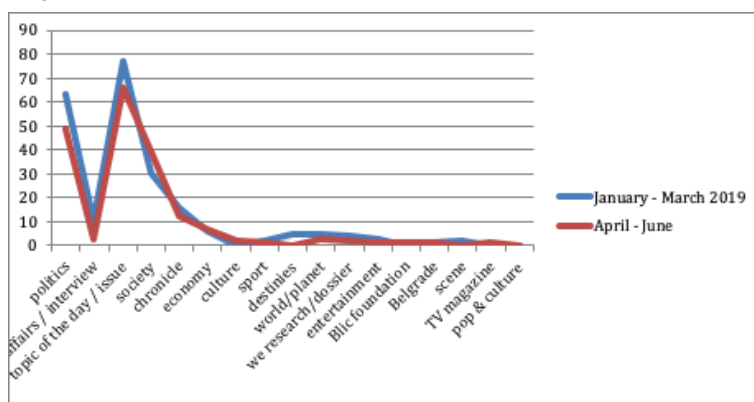
<i>Večernje novosti/</i> section	Total number of front-page texts	Total number of selected front-page texts	Total number of front-page texts that were not selected
chronicle	53	16	37
society	144	104	40
politics	111	111	0
economy	52	46	6
current affairs	44	29	15
reportage	7	2	5
culture	16	6	10
interview	6	3	3
world	22	20	2
sport	40	7	33
Belgrade	17	6	11
topic of the day	4	4	0
reflector	5	4	1
events	13	12	1
second page	6	5	1
supplement	52	2	50
TOTAL	592	377	215

Source: *Mediameter* research, April – June 2019

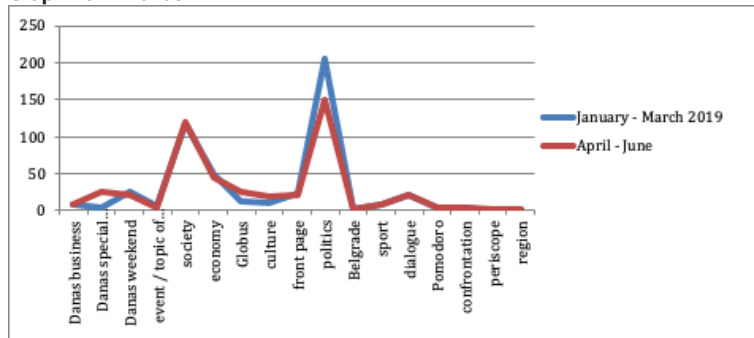
By looking at the **Tables 1-7**, it is still evident that the structure of the analyzed daily newspapers follows two different logics. *Večernje novosti*, *Politika*, *Danas* and *Blic* follow the classic structure of daily newspapers, while only the daily *Informer*, with its reduced column structure, deviates significantly from this matrix. Although in the previous quarters the daily *Kurir* started to approach the classical structure of newspapers in a certain way, in the last quarter of 2018 we see a re-approaching of the *Kurir* editorial strategy to the one present in the daily *Informer*, which is also visible in the **graph 12** in the form of significantly emphasized presence of texts in the reunited *news* section. The daily *Informer* also has a dominant *news* section, which brings together different areas, with particular attention being paid to content of entertaining character, such as information about celebrities, shows and sports, which are increasingly gaining socio-political character. On the other hand, the daily *Alo!* has somewhat branched out the structure of its rubrics in previous quarters. The editorial strategies identified in the previous seventeen issues of *Mediametre* are fully visible in the second quarter of 2019, which can be clearly seen in **Graphs 8 - 14**.

Graph 8. – Alo!

Source: Mediameter research, April – June 2019

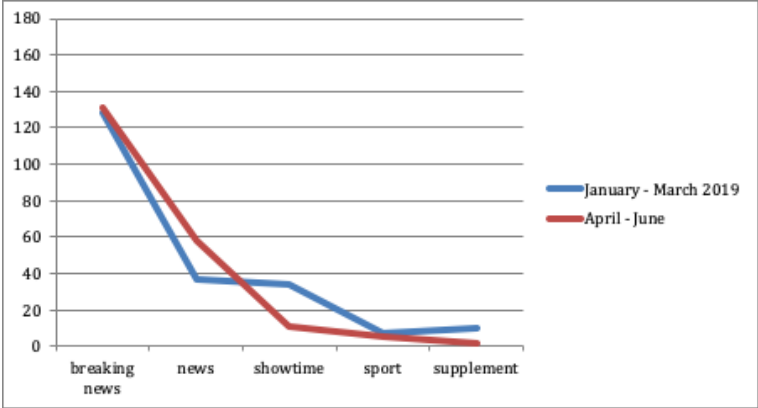
Graph 9. – Blic

Source: Mediameter research, April – June 2019

Graph 10. – Danas

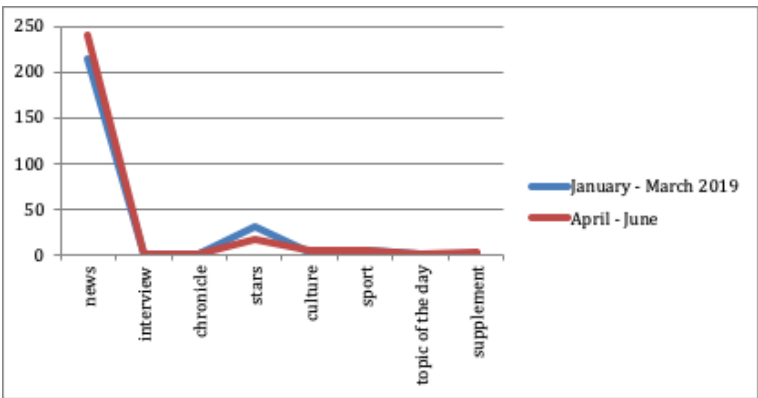
Source: Mediameter research, April – June 2019

Graph 11. – *Informer*



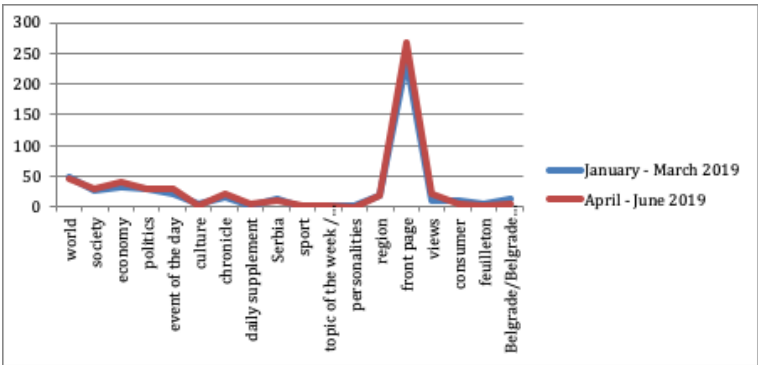
Source: *Mediameter* research, April – June 2019

Graph 12. – *Kurir*

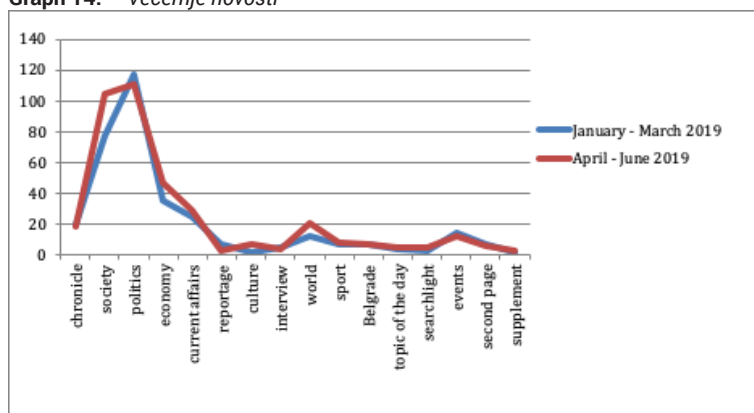


Source: *Mediameter* research, April – June 2019

Graph 13. – *Politika*



Source: *Mediameter* research, April – June 2019

Graph 14. – Večernje novosti

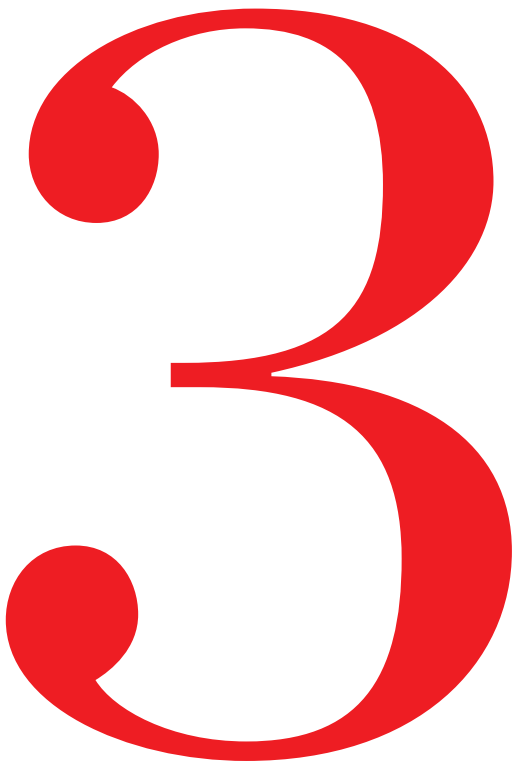
Source: *Mediameter* research, April – June 2019

In retrospect, if we compare the number of selected texts during 2015 (7382), 2016 (8293), 2017 (8652) and 2018 (8744), we can see a clear upward trend in the number of analyzed texts (see **Table 8**). Considering that Mediameter's focus is primarily on socio-political events and that this is one of the key criteria for selecting texts, it is precisely in these quotations that a significant increase in the number of articles in the sample can be found, especially in relation to 2015. It is interesting that if we compare the number of selected texts in the first and second quarters of 2019 (a total of 4525 texts) with the number of selected texts in the first two quarters in each year (in 2015 - 3033 texts, in 2016 - 4030 texts, in 2017 - 4494 texts and 2018 - 4182 texts), we can see that it is noticeably larger, which represents a renewed focus of the media on socio-political events in 2019.

Table 8. – Number of selected texts by quarter for period 2015 – 2019.

	2015.	2016.	2017.	2018.	2019.
I quarter	1360	1924	2403	2173	2251
II quarter	1673	2106	2091	2009	2274
III quarter	2172	2012	1991	2248	
IV quarter	2177	2251	2167	2314	
UKUPNO	7382	8293	8652	8744	

Source: *Mediameter* research, April – June 2019





Research results

RESEARCH RESULTS

Content and character of the titles of the articles from the sample

Newspaper titles, as well as the front pages themselves, make up the identity of all dailies, and readers are often informed about events only on the basis of the headlines of the text, due to lack of time or a desire for more detailed insight into media content. This fact contributed to the establishment of a new practice in print media - the use of titles / title blocks (headline, title, subtitle) that can be compared with *clickbait* titles in online media. Specifically, in order for readers to choose their news and / or visit the site, online media post interesting / sensationalist titles (*clickbaits*), which very often are not even related to the text.¹ Their purpose is primarily to attract the attention and “trick” readers to click on the text and thus generate revenue for the media, which is certainly a form of unprofessional media practice and follows the spirit of the growing trend of tabloidization. Most print media have portals of the same name where they have been able to test the effectiveness of such headlines for a long period of time, and therefore, through this research, we have examined the extent to which print media take on this form of headline design. Sensationalist headline text in print is a practice that provokes a reader's response, that is, desired attention, that indirectly leads to greater readership.

The research within the *Mediametar* project was aimed at assessing the character of the title, that is, to determine whether the titles were sensational and whether the title itself corresponded to the content of the text. The words that were present in the titles are graphically presented in the form of a “word cloud”, in which the dimensions of the words represent the frequencies of their appearance.

¹ Example: the title which announces the arrival of spring, posted on *www.alo.rs*: <https://www.alo.rs/vesti/drustvo/srbija-prolece-beograd-gradani-promena-vremena-prognoza/218195/ves>

When looking at the newspapers individually, in the daily newspaper *Alo!*, the most common word is *Serbs* (18 appearances), followed by *Serbian* (10), *himself* (9), *Vučić* (9), followed by *Kosovo*, *Million* and *Šiptars*, who are represented in eight titles. *Blic* most often emphasizes the words *Kosovo* (15), *Serbia* (10), *Jutka* (9), *Paris* (8) and *lifetime* (7) in the titles. The most frequently repeated word in the headlines included in *Danas* is *Serbia* (42 titles). The word *Vučić* is represented 33 times, and the *government* 30 times. The words *not* and *euro* are mentioned 16 and 15 times respectively. *Informer* gives priority to the words *Kosovo* (31), while the second and third words by representation are *Serbia* (28) and *Šiptars* (16). *Serbs* and *Đilas* are the fourth and fifth words by presence, used in headings 15 and 12 times respectively. *Serbia* (25), *Serbs* (19), *Kosovo* (17), *Vučić* (16) and *Putin* (12 appearances) are the most represented words in the titles of selected texts from *Kurir*. *Serbia* is the most present word in the headlines in *Politika* (40), followed by *Serbian* (20), *Vučić* (19), *Kosovo* and *not* (16 each). *Večernje novosti* also uses the word *Serbs* the most (22 texts), while the following words by presence are *Serbia* and *Serbian* (15 each), followed by *not* (14), *Kosovo* and *because* (10 appearances each). The representation of words in titles, according to the media, can be seen in **Graphs 16 - 22**.

Graph16 – Word cloud – *Alo!*



Graph 17 – Word cloud – *Blic*



Graph 18 – Word cloud – *Danas*



Graph 19 – Word cloud – *Informer*



Graph 20 – Word cloud – *Kurir*



Character of titles

As already noted, sensationalist reporting and tabloidization are increasingly present trends in print media in Serbia. This practice is also evident in the titles, which in almost 34% of texts do not meet the standards of professional reporting. This is, among other things, exemplified by the use of formulations that are inconsistent with the content of the text, unacceptable words, insults and similar practices. The way the headlines are conceived is a true reflection of the editorial policy of each media outlet and provides insight into the intent of journalists and editors – informing the public about topics of public concern or attracting the readership in ways that are clearly not in line with the standards of the journalistic profession.

In order to determine how the media approach the headlines, the titles of the sample are classified into four categories. The first group consists of headlines that are in full compliance with the standards of the journalistic profession and are in line with the text that follows.⁷ The next group of titles are those that conform to the standards of the profession but are not in accordance with the content of the text, that is, the facts stated in the title are in no way related to the contents of the text, but are often contradictory.⁸ The third group consists of sensationalist headlines that go beyond professional standards but are consistent with the content of the text. These are headlines that seek to elicit a more or less tumultuous reaction from readers and certainly attract attention.⁹ The last group of titles are sensationalist, which fall outside the scope of professional standards and do not fit the text. This type of headline, which provokes the most intense reactions of the audience, is mostly about disrespecting basic ethical reporting principles and pointing to bad media practices.¹⁰ The purpose of this research was not to determine the truth of the claims made in the headlines and texts (or the phenomenon of *fake news*), but rather how the media handled the facts presented. More specifically, the idea was to compare the consistency of the claims made with the argumentation outlined in the text.

Sensationalist headlines have been noted in all media, while the vocabulary and the way in which it attracts the attention of readers differs significantly in each of the media. The most sensationalist headlines were recorded in the daily *Alo!* – 189, that is, more than three quarters of the texts selected for the sample from this newspaper had a headline that did not conform to professional standards. More than half of the sensationalist titles were also recorded in *Kurir* – about 55%. Sensationalist headlines that cannot be linked to the content of the text are the most prevalent in *Informer* – 20, while the daily *Politika* has the most headlines that, at first glance, meet reporting standards, but do not state the facts confirmed in the text – 40 or about 7.58%.

7 "Gradiće se novi ledolomac [A new icebreaker will be built]," *Politika*, 03.01.2019, p. A1

8 "Putin i Vučić grade hram! [Putin and Vučić are building a temple]" *Alo!*, 17.01.2019, p. 2

9 "Krvavi scenario za rušenje Dodika! [A bloody scenario for toppling Dodik]" *Alo!*, 05.01.2019, p. 2

10 "Đilasovka koja radi za Šiptare je vođa protesta [Đilas supporter who works for Šiptars is a protest leader]," *Informer*, 04.01.2019, p. 5

Character of the title by media

Media/ title	meets standards		meets standards / inconsistent with content		sensationalist / consistent with content		sensationalist / inconsistent with content		total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
<i>Alo!</i>	53	21.54	0	0.00	4	1.63	189	76.83	246	100.00
<i>Blic</i>	111	59.36	0	0.00	1	0.53	75	40.11	187	100.00
<i>Danas</i>	406	86.94	1	0.21	0	0.00	60	12.85	467	100.00
<i>Informer</i>	85	41.26	10	4.85	20	9.71	91	44.17	206	100.00
<i>Kurir</i>	111	42.21	3	1.14	5	1.90	144	54.75	263	100.00
<i>Politika</i>	459	86.93	40	7.58	0	0.00	29	5.49	528	100.00
<i>Večernje novosti</i>	285	75.60	2	0.53	10	2.65	80	21.22	377	100.00
total	1510	66.40	56	2.46	40	1.76	668	29.38	2274	100.00

Source: *Mediameter* research, April – June 2019

Share of journalistic genres

In the second quarter of 2019, the share of reports in the total number of texts that make up the sample is 80.74% or 1836 texts, and it is increased by 1% compared to the previous quarter. The largest share of the *report* was again observed in *Informer* - 97.57%, while the lowest representation of texts written in this genre in *Politika* - about 66%. Just over 67% of texts written in this genre in all media are neutral,¹¹ with the share of intonated texts being different in relation to the medium. The largest share of the value context was recorded in *Informer* (72.64%), and the lowest in *Danas*, 12.57%. The reports are largely unbalanced,¹² even 81% are not complete. The least balanced reports were noted in *Informer* (2.49%), while the most complete texts in the form of reports were published by the daily *Blic* (30.43%).¹³

The next news form according to participation is the *interview* - 7.52% of the texts were written in this form (the highest participation was recorded in *Blic* and *Večernje novosti* - about 10% of articles). The following are *comments* and *articles*, which make up 4.88% and 3.65% of all texts in the sample. The highest number and the number of comments were recorded in *Danas* (59 or 12.63%), while the daily newspapers *Kurir* and *Večernje novosti* have not published a single article in this newspaper genre. Texts in article form were published only in the newspapers *Politika*, *Danas* and *Blic*. The second quarter of

11 In the analysis we present, we coded the ways of presenting certain topics or actors in individual texts from our sample in three different ways, taking into account both the text and the text equipment (subtitle, title and subtitle). By the *neutral* presentation of particular topics or actors, we have identified those texts in which the authors of the text / journalist do not take a value attitude towards a specific actor or topic, but seek to present in a relatively neutral, measured manner, in accordance with professional standards, certain facts which are the subject of the text. We have interpreted as *positive* those interpretations in which journalists express clear sympathies and positive attitudes towards them by presenting particular topics or actors. As *negative*, we have labeled those interpretations in which journalists express clear antipathy and negative attitude towards them by presenting particular topics or actors.

12 Balance represents the way a journalist approaches a topic. Balanced text implies a balanced and objective approach to the topic and the interlocutors and the integrity of the information.

13 Participation of balanced reports in other media: *Kurir* (4.56%), *Alo!* (11.16%), *Večernje novosti* (22.26%), *Politika* (24.21%) and *Danas* (29.04%).

2019 again brings a smaller share of news - 1.72%. Reports and other forms (such as hybrid genres or feuilletons) are present in about 1.5% or 34 articles. Compared to the previous quarter, an identical arrangement of genres is noted.

Individual share of genres in reporting of seven media from the sample

Genre	Total number	%
Report	1836	80.74
Interview	171	7.52
Commentary	111	4.88
Article	83	3.65
News story	39	1.72
Other	18	0.79
Reportage	16	0.70
total	2274	100.00

Source: *Mediameter* research, April – June 2019

Distribution of journalistic genres in texts from the sample, per media, in numbers

Genre	<i>Alo!</i>	<i>Blic</i>	<i>Danas</i>	<i>Informer</i>	<i>Kurir</i>	<i>Politika</i>	<i>Večernje novosti</i>	total
report	215	161	334	201	241	347	337	1836
interview	17	19	32	1	18	46	38	171
commentary	2	4	59	1	0	45	0	111
article	0	1	8	0	0	74	0	83
news	11	1	17	2	0	7	1	39
other	0	1	12	1	3	0	1	18
reportage	1	0	5	0	1	9	0	16
total	246	187	467	206	263	528	377	2274

Source: *Mediameter* research, April – June 2019

Distribution of journalistic genres in texts from the sample, per media, in percents

Genre	<i>Alo!</i>	<i>Blic</i>	<i>Danas</i>	<i>Informer</i>	<i>Kurir</i>	<i>Politika</i>	<i>Večernje novosti</i>	total
report	87.40	86.10	71.52	97.57	91.63	65.72	89.39	80.74
interview	6.91	10.16	6.85	0.49	6.84	8.71	10.08	7.52
commentary	0.81	2.14	12.63	0.49	0.00	8.52	0.00	4.88
article	0.00	0.53	1.71	0.00	0.00	14.02	0.00	3.65
news	4.47	0.53	3.64	0.97	0.00	1.33	0.27	1.72
other	0.00	0.53	2.57	0.49	1.14	0.00	0.27	0.79
reportage	0.41	0.00	1.07	0.00	0.38	1.70	0.00	0.70
total	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00

Source: *Mediameter* research, April – June 2019

Report structure in terms of value context in seven media from the sample

Report/ media	Value context in relation to the topic					
	positive		neutral		negative	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
<i>Informer</i>	38	18.91	55	27.36	108	53.73
<i>Alo!</i>	4	1.86	116	53.95	95	44.19
<i>Blic</i>	1	0.62	116	72.05	44	27.33
<i>Kurir</i>	17	7.05	153	63.49	71	29.46
<i>Večernje novosti</i>	23	6.82	249	73.89	65	19.29
<i>Politika</i>	21	6.05	258	74.35	68	19.60
<i>Danas</i>	0	0.00	292	87.43	42	12.57
total	104	5.66	1239	67.48	493	26.85

Source: *Mediameter* research, April – June 2019

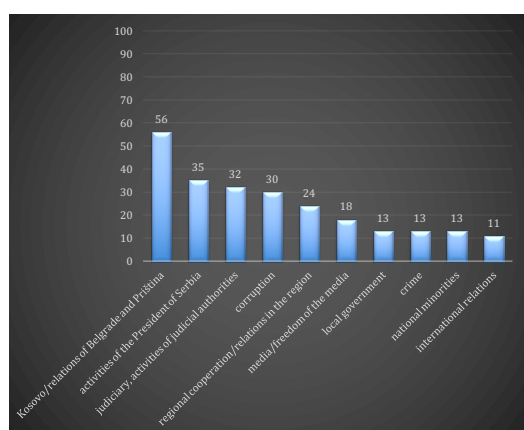
Topics

In order to define each text as clearly as possible, the selected texts that make up the sample are classified within only one topic, but other elements are always present in the text. This gave us a clearer insight into the reporting methods and media access to certain topics and in previous issues of *Mediameter*. The texts in the field of chronicle, which have a socio-political character, as well as articles related to the murder of singer Jelena Marjanović, have been reintroduced into the sample, as a kind of paradigm of the situation in Serbian journalism, characterized by different types of disrespect for ethical reporting principles. The sample also includes texts related to the media-constructed affair, whose lead actor was singer Jelena Karleuša.

Topic prominence

In the period April - June 2019, all political topics were present in a total of 622 or 27.35% of the sample texts: *political life in Serbia* in 532 or 23.39% of texts (the first topic according to the representation in the texts that made up the sample), *activities of the President of Serbia* in 2.9% or 66 articles, *activities of the Government of Serbia* 0.7% - 16 and *activities of the Prime Minister of Serbia* 0.35% - 8 texts. The representation of the topic *political life in Serbia* is reduced by about 8% compared to the total number of articles that make up the sample, or expressed in absolute numbers, 169 texts less than in the previous quarter. As noted in the introduction to this chapter, in the texts, apart from the dominant theme, elements are also recorded, indicating the angle from which the topic is viewed. Each selected text could contain only the basic theme or, with the basic theme, one or more elements. Given the largest representation of texts pertaining to *political life in Serbia*, it was necessary to consider what are the most common elements in these texts. This topic was mostly discussed from the perspective of the *Kosovo* issues (56 articles), then *political life in Serbia* was discussed from the perspective of media rights and freedoms (35), activities of the President of Serbia (32), local government (30) and the judiciary (24 items).

