



Analysis of the print media in Serbia
January - March

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Introduction

VELIMIR ČURGUS KAZIMIR

INTRODUCTION:

Craks in reality

The latest issue of the Quarterly Mediameter celebrates three full years of work, as well as the ability to look deeper into trends and orientations in our national daily newspapers. During this period, in all twelve quarterly analyzes, as in this thirteenth, 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 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.

There is, of course, nothing dramatic and surprising in the daily newspapers from January to March 2018. The fact that at that time the election campaign for the Belgrade elections did not have much influence on the basic categories and indicators we are researching.

The report is still the genre that dominates the cover of daily newspapers. On average, these are three quarters of all published texts, and in the case of the *Informer* as much as 96 percent of the texts. The daily *Politika* is in this respect the most restrained with “just” about 64 percent of reports.

In third place, as a genre, is an article – the leaders are: *Politika* - 16,85 and *Danas* with 15,29 percent. The comment is in fourth place. *Danas* has 9.07 percent, while *Politika* has 8.75 percent of comments. That pretty much speaks about the nature of these newspapers.

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.

The relationship between the value context and the balance of reports and their primacy in the newspapers is particularly interesting. By the nature of this genre, it would have to be a report on what happened without identifying. In practice this looks like this: the report, on average, has a negative value for all newspapers - only 23.65 percent. In the case of *Informer* it is 61 percent, and in *Danas* 10.2 percent. Even 77.39 percent of reports is not balanced!

Balancing the texts, that is, the absence of balance, is something that we insist on from the beginning. Not only are reports and articles unbalanced, but the truth is less and less true. This very much speaks about the journalistic attitude towards the profession and the necessary objectivity.

Svaki objavljeni tekst morao bi da ima snažan povod da bude objavljen. Da li je u pitanju izveštaj o nekom aktuelnom i dramatičnom događaju, nacionalnom, lokalnom ili ličnom, jasno je da je povod krajnje razumljiv i transparentan. U srpskim dnevnim novinama to nije slučaj. Čak četvrtina tekstova sa naslovnih strana ima povod koji je osmišljen u redakciji i nije rezultat nekog spoljnog, aktuelnog događaja. Na taj se način virtuelna stvarnost nadmeće sa onom postojećom. Od 569 tekstova osmišljenih u redakciji, 171 ili oko 30% je u negativnom ili pozitivnom vrednosnom kontekstu. Povod osmišljen u redakciji je u prvom kvartalu 2018. najzastupljeniji kada je tema teksta *politički život u Srbiji*.

Every published text should have a strong cause to be published. Whether it is a report on some current and dramatic event, national, local or personal, it is clear that the occasion is extremely understandable and transparent. This is not the case in Serbian daily newspapers. Even a quarter of the texts on the front pages have a reason that is conceived in the editorial board and is not the result of an external, current event. In this way virtual reality compares with the existing one. Of the 569 texts devised in the editorial board, 171 or about 30% have negative or positive value context. In the first quarter of 2018, the cause created in the editorial office was the most frequent when the theme of the text was *political life in Serbia*.

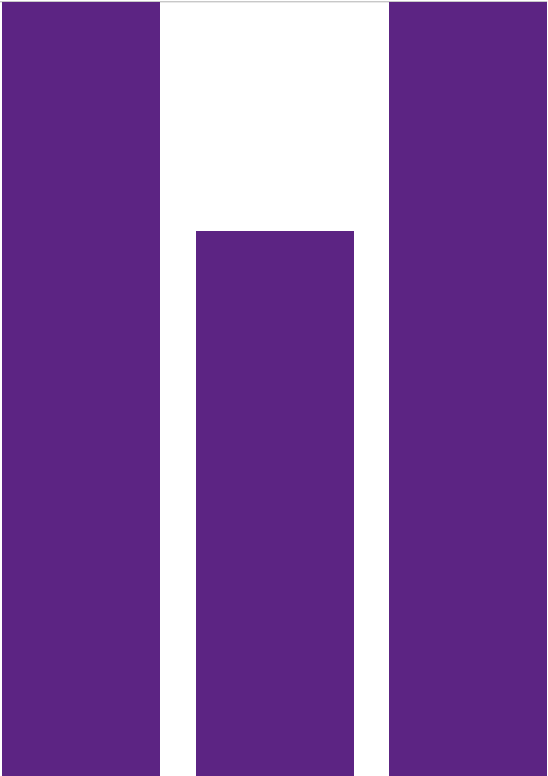
Politics and political life, of course, continue to be the most frequent topics.

One tragic event significantly shifted the focus to Kosovo. It’s the murder of Oliver Ivanović. Media attention dedicated to this event was so great that Kosovo “covered” the entire region. Another significant event - the arrest of Marko Đurić in Kosovska Mitrovica, has made Kosovo a central media topic in this quarter even more.

The European Union is mentioned in a very small number of texts. It’s as if are no longer interested in Europe. There is not one positive text about the European Union! By contrast, the number of texts about Russia does not decrease. About the US, and their politics, it’s written sharply, often negative.

In selected texts from the cover pages of the media from the sample, unnamed sources are, as in all previous quarters, the second actor according to participation. This time, there are 418 occurrences of anonymous sources, or 19.24% of the texts, which is about 4% less compared to the previous quarter (23.3%). This is a natural consequence of unbalanced and causes that often have no media foundation. It can be written about everything in a way that has nothing to do with the journalistic profession. This, undoubtedly, may take some time. Sooner or later, a crack will be created between these media and human needs and expectations. If everyone can be an editor and a journalist, why not become it immediately - via Twitter and Facebook.

2



Sample

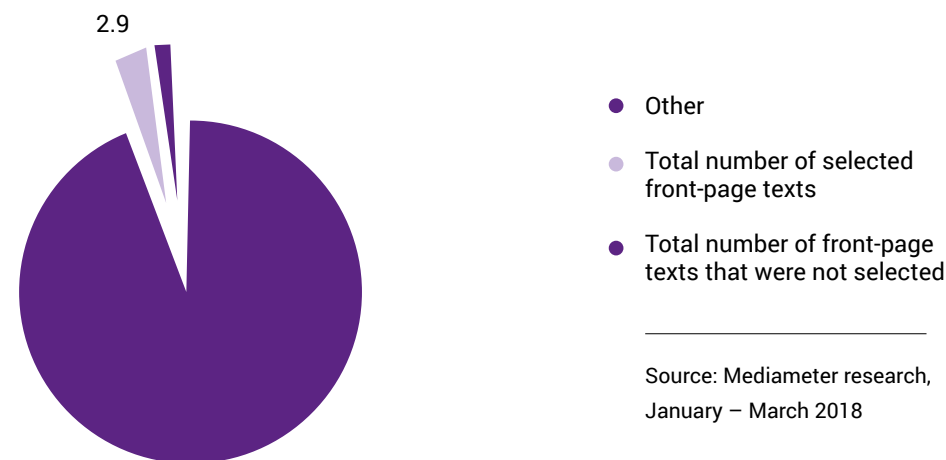
ISIDORA JARIĆ, DANICA LABAN

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 2018, 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*.

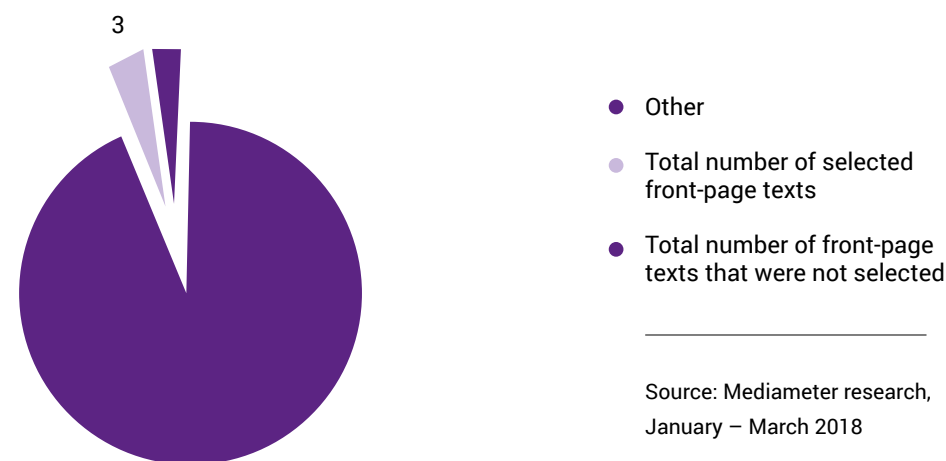
Texts from front pages reflect best the coordinates of editorial policies of daily print editions. Though this involves a small percentage of texts, editorial identity of a daily can be most easily identified through messages conveyed through front pages. The ratio of the total number of texts in each daily individually and the number of texts from the front pages that were included in the sample of our research are shown in the charts 1-7, for the period from January 1st to March 31st 2018.