Graph 23 - Participation of elements by topic political life in Serbia - all media from the sample



Source: *Mediameter* research, April – June 2019

The next represented topic in the second quarter of 2019 is *Kosovo / Belgrade - Priština relations* (334 or 14.69% of articles), which presence is increased compared to the previous quarter (205 or 9.11% of texts). The third topic by representation was the *issues of faith, church and religion*, which was the topic of 87 or 3.83% of texts, which is certainly a consequence of a turbulent session of the Holy Bishops' Council of the SOC in May. Judicial topics were represented in 81 texts (3.56%), with the same number of texts devoted to the *economy*. *Regional cooperation / relations in the region* was the sixth topic of interest, of which 77 or 3.39% of articles were published by the media, and the same interest was recorded in the area of international relations.

Exactly 66 or 2.9% of texts were devoted to topics related to the *activities of the President of Serbia*, while in 61 articles (2.68%) the media reported on the *EU / EU policy*, especially in the context of elections to the European Parliament, which ended on May 26th, 2019. Political issues in Montenegro are among the ten most represented topics (55 or 2.42%). Media writing was mainly fueled by numerous tensions between Belgrade and Podgorica, for which the Draft of the Law on Freedom of Religion, which reviews property of religious communities, including the Serbian Orthodox Church in Montenegro, is one of the causes.

If one considers the value context of the 2274 selected texts in the second quarter of 2019, 33.16% of the captions are connotated - 5.36% positive and 27.79% negative). Most negative texts were written about *political life in Montenegro* (67.27%). Just under half of the articles that spoke on regional topics were also negative (about 48%), and negative context was also observed when reporting on topics related to Kosovo - about 42.5% of texts. Negative attitudes to topics related to *Kosovo / Belgrade - Priština relations* were also built in this quarter through a narrative in which Albanians settled in Kosovo are called *Šiptars* in a pejorative context. A third of texts related to economic topics were also negative and almost 30% articles that spoke about *political life in Serbia*. In the second quarter of 2019, there were 9.09% positive connotations of the *activities of the President of Serbia* and 6.17% regarding the *economy*.

The media in the second quarter of 2019 did not show much interest in the topic related to Russia - a total of 37 or 1.63% of articles were published. Majority of them were positive - 62.16%,¹⁴ while negative ones were not recorded. On the other hand, twice as many texts were published on the EU - 61 or 2.68%. Mostly (83.61%) in neutral value context, with one positive¹⁵ and 9 negative connotations.¹⁶

14 Seven negatively connotated texts were published in the daily *Politika*, 6 in *Večernje novosti*, 5 in *Kurir*, 4 in *Informer*, and one in *Alo!*

15 In *Danas*.

16 Mostly in daily newspapers *Politika* - 6, with 2 articles in *Večernje novosti* and one in *Alo!*

Distribution of topics and their value context in seven media from the sample¹⁷

<i>All media</i>	Value context with reference to the topic							
	total		Positive		Neutral		Negative	
	No.	%	No.	%		No.	%	No.
Political life in Serbia	532	23.39	5	0.94	370	69.55	157	29.51
Kosovo/Relations of Belgrade and Pristina	334	14.69	2	0.60	190	56.89	142	42.51
Issues of faith, church and religion	87	3.83	2	2.30	73	83.91	12	13.79
System of justice, activities of judiciary bodies	81	3.56	1	1.23	64	79.01	16	19.75
Economy	81	3.56	5	6.17	47	58.02	29	35.80
International relations	77	3.39	0	0.00	63	81.82	14	18.18
Regional cooperation /relations in the region	77	3.39	1	1.30	39	50.65	37	48.05
Activities of the President of Serbia	66	2.90	6	9.09	56	84.85	4	6.06
EU/EU policy	61	2.68	1	1.64	51	83.61	9	14.75
Political life in Montenegro	55	2.42	0	0.00	18	32.73	37	67.27

Source: *Mediameter* research, April – June 2019

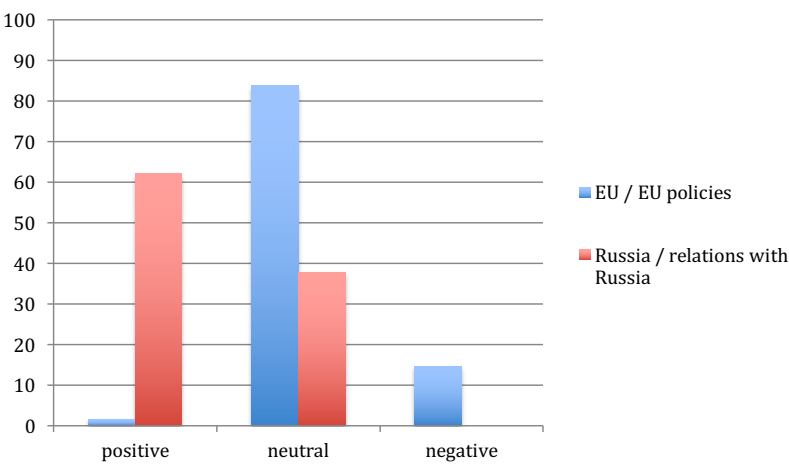
Value context in relation to all the topics in all seven media

Total	No.	%
Positive	122	5.36
Neutral	1520	66.84
Negative	632	27.79
total	2274	100.00

Source: *Mediameter* research, April – June 2019

¹⁷ In all tables relating to the first quarter of 2019, the ten most represented topics are shown.

Graph 24. – Value context in all media in relation to the topic *Russia / attitude towards Russia* and *EU / EU policy*



Source: *Mediameter* research, April – June 2019

Distribution of topics according to media

Alo!

Distribution of topics and their value context in the paper *Alo!*

	Value context with reference to the topic							
<i>Alo!</i>	total		Positive		Neutral		Negative	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Political life in Serbia	83	33.74	1	1.20	53	63.86	29	34.94
Kosovo / Relations of Belgrade and Priština	39	15.85	0	0.00	11	28.21	28	71.79
Political life in Montenegro	14	5.69	0	0.00	5	35.71	9	64.29
Economy	13	5.28	0	0.00	3	23.08	10	76.92
Regional cooperation / relations in the region	13	5.28	0	0.00	2	15.38	11	84.62
Issues of faith, church and religion	11	4.47	0	0.00	11	100.00	0	0.00
sport	10	4.07	0	0.00	8	80.00	2	20.00
Crime	8	3.25	0	0.00	6	75.00	2	25.00
Karleuša affair	6	2.44	0	0.00	0	0.00	6	100.00
Activities of the President of Serbia	5	2.03	0	0.00	5	100.00	0	0.00
International relations	5	2.03	0	0.00	5	100.00	0	0.00
System of justice, activities of judiciary bodies	5	2.03	0	0.00	5	100.00	0	0.00

Source: *Mediameter* research, April – June 2019

Value context in relation to all topics in the paper *Alo!*

<i>Alo!</i>	No.	%
Positive	4	1.63
Neutral	139	56.50
Negative	103	41.87
total	246	100

Source: *Mediameter* research, April – June 2019

BlicDistribution of topics and their value context in the paper *Blic*

Blic	Value context with reference to the topic							
	total		Positive		Neutral		Negative	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Political life in Serbia	64	34.22	1	1.56	45	70.31	18	28.13
Kosovo/Relations of Belgrade and Priština	44	23.53	0	0.00	33	75.00	11	25.00
System of justice, activities of judiciary bodies	11	5.88	0	0.00	8	72.73	3	27.27
Legislative activity	10	5.35	0	0.00	10	100.00	0	0.00
Political life in Montenegro	8	4.28	0	0.00	3	37.50	5	62.50
Economy	6	3.21	0	0.00	6	100.00	0	0.00
Issues of faith, church and religion	6	3.21	0	0.00	4	66.67	2	33.33
Regional cooperation / relations in the region	5	2.67	0	0.00	4	80.00	1	20.00
Murder of the singer Jelena Marjanović	5	2.67	0	0.00	2	40.00	3	60.00
International relations	4	2.14	0	0.00	4	100.00	0	0.00
Trade	4	2.14	0	0.00	3	75.00	1	25.00

Source: *Mediameter* research, April – June 2019Value context in relation to all topics in the paper *Blic*

Blic	No.	%
Positive	1	0.53
Neutral	137	73.26
Negative	49	26.20
total	187	100

Source: *Mediameter* research, April – June 2019

Danas

Distribution of topics and their value context in the paper *Danas*

	Value context with reference to the topic							
<i>Danas</i>	total		Positive		Neutral		Negative	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Political life in Serbia	180	38.54	1	0.56	149	82.78	30	16.67
Kosovo / relations of Belgrade and Priština	32	6.85	1	3.13	29	90.63	2	6.25
Media / freedom of the media	30	6.42	0	0.00	20	66.67	10	33.33
Trade	20	4.28	0	0.00	12	60.00	8	40.00
Economy	19	4.07	0	0.00	15	78.95	4	21.05
Culture	19	4.07	1	5.26	15	78.95	3	15.79
EU/EU policy	18	3.85	1	5.56	17	94.44	0	0.00
Local government	18	3.85	0	0.00	12	66.67	6	33.33
System of justice, activities of judiciary bodies	17	3.64	0	0.00	11	64.71	6	35.29
Issues of faith, church and religion	11	2.36	0	0.00	9	81.82	2	18.18
Regional cooperation / relations in the region	11	2.36	0	0.00	11	100.00	0	0.00
International relations	11	2.36	0	0.00	11	100.00	0	0.00

Source: *Mediameter* research, April – June 2019

Value context in relation to all topics in the paper *Danas*

<i>Danas</i>	No.	%
Positive	4	0.86
Neutral	377	80.73
Negative	86	18.42
total	467	100.00

Source: *Mediameter* research, April – June 2019

InformerDistribution of topics and their value context in the paper *Informer*

	Value context with reference to the topic							
<i>Informer</i>	total		Positive		Neutral		Negative	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Political life in Serbia	51	24.76	1	1.96	10	19.61	40	78.43
Kosovo / relations of Belgrade and Priština	38	18.45	1	2.63	10	26.32	27	71.05
Army	10	4.85	8	80.00	2	20.00	0	0.00
International relations	10	4.85	0	0.00	7	70.00	3	30.00
Regional cooperation / relations in the region	8	3.88	0	0.00	0	0.00	8	100.00
Economy	8	3.88	4	50.00	2	25.00	2	25.00
Karleuša affair	8	3.88	0	0.00	0	0.00	8	100.00
Infrastructure	7	3.40	7	100.00	0	0.00	0	0.00
USA/Relations towards USA	7	3.40	1	14.29	2	28.57	4	57.14
Russia / attitude towards Russia	5	2.43	4	80.00	1	20.00	0	0.00
Issues of faith, church and religion	5	2.43	0	0.00	4	80.00	1	20.00
NATO/NATO integration	5	2.43	0	0.00	0	0.00	5	100.00
sport	5	2.43	1	20.00	2	40.00	2	40.00

Source: *Mediameter* research, April – June 2019Value context in relation to all topics in the paper *Informer*

<i>Informer</i>	No.	%
Positive	36	17.48
Neutral	58	28.16
Negative	112	54.37
total	206	100.00

Source: *Mediameter* research, April – June 2019

KurirDistribution of topics and their value context in the paper *Kurir*

<i>Kurir</i>	Value context with reference to the topic							
	total		Positive		Neutral		Negative	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Political life in Serbia	72	27.38	0	0.00	52	72.22	20	27.78
Kosovo / relations of Belgrade and Priština	30	11.41	0	0.00	21	70.00	9	30.00
Activities of the President of Serbia	15	5.7	3	20.00	12	80.00	0	0.00
Crime	14	5.32	0	0.00	10	71.43	4	28.57
Murder of the singer Jelena Marjanović	10	3.80	0	0.00	8	80.00	2	20.00
Issues of faith, church and religion	10	3.80	0	0.00	8	80.00	2	20.00
Entertainment/showbusiness	9	3.42	0	0.00	0	0.00	9	100.00
Karleuša affair	9	3.42	0	0.00	3	33.33	6	66.67
Regional cooperation / relations in the region	8	3.04	0	0.00	4	50.00	4	50.00
System of justice, activities of judiciary bodies	8	3.04	0	0.00	8	100.00	0	0.00
Russia / attitude towards Russia	8	3.04	5	62.50	3	37.50	0	0.00

Source: *Mediameter* research, April – June 2019Value context in relation to all topics in the paper *Kurir*

<i>Kurir</i>	No.	%
Positive	16	6.08
Neutral	174	66.16
Negative	73	27.76
total	263	100.00

Source: *Mediameter* research, April – June 2019

Politika

Distribution of topics and their value context in the paper *Politika*

	Value context with reference to the topic							
Politika	total		Positive		Neutral		Negative	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Kosovo / relations of Belgrade and Priština	80	15.15	0	0.00	35	43.75	45	56.25
International relations	38	7.20	0	0.00	27	71.05	11	28.95
Political life in Serbia	37	7.01	0	0.00	22	59.46	15	40.54
EU / EU policy	32	6.06	0	0.00	26	81.25	6	18.75
Economy	28	5.30	1	3.57	19	67.86	8	28.57
System of justice, activities of judiciary bodies	25	4.73	0	0.00	19	76.00	6	24.00
Legislative activity	22	4.17	0	0.00	22	100.00	0	0.00
Activities of the President of Serbia	22	4.17	2	9.09	18	81.82	2	9.09
Political life in Montenegro	18	3.41	0	0.00	5	27.78	13	72.22
Regional cooperation / relations in the region	18	3.41	1	5.56	11	61.11	6	33.33
Issues of faith, church and religion	18	3.41	2	11.11	15	83.33	1	5.56

Source: *Mediameter* research, April – June 2019

Value context in relation to all topics in the paper *Politika*

Politika	No.	%
Positive	34	6.44
Neutral	352	66.67
Negative	142	26.89
total	528	100.00

Source: *Mediameter* research, April – June 2019

Večernje novostiDistribution of topics and their value context in the paper *Večernje novosti*

	Value context with reference to the topic							
<i>Večernje novosti</i>	total		Positive		Neutral		Negative	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Kosovo / relations of Belgrade and Priština	71	18.83	0	0.00	51	71.83	20	28.17
Political life in Serbia	45	11.94	1	2.22	39	86.67	5	11.11
Issues of faith, church and religion	26	6.90	0	0.00	22	84.62	4	15.38
Activities of the President of Serbia	17	4.51	1	5.88	16	94.12	0	0.00
System of justice, activities of judiciary bodies	14	3.71	0	0.00	13	92.86	1	7.14
Regional cooperation / relations in the region	14	3.71	0	0.00	7	50.00	7	50.00
Historical subjects	13	3.45	1	7.69	8	61.54	4	30.77
Economy	12	3.18	0	0.00	12	100.00	0	0.00
Culture	10	2.65	0	0.00	10	100.00	0	0.00
Hague / war crimes	10	2.65	0	0.00	7	70.00	3	30.00

Source: *Mediameter* research, April – June 2019Value context in relation to all topics in the paper *Večernje novosti*

<i>Večernje novosti</i>	No.	%
Positive	27	7.16
Neutral	283	75.07
Negative	67	17.77
total	377	100.00

Source: *Mediameter* research, April – June 2019

Balance

When we consider all the texts from the sample for the second period of 2019, it can be noticed that most of the topics presented were not treated in a comprehensive manner, which is evidenced by the fact that the balance is present in only 16.8% of all articles. The lowest amount of balanced texts was recorded in *Informer* 2.91%, and the highest in *Blic* - 26.74%

Although the value context is not expressed in 66.84% of all texts, in considering the real picture of the media from the sample, one should certainly take into account the fact that the vast majority of the cover texts we analyzed are not comprehensive and that such a one-sided approach reflects the general situation in the Serbian media. Balanced texts necessarily show a degree of restraint, which obviously does not represent a particularly widespread phenomenon in Serbian journalism. Taking sides, which is sometimes very passionate, attracts the audience but reduces the seriousness. It is about reaction speed, not about detailed and rational information that requires research, more interviewees and reliable and verifiable data, with available sources of information. In this way, circulation and popularity are gained in a short time, but not a reputation.

The balance in relation to all the topics and all seven media from the sample

All media	Yes		No	
media	%	No.	%	No.
<i>Informer</i>	2.91	6	97.09	200
<i>Kurir</i>	4.56	12	95.44	251
<i>Alo!</i>	10.98	27	89.02	219
<i>Politika</i>	18.56	98	81.44	430
<i>Večernje novosti</i>	20.16	76	79.84	301
<i>Danas</i>	24.20	113	75.80	354
<i>Blic</i>	26.74	50	73.26	137
total	16.80	382	83.20	1892

Source: *Mediameter* research, April – June 2019

Actors

Media in Serbia, at least according to the analysis of the empirical material collected from the front pages, mainly deal with political events within Serbia. Individual and collective political actors, who occupy different positions within the political life of Serbia, account for 45.04% of the total number of actors spoken by selected texts from the cover. If we include this number and the texts that speak of foreign political actors, the percentage of the participation of political actors in the total number of actors on the headlines rises to 74.46%. The second group by frequency of occurrence is different social actors that make up 18.19% of our sample. Economic and economic actors are the protagonists of the texts from the cover only in 4.43% of cases.

Total distribution of actors appearing in the texts which are a part of sampled research (expressed in absolute numbers)

Actors					
Political actors	9097	Domestic	5503	Individual	4142
				Collective	1361
		Foreign	3594	Individual	2854
				Collective	740
Economic actors	542	Domestic	508	Individual	189
				Collective	319
		Foreign	34	Individual	0
				Collective	34
Other social actors	2223	Domestic	2148	Individual	1660
				Collective	488
		Foreign	75	Individual	59
				Collective	16
Unnamed sources	354				
Total	12216				

Source: *Mediameter* research, April – June 2019

Distribution of frequency and value context of appearance of individual political actors from **the Government of the Republic of Serbia and the President of the Republic of Serbia**

The Government and the President of the Republic of Serbia	No.	%	Positive	%	Neutral	%	Negative	%
Aleksandar Vučić	694	45.69	17	2.45	650	93.66	27	3.89
Ana Brnabić	166	10.93	0	0.00	161	96.99	5	3.01
Ivica Dačić	162	10.66	0	0.00	161	99.38	1	0.62
Aleksandar Vulin	114	7.50	0	0.00	108	94.74	6	5.26
Nebojša Stefanović	63	4.15	0	0.00	61	96.83	2	3.17
Siniša Mali	57	3.75	0	0.00	52	91.23	5	8.77
Zorana Mihajlović	51	3.36	0	0.00	49	96.08	2	3.92
Rasim Ljajić	31	2.04	0	0.00	31	100.00	0	0.00
Nela Kuburović	28	1.84	0	0.00	27	96.43	1	3.57
Mladen Šarčević	25	1.65	0	0.00	25	100.00	0	0.00
Zoran Đorđević	22	1.45	0	0.00	20	90.91	2	9.09
Branislav Nedimović	19	1.25	1	5.26	18	94.74	0	0.00
Jadranka Joksimović	13	0.86	0	0.00	13	100.00	0	0.00
Branko Ružić	12	0.79	0	0.00	12	100.00	0	0.00
Vladan Vukosavljević	12	0.79	0	0.00	10	83.33	2	16.67
Nenad Popović	12	0.79	0	0.00	12	100.00	0	0.00
Slavica Đukić Dejanović	10	0.66	0	0.00	10	100.00	0	0.00
Zlatibor Lončar	8	0.53	0	0.00	7	87.50	1	12.50
Goran Trivan	7	0.46	0	0.00	4	57.14	3	42.86
Milan Krkobabić	5	0.33	0	0.00	4	80.00	1	20.00
Aleksandar Antić	5	0.33	0	0.00	5	100.00	0	0.00
Goran Knežević	2	0.13	0	0.00	2	100.00	0	0.00
Vanja Udovičić	1	0.07	0	0.00	1	100.00	0	0.00
total	1519	100.00	18	1.18	1443	95.00	58	3.82

Source: *Mediameter* research, April – June 2019

As in the previous quarter, the most prominent actor on the front pages of daily newspapers in Serbia was President of Serbia Aleksandar Vučić, whose media coverage in our sample is mostly neutral (in 93.66% of cases). Also, 2.45% (17) positive¹⁸ and 3.89% (27) negative¹⁹ texts were written about him. The president of Serbia appears 694 times as the protagonist of texts on the covers, which is significantly higher than the first ranked actor, Prime Minister of Serbia Ana Brnabić, who is present in 166 texts and Foreign Minister Ivica Dačić, who is represented in 162 articles. The highest frequency of Aleksandar Vučić's appearances, expressed in absolute numbers, is recorded in the daily newspapers *Danas* (191), *Politika* (124) and *Večernje novosti* (111). Expressed in relative numbers of the percentage of texts in which he appears as an actor, and in relation to the total number of selected texts from the same individual newspapers, we can see that he is the most represented actor in *Danas* (40.9%), *Informer* (37.86%) and *Blic* (33.16 %). The lowest participation of the articles in which the actor is President of Serbia is recorded in the daily *Alo!* (21.14%) and *Politika* (23.48%)

When it comes to the value context, the largest share, as well as the number of negative texts, are again present in *Danas* (12.57% or 24 articles) and *Politika* (2.42% or 3 articles). The positively connotated texts were published in *Alo!* (7 or 13.46%), *Kurir* (4 or 5.26%) and *Večernje novosti* and *Informer* (3 each).

Aleksandar Vučić: Value context with reference to the media

Aleksandar Vučić	Positive		Neutral		Negative		total	
Media	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
<i>Alo!</i>	7	13.46	45	86.54	0	0.00	52	100
<i>Blic</i>	0	0.00	62	100.00	0	0.00	62	100
<i>Danas</i>	0	0.00	167	87.43	24	12.57	191	100
<i>Informer</i>	3	3.85	75	96.15	0	0.00	78	100
<i>Kurir</i>	4	5.26	72	94.74	0	0.00	76	100
<i>Politika</i>	0	0.00	121	97.58	3	2.42	124	100
<i>Večernje novosti</i>	3	2.70	108	97.30	0	0.00	111	100
total	17	2.45	650	93.66	27	3.89	694	100

Source: *Mediameter* research, April – June 2019

18 Slightly lower than in the previous quarters when there were 22 (in the first quarter of 2019), 25 (in the fourth) and 28 (in the third), 21 (in the second) and 22 (in the first quarter of 2018).

19 More than in the previous quarter, in which there were 21, and approximately the same as in the fourth quarter of 2018, when there were 28, but significantly more than in the second (14 negatively connotated texts) and the third (13 negatively connotated texts) quarter of 2018

Number of appearances of Aleksandar Vučić in respect of total numbers of texts in particular daily newspapers

Aleksandar Vučić per media	No. of appearances	Total no. of texts	% share against total no. of texts
<i>Danas</i>	191	467	40.90
<i>Informer</i>	78	206	37.86
<i>Blic</i>	62	187	33.16
<i>Večernje novosti</i>	111	377	29.44
<i>Kurir</i>	76	263	28.90
<i>Politika</i>	124	528	23.48
<i>Alo!</i>	52	246	21.14
total	694	2274	30.52

Source: *Mediameter* research, April – June 2019

Prime Minister Ana Brnabić is the protagonist in 166 (10.94%) of the analyzed texts and she is the second most frequent protagonist among individual political actors from the Serbian political scene. In the second quarter of 2019, five texts with negative connotation were written about Ana Brnabić, all of which were published in the daily *Danas*. Positively connotated texts about the current Prime Minister were not published this quarter.

The largest number of articles in which the Serbian Prime Minister is an actor have been published in the daily newspapers *Danas* (40), *Politika* (38) and *Večernje novosti* (34). The highest share of texts in relation to the total number of texts in the media was recorded in *Večernje novosti* (9.02%), *Kurir* (8.75%) and *Danas* (8.57%).