Chart 1. – *Alo!*



Source: Mediameter research,
January – March 2018

Chart 2. – *Blic*



Source: Mediameter research,
January – March 2018

Chart 3. – *Danas*

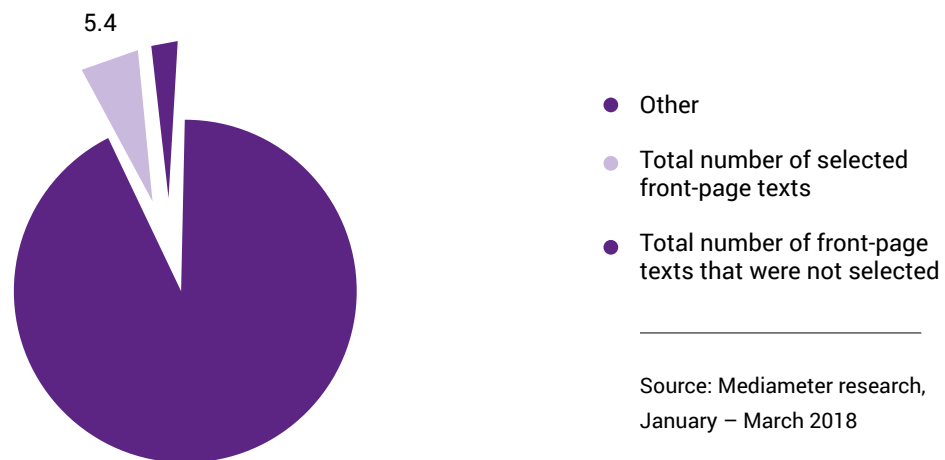


Chart 4. – *Informer*

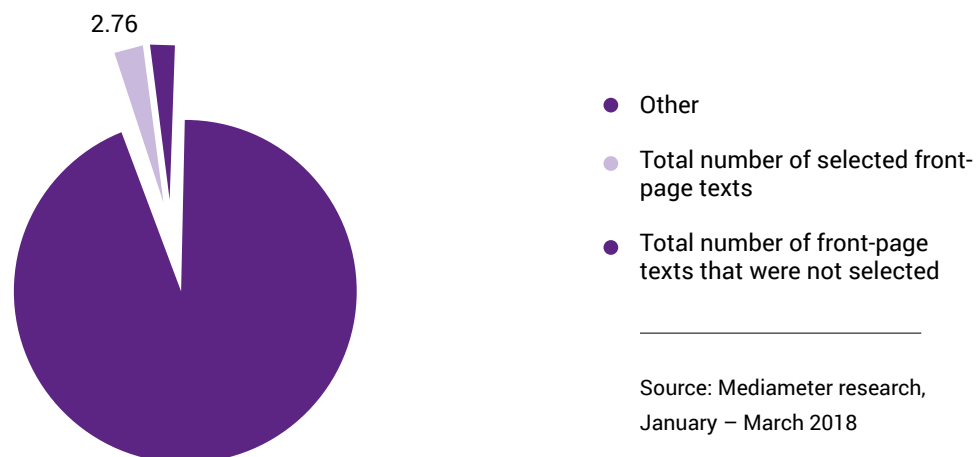


Chart 5. – *Kurir*

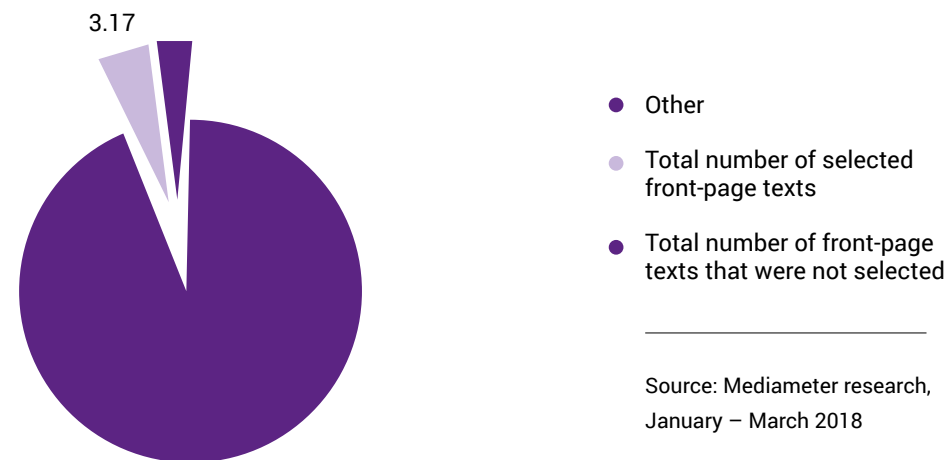


Chart 6. – *Politika*

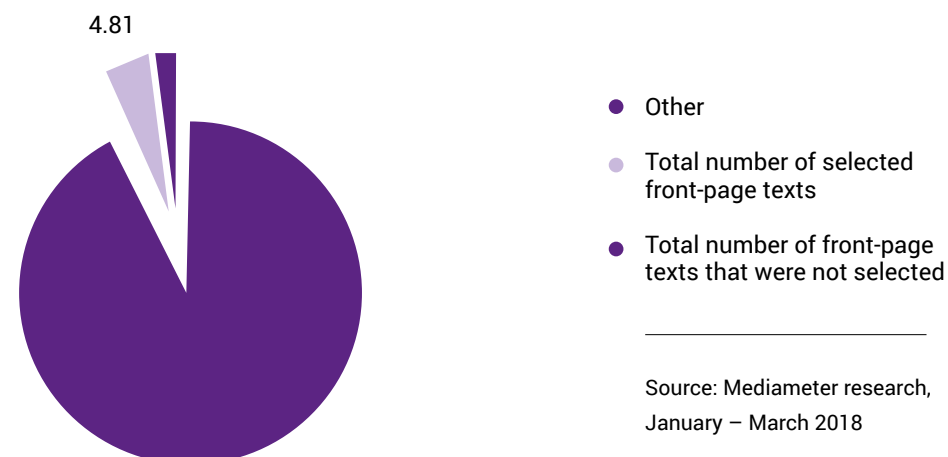
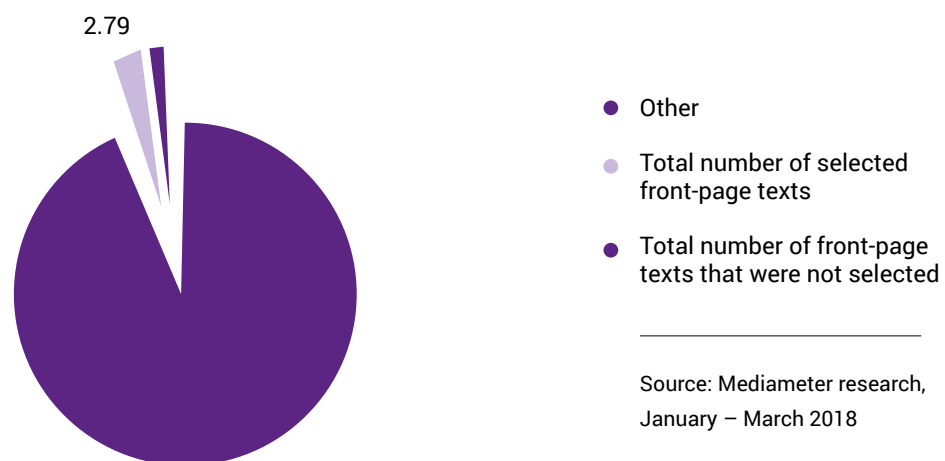


Chart 7. – Večernje novosti

The total number of analysed texts considering all seven media that are included in our research sample is 2173 and that number accounts for averagely 63.38% texts from front pages and for 3.53% 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	61	60	1
Belgrade	4	1	3
society	8	3	5
chronicle	5	2	3
Interview of the week	6	5	1
politics	3	3	0
reportage	1	0	1
advices	2	0	2
sport	21	4	17
world	4	3	1
v.i.p.	76	3	73
news	167	112	55
TOTAL	358	196	162

Source: Mediameter research, January – March 2018

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
current affairs / interview	11	11	0
Belgrade	4	0	4
Blic foundation	4	0	4
supplement	4	3	1
society	73	42	31
economy	9	6	3
chronicle	60	23	37
research	4	2	2
culture	10	0	10
politics	125	125	0
reportage	1	0	1
sport	42	3	39

destinies	3	0	3
world / planet	12	7	5
topic of the day / issue	64	53	11
entertainment	43	1	42
TOTAL	469	276	193

Source: *Mediameter* research, January – March 2018

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	5	5	0
Belgrade	5	5	0
Danas special supplement	50	43	7
Danas weekend	30	16	14
dialogue	10	9	1
event / topic of the day	1	1	0
society	94	84	10
economy	48	48	0
Globus	29	22	7
chronicle	1	1	0
culture	34	11	23
front page	51	51	0
Periskop	1	1	0
politics	114	114	0
Pomodoro	4	3	1
last page	12	11	1
sport	14	3	11
confrontation	2	2	0
TOTAL	505	430	75

Source: *Mediameter* research, January – March 2018

Table 4 – Informer

<i>Informer</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
showtime	69	1	68
sport	44	1	43
Breaking news	117	117	0
news	177	89	88
TOTAL	407	208	199

Source: *Mediameter* research, January – March 2018

Table 5. – Kurir

<i>Kurir</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
daily supplement	17	1	16
society	58	22	36
chronicle	93	41	52
interview	5	4	1
culture	22	1	21
planet	12	11	1
politics	135	135	0
sport	6	1	5
stars	68	3	65
topic of the day	60	55	5
news	5	5	0
TOTAL	481	279	202

Source: *Mediameter* research, January – March 2018

Table 6. – Politika

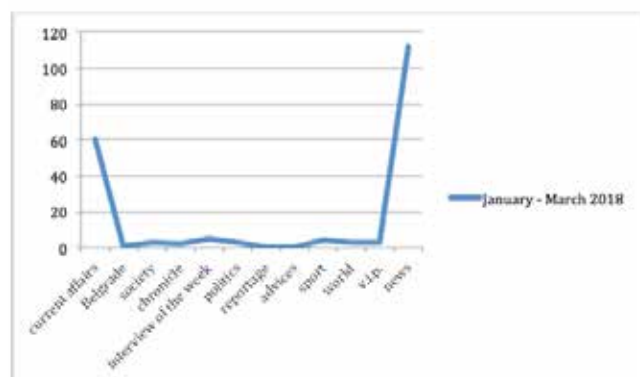
<i>Politika</i> /section	Total number of front-page texts	Total number of selected front-page texts	Total number of front-page texts that were not selected
Belgrade / Belgrade chronicle	20	9	11
reading room	9	0	9
daily supplement	65	8	57
event of the day	24	22	2
society	84	21	63
economy	33	26	7
chronicle	35	19	16
culture	26	2	24
front page	244	239	5
views	11	11	0
politics	26	26	0
consumer	19	11	8
region	8	7	1
sport	11	0	11
Serbia	28	9	19
world	41	24	17
topic of the week / day	34	23	11
TOTAL	718	457	261

Source: *Mediameter* research, January – March 2018**Table 7. – Večernje novosti**

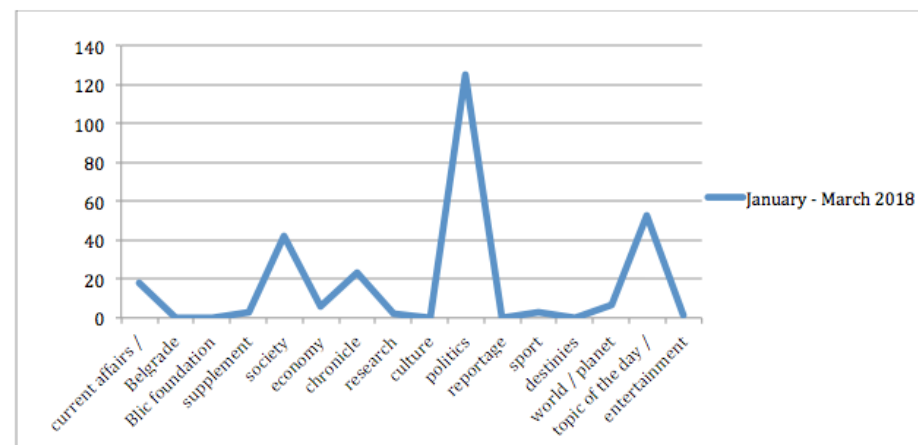
<i>Večernje novosti</i> /section	Total number of front-page texts	Total number of selected front-page texts	Total number of front-page texts that were not selected
current affairs	54	36	18
Belgrade	2	2	0
events	22	22	0
other side	3	2	1
society	100	78	22
economy	28	25	3
chronicle	85	18	67
interview	8	6	2
culture	18	3	15
politics	89	89	0
reflector	8	0	8
reportage	15	6	9
series	1	0	1
sport	14	1	13
neighbours	2	1	1
world	16	15	1
topic of the day	23	23	0
TV program	2	0	2
TOTAL	490	327	163

Source: *Mediameter* research, January – March 2018

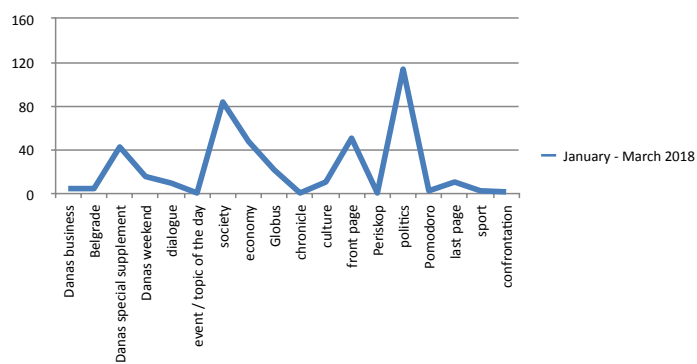
By reviewing the presented tables 1-7, it is still noticeable that the structures of dailies follow two different patterns. In other words, *Večernje novosti*, *Politika*, *Danas* and *Blic* follow the traditional structure of daily newspapers, while *Informer* deviates from this matrix to a considerable extent, as in previous trimesters. The new development is that in the first quarter of 2018, *Alo!* has increased the number of sections (which still don't follow the classical structure of a daily newspaper), approaching somewhat to the concept of *Kurir*, which to a certain extent follows both logics. The news is still the dominant section in *Informer*, which unites various areas, and special attention is given to entertainment content, such as information about famous people, then showbusiness and sports, which increasingly receive a socio-political character. The editorial strategies identified in the previous twelve issues of *Mediameter* are fully visible in the first quarter of 2018, as can be clearly seen in Charts 8-14.