Ana Brnabić: Value context with reference to the media

Ana Brnabić	positive		neutral		negative		total	
Media	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
<i>Alo!</i>	0	0.00	5	100.00	0	0.00	5	100
<i>Blic</i>	0	0.00	15	100.00	0	0.00	15	100
<i>Danas</i>	0	0.00	35	87.50	5	12.50	40	100
<i>Informer</i>	0	0.00	11	100.00	0	0.00	11	100
<i>Kurir</i>	0	0.00	23	100.00	0	0.00	23	100
<i>Politika</i>	0	0.00	38	100.00	0	0.00	38	100
<i>Večernje novosti</i>	0	0.00	34	100.00	0	0.00	34	100
total	0	0.00	161	96.99	5	3.01	166	100

Source: *Mediameter* research, April – June 2019

Number of appearances of Ana Brnabić in respect of total numbers of texts in particular daily newspapers

Ana Brnabić per media	No. of appearances	Total no. of texts	% share against total no. of texts
<i>Večernje novosti</i>	34	377	9.02
<i>Kurir</i>	23	263	8.75
<i>Danas</i>	40	467	8.57
<i>Blic</i>	15	187	8.02
<i>Politika</i>	38	528	7.20
<i>Informer</i>	11	206	5.34
<i>Alo!</i>	5	246	2.03
total	166	2274	7.30

Source: *Mediameter* research, April – June 2019

Other actors from the group consisting of the Government and the President of the Republic of Serbia are presented in a neutral value context in 95% of the texts. Most of the negative connotations, except for President Aleksandar Vučić, were written about Aleksandar Vulin (6), Ana Brnabić and Siniša Mali (5 each). It is interesting that, except for President Aleksandar Vučić, only one positive text was written about the Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management, Branislav Nedimović.

In the second quarter of 2019 we see a significant decrease in the number of opposition actors - 1287 compared to the previous quarter when there were 1511. However, compared to the last two quarters of 2018 - 1030 in the fourth and 932 in the third - it is still noticeable increased presence of opposition representatives. Again in this quarter, the most prominent opposition leader was Dragan Đilas with 200 appearances, slightly less than in the previous quarter (275). Boško Obradović (168) and Vuk Jeremić (142) follow. Most negative texts, expressed in absolute numbers, were written about Dragan Đilas (75),²⁰ then Boško Obradović (63)²¹ and Vuk Jeremić (48).²²

20 Less than in the previous quarter, when there were 111.

21 More than the previous quarter (50), and significantly more than the last two quarters of 2018 - the fourth (25) and especially the third (only 15).

22 Less than in the previous quarter (55) but still more than in the fourth quarter of 2018 (40).

Distribution of frequency and value context of appearance of individual political actors from **the opposition**

Opposition-individual	No.	%	Positive	%	Neutral	%	Negative	%
Dragan Đilas	200	15.54	0	0.00	125	62.50	75	37.50
Boško Obradović	168	13.05	0	0.00	105	62.50	63	37.50
Vuk Jeremić	142	11.03	0	0.00	94	66.20	48	33.80
Vojislav Šešelj	59	4.58	0	0.00	51	86.44	8	13.56
Borko Stefanović	47	3.65	0	0.00	43	91.49	4	8.51
Sergej Trifunović	43	3.34	0	0.00	33	76.74	10	23.26
Marko Bastać	41	3.19	0	0.00	29	70.73	12	29.27
Boris Tadić	38	2.95	0	0.00	34	89.47	4	10.53
Zoran Lutovac	34	2.64	0	0.00	33	97.06	1	2.94
Janko Veselinović	22	1.71	0	0.00	22	100.00	0	0.00
Zoran Živković	21	1.63	0	0.00	20	95.24	1	4.76
Čedomir Jovanović	19	1.48	0	0.00	17	89.47	2	10.53
Nebojša Zelenović	19	1.48	0	0.00	17	89.47	2	10.53
Sulejman Ugljanin	16	1.24	0	0.00	5	31.25	11	68.75
Nikola Jovanović	16	1.24	0	0.00	10	62.50	6	37.50
Marinika Tepić	16	1.24	0	0.00	15	93.75	1	6.25
Đorđe Vukadinović	16	1.24	0	0.00	16	100.00	0	0.00
Aleksandra Jerkov	14	1.09	0	0.00	13	92.86	1	7.14
Nenad Čanak	14	1.09	0	0.00	13	92.86	1	7.14
Branislav Lečić	14	1.09	0	0.00	12	85.71	2	14.29
Balša Božović	14	1.09	0	0.00	13	92.86	1	7.14
Dragan Šutanovac	12	0.93	0	0.00	11	91.67	1	8.33
Gordana Čomić	12	0.93	0	0.00	12	100.00	0	0.00
Tatjana Macura	11	0.85	0	0.00	11	100.00	0	0.00
Miroslav Aleksić	10	0.78	0	0.00	8	80.00	2	20.00
Radoslav Milojević Kena	10	0.78	0	0.00	10	100.00	0	0.00
Vladimir Gajić	9	0.70	0	0.00	9	100.00	0	0.00

Aleksandar Šapić	9	0.70	0	0.00	8	88.89	1	11.11
Miladin Ševarlić	8	0.62	0	0.00	8	100.00	0	0.00
Vjerica Radeta	7	0.54	0	0.00	6	85.71	1	14.29
Bojan Pajtić	7	0.54	0	0.00	6	85.71	1	14.29
Dragoljub Mićunović	7	0.54	0	0.00	7	100.00	0	0.00
Stefan Stamenkovski	7	0.54	0	0.00	7	100.00	0	0.00
Miloš Jovanović	6	0.47	0	0.00	6	100.00	0	0.00
Sanda Rašković Ivić	6	0.47	0	0.00	5	83.33	1	16.67
Dušan Teodorović	5	0.39	0	0.00	5	100.00	0	0.00
Goran Čirić	5	0.39	0	0.00	5	100.00	0	0.00
Saša Janković	5	0.39	0	0.00	2	40.00	3	60.00
Velimir Ilić	5	0.39	0	0.00	5	100.00	0	0.00
Miroslav Parović	4	0.31	0	0.00	4	100.00	0	0.00
Željko Veselinović	4	0.31	0	0.00	3	75.00	1	25.00
Vladan Glišić	4	0.31	0	0.00	4	100.00	0	0.00
Ivan Kostić	4	0.31	0	0.00	4	100.00	0	0.00
Petar Jojić	3	0.23	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
Miša Vacić	3	0.23	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
Saša Paunović	3	0.23	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
Milan Stamatović	3	0.23	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
Momir Stojanović	3	0.23	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
Nataša Jovanović	2	0.16	0	0.00	2	100.00	0	0.00
others	140	10.88	0	0.00	121	86.43	19	13.57
total	1287	100.00	0	0.00	1004	78.01	283	21.99

Source: Mediameter research, April – June 2019

Distribution of frequency and value context of the appearance of individual political actors representing the position

Position - individual	No.	%	Positive	%	Neutral	%	Negative	%
Milutin Jeličić Jutka	38	9.82	0	0.00	13	34.21	25	65.79
Vladimir Đukanović	27	6.98	0	0.00	26	96.30	1	3.70
Aleksandar Martinović	22	5.68	0	0.00	19	86.36	3	13.64
Milovan Drecun	16	4.13	0	0.00	16	100.00	0	0.00
Milutin Mrkonjić	15	3.88	0	0.00	14	93.33	1	6.67
Miroslav Lazanski	12	3.10	1	8.33	10	83.33	1	8.33
Darko Glišić	11	2.84	0	0.00	11	100.00	0	0.00
Ištvan Pastor	10	2.58	0	0.00	10	100.00	0	0.00
Dragan Marković Palma	10	2.58	0	0.00	10	100.00	0	0.00
Dragoljub Simonović	9	2.33	0	0.00	8	88.89	1	11.11
Marijan Rističević	9	2.33	0	0.00	9	100.00	0	0.00
Dragomir Karić	9	2.33	0	0.00	9	100.00	0	0.00
Marija Obradović	8	2.07	0	0.00	8	100.00	0	0.00
Muamer Zukorlić	8	2.07	0	0.00	8	100.00	0	0.00
Vladimir Orlić	7	1.81	0	0.00	7	100.00	0	0.00
Milenko Jovanov	7	1.81	0	0.00	7	100.00	0	0.00
Đorđe Milićević	6	1.55	0	0.00	6	100.00	0	0.00
Darko Bulatović	6	1.55	0	0.00	6	100.00	0	0.00
Vuk Drašković	5	1.29	0	0.00	5	100.00	0	0.00
Miodrag Linta	5	1.29	0	0.00	5	100.00	0	0.00
Andrej Vučić	5	1.29	0	0.00	5	100.00	0	0.00
Predrag Marković	5	1.29	0	0.00	5	100.00	0	0.00
Igor Bečić	4	1.03	0	0.00	4	100.00	0	0.00
Novica Tončev	4	1.03	0	0.00	4	100.00	0	0.00
Nikola Šainović	4	1.03	0	0.00	4	100.00	0	0.00
Aja Jung	3	0.78	0	0.00	1	33.33	2	66.67
Dragan Šormaz	3	0.78	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
Bogoljub Karić	3	0.78	1	33.33	2	66.67	0	0.00
others	116	29.97	2	1.72	103	88.79	11	9.48
total	387	100.00	4	1.03	338	87.34	45	11.63

Source: *Mediameter* research, April – June 2019

Distribution of frequency and value context of appearances of individual political actors: **representatives of State bodies, agencies and institutions**

State bodies, agencies and institutions - individual	No.	%	Positive	%	Neutral	%	Negative	%
Goran Vesić	70	14.64	0	0.00	65	92.86	5	7.14
Marko Đurić	66	13.81	0	0.00	64	96.97	2	3.03
Maja Gojković	60	12.55	0	0.00	58	96.67	2	3.33
Nikola Selaković	26	5.44	0	0.00	26	100.00	0	0.00
Zoran Radojičić	25	5.23	0	0.00	24	96.00	1	4.00
Tomislav Nikolić	21	4.39	0	0.00	20	95.24	1	4.76
Miloš Vučević	19	3.97	0	0.00	19	100.00	0	0.00
Jorgovanka Tabaković	14	2.93	0	0.00	14	100.00	0	0.00
Igor Mirović	9	1.88	0	0.00	9	100.00	0	0.00
Milovan Drecun	8	1.67	0	0.00	8	100.00	0	0.00
Veljko Odalović	8	1.67	0	0.00	8	100.00	0	0.00
Zoran Stanković	6	1.26	0	0.00	6	100.00	0	0.00
Nikola Nikodijević	5	1.05	0	0.00	5	100.00	0	0.00
Marko Blagojević	3	0.63	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
Darko Tanasković	3	0.63	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
others	135	28.24	0	0.00	116	85.93	19	14.07
total	478	100.00	0	0.00	448	93.72	30	6.28

Source: *Mediameter* research, April – June 2019

Distribution and frequency and value context of appearances of individual political actors: **representatives of military and police**

Military and police - individual	No.	%	Positive	%	Neutral	%	Negative	%
Milan Mojsilović	16	15.38	0	0.00	16	100.00	0	0.00
Ljubiša Diković	12	11.54	0	0.00	12	100.00	0	0.00
Bratislav Gašić	5	4.81	0	0.00	5	100.00	0	0.00
Rodoljub Milović	3	2.88	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
others	68	65.38	6	8.82	62	91.18	0	0.00
total	104	100.00	6	5.77	98	94.23	0	0.00

Source: *Mediameter* research, April – June 2019

Distribution of frequency and value context of appearances of **other** individual political and social actors

Others	No.	%	Positive	%	Neutral	%	Negative	%
Slobodan Milošević	110	29.89	0	0.00	103	93.64	7	6.36
Mirjana Marković	47	12.77	0	0.00	43	91.49	4	8.51
Zoran Đinđić	44	11.96	1	2.27	42	95.45	1	2.27
Marija Lukić	26	7.07	0	0.00	26	100.00	0	0.00
Slavko Ćuruvija	24	6.52	0	0.00	24	100.00	0	0.00
Josip Broz Tito	23	6.25	0	0.00	23	100.00	0	0.00
Marko Milošević	18	4.89	0	0.00	17	94.44	1	5.56
Igor Jurić	14	3.80	1	7.14	13	92.86	0	0.00
Vojislav Koštunica	10	2.72	0	0.00	9	90.00	1	10.00
Branka Prpa	9	2.45	0	0.00	9	100.00	0	0.00
Ivan Stambolić	8	2.17	0	0.00	8	100.00	0	0.00
Vesna Pešić	6	1.63	0	0.00	6	100.00	0	0.00
Emir Kusturica	5	1.36	0	0.00	5	100.00	0	0.00
Veran Matić	5	1.36	0	0.00	5	100.00	0	0.00
Mlađan Dinkić	5	1.36	0	0.00	3	60.00	2	40.00
Dragoljub Mihailović	4	1.09	0	0.00	4	100.00	0	0.00
Sonja Biserko	4	1.09	0	0.00	4	100.00	0	0.00
Matija Bećković	3	0.82	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
Filip David	3	0.82	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
total	368	100.00	2	0.54	350	95.11	16	4.35

Source: *Mediameter* research, April – June 2019

Distribution of frequency and value context of appearances of domestic collective political actors:

state bodies and institutions

State bodies, agencies and institutions	No.	%	Positive	%	Neutral	%	Negative	%
Government of Serbia	73	17.76	1	1.37	69	94.52	3	4.11
Ministry of Interior	36	8.76	0	0.00	36	100.00	0	0.00
National Assembly of the Republic of Serbia	29	7.06	0	0.00	29	100.00	0	0.00
Ministry of Justice	24	5.84	0	0.00	24	100.00	0	0.00
Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development	24	5.84	0	0.00	23	95.83	1	4.17
Ministry of Defense	22	5.35	0	0.00	22	100.00	0	0.00
Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Policy	22	5.35	0	0.00	20	90.91	2	9.09
National Bank of Serbia	21	5.11	0	0.00	21	100.00	0	0.00
Ministry of Finance	18	4.38	0	0.00	17	94.44	1	5.56
Ministry of Culture and Information	18	4.38	0	0.00	15	83.33	3	16.67
Ministry of Construction, Traffic and Infrastructure	14	3.41	0	0.00	14	100.00	0	0.00
Ministry of Health	12	2.92	1	8.33	11	91.67	0	0.00
Ministry of Agriculture and Environmental Protection	12	2.92	0	0.00	11	91.67	1	8.33
Government Office for Kosovo	7	1.70	0	0.00	7	100.00	0	0.00
Republic fund PIO	7	1.70	0	0.00	7	100.00	0	0.00
Ministry of Trade, Tourism and Telecommunication	6	1.46	0	0.00	6	100.00	0	0.00
Ministry of Foreign Affairs	6	1.46	0	0.00	6	100.00	0	0.00
Ministry of Public Administration and Local Self-Government	6	1.46	0	0.00	6	100.00	0	0.00
Ministry of Economy	4	0.97	0	0.00	4	100.00	0	0.00
City of Belgrade	4	0.97	0	0.00	4	100.00	0	0.00
Republic Geodetic Authority	4	0.97	0	0.00	4	100.00	0	0.00

National Employment Service	3	0.73	0	0.00	2	66.67	1	33.33
Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia	3	0.73	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
other	36	8.76	0	0.00	35	97.22	1	2.78
total	411	100.00	2	0.49	396	96.35	13	3.16

Source: *Mediameter* research, April – June 2019

Distribution of frequency and value context of appearances of domestic collective political actors:

military and police

Military and police	No.	%	Positive	%	Neutral	%	Negative	%
Serbian Armed Forces	43	60.56	8	18.60	35	81.40	0	0.00
Security Intelligence Agency	20	28.17	1	5.00	18	90.00	1	5.00
Special Anti-terrorist Unit	3	4.23	0	0.00	2	66.67	1	33.33
Military Intelligence Agency	3	4.23	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
others	2	2.82	0	0.00	2	100.00	0	0.00
total	71	100.00	9	12.68	60	84.51	2	2.82

Source: *Mediameter* research, April – June 2019

Distribution of frequency and value context of appearances of domestic collective political actors:

position

Position - parties	No.	%	Positive	%	Neutral	%	Negative	%
SNS	208	74.55	0	0.00	192	92.31	16	7.69
SPS	47	16.85	0	0.00	46	97.87	1	2.13
Socialists' Movement	7	2.51	0	0.00	7	100.00	0	0.00
United Serbia	6	2.15	0	0.00	6	100.00	0	0.00
SPO	3	1.08	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
others	8	2.87	0	0.00	7	87.50	1	12.50
total	279	100.00	0	0.00	261	93.55	18	6.45

Source: *Mediameter* research, April – June 2019

Distribution of frequency and value context of appearances of domestic collective actors: **opposition**

Opposition - parties	No.	%	positive	%	neutral	%	negative	%
Alliance for Serbia	155	25.83	0	0.00	107	69.03	48	30.97
DS	93	15.50	0	0.00	92	98.92	1	1.08
Dveri	74	12.33	0	0.00	67	90.54	7	9.46
SRS	41	6.83	0	0.00	40	97.56	1	2.44
People's party	33	5.50	0	0.00	32	96.97	1	3.03
PSG	32	5.33	0	0.00	29	90.63	3	9.38
Freedom and Justice Party	32	5.33	0	0.00	32	100.00	0	0.00
LDP	20	3.33	0	0.00	20	100.00	0	0.00
SDS	18	3.00	0	0.00	18	100.00	0	0.00
New party	17	2.83	0	0.00	17	100.00	0	0.00
LSV	16	2.67	0	0.00	16	100.00	0	0.00
DSS	15	2.50	0	0.00	15	100.00	0	0.00
Initiative: Let's not drown Belgrade	8	1.33	0	0.00	8	100.00	0	0.00
Serbian Left	8	1.33	0	0.00	8	100.00	0	0.00
SPAS	6	1.00	0	0.00	6	100.00	0	0.00
Enough is enough	5	0.83	0	0.00	5	100.00	0	0.00
New Serbia	5	0.83			5	100.00	0	0.00
SDA Sandžak	4	0.67	0	0.00	3	75.00	1	25.00
others	18	3.00	0	0.00	18	100.00	0	0.00
total	600	100.00	0	0.00	538	89.67	62	10.33

Source: *Mediameter* research, April – June 2019

Distribution of frequency and value context of the appearance of individual and collective actors:

Kosovo

Kosovo	No.	%	Positive	%	Neutral	%	Negative	%
Hashim Thaçi	151	17.66	0	0.00	115	76.16	36	23.84
Ramush Haradinaj	132	15.44	0	0.00	99	75.00	33	25.00
OVK	57	6.67	0	0.00	32	56.14	25	43.86
ROSU	45	5.26	0	0.00	25	55.56	20	44.44
KFOR	43	5.03	0	0.00	40	93.02	3	6.98
Oliver Ivanović	36	4.21	0	0.00	36	100.00	0	0.00
Kadri Veseli	35	4.09	0	0.00	21	60.00	14	40.00
Serbian list	33	3.86	1	3.03	32	96.97	0	0.00
Unmik	26	3.04	0	0.00	25	96.15	1	3.85
Behgjet Pacolli	19	2.22	0	0.00	15	78.95	4	21.05
Kosovo police	15	1.75	0	0.00	10	66.67	5	33.33
Goran Rakić	14	1.64	0	0.00	14	100.00	0	0.00
Rada Trajković	13	1.52	0	0.00	12	92.31	1	7.69
Special court for KLA crimes	10	1.17	0	0.00	10	100.00	0	0.00
Euleks	10	1.17	0	0.00	10	100.00	0	0.00
Albin Kurti	8	0.94	0	0.00	4	50.00	4	50.00
Fatmir Limaj	7	0.82	0	0.00	5	71.43	2	28.57
Milan Radojčić	6	0.70	0	0.00	6	100.00	0	0.00
Kosovo Army	6	0.70	0	0.00	6	100.00	0	0.00
Vlora Çitaku	6	0.70	0	0.00	4	66.67	2	33.33
Trepça	6	0.70	0	0.00	6	100.00	0	0.00
Filip Kosnet	4	0.47	0	0.00	4	100.00	0	0.00
Daut Haradinaj	4	0.47	0	0.00	2	50.00	2	50.00
Kosovo security forces	3	0.35	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
Enver Hoxhaj	3	0.35	0	0.00	2	66.67	1	33.33
others	163	19.06	1	0.61	144	88.34	18	11.04
total	855	100.00	2	0.23	682	79.77	171	20.00

Source: *Mediameter* research, April – June 2019

Distribution of frequency and value context of the appearance of individual and collective foreign actors from the region: **Croatia**

Croatia	No.	%	Positive	%	Neutral	%	Negative	%
Andrej Plenković	15	11.72	0	0.00	15	100.00	0	0.00
Milorad Pupovac	12	9.38	0	0.00	12	100.00	0	0.00
Kolinda Grabar Kitarović	10	7.81	0	0.00	8	80.00	2	20.00
Franjo Tuđman	8	6.25	0	0.00	8	100.00	0	0.00
Ante Pavelić	7	5.47	0	0.00	2	28.57	5	71.43
HDZ	5	3.91	0	0.00	5	100.00	0	0.00
Stjepan Mesić	4	3.13	0	0.00	4	100.00	0	0.00
Marko Perković Thompson	3	2.34	0	0.00	0	0.00	3	100.00
Vlada Hrvatske	3	2.34	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
others	61	47.66	1	1.64	47	77.05	13	21.31
total	128	100.00	1	0.78	104	81.25	23	17.97

Source: *Mediameter* research, April – June 2019

Distribution of frequency and value context of the appearance of individual and collective foreign actors from the region: **Montenegro**

Montenegro	No.	%	Positive	%	Neutral	%	Negative	%
Milo Đukanović	88	35.92	0	0.00	45	51.14	43	48.86
Duško Marković	11	4.49	0	0.00	8	72.73	3	27.27
Demokratski front	11	4.49	0	0.00	11	100.00	0	0.00
Andrija Mandić	11	4.49	0	0.00	11	100.00	0	0.00
Milan Knežević	7	2.86	0	0.00	7	100.00	0	0.00
DPS	7	2.86	0	0.00	7	100.00	0	0.00
Montenegrin authorities	5	2.04	0	0.00	1	20.00	4	80.00
Montenegrin police	5	2.04	0	0.00	4	80.00	1	20.00
Milun Zogović	3	1.22	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
others	97	39.59	0	0.00	75	77.32	22	22.68
total	245	100	0	0.00	172	70.20	73	29.80

Source: *Mediameter* research, April – June 2019

Distribution of frequency and value context of the appearance of individual and collective foreign actors from the region: **Federation of BiH**

BiH	No.	%	Positive	%	Neutral	%	Negative	%
Milorad Dodik	88	50.57	0	0.00	87	98.86	1	1.14
Denis Zvizdić	12	6.90	0	0.00	11	91.67	1	8.33
Željka Cvijanović	10	5.75	0	0.00	10	100.00	0	0.00
Alija Izetbegović	4	2.30	0	0.00	4	100.00	0	0.00
Bakir Izetbegović	4	2.30	0	0.00	3	75.00	1	25.00
Dragan Čović	3	1.72	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
others	53	30.46	0	0.00	51	96.23	2	3.77
total	174	100.00	0	0.00	169	97.13	5	2.87

Source: *Mediameter* research, April – June 2019

Distribution of frequency and value context of the appearance of individual and collective foreign actors from the region: **Macedonia**

Macedonia	No.	%	Positive	%	Neutral	%	Negative	%
Zoran Zaev	19	38.78	0	0.00	19	100.00	0	0.00
Stevo Pendarovski	8	16.33	0	0.00	8	100.00	0	0.00
Đorđe Ivanov	2	4.08	0	0.00	2	100.00	0	0.00
others	20	40.82	0	0.00	20	100.00	0	0.00
total	49	100.00	0	0.00	49	100.00	0	0.00

Source: *Mediameter* research, April – June 2019

Distribution of frequency and value context of the appearance of individual and collective foreign political actors²³

Foreign political actors	No.	%	Positive	%	Neutral	%	Negative	%
Emmanuel Macron	127	16.24	0	0.00	127	100.00	0	0.00
Angela Merkel	122	15.60	0	0.00	122	100.00	0	0.00
Angela Merkel	38	4.86	1	2.63	37	97.37	0	0.00
Viktor Orban	32	4.09	0	0.00	31	96.88	1	3.13
Edi Rama	24	3.07	1	4.17	20	83.33	3	12.50
Marine Le Pen	19	2.43	0	0.00	19	100.00	0	0.00
Recep Tayyip Erdogan	15	1.92	1	6.67	14	93.33	0	0.00
Theresa May	14	1.79	0	0.00	13	92.86	1	7.14
Alexis Tsipras	13	1.66	0	0.00	13	100.00	0	0.00
Heinz-Christian Strache	12	1.53	0	0.00	11	91.67	1	8.33
Alexander Lukashenko	11	1.41	1	9.09	10	90.91	0	0.00
Sebastian Kurz	11	1.41	0	0.00	11	100.00	0	0.00
AfD	9	1.15	0	0.00	9	100.00	0	0.00
Benjamin Netanyahu	8	1.02	0	0.00	8	100.00	0	0.00
Petro Poroshenko	8	1.02	0	0.00	8	100.00	0	0.00
Péter Szijjártó	7	0.90	0	0.00	7	100.00	0	0.00
Bashar al Assad	6	0.77	0	0.00	6	100.00	0	0.00
Boyko Borissov	5	0.64	0	0.00	5	100.00	0	0.00
Martti Ahtisaari	4	0.51	0	0.00	4	100.00	0	0.00
Catherine Ashton	4	0.51	0	0.00	4	100.00	0	0.00
Iliir Meta	4	0.51	0	0.00	4	100.00	0	0.00
Nigel Farage	4	0.51	0	0.00	4	100.00	0	0.00
Tonny Blair	3	0.38	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
Shinzō Abe	3	0.38	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
Heiko Maas	3	0.38	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
others	276	35.29	1	0.36	269	97.46	6	2.17
total	782	100.00	5	0.64	765	97.83	12	1.53

Source: *Mediameter* research, April – June 2019

23 When it comes to individual actors, French President Emmanuel Macron is the most represented foreign political representative.