Chart 8. – Alo!

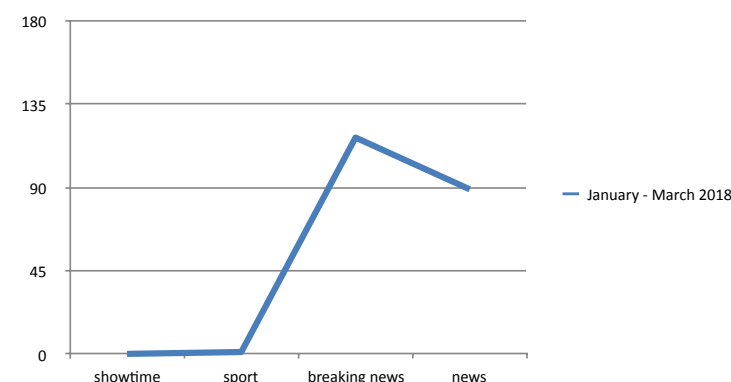
Source: Mediameter research, January – March 2018

Chart 9. – Blic

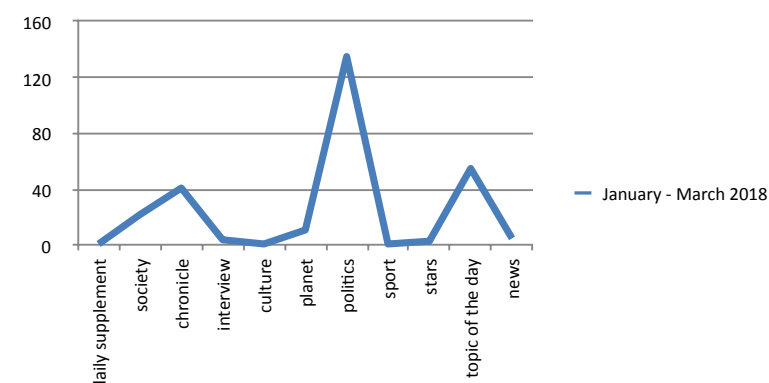
Source: Mediameter research, January – March 2018

Chart 10. – Danas

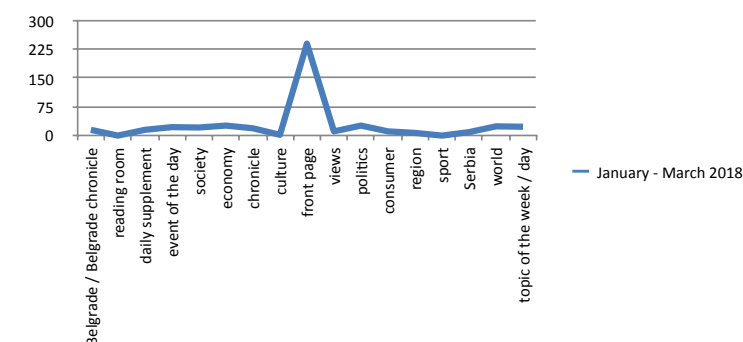
Source: Mediameter research, January – March 2018

Chart 11. – Informer

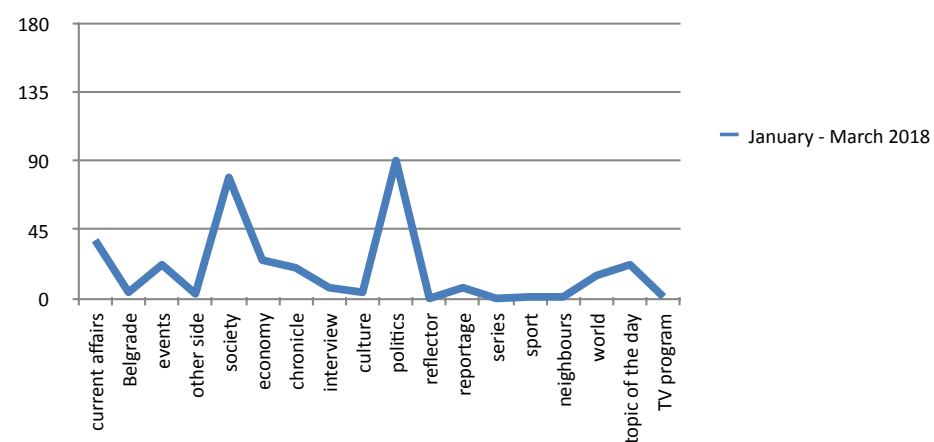
Source: Mediameter research, January – March 2018

Chart 12. – Kurir

Source: Mediameter research, January – March 2018

Chart 13. – Politika

Source: Mediameter research, January – March 2018

Chart 14. – *Večernje novosti*

Source: *Mediameter* research, January – March 2018

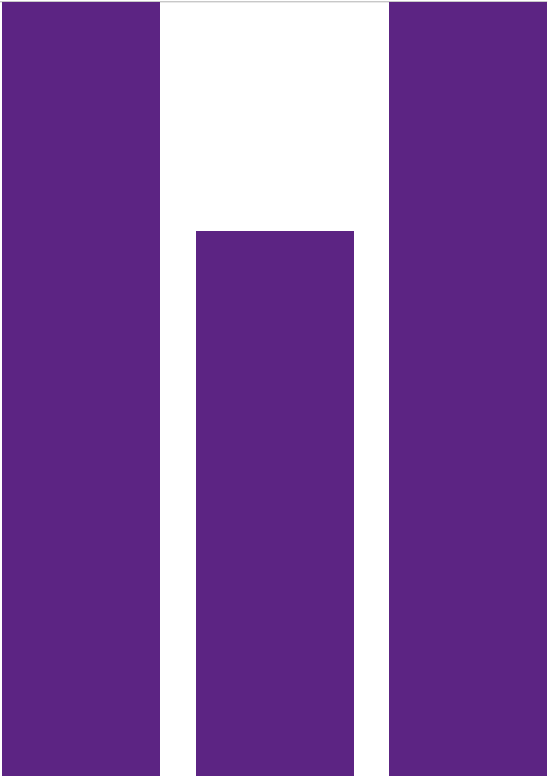
Table 8 shows the number of selected texts in all previous issues of *Mediameter*, where it can be noted that the number of selected texts varies only by 6 compared to the previous quarter. This information, among other things, indicates the stabilization of certain reporting forms.

In selected articles in the first quarter of 2018, in addition to political content, there was a lot of talk about Kosovo topics. In this period, the media also dedicated a great deal of attention to the murder of singer Jelena Marjanović.

Table 8 – Number of selected texts by quarter for period 2015 – 2018

	2015	2016	2017	2018
First quarter	1360	1924	2403	2173
Second quarter	1673	2106	2091	
Third quarter	2172	2012	1991	
Fourth quarter	2177	2251	2167	
TOTAL	7382	8293	8652	

3



Research
results

ISIDORA JARIĆ, DANICA LABAN

RESEARCH RESULTS

Share of journalistic genres

In the first quarter of 2018, the share of reports in the total number of texts that make up the sample, published on the front pages is 75.7% or 1645, which is almost identical to the last quarter of 2017. The largest share of the report was again spotted in *Informer* - 96.15%, while the smallest representation of texts written in this genre in *Politika* - 63.68%. The following forms according to participation are the interview and the article, which make up 9.66%, or 7.59% of all texts from the sample. Interviews are most frequent in *Blic* and *Danas* (about 15%), while less than 1% of texts on the covers are published in this genre in *Informer*. The highest number and participation of articles is recorded in *Politika* (77 or 16.85%), while the daily *Alo!* did not publish a single text in this newspaper form. The next genre for representation is a comment - 4.1% (89 articles), while news participation in this quarter is again less than 2% (38 texts). Reports and other forms (such as hybrid genres or feuilleton) are negligible, present in 0.6% or 13 texts.

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

Genre	Total number	%
Report	1645	75,70
Interview	210	9,66
Article	165	7,59
Commentary	89	4,10
News story	38	1,75
Other (hybrid forms, feuilleton)	13	0,60
Reportage	13	0,60
total	2173	100,00

Source: Mediameter research, January – March 2018

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

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	169	210	294	200	235	291	246	1645
interview	19	44	65	2	25	33	22	210
article	0	4	19	1	14	77	50	165
commentary	2	6	39	2	0	40	0	89
news	5	7	6	2	3	8	7	38
other	0	5	5	1	2	0	0	13
reportage	1	0	2	0	0	8	2	13
total	196	276	430	208	279	457	327	2173

Source: Mediameter research, January – March 2018

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

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	86,22	76,09	68,37	96,15	84,23	63,68	75,23	75,70
interview	9,69	15,94	15,12	0,96	8,96	7,22	6,73	9,66
article	0,00	1,45	4,42	0,48	5,02	16,85	15,29	7,59
commentary	1,02	2,17	9,07	0,96	0,00	8,75	0,00	4,10
news	2,55	2,54	1,40	0,96	1,08	1,75	2,14	1,75
other	0,00	1,81	1,16	0,48	0,72	0,00	0,00	0,60
reportage	0,51	0,00	0,47	0,00	0,00	1,75	0,61	0,60
total	100,00	100,00	100,00	100,00	100,00	100,00	100,00	100,00

Source: Mediameter research, January – March 2018

Topics

In order for each article to be defined as clearly as possible, the selected writings that make up the sample are classified under a single topic, but nevertheless, all relevant elements present in these articles have been accounted for. This gave us a clearer insight into the manner of how the news is provided and into the approach of the media to certain topics in the previous issues of the *Mediameter* too. This time, within the wider topic of *political life in Serbia*, it was observed how the media treated the *Elections in Belgrade in 2018*, that is, how many texts on political circumstances in Serbia were dedicated to the elections held on March 4th, 2018 in Belgrade.