Distribution of frequency and value context of the appearance of individual and collective foreign actors outside the region: **Russia**

Russia	No.	%	Positive	%	Neutral	%	Negative	%
Vladimir Putin	112	44.44	6	5.36	106	94.64	0	0.00
Alexander Chepurin	19	7.54	0	0.00	19	100.00	0	0.00
Sergey Lavrov	18	7.14	0	0.00	18	100.00	0	0.00
Dmitry Medvedev	9	3.57	0	0.00	9	100.00	0	0.00
Dmitry Peskov	9	3.57	0	0.00	9	100.00	0	0.00
Konstantin Kosachev	8	3.17	0	0.00	8	100.00	0	0.00
Maria Zakharova	6	2.38	0	0.00	6	100.00	0	0.00
Sergey Shoygu	6	2.38	0	0.00	6	100.00	0	0.00
"Russian authorities"	3	1.19	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
Russian Ministry of Foreign affairs	3	1.19	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
others	59	23.41	3	5.08	56	94.92	0	0.00
total	252	100.00	9	3.57	243	96.43	0	0.00

Source: *Mediameter* research, April – June 2019

Distribution of frequency and value context of the appearance of individual and collective foreign actors outside the region: **USA**

USA	No.	%	Positive	%	Neutral	%	Negative	%
Donald Trump	84	19.09	0	0.00	83	98.81	1	1.19
Matthew Palmer	33	7.50	0	0.00	32	96.97	1	3.03
Kyle Scott	27	6.14	0	0.00	24	88.89	3	11.11
Madeleine Albright	25	5.68	0	0.00	15	60.00	10	40.00
Bill Clinton	21	4.77	0	0.00	10	47.62	11	52.38
Hillary Clinton	18	4.09	0	0.00	12	66.67	6	33.33
CIA	16	3.64	0	0.00	14	87.50	2	12.50
Mike Pompeo	14	3.18	0	0.00	14	100.00	0	0.00
US Embassy	11	2.50	0	0.00	10	90.91	1	9.09
Philip Reeker	10	2.27	0	0.00	10	100.00	0	0.00
John Bolton	10	2.27	0	0.00	10	100.00	0	0.00
William Walker	8	1.82	0	0.00	3	37.50	5	62.50

Barack Obama	8	1.82	0	0.00	8	100.00	0	0.00
US Congress	8	1.82	0	0.00	8	100.00	0	0.00
"American authorities"	8	1.82	0	0.00	6	75.00	2	25.00
George Soros	5	1.14	0	0.00	5	100.00	0	0.00
Democratic Party	5	1.14	0	0.00	5	100.00	0	0.00
State Department	5	1.14	0	0.00	5	100.00	0	0.00
US Embassy in Priština	5	1.14	0	0.00	5	100.00	0	0.00
Mike Pence	4	0.91	0	0.00	4	100.00	0	0.00
Pentagon	4	0.91	0	0.00	4	100.00	0	0.00
George Bush	3	0.68	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
others	108	24.55	0	0.00	93	86.11	15	13.89
total	440	100.00	0	0.00	383	87.05	57	12.95

Source: *Mediameter* research, April – June 2019

Distribution of frequency and value context of the appearance of individual and collective foreign political actors: **representatives of EU institutions and EU institutions**

EU	No.	%	Positive	%	Neutral	%	Negative	%
EU	78	24.92	0	0.00	71	91.03	7	8.97
European Parliament	43	13.74	0	0.00	42	97.67	1	2.33
European Commission	38	12.14	0	0.00	37	97.37	1	2.63
Federica Mogherini	38	12.14	0	0.00	37	97.37	1	2.63
Sem Fabrizi	20	6.39	0	0.00	20	100.00	0	0.00
Jean Claude Juncker	16	5.11	0	0.00	16	100.00	0	0.00
Johannes Han	10	3.19	0	0.00	10	100.00	0	0.00
Maja Kocijančič	10	3.19	0	0.00	10	100.00	0	0.00
Donald Tusk	6	1.92	0	0.00	6	100.00	0	0.00
Frans Timmermans	5	1.60	0	0.00	5	100.00	0	0.00
European Council	3	0.96	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
others	46	14.70	1	2.17	44	95.65	1	2.17
total	313	100.00	1	0.32	301	96.17	11	3.51

Source: *Mediameter* research, April – June 2019

Distribution of frequency and value context of the appearance of individual and collective foreign political actors: **representatives of international organizations and institutions**

International organizations and institutions	No.	%	Positive	%	Neutral	%	Negative	%
IMF	21	12.80	0	0.00	21	100.00	0	0.00
United Nations	21	12.80	0	0.00	21	100.00	0	0.00
UN Security Council	19	11.59	0	0.00	19	100.00	0	0.00
World Bank	13	7.93	0	0.00	13	100.00	0	0.00
Council of Europe	13	7.93	0	0.00	13	100.00	0	0.00
European court for human rights	11	6.71	0	0.00	11	100.00	0	0.00
OEBS	9	5.49	0	0.00	9	100.00	0	0.00
António Guterres	9	5.49	0	0.00	8	88.89	1	11.11
UNESCO	7	4.27			7	100.00	0	0.00
Dunja Mijatović	3	1.83	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
others	38	23.17	0	0.00	38	100.00	0	0.00
total	164	100.00	0	0.00	163	99.39	1	0.61

Source: *Mediameter* research, April – June 2019

Distribution of frequency and value context of the appearance of individual and collective foreign actors: **NATO**

NATO	No.	%	Positive	%	Neutral	%	Negative	%
NATO	125	87.41	1	0.80	72	57.60	52	41.60
Jens Stoltenberg	8	5.59	0	0.00	7	87.50	1	12.50
others	10	6.99	0	0.00	7	70.00	3	30.00
total	143	100.00	1	0.70	86	60.14	56	39.16

Source: *Mediameter* research, April – June 2019

Distribution of frequency and value context of appearances of individual and collective actors: **actors related to The Hague Tribunal**

The Hague Tribunal	No.	%	Positive	%	Neutral	%	Negative	%
Vladimir Lazarević	18	21.43	1	5.56	17	94.44	0	0.00
Hague tribunal	15	17.86	0	0.00	14	93.33	1	6.67
Radovan Karadžić	9	10.71	0	0.00	9	100.00	0	0.00
Veselin Šljivančanin	8	9.52	0	0.00	8	100.00	0	0.00
Neboša Pavković	7	8.33	0	0.00	7	100.00	0	0.00
Ratko Mladić	5	5.95	0	0.00	5	100.00	0	0.00
others	22	26.19	0	0.00	21	95.45	1	4.55
total	84	100.00	1	1.19	81	96.43	2	2.38

Source: *Mediameter* research, April – June 2019

Already from this brief overview of the frequencies of the appearance of certain actors on the front pages of selected printed daily newspapers in our sample, it is clear that media with unequal interest treat issues in the field of domestic and foreign policy. In the second quarter of 2019, foreign political actors make up 39.50% of all political actors, compared to 60.49% of the incidence of domestic political actors.

The economic actors in the second quarter of 2019 make up 4.43% of the total sample of stakeholders, which, compared to the previous quarter, represents a decrease of about 1.29% or, in absolute numbers, 125 occurrences.

Distribution of frequency and value context of appearances of individual and collective **economy/economic actors**

Economic actors - individually	No.	%	Positive	%	Neutral	%	Negative	%
Zoran Babić	13	6.88	0	0.00	12	92.31	1	7.69
Dragan Šolak	11	5.82	0	0.00	7	63.64	4	36.36
Nebojša Atanacković	4	2.12	0	0.00	4	100.00	0	0.00
Miroslav Mišković	4	2.12	0	0.00	4	100.00	0	0.00
Milan Beko	3	1.59	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
Goran Puzović	3	1.59	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
Marko Čadež	3	1.59	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
Zoran Drobnjak	3	1.59	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
others	145	76.72	0	0.00	135	93.10	10	6.90
total	189	100.00	0	0.00	174	92.06	15	7.94

Source: *Mediameter* research, April – June 2019

Distribution of frequency and value context of appearances of **collective domestic economic actors**

Economic actors	No.	%	Positive	%	Neutral	%	Negative	%
Volkswagen	12	3.76	2	16.67	10	83.33	0	0.00
Corridors of Serbia	10	3.13	0	0.00	9	90.00	1	10.00
Huawei	10	3.13	0	0.00	10	100.00	0	0.00
Commercial bank	9	2.82	0	0.00	9	100.00	0	0.00
Srbijagas	9	2.82	0	0.00	9	100.00	0	0.00
Electric Power Industry of Serbia	8	2.51	0	0.00	7	87.50	1	12.50
Smederevo Iron-works	8	2.51	0	0.00	8	100.00	0	0.00
RTB Bor	7	2.19	0	0.00	7	100.00	0	0.00
Telecom Serbia	7	2.19	0	0.00	7	100.00	0	0.00
Fiat	7	2.19	0	0.00	7	100.00	0	0.00
Roads of Serbia	7	2.19	0	0.00	7	100.00	0	0.00
PKB	6	1.88	0	0.00	6	100.00	0	0.00
SBB	5	1.57	0	0.00	4	80.00	1	20.00
NIS	5	1.57	0	0.00	1	20.00	4	80.00
Chamber of commerce of Serbia	4	1.25	0	0.00	4	100.00	0	0.00

Galenika	4	1.25	0	0.00	4	100.00	0	0.00
Association of Serbian banks	3	0.94	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
Air Serbia	3	0.94	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
EBRD	3	0.94	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
Srbijavode	3	0.94	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
Banca Intesa	3	0.94	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
Gazprom	3	0.94	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
CRBC	3	0.94	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
Delhaize	3	0.94	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
Nikola Tesla Airport	3	0.94	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
others	174	54.55	3	1.72	165	94.83	6	3.45
total	319	100.00	5	1.57	301	94.36	13	4.08

Source: *Mediameter* research, April – June 2019

In addition to already mentioned political and economic actors, the protagonists are also various other social actors, who in different ways influence the social and political situation within the Serbian society. Based on the collected empirical material, we divided them into: (a) representatives of autonomous and independent governmental bodies and institutions, (b) political, social, economic, security and other analysts, (c) representatives of the Serbian Orthodox Church and other religious organizations, (d) actors from the media, (e) representatives of judicial authorities, (f) lawyers and protagonists of various court proceedings, (h) media affairs protagonists and (i) protagonists of civil protests.

Distribution of frequency and value context of appearances of individual and collective domestic social actors: **representatives of independent bodies and institutions of national importance**

Independent bodies and institutions of national importance	No.	%	Positive	%	Neutral	%	Negative	%
REM	26	24.76	0	0.00	25	96.15	1	3.85
Zoran Pašalić	10	9.52	0	0.00	8	80.00	2	20.00
SANU	9	8.57	0	0.00	9	100.00	0	0.00
Fiscal council	9	8.57	0	0.00	9	100.00	0	0.00
Anti-Corruption Agency	8	7.62	0	0.00	8	100.00	0	0.00
Rodoljub Šabić	8	7.62	0	0.00	8	100.00	0	0.00
Vladimir Kostić	4	3.81	0	0.00	4	100.00	0	0.00
Brankica Janković	4	3.81	0	0.00	4	100.00	0	0.00
Miloš Janković	3	2.86	0	0.00	2	66.67	1	33.33
State Audit Institution	3	2.86	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
others	21	20.00	0	0.00	20	95.24	1	4.76
total	105	100.00	0	0.00	100	95.24	5	4.76

Source: *Mediameter* research, April – June 2019

Analysts (experts) have special role in the texts on the front pages of the media from the sample, and the media treat them in a neutral context in all of the texts. During the entire second quarter of 2019, the analyzed daily newspapers significantly promoted the views of these experts, so their opinion was represented 590 times.²⁴ The largest share and the number of analysts represented was recorded in *Informer* (146).

²⁴ In his quarter, headline analyst coverage is up slightly again from the previous quarter when 563 analyst appearances were recorded. The highest attendance of analysts was recorded in the fourth quarter of 2018 – 601 occurrences.

Distribution of the frequency of the appearance of analysts on the covers in different media from the survey sample

Media / Analyst	No.	%
<i>Informer</i>	146	24.75
<i>Politika</i>	124	21.02
<i>Danas</i>	100	16.95
<i>Kurir</i>	92	15.59
<i>Blic</i>	54	9.15
<i>Večernje novosti</i>	42	7.12
<i>Alo!</i>	32	5.42
total	590	100.00

Source: *Mediameter* research, April – June 2019

Distribution of frequency and value context of appearances of individual domestic and social actors:
analysts

Analysts	No.	%	Positive	%	Neutral	%	Negative	%
Dragomir Anđelković	35	5.93	0	0.00	35	100.00	0	0.00
Bojan Klačar	17	2.88	0	0.00	17	100.00	0	0.00
Zoran Milivojević	16	2.71	0	0.00	16	100.00	0	0.00
Dejan Vuk Stanković	16	2.71	0	0.00	16	100.00	0	0.00
Branko Radun	12	2.03	0	0.00	12	100.00	0	0.00
Ljubodrag Savić	11	1.86	0	0.00	11	100.00	0	0.00
Božidar Spasić	11	1.86	0	0.00	11	100.00	0	0.00
Boban Stojanović	10	1.69	0	0.00	10	100.00	0	0.00
Ljubomir Madžar	10	1.69	0	0.00	10	100.00	0	0.00
Ljuban Karan	10	1.69	0	0.00	10	100.00	0	0.00
Vladislav Jovanović	10	1.69	0	0.00	10	100.00	0	0.00
Jelena Vukočić	9	1.53	0	0.00	9	100.00	0	0.00
Milojko Arsić	9	1.53	0	0.00	9	100.00	0	0.00
Božidar Delić	9	1.53	0	0.00	9	100.00	0	0.00
Dragan Đukanović	9	1.53	0	0.00	9	100.00	0	0.00
Draško Đenović	8	1.36	0	0.00	8	100.00	0	0.00
Orhan Dragaš	7	1.19	0	0.00	7	100.00	0	0.00

Zoran Dragišić	7	1.19	0	0.00	7	100.00	0	0.00
Božidar Prelević	7	1.19	0	0.00	7	100.00	0	0.00
Vlade Radulović	6	1.02	0	0.00	6	100.00	0	0.00
Darko Trifunović	6	1.02	0	0.00	6	100.00	0	0.00
Cvijetin Milivojević	6	1.02	0	0.00	6	100.00	0	0.00
Milan Prostran	6	1.02	0	0.00	6	100.00	0	0.00
Toma Fila	6	1.02	0	0.00	6	100.00	0	0.00
Ratko Božović	6	1.02	0	0.00	6	100.00	0	0.00
Milan Petrić	6	1.02	0	0.00	6	100.00	0	0.00
Dušan Janjić	6	1.02	0	0.00	6	100.00	0	0.00
Marko Nicović	6	1.02	0	0.00	6	100.00	0	0.00
Mladen Kovačević	5	0.85	0	0.00	5	100.00	0	0.00
Petar Vojinović	5	0.85	0	0.00	5	100.00	0	0.00
Vladimir Pejić	5	0.85	0	0.00	5	100.00	0	0.00
Aleksandar Radić	5	0.85	0	0.00	5	100.00	0	0.00
Saša Borojević	5	0.85	0	0.00	5	100.00	0	0.00
Marko Matić	4	0.68	0	0.00	4	100.00	0	0.00
Dragan Dobrašinović	4	0.68	0	0.00	4	100.00	0	0.00
Aleksandar Popov	4	0.68	0	0.00	4	100.00	0	0.00
Dževad Gali-jašević	4	0.68	0	0.00	4	100.00	0	0.00
Nemanja Nenadić	4	0.68	0	0.00	4	100.00	0	0.00
Nebojša Krstić	4	0.68	0	0.00	4	100.00	0	0.00
Živadin Jovanović	3	0.51	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
Zoran Grubišić	3	0.51	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
Milan Antonijević	3	0.51	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
Mahmud Bušatlija	3	0.51	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
Naim Leo Beširi	3	0.51	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
Zoran Stojiljković	3	0.51	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
others	246	41.69	0	0.00	246	100.00	0	0.00
total	590	100.00	0	0.00	590	100.00	0	0.00

Source: Mediameter research, April – June 2019

Distribution of frequency of SOC representatives and other religious communities on the covers in different media from the survey sample

Media/religion	No.	%
<i>Politika</i>	141	27.22
<i>Večernje novosti</i>	107	20.66
<i>Danas</i>	77	14.86
<i>Kurir</i>	68	13.13
<i>Alo!</i>	62	11.97
<i>Blic</i>	34	6.56
<i>Informer</i>	29	5.60
total	518	100.00

Source: *Mediameter* research, April – June 2019

Distribution of frequency and value context of appearances of individual and collective domestic social actors: **representatives of the Serbian Orthodox Church and religious organizations**

Religion	No.	%	Positive	%	Neutral	%	Negative	%
SOC	107	20.66	0	0.00	107	100.00	0	0.00
Patriarch Irinej	65	12.55	0	0.00	65	100.00	0	0.00
Amfilohije, Metropolitan of Montenegro and the Littoral	56	10.81	0	0.00	52	92.86	4	7.14
Pope Francis	23	4.44	0	0.00	23	100.00	0	0.00
Montenegrin Orthodox Church	17	3.28	0	0.00	9	52.94	8	47.06
Metropolitanate of Montenegro and the Littoral	16	3.09	0	0.00	16	100.00	0	0.00
Alojzije Stepinac	15	2.90	0	0.00	10	66.67	5	33.33
Bartholomew, Patriarch of Constantinople	15	2.90	0	0.00	15	100.00	0	0.00
Miraš Dedeić	14	2.70	0	0.00	4	28.57	10	71.43
Teodosije, bishop	11	2.12	0	0.00	9	81.82	2	18.18
Grigorije, bishop of Düsseldorf and Germany	9	1.74	0	0.00	7	77.78	2	22.22
Atanasije, bishop of Mileševa	8	1.54	0	0.00	8	100.00	0	0.00

Roman Catholic Church	7	1.35	0	0.00	7	100.00	0	0.00
Irinej, bishop of Bačka	6	1.16	0	0.00	5	83.33	1	16.67
Russian Orthodox Church	6	1.16	0	0.00	6	100.00	0	0.00
Jovan, bishop of Šumadija	6	1.16	0	0.00	5	83.33	1	16.67
Irinej, bishop of Eastern America	6	1.16	0	0.00	6	100.00	0	0.00
Porfiry, Metropolitan of Zagreb-Ljubljana	5	0.97	0	0.00	5	100.00	0	0.00
Lavrentije, bishop of Šabac	4	0.77	0	0.00	4	100.00	0	0.00
Filaret, bishop	4	0.77	0	0.00	4	100.00	0	0.00
Stanislav Hočevar, Archbishop of the Archdiocese of Belgrade	3	0.58	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
Macedonian Orthodox Church	3	0.58	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and all of Russia	3	0.58	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
others	109	21.04	0	0.00	105	96.33	4	3.67
total	518	100.00	0	0.00	481	92.86	37	7.14

Source: *Mediameter* research, April – June 2019

Distribution of frequency and value context of appearances of individual and collective social domestic actors from **the media**²⁵

Media	No.	%	Positive	%	Neutral	%	Negative	%
RTS	44	12.50	0	0.00	42	95.45	2	4.55
TV Pink	34	9.66	0	0.00	29	85.29	5	14.71
Željko Mitrović	25	7.10	0	0.00	22	88.00	3	12.00
TV N1	10	2.84	0	0.00	9	90.00	1	10.00
UNS	9	2.56	0	0.00	9	100.00	0	0.00
Vladimir Radomirović	9	2.56	0	0.00	9	100.00	0	0.00
Slobodan Georgiev	8	2.27	0	0.00	8	100.00	0	0.00
Dragan Bujošević	7	1.99	0	0.00	6	85.71	1	14.29
Milan Jovanović	7	1.99	0	0.00	7	100.00	0	0.00
NUNS	7	1.99	0	0.00	7	100.00	0	0.00
Milan Ćulibrk	6	1.70	0	0.00	6	100.00	0	0.00
Adrija medija grupa	6	1.70	0	0.00	6	100.00	0	0.00
Maja Pavlović	6	1.70	0	0.00	6	100.00	0	0.00
RTV	5	1.42	0	0.00	5	100.00	0	0.00
Olja Bečković	5	1.42	0	0.00	4	80.00	1	20.00
NIN	5	1.42	0	0.00	2	40.00	3	60.00
Dragan J. Vučićević	5	1.42	0	0.00	5	100.00	0	0.00
Jugoslav Ćosić	5	1.42	0	0.00	4	80.00	1	20.00
Politika	5	1.42	1	20.00	3	60.00	1	20.00
Ivan Ivanović	4	1.14	0	0.00	4	100.00	0	0.00
Informer	4	1.14	0	0.00	2	50.00	2	50.00
Vukašin Obradović	4	1.14	0	0.00	4	100.00	0	0.00
Ljiljana Smajlović	4	1.14	0	0.00	4	100.00	0	0.00
Dušan Petričić	4	1.14	0	0.00	4	100.00	0	0.00
Olivera Kovačević	3	0.85	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
TV Prva	3	0.85	0	0.00	2	66.67	1	33.33
others	118	33.52	1	0.85	105	88.98	12	10.17
total	352	100.00	2	0.57	317	90.06	33	9.38

Source: *Mediameter* research, April – June 2019

25 Actors who were the subject of writing by other media, i.e. media outlets about which other media reported on, were presented.

During the collection of empirical material, a significant presence of actors in connection with the activities of the judicial and investigative bodies was noted on the cover pages. The actors from this group are shown as representatives of judicial authorities (177), lawyers (151) and other protagonists of current or completed court / investigative proceedings (154).