The texts in the field of black chronicle, which have socio-political character, as well as the writings relating to the murder of the singer Jelena Marjanović, were again included into the sample, as an example of the paradigm of the state of Serbian journalism, which is marked by various kinds of disrespect for the ethical principles of reporting.

Topic prominence

In the period January-March 2018, all political topics were present in a total of 712 or 32.76% of texts from the sample: *political life in Serbia* in 620 or 28.53% of articles, *activities of the President of Serbia* in 2.72% or 59 articles, *activities of the Government of Serbia* 1.33% 29, and *activities of the Prime Minister of Serbia* 0.18% - 4 texts. Compared to the previous quarter, domestic politics are much more present on the cover of seven daily newspapers. Participation of this topic has been increased by about 8%, which is certainly the result of elections in Belgrade.

Second topic according to the representation, in the first quarter of 2018, is Kosovo / Belgrade and Priština relations. The Kosovo topic again attracts attention of the media again and it is present in 273 or 12.56% of all texts from the sample. The increase in the number of these articles can primarily be explained by the murder of Oliver Ivanović¹ and the arrest of the director of the Office for Kosovo and Metohija Marko Đurić.²

Solving the case of the murder of singer Jelena Marjanović³ is a topic that takes over the media in the first quarter of 2018, that is, it was the third topic in terms of representation, present in 134 or 6.17% of texts. In the fourth quarter of 2017, the increase in the number and participation of texts on this topic was caused by investigative actions, in particular the hearings conducted by the Prosecutor's Office after the arrest of Zoran Marjanović, the husband of Jelena Marjanović, while since the beginning of 2018, the media turned mainly on sensationalist reporting - the statements of parapsychologists, prophets and persons of a similar profile, then suggest the existence of witnesses and present books on this murder. Also, information from the investigation continues to reach the media. During the first three months of 2018, *Informer* published 36, *Kurir* 31, *Alo!* 30, *Blic* 21, *Večernje novosti* 13 and *Politika* 3, while *Danas* is again the only newspaper that did not deal with this topic.

1 The leader of the Civic Initiative "Freedom, Democracy, Justice" Oliver Ivanović was murdered on January 16th, 2018 in Kosovska Mitrovica.

2 Members of the Kosovo Police Special Unit arrested the director of the KiM Office, Marko Đurić, on March 25th, 2018 in Kosovska Mitrovica, and then he was interrogated at Priština police station, after which he was expelled from Kosovo.

3 Jelena Marjanović was murdered on April 2nd, 2016

When it comes to the *topic of regional cooperation / relations in the region* (108 texts - 4.97%), we recorded a smaller presence compared to the previous quarter, as well as slightly less negative connotations - 45.37%. The fifth theme according to the representation in the first quarter is the *economy*, about which the media wrote 90 or 4.14%, followed by topics related to *international relations* (81 - 3.73%) and *Russia* - 73 texts (3.36%). About 59 (2.72%) texts were written on the *activities of the President of Serbia* and *judicial topics*, while on the cover pages there were published 52 articles on topics related to the *US* and *social policy*.

If the value context of 2173 selected texts in the first quarter of 2018 is observed, the 30.05% of texts are valued - 5.75% positive and 24.3% negative. The highest number of negative texts was written in relation to the United States of America (48.08%) and, as already mentioned, on regional themes - 45.37% (49), while between 30% and 40% of the negative connotations were published about the murder of singer Jelena Marjanović, topics related to Kosovo and international relations. A quarter of the articles that talked about social policy in Serbia are also negative, and political life is presented in a negative light in about 17% of the texts. In the first quarter of 2018, there were also several positive connotations. As in the previous quarters, significant participation of texts in a positive tone was observed when it comes to topics related to Russia (36.99% or 27 entries), and in a slightly larger number of texts in a positive context there were written about two more topics - economy (15 or 16.67%) and activities of the President of Serbia (11 or 18.64% of texts).

The topics related to the European Union are again mentioned in a very small number of texts - 44 or about 2%. They are written mostly in neutral context - 88.64%, along with 11.36% negative, while positive connotations were not recorded.⁴ On the other hand, texts on Russia with a positive context were published in dailies *Politika* (12 articles), *Informer* (8), *Večernje novosti* (6) and *Alo!* (1), while one negative notation was recorded only in *Danas* and *Politika* (Chart 15).

As noted, in the first quarter, the media from the sample paid much attention to the city elections, held on March 4th, 2018 in Belgrade. This element was observed within the broader theme - *political life in Serbia* and was present in a total of 395 or 18.18% of texts from the sample (in the primary focus or in a wider context). In the primary focus, 277 articles were published, that is to say, these were exclusively about the Belgrade elections. The largest number, but also the participation of these texts, was recorded in *Danas* (88 - 31.77%), while *Večernje novosti* did not show interest in the Belgrade elections (4 texts or 1.41%). Most media reported in a neutral context, except *Informer*, where the tone of the texts is dominantly negative (66.67%).

4 Negatively connoted texts about the EU / EU policy are published in *Politika* (2), *Informer* (2) and *Večernje novosti* (1).

Distribution of topics and their value-orientation in seven sampled newspapers⁵

All media	Value context with reference to the topic							
	total		Positive		Neutral		Negative	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Political life in Serbia	620	28,53	2	0,32	513	82,74	105	16,94
Kosovo/Relations of Belgrade and Priština	273	12,56	2	0,73	175	64,10	96	35,16
murder of the singer Jelena Marjanović	134	6,17	0	0,00	82	61,19	52	38,81
Regional cooperation /relations in the region	108	4,97	2	1,85	57	52,78	49	45,37
Economy	90	4,14	15	16,67	61	67,78	14	15,56
International relations	81	3,73	5	6,17	46	56,79	30	37,04
Russia / attitude towards Russia	73	3,36	27	36,99	44	60,27	2	2,74
Activities of the President of Serbia	59	2,72	11	18,64	47	79,66	1	1,69
System of justice, activities of judiciary bodies	59	2,72	2	3,39	50	84,75	7	11,86
USA / attitude towards USA	52	2,39	0	0,00	27	51,92	25	48,08
Social issues / social policy	52	2,39	15	28,85	25	48,08	12	23,08

Source: Mediameter research, January – March 2018

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

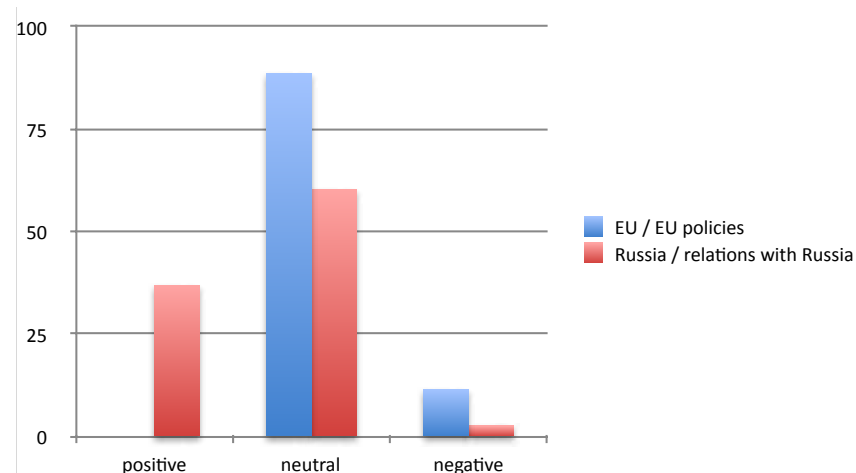
All media	No.	%
Positive	125	5,75
Neutral	1520	69,95
Negative	528	24,30
total	2173	100,00

Source: Mediameter research, January – March 2018

⁵ In all the tables that relate to the fourth quarter of 2018, the ten most common topics are presented.Distribution of articles in which the *Belgrade elections* in 2018 were present, under the theme political life in Serbia, in primary focus, according to the media and the value context

Media	Political life in Serbia/Belgrade elections 2018							
	Positive		Neutral		Negative		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
<i>Danas</i>	1	1,14	83	94,32	4	4,55	88	31,77
<i>Blic</i>	0	0,00	62	100,00	0	0,00	62	22,38
<i>Kurir</i>	0	0,00	44	97,78	1	2,22	45	16,25
<i>Informer</i>	1	2,78	11	30,56	24	66,67	36	13,00
<i>Alo!</i>	0	0,00	23	88,46	3	11,54	26	9,39
<i>Politika</i>	0	0,00	11	68,75	5	31,25	16	5,78
<i>Večernje novosti</i>	0	0,00	4	100,00	0	0,00	4	1,44
total	2	0,72	238	85,92	37	13,36	277	100,00

Source: Mediameter research, January – March 2018

Chart 15. – Value context in all media in relation to the topic *Russia/ Attitude towards Russia* and *EU / EU policy*

Source: Mediameter research, January – March 2018

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

<i>Alo!</i>	Value context with reference to the topic							
	total		Positive		Neutral		Negative	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Political life in Serbia	67	34,18	0	0,00	59	88,06	8	11,94
Murder of the singer Jelena Marjanović	30	15,31	0	0,00	19	63,33	11	36,67
Kosovo/Relations of Belgrade and Priština	26	13,27	0	0,00	22	84,62	4	15,38
Regional cooperation/relations in the region	13	6,63	0	0,00	7	53,85	6	46,15
Russia / attitude towards Russia	10	5,10	1	10,00	9	90,00	0	0,00
Crime	9	4,59	0	0,00	9	100,00	0	0,00
USA/ attitude towards USA	6	3,06	0	0,00	0	0,00	6	100,00
System of justice, activities of judiciary bodies	4	2,04	0	0,00	2	50,00	2	50,00
Activities of the Government of Serbia	4	2,04	0	0,00	4	100,00	0	0,00
Questions of faith, church and religion	3	1,53	0	0,00	3	100,00	0	0,00
Activities of the President of Serbia	3	1,53	1	33,33	2	66,67	0	0,00

Source: Mediameter research, January – March 2018

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

<i>Alo!</i>	No.	%
Positive	3	1,53
Neutral	153	78,06
Negative	40	20,41
total	196	100