Distribution of frequency and value context of appearances of collective domestic social actors: **representatives of judicial bodies**

Judicial system	No.	%	Positive	%	Neutral	%	Negative	%
Supreme Court of Cassation	26	14.69	0	0.00	26	100.00	0	0.00
Court of Appeals in Belgrade	17	9.60	0	0.00	16	94.12	1	5.88
Miodrag Majić	9	5.08	1	11.11	8	88.89	0	0.00
Prosecution for War Crimes	7	3.95	0	0.00	7	100.00	0	0.00
Higher Public Prosecutor in Belgrade	7	3.95	0	0.00	7	100.00	0	0.00
The High Court Council	6	3.39	0	0.00	4	66.67	2	33.33
Higher Court in Belgrade	6	3.39	0	0.00	6	100.00	0	0.00
Snežana Jovanović	5	2.82	0	0.00	5	100.00	0	0.00
Constitutional Court	4	2.26	0	0.00	4	100.00	0	0.00
Third Basic Public Prosecutor's Office in Belgrade	3	1.69	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
Judges' Association of Serbia	3	1.69	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
Special Court in Belgrade	3	1.69	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
Administrative Court	3	1.69	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
other	78	44.07	0	0.00	75	96.15	3	3.85
total	177	100.00	1	0.56	170	96.05	6	3.39

Source: *Mediameter* research, April – June 2019

Distribution of frequency and value context of appearances of individual domestic social actors:

lawyers²⁶

Lawyers	No.	%	Positive	%	Neutral	%	Negative	%
Borivoje Borović	16	10.60	0	0.00	16	100.00	0	0.00
Zora Dobričanin Nikodinović	11	7.28	0	0.00	11	100.00	0	0.00
Goran Petronijević	8	5.30	0	0.00	8	100.00	0	0.00
Nebojša Vlajić	4	2.65	0	0.00	4	100.00	0	0.00
Bar Association of Serbia	4	2.65	0	0.00	3	75.00	1	25.00
others	108	71.52	0	0.00	108	100.00	0	0.00
total	151	100.00	0	0.00	150	99.34	1	0.66

Source: *Mediameter* research, April – June 2019

Distribution of frequency and value context of appearances of individual domestic social actors: **actors of court proceedings and investigations**

Actors of court proceedings and investigations	No.	%	Positive	%	Neutral	%	Negative	%
Miroslav Kurak	15	9.74	0	0.00	15	100.00	0	0.00
Radomir Marković	14	9.09	0	0.00	14	100.00	0	0.00
Milorad Ulemek Legija	13	8.44	0	0.00	13	100.00	0	0.00
Ratko Romić	13	8.44	0	0.00	13	100.00	0	0.00
Dušan Spasojević Šiptar	12	7.79	0	0.00	12	100.00	0	0.00
Milan Radonjić	11	7.14	0	0.00	11	100.00	0	0.00
Mile Luković Kum	8	5.19	0	0.00	8	100.00	0	0.00
Zvezdan Jovanović	8	5.19	0	0.00	8	100.00	0	0.00
Darko Šarić	3	1.95	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
Željko Ražnatović Arkan	3	1.95	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
others	54	35.06	0	0.00	51	94.44	3	5.56
total	154	100.00	0	0.00	151	98.05	3	1.95

Source: *Mediameter* research, April – June 2019

²⁶ Some attorneys played the role of analysts in the sample media texts and were therefore featured in this group of actors.

The following table shows all protagonists associated with the show business. These are, first and foremost, the actors involved in the media-constructed affair, whose lead actor was singer *Jelena Karleuša* and the protagonists that media wrote about as part of the the topic *murder of the singer Jelena Marjanović*.

Distribution of frequency and value context of appearances of individual domestic social actors:

showbusiness

Other domestic actors – showbusiness	No.	%	Positive	%	Neutral	%	Negative	%
Jelena Karleuša	33	25.38	0	0.00	4	12.12	29	87.88
Jelena Marjanović	26	20.00	0	0.00	26	100.00	0	0.00
Zoran Marjanović	24	18.46	1	4.17	19	79.17	4	16.67
Duško Tošić	22	16.92	0	0.00	20	90.91	2	9.09
Ognjen Vranješ	21	16.15	1	4.76	20	95.24	0	0.00
Svetlana Ceca Ražnatović	4	3.08	0	0.00	4	100.00	0	0.00
total	130	100.00	2	1.54	93	71.54	35	26.92

Source: *Mediameter* research, April – June 2019

Distribution of frequency and value context of appearances of individual domestic social actors: **“One in five million” civil protests**

“One in five million” civil protests	No.	%	Positive	%	Neutral	%	Negative	%
Jovo Bakić	13	28.26	0	0.00	12	92.31	1	7.69
Čedomir Čupić	11	23.91	0	0.00	11	100.00	0	0.00
Nikola Kojo	8	17.39	0	0.00	8	100.00	0	0.00
Branislav Trifunović	5	10.87	0	0.00	5	100.00	0	0.00
Siniša Kovačević	4	8.70	0	0.00	4	100.00	0	0.00
Zoran Ivošević	3	6.52	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00
others	2	4.35	0	0.00	2	100.00	0	0.00
total	46	100.00	0	0.00	45	97.83	1	2.17

Source: *Mediameter* research, April – June 2019

UNNAMED SOURCES

In the selected front page articles from the sampled media, unnamed sources have also been the second most prominent actor. This time there were 354 instances of quoting anonymous sources, or rather 15.57% of texts, which represents a decrease of about 2% in comparison to the results from the previous quarter (17.5%).

The widespread usage of unnamed sources has been precisely determined thanks to the manner of qualifying anonymous sources, which we have been applying since the second *Mediameter* issue, so as to not only classify those sources which the very media has defined as anonymous, but also those who provide information that cannot be verified, no matter the manner in which they have been incorporated into an article. Of course, the presence of information gained from anonymous sources speaks more about the manner of the reporting done by the seven media found in our sample, than about the actual need of protecting the identities of the individual who provide certain information.

As Matt Carlson, in his book “On the Condition of Anonymity” has said: “Journalism is woven into the fabric of our environment, and in turn is based on it, meaning that it can never be an objective observer, as it is claimed...These sorts of questions are better answered through an approach that recognizes the culture of unnamed sources as a *culture*. This view steers an inquiry into unnamed sources away from frequency and implementation, toward issues of meanings that we share and patterns of collective interpretation between journalists, sources and the public. The securing of anonymity is not just a question of technique. It is, actually, a request for a certain type of imagining of relations between these three sides.”²⁷

A news form that contains the largest number of information obtained from an unnamed source is a report. Of the 1836 texts written in this form, 339 or 18.46% contains anonymous sources.

Share of “unnamed sources” in all journalistic forms, in seven media from the sample

Genre	Total number of texts	Unnamed sources	%
Report	1836	339	18.46
Article	83	8	9.64
News	39	5	12.82
Commentary	111	1	0.90
Reportage	16	1	6.25
other	18	0	0.00
Interview	171	0	0.00
total	2274	354	15.57

Source: *Mediameter* research, April – June 2019

27 M. Carlson, *On the condition of anonymity*, Urbana, Chicago, Springfield, University of Illinois Press, 2011, 7

The largest number, as well as the participation of texts containing information obtained from unnamed sources, in relation to the total number of published articles, is recorded in *Kurir* (30% or 79 texts), while the least amount of such practice is noted in *Politika* (7% – 37).

Share of unnamed sources per analyzed media

Media	Total number of texts	Unnamed sources	%
<i>Kurir</i>	263	79	30.04
<i>Informer</i>	206	56	27.18
<i>Blic</i>	187	50	26.74
<i>Alo!</i>	246	49	19.92
<i>Večernje novosti</i>	377	50	13.26
<i>Danas</i>	467	33	7.07
<i>Politika</i>	528	37	7.01
total	2274	354	15.57

Source: *Mediameter* research, April – June 2019

The majority of texts containing information from anonymous sources (99) were recorded when the topic of the text was related to political life in Serbia, however the largest share of unnamed sources in relation to the total number of texts published on a topic was again noted when it came to articles that talk about the media-constructed Karleuša-Vranješ affair - about 71%

Number of texts containing information obtained from “unnamed sources” according to topics in seven media from the sample²⁸

Topic/All media	Total number of texts	Unnamed sources	%
Political life in Serbia	532	99	18.61
Kosovo / Belgrade and Priština relations	334	62	18.56
Economy	81	19	23.46
Karleuša affair	24	17	70.83
Issues of faith, church and religion	87	15	17.24
System of justice, activities of judiciary bodies	81	15	18.52
Crime	28	14	50.00
Murder of the singer Jelena Marjanović	25	10	40.00
Local government	38	9	23.68
Economy	52	8	15.38

Source: *Mediameter* research, April – June 2019

²⁸ Ten topics with the largest number of unnamed sources are shown.

Conclusion

The topics covered by the print media on their front pages during the second quarter of 2019 were marked by a focus on domestic policy issues and regional concerns. Kosovo is once again in the spotlight, along with Montenegro. Turbulent developments within the Serbian Orthodox Church have focused the media's focus on this topic as well. The balance of texts is still very low. The sources cited by the texts are often unknown and secretive, as are the ways in which personal and intimate information about various public figures is disclosed. The media is becoming increasingly clear in their political and ethical choices. There is a further decline in the level of journalism and adherence to professional ethical standards, which is disturbing.

4



Discourse Analysis

DISCOURSE ANALYSIS

Imminent and unwavering political polarization

The spirit of political antagonism prevailing within the institutions of the system and general public is directly and almost completely reflected in the print media. Moreover, the print media, including the weekly newspapers, show and portray, but also encourage and articulate, the size of the gap between political actors, while generating and reproducing almost mutual fatal stereotypes that actors have while functioning as an integral part of propaganda machinery.

Judging by the spirit and the narrative of articles, interviews, columns, and visual identities of both dailies and weeklies, the most frequently mentioned words such as “dialogue”, “compromise” and “consensus” are actually only „empty words“ (*flatus vocis*). They are uttered almost daily, but it is clear that there is no serious attempt to put them into practice. Print media is a testament to the deep and unwavering polarization. The pluralism of viewpoints, the diversity of approaches, arguments and rhetorical figures, leads to categorically expressed, fatally sharpened and mutually incompatible positions.

The factuality of different approaches and attitudes in relation to each relevant topic in political and social life, shows that there is no topic in Serbian journalism which is off the table. Likewise, it is obvious that conflicting and mutually exclusive viewpoints of different editorial boards are present and existing. Pluralism of editorial policies in the field of print journalism, proves that there is a constitutionally and legally guaranteed freedom of thought and speech in place, or more precisely, freedom of expression. Secondly, in the realm of print media, there is no censorship or media dictatorship enforced by the government or any other center of power. Thirdly, the importance and influence of print media articles is much greater than the circulation of daily or weekly newspapers is. Moreover, it's a widely known fact that interviews and editorial columns are shared through social networks. Therefore, interpretative codes tend to have the power of continuous dissemination on the Internet, and as a consequence, they are often the root and significant impetus for numerous television shows or interviews. The verbose character of the written piece, namely its dislocation from a strictly printed format to various internet formats, more precisely its virality, makes the power of print media exceed the number of copies sold weekly or daily.

The outcome of effective freedom of expression is strong polarization, sharp clash of values and political attitudes and almost endemic involvement of journalists in daily political controversies and party life. If Lenin once spoke of “partisanship in philosophy” as a hallmark of bourgeois democracy, the current political moment clearly draws attention to “partisanship in journalism.” This partisanship is visible and immediate. Its most striking expression is the semantic-rhetorical concordance of the views of opposition journalists, opposition interviewees and opposition-oriented politicians. Similarly, in pro-government print media, there are clear signs of coherence between editorial policies, official views and rhetoric of government.

Public sphere has been reduced to the controversy and various mutually opposed rhetorical strategies almost in its entirety. The space for a rational debate with arguments is non-existent. The reality of the media is the reality of intense and dynamic propaganda, linguistic exclusivity, constant attacks, quasi-rational constructions, neglect of facts, minimization of success and exaggeration of the shortcomings of opponents, uncritical (self) glorification, constant undermining of the credibility of others and ‘the other’, moralistic contestation ... Images of political actors, interpretations of political, economic and other processes and decisions are predominantly negative. More precisely, they emphasize wrongdoing of political actors, and as if by some unwritten rule, focus on the negative motivation, elaboration and outcomes of political decisions and processes.

The reality presented from the perspective of weekly press has political and value nihilism towards the current government, and in general socio-historical and political-economic terms, decadence as a result of persistent and tireless journalistic work.

Although the aforementioned evaluation of critical media does not come as a surprise, it should be emphasized that critical discourse emphasizes two extremely negative and politically provocative moments - madness and fascism. The government and the society in general are depicted with words like madness, abnormality, deviation from common sense, lack of any logic. On the other hand, the government is quickly, easily and simply labeled as fascist. Irrationality of reality, in line with the radically political and morally problematic and historically dangerous type of political order, reduces the critical discourse to the continuous production and reproduction of propaganda narratives. Traces of political propaganda narratives are present at both written and the visual level. A suggestive photo and its “signature” in the form of a front page of a weekly newspaper, which similarly to a political poster usually represents the opposition leader or an engaged intellectual – is the actual symbol of a weekly newspaper. The texts linked to the front page are a further elaboration of its message, with a clear intention to form political opinion and action.

Traditional negative obsession with Aleksandar Vučić, the current president of Serbia, is the center of journalistic reporting. In this regard, he is constantly and permanently negatively portrayed, regardless of the process or the project that he is involved in. The moral judgment and political condemnation of the first man of Serbian politics appears as evidence of journalistic virtue and a kind of moral and political imperative of the first order. In order to be considered a professional, Serbian journalist must always and in every situation, seek, show or invent some sort of a fallout in Vučić’s rule.

Serbia is not an isolated case when it comes to the negative obsession with the President. The controversy and fierce journalist-political struggle has flared up in all states where, according to Linz and Stephen, "democracy is the main game in political life." From the American Liberal Republicans, where polarization concerns the conflict between Trump and his supporters and alleged or actual protectors of liberal-democratic values, to the states across the European continent, where debates are spreading about the future of democracy in light of the challenges posed by the conservative-populist right.

In the analyzed period April to June, key topics were concentrated among the narratives about dictatorship or pseudo-democracy, fostering a spirit of rebellion through the glorification of civil protests, and developing rhetorical-political concepts that make the boycott of elections politically useful and morally justified. Within the narrative of the non-institutional struggle against the government, the idea of a revolutionary change is reasonably and unambiguously explained and encouraged. This change in the paradigm of opposition struggle has gained momentum following the incursion of opposition protesters into the Radio Television of Serbia and the siege on the Serbian Presidency building.

On the other hand, the pro-government media continue with the same writing style and content. The image of the opposition unchangingly negative in the pro-government media. Opposition is challenged on moral and political grounds, using the language that is beyond the limits of conventional decency. The credibility, competence and patriotism of opposition leaders is being challenged, along with the allegations of their plans to violently take over the government.

In particular, it should be emphasized that interview is visibly dominant as a journalistic genre. This journalistic form is a "window of opportunity" for developing oppositional views and appropriate arguments.

The interviewees are selected according to the political-value criteria which correspond to the orientation of the members of the editorial board. There is a noticeable and distinct tendency of repetition of interviewees with the aim of intensifying the effect of the message, both in value and political sense. It should be emphasized that it is often the case that the interviewees are selected so that they portray a figure of authority be it individual or professional. This is mostly about a desire to position certain public figures (singers and actors, for example) as role models with their civic stance which is almost in all cases negatively intoned against the government. It is a skilful transfer of social recognition to the domain of politics, a precise example of the fact that propaganda goes together with advocacy journalism. This kind of public sphere modelling turns the public landscape into an endless space of constant disputes and never-ending conflict with high intensity. Content-wise, majority of messages from the interview (which is, as by rule, conceptually linked to the front page) is repeated according to the already prepared a political-value matrix established by the editorial board of the weekly or daily newspapers.

Repetition of the media message is at the core of control over the public space. This is another important feature of the weekly press. The message has a significant political impact- its outcome is the creation of environment characterized by sharpened divisions. The frequency of repetition of the same message, communicated by various interviewees, creates a pattern of reactions and feelings with the readers who finally form rigid stands.

“Fixating” the image of the actor or an event is one of the most common weapons in the political and propaganda war. “Fixating” the image is a process in which, and thanks to whom, one subject remains “frozen” in time, despite their potential and actual transformations or the changes in the political, economic, social and historical circumstances. This rigid pseudo-intellectual matrix operates according to the permanently assigned roles. Actors are portrayed as the “good” or “bad” guys in public space.

Morally and politically acceptable “positive” attributes are ascribed to a particular group of political figures and organizations, while negative ones are irrevocably and unquestionably assigned to the opposite side – the permanently “unfit ones”. At the heart of the conflict in the public-political field is the Manichean division of the media and political elite. After analysing the print media in Serbia, and in the spirit of this moral and political division, one can say that all of the weeklies are in fact – biased. In their bias, they are very clear and sharp, and therefore, very irrational.

The conflict of events, processes and actors is so vivid, that rationality, which is supposed to characterize democratically constituted public, cannot exist neither as a useful illusion nor a regulatory mechanism in the process of opening up the space for rational social debate. Thus, anyone can be against anyone, motivated by „their own” reasons which are seldom detectable in the in-depth analysis, and where the arguments of the „other side” rarely serve any purpose. The spirit of argumentation in the Serbian weeklies, especially the columns and interviews, is characterized by radicalism, political defamation of the opponent and first-class moral exclusivity.

At the same time, the repetition of one and the same message leads to the rigidity of the editorial policy. From this point, it is easy to form an image about the actor, process or a specific event. Repetition of the message and unhidden tendency to form a concrete image shows the importance of print media as a tool for political communication, more precisely, a weapon in the constant political war among the actors on Serbian political scene. The rigidity of a specific media also shows the intention to skip the debate on certain issues and go straight into the condemnatory mode of depicting actors, processes or events.

Secondly, and this is very specific for weeklies, the front page holds an important place, for its message is constructed both visually and verbally in the form of election poster (most often: an image of the actor with a concise and direct headline from the interview or the image of an actor with a message which should form the reader’s opinion). In the weeklies, for example in *NIN* the cartoon caricature also plays a significant role. This dynamic unity of a drawing and words serves a strong political-propaganda message. Another important feature of headlines in weeklies and editorial columns is the rhetorical match in the opinions and attitudes of the editorial board and the subjects being interviewed. This tendency shows that print media are most usually a sophisticated tool in the political battle, especially in the sphere of construction and maintenance of the image.

There are two ways to classify the weeklies. According to the criterion of division that is common and usually present in a democratic society, the classification should entail the ones close to the government and ones that are critical towards it. In Serbia, this criterion cannot be consistently applied since most weeklies only belong to the disapproving category. Weekly *Pečat* falls under the category of partially critical of the authorities, because of its open criticizing of the government’s pro-European foreign policy under the Vučić’s rule. However, this weekly shows strong critical stance towards moral credibili-

ty, axiological orientation and political views of the 5th October winners. On the other hand, weeklies like *NIN*, *Vreme*, *Novi magazin* and *Nedeljnik* fall under the category of completely critical of the government. There is a visible difference also in the intonation of the criticism.

While there is a complete, concrete and fierce criticism of the government in *Vreme* and somewhat *NIN* (especially in the domain of domestic politics and economy), weekly newspapers such as *Novi magazin* and *Nedeljnik* are characterized by a more moderate tone in expressing critical views. Although they do not engage in as much labelling and accusing as *Vreme* and *NIN* do, there is a strong and obvious devotion to the oppositional arguments in their manner of writing about the government, along with taking an implicit pro-Western political stance.

Another classification that can be applied to the weeklies is their foreign policy orientation. *Vreme*, *NIN*, *Novi magazin* and *Nedeljnik* are more or less pro-European. On the other hand, the weekly *Pečat* clearly emphasizes the anti-Western and pro-Russian stance, intended to support the nationalist discourse, close to the one which was dominant in wars in the 1990s.

Aleksandar Vučić is the subject on which both of these discourses clash. Both discourses examine the policies of the current Serbian leader, seeking to challenge it thoroughly and repeatedly. For Euro-reform critics, Vučić is an “eternal” anti-Democrat, for nationalists, anti-capitalists and Russophiles he is neither patriotic nor pro-Russian, nor properly anti-capitalist, despite the global crisis of this economic system.

The image of Aleksandar Vučić’s rule – authoritarian, undemocratic, fascist, essentially irrational, media manipulator, mafia leader, nationalist and a fake European, with no actual success in the economy; his power represents the twilight of civilization and culture.

In the analyzed period, political and moral evaluation of the current government was predominantly based on the negative obsession with Serbian President Aleksandar Vučić. The first man of Serbian politics along with his government is represented in a predominantly negative context. Discontentment was explained in a systematic and detailed yet dynamic and intense manner. The premise of this disapproval is the idea that Aleksandar Vučić stands in direct opposition to the liberal democracy, social and historical progress of citizens and development of the country.

The comprehensiveness of the disapproval discourse is also reflected in the model of its conception. As before, it first starts with a series of general, radically critical and often nihilistic assessments and evaluations of the situation in the society, in order to make the whole thing significantly more concrete and put in the context of current social and political processes and events. The discourse of discontentment usually starts with a gloomy and consciously exaggerated image of the state of affairs in the society, history and politics. It is related to the impulse towards political self-expression of the speaker or writer and the desire to arouse the pathos of indignation and protest with the reader through a shocking

political message. In the context of this intention, Aleksandar Vučić's Serbia should be identified with evil, regarded as a cave-like state and the system of social relations is to be seen as an era of slavery.

As an integral part of the aforementioned political-propaganda intention, one should read an excerpt from an interview with theater director Dejan Mijač, who said: "This is a time of shackles for all that is human, and shackles belong to slaves, not to free people. Earlier, we had a system of repression that restricted liberties, but we still had free people. Serbia was everything - from pashalik to the principality, the kingdom ... but I have never experienced something like this in my life. This is pure evil and nothing else. A cave-state where the Secret Service keeps children's exams. Is it their duty?! Do the Secret Services keep children's exams in all democratic countries?! I wonder about everything and wonder how we manage to survive at all. We merrily sink into futility. That's the whole story. Consciousness is something that makes us different from animals. Lose the consciousness, you brought the animal back. And today, materialism is everything. There is no spirituality. The whole game is played around money. One man is talking here, the others are silent and nodding. Because we have a president, presidents of presidents, and this is booming from all institutions."¹

Mijač's vision of the government is shocking. Inhuman government has suspended freedom, turned Serbia into a land of slaves, abolished spirituality, suppressed culture and creativity, promoted greed and arrogance, abolished morality. It is a time of deep decadence, a radical crisis of consciousness and all that is human, noble and valuable in one's life. The source of this historical division, spiritual and existential devastation is no one else but Aleksandar Vučić and his party. "Who is and what Vučić is" is a fundamental question. Without an "in-depth" insight into his personality and moral-political habitus, there is no way of understanding the political and broader social realities. Zlatko Paković, playwright and columnist for the anti-government daily *Danas*, sees the president of Serbia as an ideological chameleon and a man for whom to live authentically is a genuine political experiment, an attempt to live as Jaspers put it - in "his own truth." Since he cannot do this in real political life, Paković proposes a psychological-political experiment as an attempt to present Vučić authentically, without marketing and propaganda wrapping: "Vučić is able to advocate for completely opposing ideological and political attitudes in different intervals. He is also able to advocate for opposing values at the same time. I gave him a chance at the theater. I gave him the opportunity to tell the truth, finally, though experimentally, to rise from deceptive existence to the real one and become a person - a man who dares to look at himself in the eye, to see himself and to publicly count all his mistakes. That's the unexpected, the surprising. It was a moment of catharsis that no one even suspected. At that moment, the audience clearly feels that tragic difference between what a human being is capable of being, what he was created for, and what he transformed himself into, what he threw himself into. It's not lustration, it's art."²

Writer Miljenko Jergović turns his personal literary woes with President Vučić into a resolute political stance: "I have a problem with Vučić's literarization because it all seems to me a bit exaggerated. There is no character in such exaggeration, no opportunity for a story. His pathetic crying gestures, capricious anger, and this - I don't want to be misunderstood - almost female way of being insulted is something I

1 Dejan Mijač, „Napravili su zemlju bez budućnosti [They built a country with no future],“ interview with Tanja Nikolić Đaković, *NIN*, No. 3574

2 Zlatko Paković, „Ne smemo toвити vlast koja građane vodi u klanicu [We can't put up with the government which is leading the people towards slaughter],“ talk with Stefan Slavković, *NIN*, No. 3568

can't handle neither as a citizen - even a foreigner - nor as a writer. When I say female way of being insulted, I hope that I do not need to explain that there is also a male way, which is neither better nor worse than female, but different. The fact that Vučić's is female is by no means funny to me, it just confuses me and doesn't let me think of him as a literary character."³

This ingenious political-psychological analysis not only offered a new insight into Vučić but also highlighted the problem of his gender identity in a complex social context. Of course, this statement is not only a psychological image, but also a way to discredit the President of Serbia. The negative obsession with Vučić will culminate in the attitude of Radoslav Milenković. As a member of the radical anti-government organization "Self-Defense", Radoslav Milenković says: "He is for some sketch about a meaningless, self-proclaimed, deliberate, worthless man in the domain of what he has decided to do. He is insignificant in spite of the terrible damage he causes. He is insignificant both in his knowledge and in that everything he does, as he only does it on the basis of selfishness and self-righteousness. Therefore, a sketch."⁴

In addition to the negative stereotypes about Vučić as a president of Serbia, there is also a question of his credibility. The interviewees challenge his authority through mocking and defamation. The essence of this strategy is to turn personal animosity into a political argument. This rhetorical-political operation occurs as a "means" of artistic irony wrapped in a flurry of everyday speech understood by the common man. The suggestion of this message is reinforced by the fact that it does not come from a strictly political arena made up of parties, non-governmental organizations or movements, but rather by public figures known to the general public through art.