Source: Mediameter research, January – March 2018

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

<i>Blic</i>	Value context with reference to the topic							
	total		Positive		Neutral		Negative	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Political life in Serbia	124	44,93	0	0,00	114	91,94	10	8,06
Kosovo/Relations of Belgrade and Priština	28	10,14	0	0,00	26	92,86	2	7,14
Murder of the singer Jelena Marjanović	21	7,61	0	0,00	13	61,90	8	38,10
Activities of the Government of Serbia	12	4,35	0	0,00	10	83,33	2	16,67
Regional cooperation/relations in the region	10	3,62	0	0,00	10	100,00	0	0,00
Activities of the President of Serbia	10	3,62	0	0,00	10	100,00	0	0,00
EU/EU policy	6	2,17	0	0,00	6	100,00	0	0,00
Education	6	2,17	0	0,00	2	33,33	4	66,67
Economy	6	2,17	0	0,00	6	100,00	0	0,00
Health services	5	1,81	0	0,00	4	80,00	1	20,00
Sport	5	1,81	0	0,00	5	100,00	0	0,00
System of justice, activities of judiciary bodies	5	1,81	0	0,00	5	100,00	0	0,00

Source: Mediameter research, January – March 2018

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

<i>Blic</i>	No.	%
Positive	0	0,00
Neutral	249	90,22
Negative	27	9,78
total	276	100

Source: Mediameter research, January - March 2018

Danas

Distribution of topics and their value context in the paper

Danas	Value context with reference to the topic							
	total		Positive		Neutral		Negative	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
Political life in Serbia	178	41,40	1	0,56	158	88,76	19	10,67
Kosovo/Relations of Belgrade and Priština	43	10,00	0	0,00	43	100,00	0	0,00
Economy	28	6,51	1	3,57	22	78,57	5	17,86
Media/freedom of the media	20	4,65	0	0,00	15	75,00	5	25,00
Social issues/social policy	14	3,26	0	0,00	9	64,29	5	35,71
System of justice, activities of judiciary bodies	12	2,79	0	0,00	9	75,00	3	25,00
Regional cooperation/relations in the region	11	2,56	0	0,00	11	100,00	0	0,00
Local government	11	2,56	0	0,00	6	54,55	5	45,45
Army	9	2,09	0	0,00	8	88,89	1	11,11
Economy	8	1,86	0	0,00	5	62,50	3	37,50
Russia / attitude towards Russia	8	1,86	0	0,00	7	87,50	1	12,50
Culture	8	1,86	0	0,00	8	100,00	0	0,00
achieving EU integration requirements	8	1,86	0	0,00	8	100,00	0	0,00
International relations	8	1,86	0	0,00	7	87,50	1	12,50

Source: Mediameter research, January - March 2018

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

Danas	No.	%
Positive	3	0,70
Neutral	363	84,42
Negative	64	14,88
total	430	100,00

Source: Mediameter research, January - March 2018

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

Informer	Value context with reference to the topic							
	total		Positive		Neutral		Negative	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
Political life in Serbia	63	30,29	1	1,59	18	28,57	44	69,84
Murder of the singer Jelena Marjanović	36	17,31	0	0,00	16	44,44	20	55,56
Kosovo/Relations of Belgrade and Priština	22	10,58	0	0,00	7	31,82	15	68,18
Regional cooperation/relations in the region	15	7,21	0	0,00	1	6,67	14	93,33
USA/ attitude towards USA	11	5,29	0	0,00	2	18,18	9	81,82
Russia/attitude towards Russia	9	4,33	8	88,89	1	11,11	0	00,00
Economy	6	2,88	3	50,00	1	16,67	2	33,33
International relations	6	2,88	1	16,67	1	16,67	4	66,67
NATO/NATO integration	5	2,40	0	0,00	2	40,00	3	60,00
Social issues/social policy	5	2,40	4	80,00	1	20,00	0	0,00
Crime	5	2,40	0	0,00	3	60,00	2	40,00

Source: Mediameter research, January - March 2018

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

Informer	No.	%
Positive	22	10,58
Neutral	61	29,33
Negative	125	60,10
total	208	100,00

Source: Mediameter research, January - March 2018

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	105	37,63	0	0,00	95	90,48	10	9,52
Kosovo/Relations of Belgrade and Priština	35	12,54	0	0,00	19	54,29	16	45,71
Murder of the singer Jelena Marjanović	31	11,11	0	0,00	23	74,19	8	25,81
Criminal	16	5,73	0	0,00	12	75,00	4	25,00
Entertainment	10	3,58	0	0,00	10	100,00	0	0,00
Activities of the President of Serbia	10	3,58	4	40,00	6	60,00	0	0,00
International relations	9	3,23	0	0,00	3	33,33	6	66,67
Health services	6	2,15	0	0,00	3	50,00	3	50,00
Hague/war crimes	6	2,15	0	0,00	5	83,33	1	16,67
Regional cooperation/relations in the region	5	1,79	0	0,00	4	80,00	1	20,00
USA/ attitude towards USA	5	1,79	0	0,00	5	100,00	0	0,00
Russia/attitude towards Russia	5	1,79	0	0,00	5	100,00	0	0,00
System of justice, activities of judiciary bodies	5	1,79	0	0,00	5	100,00	0	0,00

Source: Mediameter research, January - March 2018

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

<i>Kurir</i>	No.	%
Positive	6	2,15
Neutral	218	78,14
Negative	55	19,71
total	279	100,00

Source: Mediameter research, January - March 2018

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

<i>Politika</i>	Value context with reference to the topic							
	total		Positive		Neutral		Negative	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
Political life in Serbia	48	10,50	0	0,00	38	79,17	10	20,83
International relations	46	10,07	3	6,52	27	58,70	16	34,78
Kosovo/Relations of Belgrade and Priština	40	8,75	0	0,00	23	57,50	17	42,50
Economy	38	8,32	8	21,05	24	63,16	6	15,79
Russia/attitude towards Russia	26	5,69	12	46,15	13	50,00	1	3,85
System of justice, activities of judiciary bodies	24	5,25	0	0,00	24	100,00	0	0,00
Activities of the President of Serbia	20	4,38	1	5,00	19	95,00	0	0,00
Social issues/social policy	19	4,16	5	26,32	7	36,84	7	36,84
Regional cooperation/relations in the region	18	3,94	0	0,00	12	66,67	6	33,33
EU/EU policy	16	3,50	0	0,00	14	87,50	2	12,50
USA/ attitude towards USA	16	3,50	0	0,00	9	56,25	7	43,75

Source: Mediameter research, January - March 2018

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

<i>Politika</i>	No.	%
Positive	52	11,38
Neutral	301	65,86
Negative	104	22,76
total	457	100,00

Source: Mediameter research, January - March 2018

Večernje novosti

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

<i>Večernje novosti</i>	Value context with reference to the topic							
	total		Positive		Neutral		Negative	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
Kosovo/Relations of Belgrade and Priština	79	24,16	2	2,53	35	44,30	42	53,16
Regional cooperation/relations in the region	36	11,01	2	5,56	12	33,33	22	61,11
Political life in Serbia	35	10,70	0	0,00	31	88,57	4	11,43
Murder of the singer Jelena Marjanović	13	3,98	0	0,00	8	61,54	5	38,46
Russia/attitude towards Russia	13	3,98	6	46,15	7	53,85	0	0,00
Hague / war crimes	10	3,06	0	0,00	4	40,00	6	60,00
EU/EU policy	10	3,06	0	0,00	9	90,00	1	10,00
economy	10	3,06	3	30,00	6	60,00	1	10,00
Activities of the President of Serbia	10	3,06	3	30,00	7	70,00	0	0,00
System of justice, activities of judiciary bodies	9	2,75	2	22,22	5	55,56	2	22,22
Infrastructure	9	2,75	3	33,33	4	44,44	2	22,22

Source: Mediameter research, January - March 2018

Value context in relation to all topics in the paper *Večernje novosti*

<i>Večernje novosti</i>	No.	%
Positive	39	11,93
Neutral	175	53,52
Negative	113	34,56
total	327	100,00

Source: Mediameter research, January - March 2018

Balance

When we take into consideration all the texts from the sample for the first period of 2018, it can be noticed that most of the topics presented are not treated in a comprehensive manner, as evidenced by the fact that the balance is present in only 19.14% of all texts, which is about 2% more than in the previous quarter. The smallest number of balanced texts was recorded in the *Informer* 0.96% or 2 of 208 entries, followed by *Alo!* with 14.29% (about 6% of the balanced texts more compared to the previous quarter), *Večernje novosti* with 16.21%, *Kurir* - 19.71% (increase of about 11% of balanced articles), *Politika* (21.23%), *Danas* (23.26%) and *Blic* (29.35%).

Although the value context is not expressed in 69.95% of all texts, consideration must be given to the fact that the vast majority of texts from the cover pages we have analyzed are not comprehensive, and that one-sided approach reflects the general situation in the Serbian media. Balanced texts, of course, necessarily show some 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 seriousness. This is about the speed of the reaction, not the detailed and rational information required by the research, a larger number of interlocutors and reliable and verifiable data, along with available information sources. 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>	0,96	2	99,04	206
<i>Alo!</i>	14,29	28	85,71	168
<i>Večernje novosti</i>	16,21	53	83,79	274
<i>Kurir</i>	19,71	55	80,29	224
<i>Politika</i>	21,23	97	78,77	360
<i>Danas</i>	23,26	100	76,74	330
<i>Blic</i>	29,35	81	70,65	195
total	19,14	416	80,86	1757

Source: Mediameter research, January - March 2018

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. Even 44.40% of the total number of actors covered by selected texts from the front pages are (individual and collective) political actors who occupy different positions within the political life of Serbia. If we add this number to 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 68.41%. The second group by frequency of occurrence is different social actors, which make up 13.83% of our sample. Economic actors are the protagonists of the texts on the covers in only 4.62% of cases.