It is understood that the artistic-colloquial defamation of Vučić's is a part of a broader discourse of discontent that sees Serbia as "the worst of all possible worlds" and Aleksandar Vučić as a kind of historical-political "complete disaster", devoid of democratic and liberal habitat in his exercise of power.

Dragoljub Žarković sees an unbreakable unity of state, party and a leader in Vučić's manner of rule. The current Serbian state is a party state. It is the antidote to the rule of law or a professional and efficient bureaucracy. Vučić's rule is a contemporary imprint of the ideal Communist party state with a leader in the center who, in addition to the realpolitik manner of ruling, also applies communication strategies that enable him to control most of the electorate. Žarković describes Serbia as a party state in the following piece: "The government has suddenly, unilaterally and without any constitutional basis, became all-peopled and along with the distribution of political power, it took the privilege of distributing economic and social power leaving the people in the position of maybe receiving a piece of bread and a sip of water."⁵

3 Miljenko Jergović, „Vučić nije lik za roman [Vučić is no literary character],“ interview with Nedim Sejdinović, *Vreme*, No. 1484

4 Radoslav Milenković, „Moramo da očistimo društvo od parazita [We need to cleanse the society from parasites],“ interview with Nedim Sejdinović, *Vreme*, No. 1486

5 Dragoljub Žarković, „Vulin s boka, Mitrović zguza – Kako se uz pomoć vojske i muzike brani Vrhovni komandant od protesta građana [Vulin from the side, Mitrović from the back – how to defend the Commander in Chief from the civil protests with music and army],“ *Vreme*, No. 1475

With the same amount of sarcasm and moralistic condemnation, the author views Vučić's public profile based on a precise and complete analysis of public opinion. Although he is more than aware that in a democratic society political attitudes are modeled based on the insights into mood of the majority of voters, Žarković wants to present the president of Serbia as an instant politician who follows the public opinion, in order to gain larger support if not complete concentration of power through manipulation and propaganda.

In the context of symbiosis and Vučić's political profile, Žarković says: "I resent him for progressing more and more towards the rule of 'absolute authority', while demonstrating it more and more, trusting the focus group research that shows that Serbs love having a strong hand leading them."⁶

At this point Žarković clearly emphasized the undemocratic and essentially illiberal nature of Vučić's rule. His whole technique of proving, or more precisely, persuading the reader, has been reduced by the view that the current government is in its essence a radical inversion of democracy and freedom, which is not only in anti-democratic, but forced into the broader context of Serbian political culture.

Just like Žarković, Teofil Pančić persistently repeats the already established stereotype of the one-man rule. One-man rule is synonymous with anti-democratic rule, characterized by violence, fear, lack of freedom and turning citizens into "depoliticized mass." "In the era after the collapse of ideologies, the regime is one person with changeable surrounding, and the peculiarity of this 21st century personal rule, is that 'political' actually ceases to be important, while postmodern prevails in its marketing-made shape of what used to be called 'personal charisma' – The 'charisma holder' is empowered to do whatever he wants with his capital, since to a depoliticized society it doesn't matter where he leads them, as long as he takes them. Although he doesn't really lead them anywhere, for old-fashioned, Domanović reasons."⁷

Pančić identifies Aleksandar Vučić's rule with unscrupulous and morally indifferent self-righteous people without morality, deprived of any ethical worldview and conscience. For them it is a rule of the arrogant, of the moral mud. He announces his moralistic indignation to the rule of Vučić: "These are the people who wouldn't flinch to do whatever it takes to whomever it is necessary, just as long as they don't have to pay any political, material, status or moral price. And those people, who are on the other side of everything that is still considered right and moral, are simply corrupt. They are called a scum. And that Scum is exactly what governs this country, starts and stops buses, abolishes and invents broadcasts and journalists, decomposes and devastates cities, and does everything that is generally the business and preoccupation of every serious 'Bashi-bazouk'."⁸

In addition to the standard accusations which describe Aleksandar Vučić's rule as a dictatorship, Teofil Pančić adds that his manner of governance is below every moral level. "Dictatorial power" and power "tormentor" the rule of unscrupulous, destructive, uncivilized and morally unworthy people. The notion of "dictatorship", "autocracy", "censorship" was added to the critical repertoire which frivolously appro-

6 Dragoljub Žarković, „Ja tebe serdare, ti mene vojvodo – kako nismo pametniji posle sastanka u Patrijaršiji, ali smo gluplji po nekim tačkama dnevnog reda [I call you duke, you call me your Highness – how come we are not smarter after the meeting in Patriarchy, but we are more stupid according to the items on the agenda],“ *Vreme*, No. 1480

7 Teofil Pančić, „Dva Boška i jedan Francisko [Two Boškos and one Francisco],“ *Vreme*, No. 1475

8 Teofil Pančić, „Žurka pred svanuće [Party before the sunrise],“ *Vreme*, No. 1480

priated the notion of "rule of the scum". Consciously and with a purpose. Namely, the negative mood among citizens should be further enhanced for the forthcoming boycott campaign; the revolt should be encouraged, protest prepared, perhaps even laying the ground for some street incident or some other form of political provocation outside the institutions. In a critique that is not strictly political, but rather hybrid, many different concepts and stylistic figures emerge, so Pančić is definitely not alone.

Writer Srdjan Valjarević, in his interpretation of politics and broader social movements in Serbia and beyond, applies a viewpoint which represents a combination of the so-called liberal criticism of the structure and political practice of the current government, a campaign of reminiscing and criminalization. In an interview for the weekly *Vreme*, he explicitly states: "Once upon a time, people who are in power today wanted to build a safe house for Ratko Mladić, and now they are making safe houses for various criminals in Serbia. The same is happening in Kosovo, just the other way around. In a country where there is no freedom, where there is no free expression of citizens, where people are fighting on the streets, in the offices of the mayor - there is no parliament, nor is it possible to have one."⁹

The above sentences show that Valjarević's image of Serbia is the image of a politically primitive society – a society without liberal democratic values, institutions and practices. In his criticism of the authorities, Blagoje Grahovac takes up almost identical stand, seeing the president as a politically immature nationalist leader who suffers from a mania about himself and his persona. At the same time, Vučić is an "absolutist", reluctant to abide to the principles of limited power practiced by liberalism. For him, he is an irrational and excessive individual who controls almost all available resources in the country: "Vučić is obsessed with himself and Serbia. Himself, because of his unrealistic ambition to become a leader of all Serbs, and Serbia because he did leave the radicals, but the radical did not leave Vučić. With such reality, irrational political thinking and absolute authority of the individual, scandal is inevitable. This time the scandal will not involve Serbia, but Vučić..."¹⁰

That there is a significant overlap between the views of public intellectuals and opposition politicians is clear from the interview with a former President of Serbia and current president of the Social Democratic Party, Boris Tadić, who says: He is in power for seven years, with self-proclaimed pro-European orientation, but the country and the society are far from European values and far from standards a country candidate for EU should have, both in terms of internal and foreign policy ... Vučić has introduced a specific terror-rule over these seven years.

He has a pathological need to become a historical figure and believes that his shortest path to fulfilling that ambition is to rule by fear, muscle and usurpation of everything: from state institutions and media, through private companies to every restaurant and even traffic. Wherever there is money and power, Vučić has his brothers, godparents and friends... so to fight such politics and autocracy takes a lot of patience and when the moment comes, decisiveness, especially having in mind that EU supports him for solving the Kosovo problem in return."¹¹

9 Srdan Valjarević, „Ova vlast će zbog svojih laži pojesti samu sebe [This government will eat itself in the sea of its lies],” interview with Sonja Čirić, *Vreme*, No. 1483

10 Ibid

11 Boris Tadić, „Vučić vlada strahom [Vučić governs by fear],” interview with Jelka Jovanović, *Novi magazin*, No. 416



Novi magazin, 18th April 2019

Tadić adds two more points to his critical narrative: the identification of power with dictatorship and its equalization with the state of social pathology. The combination of political-psychological stigmatization of the present order is evident in the following piece of Tadić's almost regular quarterly address to the readers of the *Novi magazin*: "He tied his hands and feet to his opponents, then invited them into the ring. Such abuse of power is not a matter of political skill and anyone can do that. I could have secured endless victories this way, but it was not only a matter of morality, value and respect for the law, it was also a thing of common sense and stomach. Every normal person is disgusted to behave in this way. When you put it all together, you understand the nature of Vučić's autocratic - and I may say psychopathic - government, and only such evil can emerge from such illegitimate authority. On October 5th, Milosevic did not acknowledge the election results, but Vučić did not even give citizens the opportunity to vote freely, making them subject to blackmail, those automatically execute his political orders and wishes."¹²

The structure of Vučić's government, as described by Alexander Olenik, leader of the opposition Civic Democratic Forum, rests on three interconnected sources of power that almost completely make sense of the election. It is about control of the media, misuse of public resources and local authorities that function arbitrarily and recklessly: "One pillar is control and misuse of the media, the production of lies, manipulation and the diversion of public focus from the essentials. The second pillar is in the economic and social sphere. This is an abuse of public resources. This last gathering they made was a clear indicator of this. It is as if we once again have the League of Communists as one single party and where the whole state apparatus is put into the function of that party. Everything - buses, fuel, sandwiches ... All the logistics are taken from the state. If we just look at that segment, it's like we're in a one-party system. The third part is the one that people mostly don't see - it's those local sheriffs who literally rule by fear on the local level, various Jutka, Simonović, Palma guys."¹³

The negation of freedom and the pervasiveness of nationalism as the dominant spiritual-political forces are transformed by the criminalization of power, more precisely by their identification with mafia, into a convenient historical-political ground for affirming violence as a means of changing political power. Affirmation of violence as a means of political struggle represents the utmost skill and the sociological expertise of Jovo Bakić, a prominent opposition leader and a professor at Belgrade University, who said in an interview with for weekly *NIN*: "Experience taught us nationalism and patriotism are the cover for hooligans and their last resort. In that sense, you have a serious mob that will stand up for this regime. The same mob can also turn its back on the regime if it has guarantees from the other side that it will not be touched. In a 2000 we had just that. And when the late Đinđić realized that you could not have both the state and the mafia and you had to decide, he chose the state because he was a civilized man. And the mob liquidated him. So now we will have a similar situation. Without power, this government will not go away because mafia is in its essence and mafia has captured the Republic, as a public property. We as citizens are in the hands of mafia that does literally what it wants. You go there and they point a long tube to your colleague's head and say: read the prepared text, we just took over the power. Otherwise, if you don't have long pipes

12 Ibid

13 Aleksandar Olenik, „Kosovo je faktički nezavisno [Kosovo is in fact, independent],“ interview with Mijat Lakićević, *Novi magazin*, No. 420

and you hit the RTS, what are you going to do there?! It's not just RTS, you didn't do anything unless you are connected the leading politicians."¹⁴

Bakić's conclusion that an uprising of people against the authorities in Serbia is possible has its alternative approaches. Unlike Bakić's radical nihilism manifested in the criminalization and negation of anything democratic and liberal in Serbia, retired General Blagoje Grahovac claims that Vučić's rule has yielded some economic results, such as budget stabilization and a degree of economic growth, but that "self-sustaining politics" itself Vučić and the overthrow of institutions lead to political calculations that can culminate in armed insurrection: "Vučić's self-government has some results, especially in stabilizing fiscal and monetary policy, forgetting the axiom that state institutions are the only guarantor of state stability and protection of citizens. Of course, under the the law. He, he and only he, in everything and anything, will lead to the final burial of state institutions. World experiences tell us this. Idolatry towards the leader is one of the indicators of society's fascination and Vučić's case goes beyond decency. Citizens are apprehensive about Vučić's intolerance of dissenters. Intolerance with unbridled hatred! He acts like a villain he hates. The rehab of the Quisling and Collaboration Forces is evident. It's getting risky! I do not rule out the possibility of an anti-fascist uprising of the people in Serbia."¹⁵

In order to justify the violent change of government, the President of Serbia should be presented as incapable. This effect is achieved by contrasting his personality with a set of moral-psychological traits that, presumably, every president should possess. Balance, vocabulary, truthfulness and justice should all be the qualities of a true president. According to the aforementioned Jovo Bakić, the current president does not have these qualities, therefore he is described as inappropriate for this function. He is also prone to aggression and close to the mafia's violent practice in politics, while respect for the other, truthfulness, justice and honesty should excel in one president. The reason for this president's aggressive actions against individual citizens is a justified panic - why would the confident government, prepared to step down after a lost election, fear the words of one sociologist, if not for its well-hidden treasons and lies. The Mafia never steps down voluntarily...¹⁶

The origins of Aleksandar Vučić's rule in the terrible times of wars and sanctions of 1990s is gaining importance. In previous periods, the link between the current government and the previous ruling political elite was symbolically emphasized. Now there is much more insistence on the connection between the two epochs, most probably because of an attempt to justify as convincingly as possible the radicalism of the political action against the government, namely opposition's intention to boycott the institutions of the political system. In addition to the inevitable connection of Progressive Party leader Aleksandar Vučić and radical leader Vojislav Seselj, this media-political matrix also introduces personalities and events that were at the epicenter of political-historical events and processes during the 1990s. One of the people who encouraged the reminder campaign and the accompanying moralistic-political campaign was Mirjana Marković.

14 Jovo Bakić, „Mafija je zarobila državu, sledi revolucija [Mafia has enslaved the state, revolution is inevitable],“ interview with Tanja Nikolić Đaković, *NIN*, No. 3572

15 Blagoje Grahovac, „Đukanović i Vučić nisu državnici već vladari [This government will eat itself in the sea of its lies],“ intervju sa Zoranom Preradovićem, *NIN*, br. 3571

16 Jovo Bakić, „Mafija je zarobila državu, sledi revolucija [Mafia has enslaved the state, revolution is inevitable],“ interview with Tanja Nikolić Đaković, *NIN*, No. 3572

The death of Professor Mirjana Marković, wife of Slobodan Milošević and ideologue of the Yugoslav Left, fueled the tale of guilt for Serbia's nineties and initiated the stigmatization of the current government on a moral and political level. The handwriting of the memoirs and accusations is recognized in the text of *Vreme* journalist Tamara Skrozza, who reminisces: "They and their political-ideological construction are to blame for the bombing, for every life that was lost just before, during and after the actions of NATO forces for Kosovo, for Croatia, for Bosnia. Finally, the fact that their associates, colleagues and like-minded people have not been prosecuted or condemned after October 5th and are in power again today, has brought us to where we are today: on the brink of collapse of institutions, in a state led by people proven incapable of living and governing in democracy, peace and freedom. All this, and much more, was left in the amanet by a woman who died on April 14th 2019, contrary to any criteria of universal justice: peacefully, unprosecuted and free, in a hospital certainly far more decent than any in Serbia"¹⁷

Vučić's background in the ideological and realpolitik paradigm of the 1990s was also confirmed by a general and publicist Blagoje Grahovac, who sees it not only as a Serbian problem but as a regional problem. Grahovac considers mimicry present on the public scene. Vučić's government is declaratively committed to liberal and democratic values, institutions and practices, but in reality is still practicing the politics of Milosevic's 1990s war years.

"Many politicians in the ex-Yugoslav countries have been instructed to lead a loud and noisy political campaign on European and Euro-Atlantic integrations, but this story is a cover for the actual fascist-ization of the society, Serbia today represents the authentic Šešelj's kingdom, while Vučić, Dacic and Vulin represent the political fragments of that kingdom."¹⁸

An interesting metaphor for Blagoje Grahovac is that today's Serbia is "Šešelj's Kingdom."

Former senior military official and publicist, despite the successes of Vučić's government in the field of Euro-integrations, and without any fence, categorically labels the government as primitively nationalist and historically retrograde. The same political-value message is also sent by the writer Srđan Valjarević, who thinks that Serbia is still trapped in the war of the 1990s, and that it has not morally and politically stepped away from the topics and dilemmas of the post-war period.

Living in modern Serbia is "living in lies and silence" regarding wars and crime. The status of "remaining war past" and its connection to "present day" is recognized in the following sentences from the extensive interview of this novelist to the anti-Government weekly *Vreme* where Valjarević, among others, states: "There is nothing to destroy here, since there are no values for the last 30 years, at least, this term should not even exist. We haven't had any closure on the topic of corpses in refrigerator trucks, siege of Sarajevo, mass graves, our own guilt, I do not know what destruction are we talking about, destruction of what? Here, people write books and make movies on World War I and Gavrilo Princip, as if all of those refrigerator trucks and mass graves do not exist. All of this time, the Serbian nationalism is dominant in this society, one cannot accept the truth about the guilt, no truth can be assimilated at all, lies are told,

17 Tamara Skrozza, „Amanet raspada i propasti [Legacy of destruction and failure],“ *Vreme*, No. 1476

18 Blagoje Grahovac, „Đukanović i Vučić nisu državnici već vladari [Đukanović and Vučić are not statesmen but rulers],“ interview with Zoran Preradović, *NIN*, No. 3571

new conflicts are made, and it all becomes more and more miserable. This government will be devoured by its own lies, with the highest possible price, if need be.”¹⁹

The fact that the campaign of reminding has effect eleven years after Tadić beat Nikolić at the presidential elections of 2008 is confirmed by the columnist of weekly *Nedeljnik* Zoran Panović, who writes the following about the SNS rally “Future of Serbia”: “Vučić, at the rally in Belgrade, re-actualized three key words from the ‘AB Revolution’ of Milosević – homogenization, mobilization and differentiation. Naturally, all under the gimmick of ‘unity’ that, if we were to be cynical, is valid for the oppositional part of the population as the democracy is valid for the ‘enemies of democracy’. Belgrade’s ‘Future of Serbia’ is just another contribution to making a spectacle out of politics which is an important component of the technology of rule of Vučić, but this field of spectacle is not unlimited. Now, just like Ušće some time ago, nation happened (or they were brought in), in the words of Milovan Vitezović, but the enthusiasm of this nation is not a resource Vučić could rely on, as the loyal mass of the ‘qualified majority’. Anyway, our leaders simply rent the people. They will follow whoever comes after Vučić, just as they followed those before.”²⁰

The claim on essential and almost fatal social division as the core of technology of current government almost naturally follows this columnist’s observation. The position on political division to “us” and “them”, to “friends” and “enemies” as presumption, and the performance of technology of current government of SNS is promoted by already quoted Professor of the Faculty of Political Sciences in Belgrade, Jelena Đorđević: “We are a deeply, fundamentally divided society. Since the nineties, but this government made the division deeper by talking to only one social layer and only one, usually unidentified, fake political ideology, without the beginning or the end, but having perfect methods of plain propaganda. At the same time, all was done to persuade the people, using different methods of open propaganda as well as ‘underground’ methods of manipulation, to believe the nonsense that the politics is something shameful and that all of them are the same – pure lies and manipulation of the mind. This division to us and them is the precondition of rule, since the production of internal and external enemies enables the regimes with authoritarian and dictator features to remain in power. Populistic regime of the fascist type, established seven years ago based on the disproportionately significant role of the First Vice-President, is based on one idea – separate the ‘elite’ from the ‘people’, fence everything that smells ‘intellectual’, education, play of the soul, good taste, decency, understanding freedom, critical thinking, dialogue, tolerance – marginalize all those with tendency to think like this and, if possible, silence them using different methods.”²¹

Using the manner of the post-modern political essayist with strong political (pre)beliefs, hermetical and legible at first sight, Jelena Đorđević gives a moral and political interpretation of the current political and wider social and cultural context. Her goal is to confirm the stereotype about Aleksandar Vučić as a populist, negative towards the elite, incompetent for true democratic order, rationality and tolerance. Unlike the dialogue framework of communication including unity of rationality, difference and tolerance,

19 Srđan Valjarević, „Ova vlast će zbog svojih laži pojesti samu sebe [This government will eat itself for its lies]” interview with Sonja Čirić, *Vreme*, no. 1483

20 Zoran Panović, „Mitinzi – od korenja do softvera [Rallies – from roots to software],” *Nedeljnik*, no. 379

21 Jelena Đorđević, „Praznina i tišina [Emptiness and silence],” *Vreme*, no. 1479

Jelena Đorđević insists that the current dominant and ruling political and media constellation is: "On the contrary, to indoctrinate, persuade, manipulate the majority and its feeling of reality, control their emotions and desires in line with the will of one man using indefinite flow of words that are penetrating their mind continuously. This separation is implemented using comprehensive work on creating the trash ethos, where the dominant role is played by hating tabloids, news producers in full capacity, creators of the system of values that confirms ideas, positions, desires and urges of the one thinking he has the fate of the nation in his hands. In parallel, institutions are getting rid of experts, professionals, critical individuals, people with integrity and opinion are rejected and the rule of incompetent subjects is established. We all know that intimidation and blackmail are the foundations propelling this populist fascist intention."²²

Not only the division of which Jelena Đorđević speaks of, but also the destruction of public sphere and cancellation of the possibility for basic consensus is also the "merit" of Aleksandar Vučić and SNS. This process is also called, which is sort of a joke and a bit irresponsible from the reporters' point of view, "bringing back Šešelj" into the public space: into public policy and practice, and this almost resulted in union of SNS and the Radicals. The explanation that the Jul-Radical rehabilitation of "patriot" politics may have some sense in holding the vast voting mass under emotional and value control, that would, in any other case, go to anyone who is honestly against Serbia in EU, Kosovo agreement, but it is pretty visible that the consequences of such strategy are burning the public space to the ground – thus, making the environment of impossibility for any minimum basic consensus."²³

The aforementioned Šešelj rehabilitation process has its global role models in distant countries to the East – Russia and China. Using a typically superficial liberal key, current government is depicted as authoritarian in line with the Chinese-Russian model by the columnist of *Novi Magazin*, Mijat Lakićević: "Russian saints and Chinese cash – this is the shortest way to describe the Serbian, that is, the politics of Aleksandar Vučić. Orthodox brotherhood links us to Russia, and steel to China. We had the pleasure to enjoy the former on the 10th of May at the military and police parade in Niš, where the Russian Iron Regiment marched. Strong leader, strict centralization, solid party control of the entire society – isn't this the practice of Vučić recently (or attempt of). He had his role models for this before, too, primarily in Vladimir Vladimirovič Putin, but it couldn't hurt to familiarize oneself with the far east experience of the country practicing this, more or less, for almost 5,000 years."²⁴

In creating the negative image on the government, the obsession with Aleksandar Vučić was confirmed in the attacks to family members. Andrej Vučić was in headlines again. Even though he has no formal function in the state or the ruling party, Andrej Vučić, with his brother Aleksandar, is its Grey Eminence. Moreover, not only the Grey Eminence, but a man managing the party using the Cosa Nostra methods. To promote this claim, the editorial staff of NIN used the former member of SNS from the municipality of Alibunar with suspicious criminal past – Petar Belić. Belić's suspicious biography and the fact that he was rejected by the party was not an obstacle to the editorial staff of the weekly with the largest

²² Ibid.