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

Actors					
Political actors	11325	Domestic	7350	Individual	5204
				Collective	2146
		Foreign	3975	Individual	2854
				Collective	1121
Economic actors	765	Domestic	721	Individual	243
				Collective	478
		Foreign	44	Individual	3
				Collective	41
Other social actors	2291	Domestic	2270	Individual	1674
				Collective	596
		Foreign	21	Individual	16
				Collective	5
Unnamed sources					2173
Total					16554

Source: Mediameter research, January - March 2018

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	723	39,57	22	3,04	684	94,61	17	2,35
Ivica Dačić	207	11,33	4	1,93	199	96,14	4	1,93
Ana Brnabić	177	9,69	2	1,13	175	98,87	0	0,00
Aleksandar Vulin	109	5,97	0	0,00	107	98,17	2	1,83
Nebojša Stefanović	89	4,87	2	2,25	87	97,75	0	0,00
Zorana Mihajlović	82	4,49	0	0,00	76	92,68	6	7,32
Aleksandar Antić	70	3,83	0	0,00	70	100,00	0	0,00
Rasim Ljajić	51	2,79	1	1,96	50	98,04	0	0,00
Jadranka Joksimović	42	2,30	0	0,00	42	100,00	0	0,00
Branko Ružić	30	1,64	0	0,00	27	90,00	3	10,00
Nenad Popović	27	1,48	0	0,00	27	100,00	0	0,00
Zoran Đorđević	25	1,37	0	0,00	25	100,00	0	0,00
Vanja Udovičić	22	1,20	0	0,00	14	63,64	8	36,36
Dušan Vujović	22	1,20	0	0,00	22	100,00	0	0,00
Mladen Šarčević	22	1,20	0	0,00	22	100,00	0	0,00
Zlatibor Lončar	21	1,15	1	4,76	20	95,24	0	0,00
Vladan Vukosavljević	20	1,09	1	5,00	19	95,00	0	0,00
Goran Knežević	19	1,04	0	0,00	19	100,00	0	0,00
Slavica Đukić Dejanović	19	1,04	0	0,00	19	100,00	0	0,00
Nela Kuburović	18	0,99	0	0,00	18	100,00	0	0,00
Goran Trivan	16	0,88	0	0,00	16	100,00	0	0,00
Branislav Nedimović	10	0,55	0	0,00	10	100,00	0	0,00
Milan Krkobabić	6	0,33	0	0,00	6	100,00	0	0,00
total	1827	100,00	33	1,81	1754	96,00	40	2,19

Source: Mediameter research, January - March 2018

As in the previous quarter, the most frequent actor on the front pages of daily newspapers in Serbia was Serbian President Aleksandar Vučić, about which the media from our sample report predominantly neutral (in 94.61% of cases). About 3.04% (22)⁶ positive and 2.35% (17) texts with negative con-

⁶ More than twice as much as in the previous quarter, in which there were only 10, and about 50% less than in the third quarter of 2017, when a total of 40 positive texts were recorded.

notation were written about him. The President of Serbia, as the protagonist of the texts on the cover, appears 723 times, which is significantly higher than the first ranked actor, Foreign Minister Ivica Dačić, who is present in 207 texts and Serbian Prime Minister Ana Brnabić, who is present in 177 articles. The highest frequency of the appearance of Aleksandar Vučić, expressed in absolute numbers, was recorded in daily newspapers *Danas* (179), *Večernje novosti* (122) and *Politika* (114). Expressed in the relative numbers of the percentage participation of the 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 frequent in *Danas* (41.63%), and then in the daily newspapers *Večernje novosti* (37.31 %) and *Informer* (37.02%). The smallest share of the texts in which the actor is the president of Serbia is recorded in the newspapers *Kurir* (25.09%) and *Politika* (24.95%)

When it comes to the value context, the largest share, as well as the number of negative texts, are again present in *Danas* (9.50% or 17 texts). The highest number of positive texts were published in *Alo!* - 11.67% or 7 texts, followed by *Informer* (6), and *Večernje novosti* (5) and *Politika* and *Kurir* with two positively contexted texts

Aleksandar Vučić: Context value with reference to the media

Aleksandar Vučić	Positive		Neutral		Negative		total	
Media	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
<i>Alo!</i>	7	11,67	53	88,33	0	0,00	60	100,00
<i>Blic</i>	0	0,00	101	100,00	0	0,00	101	100,00
<i>Danas</i>	0	0,00	162	90,50	17	9,50	179	100,00
<i>Informer</i>	6	7,79	71	92,21	0	0,00	77	100,00
<i>Kurir</i>	2	2,86	68	97,14	0	0,00	70	100,00
<i>Politika</i>	2	1,75	112	98,25	0	0,00	114	100,00
<i>Večernje novosti</i>	5	4,10	117	95,90	0	0,00	122	100,00
total	22	3,04	684	94,61	17	2,35	723	100,00

Source: Mediameter research, January - March 2018

Number of appearances of Aleksandar Vučić in respect of total numbers of texts in particular dailies

Aleksandar Vučić per media	No. of appearances	Total no. of texts	% share against total no. of texts
<i>Danas</i>	179	430	41,63
<i>Večernje novosti</i>	122	327	37,31
<i>Informer</i>	77	208	37,02
<i>Blic</i>	101	276	36,59
<i>Alo!</i>	60	196	30,61
<i>Kurir</i>	70	279	25,09
<i>Politika</i>	114	457	24,95
total	723	2173	33,27

Source: Mediameter research, January - March 2018

Prime Minister Ana Brnabić is the protagonist in 177 (9.69%) of analyzed texts and is the third according to the frequency of appearances among individual political actors from the political scene of Serbia (see Table 49). In the first quarter of 2018, no negative connotation of Ana Brnabić was recorded, and only two newspapers published it: *Informer* (1 text) and *Večernje novosti* (1).

Najveći broj tekstova u kojima je akterka premijerka Srbije, objavili su dnevni listovi *Politika* (36) i *Večernje novosti* (35). Najveće učešće tekstova u odnosu na ukupan broj tekstova u mediju zabeležen je u *Večernjim novostima* (10.70%) i *Kuriru* (10.04%) (tabela 53).

The largest number of articles in which the Serbian Prime Minister was the actor, were published in *Politika* (36) and *Večernje novosti* (35). The greatest share of texts in relation to the total number of texts in the media was recorded in *Večernje novosti* (10.70%) and *Kurir* (10.04%)

Ana Brnabić: Context value with reference to the media

Ana Brnabić	positive		neutral		negative		total	
Media	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
<i>Alo!</i>	0	0,00	13	100,00	0	0,00	13	100,00
<i>Blic</i>	0	0,00	22	100,00	0	0,00	22	100,00
<i>Danas</i>	0	0,00	31	100,00	0	0,00	31	100,00
<i>Informer</i>	1	8,33	11	91,67	0	0,00	12	100,00
<i>Kurir</i>	0	0,00	28	100,00	0	0,00	28	100,00
<i>Politika</i>	0	0,00	36	100,00	0	0,00	36	100,00
<i>Večernje novosti</i>	1	2,86	34	97,14	0	0,00	35	100,00
total	2	1,13	175	98,87	0	0,00	177	100,00

Source: Mediameter research, January - March 2018

Number of appearances of Ana Brnabić in respect of total numbers of texts in particular dailies

Ana Brnabić per media	No. of appearances	Total no. of texts	% share against total no. of texts
<i>Večernje novosti</i>	35	327	10,70
<i>Kurir</i>	28	279	10,04
<i>Blic</i>	22	276	7,97
<i>Politika</i>	36	457	7,88
<i>Danas</i>	31	430	7,21
<i>Alo!</i>	13	196	6,63
<i>Informer</i>	12	208	5,77
total	177	2173	8,15

Source: Mediameter research, January - March 2018

Other actors in this group are presented in 96% of texts in a neutral value context. In addition to the president, a slightly larger number of negative connotations were recorded in case of Vanja Udovičić (8) and Zorana Mihajlović (6).

In the first quarter of 2018, we again recorded the growth of the number of opposition actors initiated by the activities related to the Belgrade elections (1781). The most represented opposition leaders are Dragan Đilas (266 texts), Saša Janković (149), and Vuk Jeremić (137). The highest number of negative texts was written about this troika of opposition actors: Dragan Đilas (64 or 24.06%), Saša Janković (36 or 21.16%) and Vuk Jeremić (30 or 21.9%). About the representatives of the opposition in the first quarter of 2018 only one positive text was written.

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

Opposition- individual	No.	%	Positive	%	Neutral	%	Negative	%
Dragan Đilas	266	14,94	1	0,38	201	75,56	64	24,06
Saša Janković	149	8,37	0	0,00	113	75,84	36	24,16
Vuk Jeremić	137	7,69	0	0,00	107	78,10	30	21,90
Aleksandar Šapić	129	7,24	0	0,00	114	88,37	15	11,63
Dragan Šutanovac	105	5,90	0	0,00	98	93,33	7	6,67
Boris Tadić	86	4,83	0	0,00	81	94,19	5	5,81
Vojislav Šešelj	76	4,27	0	0,00	75	98,68	1	1,32
Ljubiša Preletačević Belj	62	3,48	0	0,00	62	100,00	0	0,00
Saša Radulović	46	2,58	0	0,00	43	93,48	3	6,52
Boško Obradović	45	2,53	0	0,00	41	91,11	4	8,89
Čedomir Jovanović	44	2,47	0	0,00	38	86,36	6	13,64
Zoran Živković	40	2,25	0	0,00	36	90,00	4	10,00
Borko Stefanović	37	2,08	0	0,00	31	83,78	6	16,22
Miloš Jovanović	24	1,35	0	0,00	24	100,00	0	0,00
Velimir Ilić	18	1,01	0	0,00	10	55,56	8	44,44
Bojan Pajtić	17	0,95	0	0,00	13	76,47	4	23,53
Vesna Rakić Vod-inelić	16	0,90	0	0,00	16	100,00	0	0,00
Balša Božović	16	0,90	0	0,00	16	100,00	0	0,00
Sanda Rašković Ivić	15	0,84	0	0,00	14	93,33	1	6,67
Marko Bastać	14	0,79	0	0,00	14	100,00	0	0,00
Nenad Čanak	12	0,67	0	0,00	10	83,33	2	16,67
Janko Veselinović	11	0,62	0	0,00	8	72,73	3	27,27
Branislav Lečić	9	0,51	0	0,00	9	100,00	0	0,00
Dušan Duda Ivković	9	0,51	0	0,00	7	77,78	2	22,22
Dušan Teodorović	9	0,51	0	0,00	9	100,00	0	0,00
Nikola Jovanović	8	0,45	0	0,00	8	100,00	0	0,00
Radomir Lazović	8	0,45	0	0,00	8	100,00	0	0,00
Ksenija Radovanović	8	0,45	0	0,00	8	100,00	0	0,00
Predrag Marković	8	0,45	0	0,00	7	87,50	1	12,50
Đorđe Vukadinović	8	0,45	0	0,00	8	100,00	0	0,00

Vojin Biljić	8	0,45	0	0,00	8	100,00	0	0,00
Vjerica Radeta	8	0,45	0	0,00	8	100,00	0	0,00
Dobrica Veselinović	7	0,39	0	0,00	7	100,00	0	0,00
Rade Veljanovski	7	0,39	0	0,00	7	100,00	0	0,00
Dragoljub Mićunović	7	0,39	0	0,00	7	100,00	0	0,00
Srbijanka Turajlić	6	0,34	0	0,00	5	83,33	1	16,67
Dušan Petrović	6	0,34	0	0,00	5	83,33	1	16,67
Momir Stojanović	6	0,34	0	0,00	6	100,00	0	0,00
Dijana Vukomanović	6	0,34	0	0,00	6	100,00	0	0,00
Vladan Glišić	5	0,28	0	0,00	5	100,00	0	0,00
Sreto Malinović	5	0,28	0	0,00	5	100,00	0	0,00
Dušan Pavlović	5	0,28	0	0,00	5	100,00	0	0,00
Milan Stamatović	5	0,28	0	0,00	5	100,00	0	0,00
Marinika Tepić	5	0,28	0	0,00	3	60,00	2	40,00
Marko Đurišić	5	0,28	0	0,00	5	100,00	0	0,00
Nikola Sandulović	4	0,22	0	0,00	3	75,00	1	25,00
Milorad Radulović	4	0,22	0	0,00	3	75,00	1	25,00
Igor Salak	4	0,22	0	0,00	3	75,00	1	25,00
Nebojša Zelenović	4	0,22	0	0,00	4	100,00	0	0,00
Sulejman Ugljanin	3	0,17	0	0,00	1	33,33	2	66,67
Vladimir Gajić	3	0,17	0	0,00	3	100,00	0	0,00
Slavica Janković	3	0,17	0	0,00	1	33,33	2	66,67
Petar Jojić	3	0,17	0	0,00	3	100,00	0	0,00
others	230	12,91	0	0,00	214	93,04	16	6,96
total	1781	100,00	1	0,06	1551	87,09	229	12,86