²³ Zoran Panović, „Da li su beogradski izbori bili poslednji pravi [Were the Belgrade elections the last real ones]" *Nedeljnik*, no. 388

²⁴ Mijat Lakićević, „Ruski gubernator ili kineski mandarin [Russian governor or Chinese mandarin]" *Novi magazin*, no. 423

symbolic reputation to make him the star on the headline that should send the readers a clear message on the character of the currently ruling party, and the government it represents.

The main message is: "Serbian Progressive Party is a mafia organization. The country is ruled by the mafia." This dimension of creating a negative attitude on SNS can be seen in the following section of Belić's interview: "Andrej Vučić absolutely runs the SNS and all the members of the Board are subjected to him, and through the coordinators, he runs the entire party infrastructure in the country. There is Aleksandar Vučić, then three spaces blank, and then his brother Andrej, and then the party follows, with laws and the Constitution after them all... Big statements of Aleksandar Vučić on combatting crime and corruption are no longer true, since he is the man surrounding himself with 'experts' for moving state money to private pockets. Such as Branko Malović and Južni Banat, as the symbol for counter-progressive octopus holding all the citizens and businessmen."²⁵

Criminalization of power, primarily the President of Serbia, receives its specific criminal detail, in addition to a mobster one. Namely, it is not that SNS is organized as a mixture of mafia and a serious public pressure group, but, it is morally and politically disputed that the first man of SNS and Serbian politics Aleksandar Vučić is, indirectly, but then again, directly also, involved in the murder of a famous reporter Slavko Ćuruvija in April 1999.

Zlatko Paković, playwright and a columnist of the anti-Governmental paper *Danas*, directly politically and legally accused Vučić for a series of political assassinations that happened in Serbia for the last 20 years. Vučić's responsibility exists from the 'Ćuruvija' case, all the way to the assassination of the first democratic Prime Minister of the Government of Serbia Zoran Đinđić and other murders with political background. It is not classic, criminal or legal, it may be argued whether it is politically or morally sustainable, but Paković presumes it and in this presumption emphatically claims that the President of Serbia is responsible due to the nature of official positions he occupied and the content of political positions he took.

'Forcing' responsibility, according to Paković, reaches the level of accusing all, in addition to Vučić, who directly or indirectly supported him, for very specific criminal acts. Extensive understanding of the notion of responsibility should be the basis for the affirmation of radical politics of civil disobedience which is the presumption of the change of current government. Paković says: "The connection between the citizens and the government is a connection of state and social responsibility. When Ćuruvija was killed, Vučić was the Minister of Informations. When Đinđić was killed, Vučić was an MP in the Federal Parliament, and the President of the political party he was in at that time, the later President of Serbia Nikolić, hinted to the death of Đinđić as something politically useful. When Ivanović was killed, Vučić was what he is today, President of Serbia. Regarding bleeding conscience, I simply said that it was easy to spot blood from wounds of murdered Ivanović, Đinđić and Ćuruvija, Milan Pantić, Nebojša Simeunović, Ivan Stambolić and Dada Vujasinović, but the blood from guilty conscience is invisible, although it gushes also. All those who consent to any relationship with the government that denies laws and institutions, consent also to a bleeding conscience. I am merely saying that this blood is spilled in the same way as the blood of those who were killed for democracy. Some are killing the just, other persons within

²⁵ Vuk Z. Cvijić, „Andrej, Bog i batina [Andrej, Master of Universe]" *NIN*, no. 3565

themselves.”²⁶ The discourse of radical responsibility is transformed into the discourse of radical moral judgement, into the speech identifying the government with evil. Government is demonized. This moralistic strategy is manifested twofold: the government is killing fighters for democracy, killing the person within themselves at the same time. Stretched connection between existential ethical optics and political moralism culminates in Paković’s politically profane and rationally poor accusing analysis.

“Dictator, political protector and promoter of “arroganceocracy”, “fascist populist”, Aleksandar Vučić is, simultaneously, kind of a creator of illusions and media censor. The image of Vučić as a general controller of media is constantly present, although, it is excessively stipulated in this research period, due to the rationalization of election boycott. The main argument for the parties in boycott is the media situation. Opposers of the opposition’s participation in elections consider the situation in media an example of radical lack of freedom, and the leading media is treated only and exclusively as the service of Aleksandar Vučić, SNS and the remaining ruling coalition. Still, focus on Aleksandar Vučić in this segment of reception of Serbian politics is the most impressionable.

“Vučić as the creator of fiction” is the moto of the novelist Valjarević in his review of the Serbian society and media. He, namely, clearly states: “Why is he going places every day, saying things, visiting, taking pictures, commenting on 15 different issues? Because the man is living in Matrix – virtual world of media, and media is everything to him. He rules using the media, in addition to cash and pressure, different crews running around Serbia making threats. He does not rule with results, there are none... It’s all fiction with him, he is inverting reality for years now.”²⁷

Valjarević decodes the nature of propaganda speech of the President of Serbia. According to this legendary novelist for some, the skillful President of Serbia, in his addressing to the public, performs a rhetorical inversion. He is accusing others of the things he is doing himself. This performance inversion, that is in the core of propaganda speech, is the foundation of the progressive and Vučić’s discourse, and this is stipulated by Valjarević: “Everything he does to others, he says it is done to him. He is attacked in the media, we are violent, thieves, fascists, we insult, lie... And these so-called media are only attacking the opposition and glorifying him. Our members are beaten at every corner, we are called scum, social mud by the President... I think he is mixing the real world and the world he is trying to create. He speaks of employment, and people are fleeing the country, he says our economic growth is unbelievable.”²⁸

Awareness and an active relationship of the President of Serbia and the media, mass media at first, causes a high level of personal repulsion and moral critique with a large number of so-called public intellectuals. One of them, speaker at the street protests, actor Nikola Kojo, ‘calls out’ in the moralistic manner the President of Serbia, creating a demagogic mind experiment where he is placed in a reality program with an average Serbian salary.

26 Zlatko Paković, „Ne smemo toviti vlast koja građane vodi u klanicu [We cannot feed the government that takes its citizens to the slaughterhouse]” interview with Stefan Slavković, *NIN*, no. 3568

27 Srđan Valjarević, „Ova vlast će zbog svojih laži pojesti samu sebe [This government will eat itself in the sea of its lies]” interview with Sonja Čirić, *Vreme*, no. 1483

28 Ibid.

This highly flammable moralistic rhetoric based on the equalization of impossible was presented in the following section of his interview: "Since he is living in the TV set and media is everything to him, I would gladly produce a reality show where he would be the leading role with the task: Receive an average monthly salary and live through the month with your family. No! I would give him his presidential salary and follow his survival: how he pays the bills, housing loan, buys food, fuel, saving for skiing, summer holiday... No! Let's call it a luxury. No holidays! Just aforementioned. Then we would get all the answers. I think he would not vote for himself then... Let's leave it to imagination, but, where are the limits of humanity and good taste when you make a human being be manipulated for a meal or two? Does it ever get any lower? Do those sharing the benefits of this arrogant rule ever think about that? Many of them are saying they are religious. Is there any theistic thinking or maybe fear? I would like to say, SHAME ON YOU GENTLEMEN! And the rest."²⁹

The tone used to speak to the public is also interesting. Basically, in addition to stigmatization of the government, the notion of "shame" is introduced as an expression of moral judgement for all that do not share the perspective of this public person. Paković's "radical responsibility" of every citizen for the status of the society is complemented by a strong moral term, inviting the spirit of moral self-judgment. Paroxysm of opposition is self-forced with the political duty that must be applied to all. Pathos of radicalism strangely intertwines with the notion of incapacity and frustration in the real political struggle.

In the critical "showdown" with the government and the media close to it, the Director and Editor in Chief of N1 TV Jugoslav Ćosić, went far as well, in an interview for an anti-Government weekly *Vreme*: "This paper, 'Alo', as well as other tabloids, and almost all electronic media, in my opinion, are controlled by the media headquarters of the President of Serbia. Important media decisions are made in these headquarters: who will be the subject of attack tomorrow, in what manner and what questions will be asked to Vučić. Questions are forwarded where needed and then asked on press conferences to the surprised President. That is the editorial policy... It seems to me that the independent media in Serbia today are going through treatment the Jews went through in the Nazi Germany in 1936. Introduction to extinction."³⁰

Ćosić's message on media control from one political center was further detailed in the position of the media expert Dr. Snježana Milivojević, active promotor of opposition and professor at the Faculty of Political Sciences in Belgrade. She, like Ćosić, thinks that the political control of media is such that room for criticizing the government is narrowed, or completely closed, and at the same time, the possibility for defamation of all declaring as the opponents of the Vučić regime is fully open. In the spirit of the opposition narrative, she will not miss an opportunity to call the current government 'autocratic' and emphasize its originally disputable democratic legitimacy.

"New autocrats use the media to close any possibility for any criticism, to glorify themselves and liberate themselves from any responsibility, public control and criticism. This is the origin of our monstrous campaigns of killing character, public reputation of people daring to say anything against the political

29 Nikola Kojo, „Vođa čopora je jako nervozan [Leader of the pack is very nervous]" interview with Tanja Nikolić Đaković, *NIN*, no. 3567

30 Jugoslav Ćosić, "Uvod u istrebljenje medija [Introduction to extinction of media]" interview with Radoslav Čebić, *Vreme*, no. 1486

regime, and when you lay them out, these are: judiciary, independent media, non-governmental organizations, critical individuals, intellectuals – part of the society that could be the opponent of government.”³¹

Fully in spirit and in line with the opposition parties and movements, she focuses on the news program of the most influential electronic media, considering it the proof of lack of freedom in the media. No freedom in the media in Serbia is the generator of principle of negative selection among the officials of the political system and bad state management, the basis of public manipulation and the place where the impact of open repression of the government is most visible and damaging.

As in the case of the representatives of the opposition, her political narrative is obsessed with media. This obsession is strengthened with the need to emphasize and rationally and rhetorically justify call for boycott of the institutions of the system and future elections: “News programs are the most disputed programs here, since we are talking about the reduction of pluralism, dissatisfaction of the public, blocking public debate, production of fake news, no organized electoral administration, no proper election day unless it is preceded by the public debate and free media. Without free media and democracy, you cannot make a selection of the best people that will perform public function in the society and then your society is on the downfall. This is why democracies fail. Because you keep choosing the incompetent, irresponsible, obedient, because you created a climate in which you can elect only them. For example, from today, if the media space is not normalized as of today, and belief is not created that all of us have the right to participate in the public communication and that it is absolutely forbidden and unacceptable in the normal society to persecute people, lynch them publicly and in the media because they think differently and their vision of development is different, it will cost us dearly, since we will keep on choosing the worst.”³²

Prof. Dr. Marija Bogdanović agrees with her, where she presents her position on the media in the following quote: “What is the situation of our society today? On one side, we are facing closed media with national frequency, except for the ruling, self-bragging coalition, that uses offensive language when speaking to citizens, even angry language, that is moved to the Parliament subsequently and the cloning process is continued. They complete who will be the biggest minion, which causes nausea and disgust with most people... It is hard to endure. Pollution of the public scene is followed by vulgar reality shows.”³³

The informal leader of the supposedly strongest opposition group “Alliance for Serbia” Dragan Đilas, is completely in consent with the engaged intellectual and the professor of the Belgrade University. As presumed by this political leader, highly manipulative regime media is the generator of fundamental divisions in the society and the means of coverup, of what Đilas calls a realistically catastrophic condition of the country. This is why the political division is key for media. “People in Serbia are divided; the Serbs in Kosovo are divided. We are also facing daily violations of the Constitution and basic human rights and liberties, failing institutions, daily intimidation of citizens with

31 Snježana Milivojević, „Bitka za medije [Battle for media]” interview with Ivana Milanović Hrašovec, *Vreme*, no. 1484
32 Ibid.

33 Marija Bogdanović, „Stručnost se osporava u svim sferama života, jer živimo u ‘zlatnom dobu’ [Expertise is disputed in all areas of life since we are living in golden age]” *Nedeljnik*, no. 386

18. АПРИЛ 2019. / БРОЈ 3564 / 299 RSD

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war rhetoric. We are facing a realistic economic misery of the majority of citizens, unemployment, emigration of experts and the youth, a number of strikes of all levels of society, daily brutal violence over all of those who do not think the same, coverup of different affairs of those in power..."³⁴

'Autocratic', 'fascist-populistic', 'criminal' Serbia of Aleksandar Vučić survives due to a specific political pact between the current President of Serbia and the EU. "Non-democratic" Serbia survives as a partner due to the promise of Vučić that he will resolve the Kosovo issue as the West intended, that is, Serbian policy will be placed in alignment with the leading European countries regarding this issue, countries that recognized the independence of Kosovo in 2008 and participated in the aggression of 1999. Because of this 'pact' the euro-reform critics of Vučić claim that the EU is tolerating the non-democratic and oppressive political order that Vučić imposed. European non-democratic inconsistency is a cold real-politic pragmatism putting the values of democracy and freedom aside due to geopolitical and security interests. Testimony on such view of politics in Serbia and the European political elite can be found in a number of articles and interviews of the opposition press. An illustrative example is the viewpoint of the historian Branka Prpa who says: "Back in 2012, there was an understanding between the new government and part of the international community that the issue of Kosovo must be resolved in line with their expectations. Vučić is fulfilling this promise for the last seven years, bit by bit. This is why it is pretty naïve to think that they would give up on him easily, since what is left now is to make him put a signature on the final, legally binding agreement that would make Serbia give up its territory for good, and affirm Kosovo completely and irrevocably in the international arena. But I think it is starting to dawn on them that he may not be able to do this – primarily due to the Albanian side with its maximum requests – and that the price would be too high, in general. The continuation of this condition, that leads to full dictatorship, leads to increasing danger."³⁵

Already quoted actor Radoslav Milenković repeats the same message, lamenting over the destiny of democracy in Serbia and unreadiness of EU to treat Vučić as they treated Milosevic during the last years of the past century: "These are all geopolitical games, and absolutely nobody is interested in the fact that this nation is dying in misery and is being tortured in the so-called transition. A good person from an EU member state can show empathy on the human level, but none of the European officials really care how do we live here! Who cares about the media in Serbia! Well, the media has been the same for the last five-six years, and they only mentioned something in the latest progress report. All the praises and criticism from EU depend on their current interest. And, when they decide it's time for Vučić to leave, he will leave."³⁶

While the promoters of the European-reform course in the Serbian politics see the current governance of Aleksandar Vučić as his pact with the West due to cooperation related to Kosovo, the representatives of the "patriotism", "true believers", nationalisms, condemn Vučić's idea on separation as basically illegal, that is, anti-constitutional and politically naïve. This political message, with a lot of consideration, but very clearly, is announced by the columnist of the paper *Pečat*, Nikola Vrzić. In re-examining the politics

34 Dragan Đilas, „Vlast hoće nasilje, a ne opozicija [Government wants violence, not the opposition]" *NIN*, no. 3564

35 Branka Prpa, "Od ljudske krvi ruke se ne mogu oprati [You cannot wash hands from human blood]" *Vreme*, no. 1475

36 Radoslav Milenković, „Moramo da očistimo društvo od parazita [We must clean the society from parasites]" interview with Nedimom Sejdinovićem, *Vreme*, no. 1486

of the current chief of state he claims that the idea of separation is damaging on many levels, more indirectly than directly: "I think it was clearly stated, on several occasions, what is the official politics of Belgrade – it is the politics of separation. To translate to common tongue, it means that the current government would be ready to recognize the secession of the southern Serbian province with the condition of reintegrating a smaller portion of the territory of the province into the constitutional order of the Republic of Serbia (presumably northern part above the Ibar river, or portion of that part), with certain guarantees for Serbs south of Ibar river and for the historical and cultural legacy – guarantees that would, even if they were given, be just a piece of paper. It is completely clear that this is the politics of the current President, even though it is not proclaimed so explicitly, since it is anti-constitutional and as such, is subjected to not only political, but criminal liability as well. Naturally, I would love to be wrong on this issue, and I would love for the current government to be actually buying time, playing with Western forces and transferring responsibility to Pristina due to the current stoppage of the so-called dialogue, but it seems to me that this strategy would be, to say the least, and to remain courteous, very naïve."³⁷

The imperative of the action of the opposition can be summarized in the message of Radoslav Milenković, actor and university professor, stating, without any breaks or picking words: "We must clean up our society from disgust, bastards, illness, parasites, tape worms, clap, all kinds of diseases, so that we can enable our organism to heal and to start to function. However, we are feeding our parasites, and they are not satisfied with us, in general. They are offended if we do not express our limitless admiration. Sometimes they cry in front of cameras and reporters, sometimes they scream."³⁸

Image of the Opposition – Between the Essential Lack of Moral Credibility Patriotism and Political Legitimacy and Imperative of the Struggle for the Removal of the Hated Regime

Unlike the government, the image of the opposition in weeklies and editorial columns is more complex. On one hand, in a certain number of media close to the government the opposition is presented in a negative manner, politically and morally judged, where this is done with a dose of euphoria and harsh, categorical and disqualifying judgement. On the other hand, certain, primarily critical media, open space for explication and articulation of the opposition viewpoints, indirectly or directly providing support for the severe political struggle with the government.

In print media, primarily weeklies critical to the government, passionate argument is held on the possibility of strengthening the opposition. Additionally, one can notice the tendency to glorify civil protests

37 Nikola Vrzić, „Ima li Obilića [Looking for Obilić]" *Pečat*, no. 571

38 Radoslav Milenković, „Moramo da očistimo društvo od parazita [We must clean the society from parasites]" interview with Nedimom Sejdinovićem, *Vreme*, no. 1486

as the form of political action, that is, as a legitimate democratic tool with potential of questioning the position of the current government.

The opposition is observed from two opposite perspectives. On one hand, the opposition as the political actor, is assigned with an extremely negative value dimension. This image is created and promoted by the media close to the government. On the other hand, the opposition is seen from the perspective of its potential to threaten the current government with almost inevitable political and moral dilemma referring to the determination of whether there is a 'real' or 'fake', that is, authentic or not, opposition. Sometimes, the debate on opposition, in the critical media, is complemented by the very negative staffing context that is not in the function of the judgment of opposition leaders, it is present due to the worry of the progress and increasing impact to public opinion of this political organization.

Special role in assigning negative value component to the opposition parties is taken by the paper *Informer*, whether it is its daily edition, or editorial columns of Dragan J. Vučićević. Surely, this analysis will focus on the structure and sum of conclusions offered by the columns of the editor in chief of this paper.

Vučićević's columns include issues with the actors of the opposition scene in a moral and political sense, by treating critically opposition media and NGOs with inevitable reflection on the period of rule of the winners of the 5th October. Vučićević's criticism of the Serbian opposition scene is evenly focused on the opposition as the factor of political life, and the media that are critical towards the government. His critic is always *ad hominem*, strictly personalized, to be more persuasive. This is why he stigmatizes a certain individual, stipulates his or her moral and psychological profile making this person unworthy of any function in public life.

Vučićević's narrative on the opposition includes a series of mutually connected moments that make a unique, hermetical and potentially effective whole from the viewpoint of propaganda. Lack of moral credibility, political incompetence, belief in violent overturn, ideological exclusion and overstated passion, belief of the opposition into the own political and moral exclusivity together with the lack of patriotism and lack of sense of state and national interest, servility towards the West, are the main parts of the mosaic creating the negative image of the opposition in the media.

Vučićević starts his elaboration, that is, creating the negative image of the opposition in print media with a psychological description, moral evaluation and political disqualification of the opposition's main actors. The editor of *Informer* writes about the leader of 'Dveri' Boško Obradović, as an immoral political leader without a profession and political loser that has not entered politics from belief, but only and exclusively due to personal benefit: "Boško is surely a 'Ljotic' fool, he may believe in fairy tales that power is served on a platter... Boško Obradović final destination Ljotic is perhaps the best image. Image of the hater's Serbia. Politician in the making for all times, librarian by education, Obradović wasted 43 years and did nothing in his professional life. Absolutely nothing. He has entered politics in 1999, so it says in his biography – so full 20 years, half of a man's working life (!!??) – and no result from this politics, at all. But he and his crew did receive some fruits. The man who lost all the elections; so-called leader that could not skip the census by himself, with 'Dveri', not even for the building council; outrageous politician that sold his beliefs and oaths for Đilas's millions, even the Hilandar oath; crooked manipulator whose only God is cash; miserable cowardly bully attacking women with his crew; this Boško, this – as the people from Čačak would say – saltshaker without

salt, is trying to present himself to Serbia as a new, young, non-corrupted and non-compromised (!!??) leader, the one in whose hands we should put the future of our children and grandchildren?!"³⁹

If Boško Obradović is the embodiment of 'moral fall' and political failure, Vuk Jeremić, former Minister of Foreign Affairs of Serbia at the time of the Democratic Party rule, represents, in line with Vučićević's opinion, the self-loving politician giving himself the missionary role: "Jeremić definitely is the arrogant ego-centric who thinks the Earth moved around him, thus he is convinced that he was sent from above to Serbia as the messiah; but Đilas??!"⁴⁰

Naturally, Dragan Đilas also felt the blade of Vučićević's critique, leading the Party of Liberty and Justice and unofficially the informal leader of the Alliance for Serbia. Đilas is marked as the transitional winner of the first order, as the man who got rich in a legally and morally suspicious manner taking all possible advantages borne by the political position. As a tycoon, that is, hard-core rich, he is alienated from the common man and lacking potential to get his trust and triumph in the democratic political process: "Đilas is none of the above. Tycoon that earned almost 500 million euro during his time in office, he who, with Šolak, controls almost every other TV set in Serbia, he is definitely not someone rushing into a lost battle – he definitely has a plan. What plan? I do not know. But I know he will not win. Because he can't. Because the Serbs do not want him."⁴¹

Political loser and self-interested man Obradović, self-loving and mission oriented Jeremić and alienated rich man with huge political ambitions Đilas, according to Vučićević, have no democratic base. They are without any authentic majority support of the people. Still, as ambitious leaders, they want power at any cost. For this cause, even though without political program and belief, they are even ready to use violence as the tool to take power. "What are they offering to the people of Serbia? Except bare violence? What is their political idea, except for taking power for enriching and defending the political and tycoon class?! And how, in God's name, do they believe the majority will trust them and follow them since they offer no program, they have no plan except for the pro-fascist campaign of violence and insult?! Who the hell will 'buy' their politics when it is reduced to naked, sick hate?!"⁴²

Political inaptitude of the opposition is convergent to the lack of political program, clear value orientation and specific solutions. Since there is no program, specific measures and credible people and promises, the politics of the opposition is lacking any chance of success. The already mentioned stigma of the political loser is moved from Boško Obradović to the radical political opposition to the current rule of Aleksandar Vučić. In line with the negative identification of Dragan Đilas personally, for creating the initiation of the negative asocial regime and conclusion of the reader, the opposition is identified with an unclear, but suggestive term "Đilas-men": "Đilas-men have no chance, believe me. This cannot happen, something cannot be created from nothing. And the politics of the tycoon Đilas and his followers is one big nothing."⁴³

39 Dragan J. Vučićević, "Boško i hejteri [Boško and the haters]" *Informer*, 01.06.2019.

40 Ibid.

41 Ibid.

42 Ibid.

43 Dragan J. Vučićević, "Magarčenje [Horsing around]" *Informer*, 08.06.2019.

"Annulled" from the perspective of credibility of its leaders and political programs, opposition is lacking the minimum healthy patriotism, that is, love for own nation. An example of insufficient patriotism and political unscrupulousness is the relation towards the Serbian Orthodox Church. A specific motive is the call of the Synod of the SOC to President Vučić. Vučićević writes the following on the event and interpretation of the event by the opposition gathered around the AFS: "Disrespecting church, the Serbian Orthodox Church, which is the reason our nation and our country exists today, is the main social and political discipline of the second-Serbia yellow scum elite."⁴⁴

Stated quote clearly shows that the opposition leaders often simulate religion, this author states, with the goal of getting cheap political points. The entire discourse of Vučićević is specific, situated into the context of writing connected to a certain event in space and time and very direct and as such, easily accessible and legible for every reader.