Source: Mediameter research, January - March 2018

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

Position- individual	No.	%	Positive	%	Neutral	%	Negative	%
Zoran Radojičić	50	8,74	3	6,00	47	94,00	0	0,00
Aja Jung	33	5,77	3	9,09	30	90,91	0	0,00
Milovan Drecun	32	5,59	0	0,00	32	100,00	0	0,00

Dragan Marković Palma	28	4,90	0	0,00	28	100,00	0	0,00
Irena Vujović	28	4,90	0	0,00	28	100,00	0	0,00
Vuk Drašković	26	4,55	0	0,00	26	100,00	0	0,00
Milutin Mrkonjić	25	4,37	0	0,00	21	84,00	4	16,00
Milenko Jovanov	23	4,02	0	0,00	23	100,00	0	0,00
Darko Glišić	18	3,15	0	0,00	18	100,00	0	0,00
Živorad Nikolić	16	2,80	0	0,00	16	100,00	0	0,00
Vladimir Đukanović	16	2,80	0	0,00	16	100,00	0	0,00
Muamer Zukorlić	14	2,45	0	0,00	14	100,00	0	0,00
Toma Fila	13	2,27	1	7,69	11	84,62	1	7,69
Miroslav Lazanski	12	2,10	0	0,00	12	100,00	0	0,00
Bogoljub Karić	10	1,75	0	0,00	10	100,00	0	0,00
Vesna Stanojević	10	1,75	1	10,00	9	90,00	0	0,00
Miodrag Linta	9	1,57	0	0,00	9	100,00	0	0,00
Marija Obradović	9	1,57	0	0,00	9	100,00	0	0,00
Vladimir Orlić	9	1,57	0	0,00	9	100,00	0	0,00
Ivan Tasovac	8	1,40	0	0,00	8	100,00	0	0,00
Aleksandar Martinović	7	1,22	0	0,00	7	100,00	0	0,00
Milutin Jeličić	6	1,05	0	0,00	2	33,33	4	66,67
Marijan Rističević	6	1,05	0	0,00	5	83,33	1	16,67
Dragan Jovanović	6	1,05	0	0,00	6	100,00	0	0,00
Nikola Šainović	5	0,87	0	0,00	5	100,00	0	0,00
Sima Avramović	5	0,87	0	0,00	5	100,00	0	0,00
Predrag Marković	5	0,87	0	0,00	5	100,00	0	0,00
Igor Bečić	5	0,87	0	0,00	5	100,00	0	0,00
Novica Tončev	5	0,87	0	0,00	5	100,00	0	0,00
Radomir Nikolić	4	0,70	0	0,00	3	75,00	1	25,00
Meho Omerović	4	0,70	0	0,00	4	100,00	0	0,00
Andrej Vučić	4	0,70	0	0,00	4	100,00	0	0,00
Nenad Prokić	3	0,52	0	0,00	3	100,00	0	0,00
Boško Ničić	3	0,52	0	0,00	3	100,00	0	0,00
others	115	20,10	0	0,00	112	97,39	3	2,61
total	572	100,00	8	1,40	550	96,15	14	2,45

Source: Mediameter research, January - March 2018

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	%
Marko Đurić	119	20,88	1	0,84	117	98,32	1	0,84
Siniša Mali	113	19,82	1	0,88	109	96,46	3	2,65
Goran Vesić	82	14,39	0	0	82	100	0	0
Tomislav Nikolić	57	10	0	0	56	98,25	1	1,75
Nikola Selaković	35	6,14	0	0	35	100	0	0
Maja Gojković	33	5,79	0	0	31	93,94	2	6,06
Andreja Mladenović	14	2,46	0	0	14	100	0	0
Miloš Vučević	10	1,75	0	0	9	90	1	10
Nikola Nikodijević	8	1,4	0	0	8	100	0	0
Igor Mirović	7	1,23	1	14,29	6	85,71	0	0
Jorgovanka Tabaković	5	0,88	0	0	5	100	0	0
Milutin Folić	3	0,53	0	0	0	0	3	100
Veljko Odalović	3	0,53	0	0	3	100	0	0
others	81	14,21	1	1,23	75	92,59	5	6,17
total	570	100	4	0,7	550	96,49	16	2,81

Source: Mediameter research, January - March 2018

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	%
Bratislav Gašić	17	20,99	0	0,00	17	100,00	0	0,00
Ljubiša Diković	14	17,28	0	0,00	14	100,00	0	0,00
Milan Vukšić	4	4,94	0	0,00	4	100,00	0	0,00
Vladimir Rebić	4	4,94	0	0,00	4	100,00	0	0,00
Novica Antić	3	3,70	0	0,00	3	100,00	0	0,00
Jovan Krivokapić	3	3,70	0	0,00	3	100,00	0	0,00
others	36	44,44	6	16,67	30	83,33	0	0,00
total	81	100,00	6	7,41	75	92,59	0	0,00

Source: Mediameter research, January - March 2018

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

Others	No.	%	Positive	%	Neutral	%	Negative	%
Slobodan Milošević	103	26,08	1	0,97	94	91,26	8	7,77
Zoran Đinđić	79	20,00	3	3,80	76	96,20	0	0,00
Vojislav Koštunica	28	7,09	0	0,00	27	96,43	1	3,57
Mirjana Marković	23	5,82	0	0,00	22	95,65	1	4,35
Jelena Karleuša	16	4,05	0	0,00	15	93,75	1	6,25
Ivan Stambolić	12	3,04	0	0,00	12	100,00	0	0,00
Svetlana Ceca Ražnatović	12	3,04	0	0,00	12	100,00	0	0,00
SANU	10	2,53	0	0,00	10	100,00	0	0,00
Humanitarian law center	9	2,28	0	0,00	7	77,78	2	22,22
Sergej Trifunović	8	2,03	0	0,00	6	75,00	2	25,00
Slavko Ćuruvija	7	1,77	0	0,00	7	100,00	0	0,00
Emir Kusturica	7	1,77	0	0,00	7	100,00	0	0,00
Nataša Kandić	7	1,77	0	0,00	5	71,43	2	28,57
Dušan Kovačević	7	1,77	0	0,00	7	100,00	0	0,00
Nebojša Arsenijević	6	1,52	0	0,00	0	0,00	6	100,00
Siniša Jasnić	6	1,52	0	0,00	1	16,67	5	83,33
Aleksandar Karađorđević	5	1,27	0	0,00	5	100,00	0	0,00
Tamara Vučić	5	1,27	0	0,00	5	100,00	0	0,00
Ana Bekuta	5	1,27	0	0,00	5	100,00	0	0,00
Vladimir Kostić	5	1,27	0	0,00	5	100,00	0	0,00
Jelena Milić	4	1,01	0	0,00	3	75,00	1	25,00
Borka Pavićević	4	1,01	0	0,00	4	100,00	0	0,00
Marko Milošević	4	1,01	0	0,00	4	100,00	0	0,00
Sonja Biserko	4	1,01	0	0,00	4	100,00	0	0,00
Dragica Nikolić	4	1,01	0	0,00	3	75,00	1	25,00
Miša Vacić	3	0,76	0	0,00	2	66,67	1	33,33
Women in black	3	0,76	0	0,00	1	33,33	2	66,67
Nada Macura	3	0,76	0	0,00	3	100,00	0	0,00
Mirko Cvetković	3	0,76	0	0,00	3	100,00	0	0,00
Mlađan Dinkić	3	0,76	0	0,00	3	100,00	0	0,00
total	395	100,00	4	1,01	358	90,63	33	8,35

Source: Mediameter research, January - March 2018

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	157	23,93	4	2,55	150	95,54	3	1,91
“Serbian authorities”	71	10,82	2	2,82	67	94,37	2	2,82
Ministry of Interior	59	8,99	1	1,69	57	96,61	1	1,69
Ministry of Defence	27	4,12	0	0,00	26	96,30	1	3,70
National Assembly of Serbia	26	3,96	0	0,00	24	92,31	2	7,69
Ministry of Justice	21	3,20	0	0,00	21	100,00	0	0,00
National Bank of Serbia	19	2,90	0	0,00	19	100,00	0	0,00
Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Policy	18	2,74	0	0,00	17	94,44	1	5,56
Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development	16	2,44	0	0,00	16	100,00	0	0,00
Ministry of Foreign Affairs	14	2,13	0	0,00	14	100,00	0	0,00
Ministry of Agriculture and Environmental Protection	13	1,98	0	0,00	13	100,00	0	0,00
Tax Administration	12	1,83	0	0,00	9	75,00	3	25,00
Ministry of Culture and Information	12	1,83	0	0,00	12	100,00	0	0,00
President's Cabinet	11	1,68	0	0,00	11	100,00	0	0,00
Ministry of Finance	11	1,68	0	0,00	11	100,00	0	0,00
City of Belgrade	10	1,52	0	0,00	10	100,00	0	0,00
Ministry of Youth and Sport	9	1,37	0	0,00	9	100,00	0	0,00
Republic fund PIO	9	1,37	0	0,00	9	100,00	0	0,00
Ministry of Health	9	1,37	0	0,00	9	100,00	0	0,00
CSR	8	1,22	0	0,00	5	62,50	3	37,50
Assembly of the City of Belgrade	8	1,22	0	0,00	8	100,00	0	0,00
Office for Kosovo and Metohija	7	1,07	0	0,00	7	100,00	0	0,00
Presidency of Serbia	7	1,07	0	0,00	7	100,00	0	0,00
Prime Minister's Cabinet	6	0,91	0	0,00	6	100,00	0	0,00
Ministry of Economy	6	0,91	0	0,00	6	100,00	0	0,00

Ministry of Construction, Traffic and Infrastructure	5	0,76	0	0,00	5	100,00	0	0,00
Restituion agency	4	0,61	0	0,00	4	100,00	0	0,00
National security Council	4	0,61	0	0,00	4	100,00	0	0,00
Ministry of State Administration and Local Government	4	0,61	0	0,00	4	100,00	0	0,00
Ministry of Trade, Tourism and Telecommunication	3	0,46	0	0,00	3	100,00	0	0,00
Customs direction	3	0,46	0	0,00	3	100,00	0	0,00
Republic Statistical Authority	3	0,46	0	0,00	3	100,00	0	0,00
National employment agency	3	0,46	0	0,00	3	100,00	0	0,00
others	61	9,30	0	0,00	61	100,00	0	0,00
total	656	100,00	7	1,07	633	96,49	16	2,44