Disapproval of SOC by the opposition is simultaneous with the reception of the President of Serbia by the SOC Council. This invitation to the President of Serbia is openly condemned by the opposition. This judgement comes from the opposition leaders presenting themselves as religious.

Religious and political mimic of the leaders of the opposition is shown in the following statement: "Even those among them who, for the sake of collecting votes of the naïve ones, publicly act as religious men, like Vuk Pozderac Jeremić and Boško Ljotić Obradović, now openly attack the patriarch and most of the bishops. Why? Because, oh what a sin, the heads of the SOC dared to invite the President of Serbia to their Council and discuss most important state and national issues."⁴⁵ At the same time, Vučićević claims that the opposition considers the institution of the highest national authority and moral integrity as its own political outpost, that is, the institution that must serve its daily political interests: "In accordance with the plan of Pozderac Jeremić, Tycoon Đilas (this declared atheist sends his best man Mlađa Đorđević to Cetinje to agitate Amfilohije against Vučić??!) and Ljotić Obradović, the Church must serve them and support only them. And if, by any chance, Patriarch Irinej refuses to participate in the hysterical, haters campaign, then he will be pronounced a fraud, thief, and God forbid, sick pedophile and queer! He and all around him."⁴⁶

Lack of patriotism linked to the endemic lack of good political intention is followed by the essential inferiority of opposition related to the government. The demonstration of the 'lowest level' of the opposition goes hand in hand with listing the achievement of the government. Reasonable strategy of comparing two extremes, that is, more accurately, Manichaeistic image of political relations, is present in the following quote. This quote includes also the awareness of political immaturity of the opposition since it suggests their intentional refusal or lack of knowledge of the democratic rules of the game: "How are they imagining this? How do Đilas, Jeremić, Obradović and other tycoons-fascists plan to overthrow Vučić and come to power? What, a couple of them gather, then they walk around, yell, threaten, barge into the RTS, occupy the Presidency, send that ape Bastać to attack women in front of the City Hall,

44 Dragan J. Vučićević, "Napad na Crkvu i korišćenje Kosova [Attack on church and use of Kosovo]" *Informer*, 18.05.2019.

45 Ibid.

46 Ibid.

announce to unload the tractor trailer at the entrance to TV Pink, threaten with highway and main inter-sections blockage in Belgrade... and? What then? How?"⁴⁷

Following the open insinuations about instigation of violence conducted by the opposition, Vučićević goes further to claim that the opposition cannot comprehend the dynamics and outcome of a political combat. In other words, the opposition leaders expect the Serbian president to resign and, by so doing, facilitate restauration of the political nomenclature that ruled Serbia after 2000: "Do they truly believe Vučić will one day simply get tired and give up? Or resign in fear of their threats, turn over his jurisdiction of Serbia, and serve them refreshments in the process?! Good God! When and where has anything happened that way?!"⁴⁸

Comparing the previous with the current government, Vučićević clearly observes the "democratic opposition immaturity", and in essence, the lack of awareness of political reality and media strategy. During the rule of the previous government Serbia was under no progress, unattractive for investors, smothered by the budget deficit, "occupied" by the greedy, government-craving political elite, and incapable of reaching toward economic and all-encompassing social prosperity. On the other hand, the current government has opened the prospect of growth, organized public finances, and improved the position of Serbia on the world map. Fierce reaction and the campaign of hatred conducted by the opposition media is criticized in the following lines: "They are constantly trying to trick us into not believing our own eyes, but their deceiving, dirty, hateful campaigns, as if we were "donkeys". For example, they are trying to persuade us how deficit is better than suffice, empty budget is better than the full one, or that modern highways are less attractive than lack thereof. Nothing has any worth, including broken records in foreign investments, compared to the time of their government when Serbia was avoided like one would avoid the smell of rotten cheese. We are supposed to believe that glory days were those dominated by yellow tycoons at the moment when the Serbian market finally welcomes Ikea and Lidl, companies which previously refused to be on the market rife with bribery. The army equipped with one half-repaired MIG 29 is claimed to have been more powerful than the present army which owns 14 modernized MIG 29s. They are shamelessly attempting to persuade us that 330 euro is better than 480 euro in average salary, reminiscing the days when Serbia was controlled by Mišković and the likes of him, while condemning the first period of state government leadership in the 21st century Serbia."⁴⁹

Due to radical criticism of the government by the opposition, editor in chief of *Informer* does not perceive political combat in the media as intense controversy, but as the 'special war' - a form of communication used in wartime, associated with uncompromising and powerful criticism of a political opponent. The reason to use the term special war was based in an intense, provocative discourse of some opposition platforms, as those of the sociologist Jovo Bakic, whose rhetoric against the government often fail to recognize moral considerations or limitations inherent to the conventional use of language in public speech. Provocative i.e. pro-democratic discourse hides the opposition's intention to betray Kosovo and the Republic of Srpska with a view to seizing power.

47 Dragan J. Vučićević, "Kako oni to zamišljaju [How do they imagine this]" *Informer*, 06.04.2019.

48 Dragan J. Vučićević, "Magarčenje [Fooling]", *Informer*, 08 June 2019

49 Ibid.

СЛУЧАЈ „ДРЖАВНИ УДАР“ У ЦРНОЈ ГОРИ
Представа из Стаљиновог шињела

ДРАГАН МРАОВИЋ: ИЗБОРИ ЗА ЕУ ПАРЛАМЕНТ
Нова Европа или исламски калифат

ГЛОБАЛНА ПРОИЗВОДЊА БИОЛОШКОГ ОРУЖЈА МРАЧНЕ ИСТИНЕ О „ЕТНИЧКОЈ БОМБИ“



Pečat, 17th May 2019

Critical examination of the opposition reveals such motives in the following lines written by Vučićević: "Those who devastated this country in 2012 are now using all available means to conduct the special war, with the ultimate goal of stirring chaos and reestablishing power; they would be swift to recognize the independence of Kosovo, while relinquishing the Republic of Srpska, for a slave portion of American cracklings."⁵⁰

Nikola Vrzić, columnist of the journal *Pečat*, claims that the opposition protest held on 13 April 2019 was unsuccessful for a number of interconnected reasons. Firstly, the visit to the protest was far less numerous than expected and did not exceed the support to the opposition in the previously held city elections. Moreover, the "Macedonian scenario" of crushing the government at the streets did not take place, as had been foreshadowed at the meeting of leaders of the Union of Serbia and the Macedonian Prime Minister, Zaev. Finally, rhetoric of the opposition leaders deflated the possibility of achieving national unity, much needed in the decisive battle for Kosovo. All the points mentioned in Vrzić's analysis portray the opposition as both weak and patriotically controversial, due to their rhetoric of intolerance that destroys national and political unity.

Close relations between the opposition SZS and Zoran Zaev are, in fact, the connection with the American political influence leading to the recognition of Kosovo independence and membership in the NATO: "The obvious closeness between Đilas and Zaev, including Đilas's appraisal of the Macedonian political scenario and subsequent arrangements made about the official name of North Macedonia, would not be that alarming had they not been exhibited for the sole purpose of serving American interests in the region. Let us retrace the sequence of undeniable events: citizen disobedience and protests in the form of a 'colorful revolution' – forced interim government – elections organized by the interim government – post-election frenzy and Zaev's inauguration – arrangement with Greece regarding the name of Macedonia – reception into the NATO."⁵¹

In addition to controversial connections with Zaev and NATO, the meeting also revealed poor motivation of the opposition supporters when asked to participate in anti-government protests and rallies. Vrzić mentions the asymmetry in the numbers of protest participants and voters of the Union for Serbia (SZS) member parties: "If we agree on the rough estimate of 10,000 people at the protest, adding to it a couple of thousand more that we all somehow failed to notice, we cannot but conclude that the widely announced protest failed to meet the expectations of its organizers, demonstrating the lack of power, and incompetence of the opposition to attract its own supporters let alone a wider audience. This conclusion is also corroborated by the outcome of the last year's city elections, when voting lists of Dragan Đilas and Vuk Jeremić, Boško Obradović, for 'Yellow Duck', DS, Boris Tadić, Živković to Marko Bastać, the chief of Stari Grad, all gathered under the protest slogans '1 out of 5 million' and 'All For One', had more than 236,000 voters, while only 5% of that number, including central Serbia, participated in the protest of key importance to the opposition."⁵²

50 Dragan J. Vučićević, "Slučaj Jove Bakića [The case of Jovo Bakić]", *Informer*. 15 June 2019

51 Nikola Vrzić, „April u Beogradu [April in Belgrade]", *Pečat*, No. 564

52 Ibid.

In the nationalist spirit of calling for unity for the preservation of state and national interests in Kosovo and Metohija, Vrzic concludes that "hate rhetoric" by the opposition leaders is an insurmountable obstacle to the national unity: "Has anyone wondered whether fostering intolerance can attract even one extra vote to the opponents of Vučić's government? Not to mention the effect on mental health of the whole society. This, of course, works in the opposite direction too, concerning especially a snide remark made by Ivica Dačić about a "song for those who were here on Saturday" i.e. "Ostani dubre do kraja" (*Be a bitch 'till the end*). Is that the national unity spoken about by Vučić?"⁵³

Opposition hate speeches directed at the government is observed by Ljiljana Smajlović. In the text published after the opposition protest in April, she recognizes the tendency of opposition leaders, and intellectuals close to them, to label and disfavor the government beyond conventional boundaries. Accusations, insults and slander, show that the reference to a decent society, tolerance and democracy masks intolerance towards political opponents.

Smajlović questions the exclusivity of the status "victims of the regime propaganda" attached to the opposition in the media, deeming the rhetoric used in speeches of the opposition equally intemperate, irrational and disparaging to its counterparties. Her viewpoint is that the negative campaigning holds both sides of the medal in Serbian media and the political life. Demystification of the opposition party rhetoric of intolerance, full of contempt toward the government, can be observed in the following quote: "The opposition party leaders mainly agree that the one to blame for all the wrongs in Serbia is Vučić. If there is anything his predecessors should be blamed for, it is permitting Vučić to overtake the government. Some truly well-mannered, decent people believe that "swearing" used by the Serbian intelligence is also Vučić's fault. If he did not use harsh words and insults, the 'people who use their brain' (as voters are pejoratively referred to by the Union for Serbia) would also refrain from doing so. Even Sergej Trifunović would not curse or swear, if only there were not for Vučić's provocations. Dragojević's main political thesis is that Serbia is governed by "swines", the "fascist junta". To call his opponents either fascists or pigs is a long-term mannerism of Dragojević's language, almost a cliché."⁵⁴

In addition to Ljiljana Smajlović's estimation of the high-society speeches resentful to the government, made by the opposition leaders and intellectuals who take active interest in the "opposition matters", doubts arise in the opposition lines regarding their own potentials and limits, especially their outer-parliamentary activity, namely the potentials of the protest and the capabilities of current opposition leaders to motivate politically stagnant pools of the voting body.

A classic example of such tendencies in the government-opposing public is the interview of actor Branislav Trifunović, former leader of the street demonstrations, who states: "People are tired of such opposition. Some doubt remains in the opposition-inclined voters concerning the people who were in power before Vučić. This is to some extent justified, but I think no government has been as horrible as this one. Of course, skepticism is justified, but what the opposition has still not realized is that 20 percent of people do not wish to witness the same way of doing politics as the one done for the past 30 years. None of the opposition parties offered anything that could resemble a change in the system and the way of

⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁴ Ljiljana Smajlović, „Svinjski fašizam [Swine fascism]“, *Nedeljnik*, No. 380/381

state functioning. Ideas that the opposition offers seem stale to the people who are against the current government. I hope that some of the opposition parties will listen to what people are saying, and it is not a small number of people. Twenty percent is a huge number, which can prevail despite all the shortcomings. I hope that someone out there realizes that something has to change, starting from the leaders. I think that people have had enough of the same characters, the same faces and the same story.”⁵⁵

Trifunović’s skepticism about the limits of political opposition is further elaborated by the opposition parliament member and leader of political party Modern Serbia, Tatjana Macura, who states that the boycott of the Parliament of Serbia brings no political profit. She observes the poor strategy in organizing protests and expensive accompanying campaigns, such as the raid on RTS building, “Boycotting has been made senseless by those who called for it, who are not Parliament members. The call was posted on Twitter and it should have been refused to begin with: serious parliament oppositionists would have offered a plan for boycott without this kind of pressure. Politically active opposition thus dealt with raids on RTS, some colleagues lost their parliamentary groups, so the question remains concerning the point of their return now that the time for discussion is over.”⁵⁶

Spreading doubt goes hand in hand with gradual development of a negative image about the capacities of the opposition front to use the “street energy” skillfully. On the other hand, some opposition tribunes, like the academician Dušan Teodorović, point to a modest, insufficient number of protestors, as well as the limitations of the protest approach: “I have to say that we have not yet found a magic formula how to remove Vučić and create a normal society. Protests held for the past five months have shaken his position, but that is all. I am one of those people who marched and spoke at the protests, which is why I think I have the right to say so. If marching was supposed to bring about a change, then the protest should have been massive. If 300,000 marches at the streets, that is quite a different story. Massive protests are the key to ending the regime of Aleksandar Vučić and he knows it well. I am not out for bad blood and fighting, but I have to make some remarks. The same scheme was repeated every Saturday, whereas some activities were simply childish. We fought against Milošević to the end, made cordons that lasted seven days and were exposed to tear gas. I think it was in January that we missed the chance to radicalize the protests by blockades and different acts of citizen disobedience. We should have learned from Lech Wałęsa and the Solidarity Union how they crushed the dictatorship in Poland back in the 1980s. If I am ever, at this age, in an organization board of a future protest, I will insist on much fiercer resistance to Vučić’s regime.”⁵⁷

The portrayal of the opposition, however doubtful or negatively connotated, forms the positive image, especially in anti-government dailies and weeklies. Above all, the belief is established that the political power of the opposition is able to combat the almighty government, along with the notion created by the opposition leaders that the opposition parties are guardians of freedom and democracy in Serbia.

55 Branislav Trifunović, „Građanski gnev i bes je mnogo jači od trenutne snage opozicije [Citizen anger is much stronger than the opposition strength]”, *Nedeljnik*, No. 386

56 Tatjana Macura, „Bojkot Parlamenta nije uspeo [Parliament boycott failed]”, interview with Tanja Aleksić, *Novimagazin*, No. 420

57 Dušan Teodorović, „Moraćemo sve ispočetka [We will have to start again]”, interview with Zora Drčelić, *Vreme*, No. 1480

"Opposition as the guardian of freedom and democracy" is the syntagma which can be used to interpret media coverage of an idea about the union of several parties, created after the defeat of the Democratic Party and Boris Tadić in 2012. An elaborate overview of the "DP restoration" covers new/old leaders of the new (old) united DP. Zoran Lutovac, leader of the Democratic Party, accentuates the significance of this political party for Serbian democracy "Sense. Responsibility. Nationwide wellbeing. We respect the circumstances under which we act and consider the serious threats to democracy in Serbia, made by the authoritarian government of Aleksandar Vučić, as well as destruction or depreciation of its democratic institutions."⁵⁸

The same rhetoric, with the relatively similar political message is exhibited in the public eye by Nebojša Zelenović, the mayor of Šabac, designating the city as the beacon of democratic and responsible government: "It is crucial to restore confidence of Serbian citizens and belief in the possibility of change, because after that, great leaders and rulers will not be the primary topic of their interest. By opening this possibility to the citizens, we make the whole process public and transparent, uncorrupted, devoid of false tenders and nepotism, including everything else that fortifies the regime of Aleksandar Vučić. The model has been tested in our town and we recommend it to everyone, because Democratic Party policies cannot be avoided. Who can vote against offering the citizens direct involvement in decision-making? Even the SNS 'had to' vote in favor of it, although initially against it."⁵⁹

After exposure and legitimization of the opposition's role and mission in Serbian society and state, they should be allowed an injection of political power, reflected in the attempt to restore faith in their power to perform a political upturn using specific interpretation of statistical evaluation of trends.

For this reason, like in the previous times, an atmosphere of an almost even race for the support of voters is created among the opposition leaders, reporters, and their supporters - researchers of public opinion. Projection of power using statistics gives an impulse of optimism to the opposition, with an aim to crush the domination of Aleksandar Vučić and the SNS in the public eye. It is interesting to point out that this kind of propaganda matrix operates independently from the decision whether the opposition participates or not in the upcoming elections. Thus, the leader of the newly created opposition SSP, Dragan Đilas says, "Under current conditions 43 per cent of Serbian citizens would vote for the list gathered around SNS and 41 per cent for the opposition. Until today these people would have stayed at home, now they would vote."⁶⁰

Confidently analyzing the political impact of protests on public opinion, Dragan Đilas also confidently offers the best, almost unattainable political solution - a single list of opposition parties. In the interview already quoted political leader of the radical opposition Alliance for Serbia says, "The best opponent in the upcoming parliamentary elections is the united opposition-civil list, composed of the party representatives and non-party figures who were active participants in the protests. Such a list would, along with

58 Zoran Lutovac, Nebojša Zelenović and Aleksandar Ivanović, „Ključna je nova ponuda građanima [The new offer to citizens is the key]" *Novimagazin*, No. 414

59 Ibid.

60 Dragan Đilas, „Vučić je čovek koji maše praznoj ulici [Vučić is waving to an empty street]", *Nedeljnik*, No. 386

free media and the ability to control the election process, certainly win the elections. Vučić has stepped up his already scary campaign against the opposition, convincing citizens that we are thieves, traitors, fascists, and that there is no other option but to stay at home if they will not vote for him. It is all in vain. He is a man waving at an empty street. His failure began and nothing can stop it.”⁶¹

Considering the above quotation, it becomes clear that the weeklies largely deal with tactical issues of the opposition combat. At this point, bias in their approach and attitude is obvious. Not a trace of objectivity and rational criticism can be found if the media dwelling on the question how the opposition should be organized in order to dismiss the government? Variations on Lenin’s famous question ‘What to do?’ is one of the central places in the weeklies, along with investigations of the opposition authenticity. Like Njegoš’s “investigation of converts”, journalists examine whether and who is true opposition. “Opposition license” is obtained from the critical media. The independent opposition politics has been placed under the public context, specifically the evaluation and assessment of decisions and actions of political activists.

The opposition belief it can compete in a tough and grueling fight against the authorities will be confirmed by the actor and leader of the opposition party “Movement of Free Citizens “ Sergej Trifunović, “We have rocked his boat, pointed to cracks, and mud and water came out, along with all the Simonovičs Jeličićs, Stefanovičs, and midwives; it is only a matter of time before this regime falls, and it will certainly fall in the elections, peacefully. The question is who after him? Does it matter when it is only important to build the system? We cannot turn back the clock, the ratings dropped from 53.8 percent to 42.7 and there is no going back.”⁶²

Idolatry of civil protests, radical criticism of the government and awareness that the opposition can achieve more in the political struggle is the attitude of the actor Nikola Kojo, who says, “It is good that the capacity for revolt against the occupation has been recognized; it was shown by a large number of people on the streets in the coldest days of the year. The hunger for freedom and normality has emerged and people came despite the attempts to anesthetize and call the protests nonsensical. Biting their nails, crushing their teeth on the whistle, borrowing money to buy fuel, and raging how that is the last time, they kept coming and coming.

Of course, there is limit to tolerance. When they realized that clueless walks, rave parties, agreements with the people and raids into television, presidential and police headquarters are nothing but participation in a badly directed performance, one that aims to extinguish rebellion, they slowly stopped coming.”⁶³

A particularly interesting portrayal of the opposition was offered by a columnist for the weekly *Nedeljnik*, Zoran Panović. The portrayal is interesting because it combines three hardly consistent elements in politics - a mystical opposition ‘newspeech’, the victim status, and success in the public and political scene. Panović has recognized the mystical opposition ‘newspeech’ in the language of the opposition parties, namely in the words such as ‘abducted country’, ‘rebellious nation’, and so on.

61 Ibid.

62 Sergej Trifunović, „Vučićev brod tone [Vučić’s ship is sinking]“, interview with Tanja Đaković Nikolić, *NIN*, No. 3564

63 Nikola Kojo, „Vođa čopora je jako nervozan [The pack leader is really nervous]“, interview with Tanja Nikolić Đaković, *NIN*, No. 3567

Victim status is assigned to the opposition because of the loss of the parliamentary group of the political party "Dveri", arising from its boycott of the institutions and the establishment of a new parliamentary party. The above-mentioned conclusions can be found in Panović's text: "When the government cannot offer even the most rational things except through hysteria - the opposition is closer to mysticism. It has already made its 'newspeech', such as 'abducted country', 'rebellious nation' 'marathon, not a sprint' 'a spark of rebellion' 'we must not stop' 'the torch of freedom', 'the elections stolen in advance', and so forth. What lies beneath the semantic-parole social realism is that Dveri - a party whose leader was affirmed through demonstrations - is now without a caucus, while the Party of Modern Serbia, which did not participate in the elections, becomes a parliamentary party although its president still awaits recognition."⁶⁴

Success of the opposition lies in the necessity of using solely offensive language when referring to the current government, partial acceptance of the opposition criticism of the government by the EU, as evidenced by the report of the European Commission on the state of democracy and the political system in Serbia, and the need to seek candidates like Koštunica, raising the possibility of opposition political victory, considering the epilogue of Koštunica's candidacy in the presidential elections in 2000.

"The success of the opposition is in their persistence and relative 'dekosovisation' of European taboos about Vučić, therefore its depictions of the situation in Serbia became a part of the European Commission reports. The success is that the regime has to dig out an old story of the 'traitors' when US envoy Matthew Palmer meets opposition leaders (causing political jealousy in part of the opposition that Palmer does not invite for an interview), although this sensibility of the West is much smaller compared to the reception in the 1990s. The west urged the opposition to boycott in 2000, and today the West does not understand the idea of a boycott, which relativises the question of dictatorship - especially when the interest in Exit, say, this year in particular is high. Half a year after the protest, opposition leader Dragan Đilas has to seek 'his Kostunica 'that would oppose Vučić.'"⁶⁵

The image of the opposition is different from the image of the government. The perception of power is extremely negative, and can be called a symbiosis of two attitudes: The government is anti-democratic and anti-liberal and Serbia is the worst of all possible worlds. Perception of the opposition is more complex and cannot be reduced to two phrases. The opposition is presented negatively or affirmatively. It is democratically, patriotically and morally questionable, but the guardian of democracy and freedom and hope for 'a better tomorrow'.

Radically opposed images of actors in the media are equivalent to the tension and the sharp contradictions of the parties. However, it is naive to believe that the media is solely and exclusively the reflection of political reality. In modern media political constellations, the media is an important participant in political life, not mere transmitters of messages. The media are the creators of messages constitutive of certain political realities. The media constructs the perception of political actors by observing and evaluating a given political practice. Nevertheless, with dynamic and detailed reporting they produce and reproduce the political reality.

64 Zoran Panović, „Spektakularizacija politike [Spectacularisation of politics]“, *Nedeljnik*, No. 380/381

65 Ibid.

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About
authors

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Public Policy Institute is a regional think-tank organization that operates in the Western Balkans region through the work of its branch offices in Belgrade, Podgorica and Ljubljana. By promoting public dialogue and constructive solutions, Public Policy Institute contributes to the efforts of the Western Balkan countries to become equal, reliable and progressive partners in the process of European integrations and mutual relationships. After the initial research and analysis of social and media context in the countries of the Western Balkans, the Institute has developed and implemented a series of media related projects, including: Role of the media in the process of securitization in the Western Balkans, Civil Response to Clientelism in the media - MEDIA CIRCLE, NATO Reach Out - media monitoring and Role of the media in monitoring of R1325 in Montenegro.

EBART Media Archive is privately owned company established in 2000. Its main activity is archiving print media data in e-format. The print media archive consists of up-to-date material dating back to 2003, and more than 3 million print media reports from sources with national coverage. EBART is also specialized for media analysis, basic quantitative and qualitative analyses, comparing media treatment of specific keywords, as well as complex content analyses according to BBC methodology. EBART Media Archive is unmatched in the region with its unique media reports database, and 12 years of media research experience. This media database allows for the overall study of long-term media presence.

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