Source: Mediameter research, January - March 2018

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	39	49,37	2	5,13	37	94,87	0	0,00
BIA	19	24,05	0	0,00	19	100,00	0	0,00
others	10	12,66	0	0,00	10	100,00	0	0,00
Serbian Military Union	5	6,33	0	0,00	5	100,00	0	0,00
Military Security Agency	2	2,53	0	0,00	2	100,00	0	0,00
Serbian Police Union	2	2,53	0	0,00	2	100,00	0	0,00
SAJ	2	2,53	0	0,00	2	100,00	0	0,00
total	79	100,00	2	2,53	77	97,47	0	0,00

Source: Mediameter research, January - March 2018

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

Position	No.	%	Positive	%	Neutral	%	Negative	%
SNS	334	58,19	8	2,40	310	92,81	16	4,79
SPS	143	24,91	0	0,00	143	100,00	0	0,00
United Serbia	33	5,75	0	0,00	33	100,00	0	0,00
PUPS	15	2,61	0	0,00	15	100,00	0	0,00
SNP	13	2,26	0	0,00	13	100,00	0	0,00
SDPS	10	1,74	0	0,00	10	100,00	0	0,00
Socialists' Movement	8	1,39	0	0,00	8	100,00	0	0,00
SPO	5	0,87	0	0,00	5	100,00	0	0,00
Strength of Serbia Movement	3	0,52	0	0,00	3	100,00	0	0,00
SVM	3	0,52	0	0,00	3	100,00	0	0,00
others	7	1,22	0	0,00	7	100,00	0	0,00
total	574	100,00	8	1,39	550	95,82	16	2,79

Source: Mediameter research, January - March 2018

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

Opposition- parties	No.	%	positive	%	neutral	%	negative	%
DS	171	20,98	1	0,58	161	94,15	9	5,26
Enough is enough	78	9,57	2	2,56	75	96,15	1	1,28
Dveri	73	8,96	1	1,37	71	97,26	1	1,37
PSG	68	8,34	0	0,00	64	94,12	4	5,88
SRS	63	7,73	0	0,00	61	96,83	2	3,17
Initiative: Let's not drown Belgrade	53	6,50	0	0,00	53	100,00	0	0,00
People's party	51	6,26	0	0,00	50	98,04	1	1,96
LDP	44	5,40	1	2,27	41	93,18	2	4,55
DSS	42	5,15	0	0,00	41	97,62	1	2,38
SDS	42	5,15	0	0,00	42	100,00	0	0,00
New party	42	5,15	0	0,00	40	95,24	2	4,76
Serbian Left	14	1,72	0	0,00	12	85,71	2	14,29

New Serbia	13	1,60	0	0,00	12	92,31	1	7,69
PokS	8	0,98	0	0,00	8	100,00	0	0,00
Movement for Turn-around	8	0,98	0	0,00	8	100,00	0	0,00
LSV	6	0,74	0	0,00	6	100,00	0	0,00
others	39	4,79	0	0,00	38	97,44	1	2,56
total	815	100,00	5	0,61	783	96,07	27	3,31

Source: Mediameter research, January - March 2018

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

Kosovo

Kosovo	No.	%	Positive	%	Neutral	%	Negative	%
Oliver Ivanović	152	14,56	8	5,26	144	94,74	0	0,00
Hashim Thaçi	105	10,06	0	0,00	87	82,86	18	17,14
Ramush Haradinaj	77	7,38	0	0,00	64	83,12	13	16,88
"Kosovo authorities"	65	6,23	0	0,00	52	80,00	13	20,00
Euleks	38	3,64	0	0,00	30	78,95	8	21,05
ROSU	35	3,35	0	0,00	20	57,14	15	42,86
Serbian list	29	2,78	0	0,00	29	100,00	0	0,00
KLA	29	2,78	0	0,00	17	58,62	12	41,38
KFOR	28	2,68	0	0,00	24	85,71	4	14,29
Kadri Veseli	27	2,59	0	0,00	24	88,89	3	11,11
Goran Rakić	27	2,59	0	0,00	27	100,00	0	0,00
Citizen initiative SDP	25	2,39	0	0,00	25	100,00	0	0,00
Kosovo police	23	2,20	0	0,00	18	78,26	5	21,74
Special court for KLA crimes	19	1,82	0	0,00	19	100,00	0	0,00
UNMIK	16	1,53	0	0,00	15	93,75	1	6,25
Dalibor Jeftić	14	1,34	0	0,00	14	100,00	0	0,00
Behgjet Pacolli	12	1,15	0	0,00	12	100,00	0	0,00
Milan Radojičić	10	0,96	0	0,00	10	100,00	0	0,00
Kosovo Government	9	0,86	0	0,00	8	88,89	1	11,11
Kosovo Assembly	6	0,57	0	0,00	4	66,67	2	33,33
Isa Mustafa	4	0,38	0	0,00	3	75,00	1	25,00

Self-determination movement	4	0,38	0	0,00	4	100,00	0	0,00
Albin Kurti	4	0,38	0	0,00	4	100,00	0	0,00
Daut Haradinaj	3	0,29	0	0,00	2	66,67	1	33,33
Vlora Çitaku	3	0,29	0	0,00	3	100,00	0	0,00
Ilir Deda	3	0,29	0	0,00	3	100,00	0	0,00
Kosovo security forces	3	0,29	0	0,00	3	100,00	0	0,00
others	274	26,25	1	0,36	253	92,34	20	7,30
total	1044	100,00	9	0,86	918	87,93	117	11,21

Source: Mediameter research, January - March 2018

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

Croatia	No.	%	Positive	%	Neutral	%	Negative	%
Kolinda Grabar Kitarović	52	19,77	0	0,00	52	100,00	0	0,00
Andrej Plenković	42	15,97	0	0,00	39	92,86	3	7,14
Milorad Pupovac	21	7,98	0	0,00	21	100,00	0	0,00
Croatian authorities	19	7,22	0	0,00	7	36,84	12	63,16
Government of Croatia	11	4,18	0	0,00	9	81,82	2	18,18
Franjo Tuđman	8	3,04	0	0,00	8	100,00	0	0,00
Stjepan Mesić	5	1,90	0	0,00	5	100,00	0	0,00
Croatian police	4	1,52	0	0,00	3	75,00	1	25,00
Savo Štrbac	4	1,52	0	0,00	4	100,00	0	0,00
Miro Kovač	3	1,14	0	0,00	3	100,00	0	0,00
Ivo Josipović	3	1,14	0	0,00	3	100,00	0	0,00
others	91	34,60	1	1,10	76	83,52	14	15,38
total	263	100,00	1	0,38	230	87,45	32	12,17

Source: Mediameter research, January - March 2018

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	7	10,29	0	0,00	5	71,43	2	28,57
Duško Marković	7	10,29	0	0,00	7	100,00	0	0,00
Filip Vujanović	6	8,82	0	0,00	5	83,33	1	16,67
Montenegrin police	4	5,88	0	0,00	4	100,00	0	0,00
Montenegrin government	3	4,41	0	0,00	2	66,67	1	33,33
Special state prosecution of Montenegro	3	4,41	0	0,00	3	100,00	0	0,00
others	38	55,88	0	0,00	37	97,37	1	2,63
total	68	100,00	0	0,00	63	92,65	5	7,35

Source: Mediameter research, January - March 2018

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	67	36,41	0	0,00	66	98,51	1	1,49
Bakir Izetbegović	18	9,78	0	0,00	17	94,44	1	5,56
Mladen Ivanić	13	7,07	0	0,00	13	100,00	0	0,00
BiH Government	7	3,80	0	0,00	6	85,71	1	14,29
Dragan Mektić	7	3,80	0	0,00	7	100,00	0	0,00
Dragan Čović	6	3,26	0	0,00	6	100,00	0	0,00
Naser Orić	5	2,72	0	0,00	3	60,00	2	40,00
Alija Izetbegović	5	2,72	0	0,00	4	80,00	1	20,00
Government of RS	4	2,17	0	0,00	4	100,00	0	0,00
Željka Cvijanović	3	1,63	0	0,00	3	100,00	0	0,00
BiH armed forces	3	1,63	0	0,00	3	100,00	0	0,00
BiH Presidency	3	1,63	0	0,00	3	100,00	0	0,00
SNSD	3	1,63	0	0,00	3	100,00	0	0,00
SDS	3	1,63	0	0,00	3	100,00	0	0,00
others	37	20,11	0	0,00	34	91,89	3	8,11
total	184	100,00	0	0,00	175	95,11	9	4,89

Source: Mediameter research, January - March 2018

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	14	27,45	0	0,00	14	100,00	0	0,00
Đorđe Ivanov	5	9,80	0	0,00	5	100,00	0	0,00
Nikola Gruevski	4	7,84	0	0,00	4	100,00	0	0,00
VMRO–DPMNE	3	5,88	0	0,00	3	100,00	0	0,00
SDSM	3	5,88	0	0,00	3	100,00	0	0,00
others	22	43,14	0	0,00	22	100,00	0	0,00
total	51	100,00	0	0,00	51	100,00	0	0,00

Source: Mediameter research, January - March 2018

Distribution of frequency and value context of the appearance of individual foreign political actors outside the region- **foreign politicians**

Foreign political actors	No.	%	Positive	%	Neutral	%	Negative	%
Recep Tayyip Erdogan	23	5,15	0	0,00	22	95,65	1	4,35
Emmanuel Macron	21	4,70	0	0,00	21	100,00	0	0,00
Kim Jong Un	17	3,80	3	17,65	14	82,35	0	0,00
Edi Rama	14	3,13	0	0,00	12	85,71	2	14,29
Theresa May	12	2,68	0	0,00	10	83,33	2	16,67
Shinzō Abe	11	2,46	1	9,09	10	90,91	0	0,00
Xi Jinping	11	2,46	0	0,00	11	100,00	0	0,00
Sebastian Kurz	10	2,24	0	0,00	10	100,00	0	0,00
Alexander Lukashenko	7	1,57	0	0,00	7	100,00	0	0,00
Catherine Ashton	7	1,57	0	0,00	7	100,00	0	0,00
Heinz-Christian Strache	7	1,57	0	0,00	7	100,00	0	0,00
Chinese authorities	7	1,57	0	0,00	7	100,00	0	0,00
Alexis Tsipras	7	1,57	0	0,00	7	100,00	0	0,00
Miro Cerar	6	1,34	0	0,00	6	100,00	0	0,00
Boris Johnson	6	1,34	0	0,00	5	83,33	1	16,67
Mariano Rajoy	5	1,12	1	20,00	4	80,00	0	0,00
Bojko Borisov	5	1,12	0	0,00	5	100,00	0	0,00

Binali Yıldırım	4	0,89	0	0,00	4	100,00	0	0,00
Martti Ahtisaari	4	0,89	0	0,00	4	100,00	0	0,00
Viktor Orban	4	0,89	0	0,00	3	75,00	1	25,00
Carles Puigdemont	3	0,67	0	0,00	3	100,00	0	0,00
Mevlüt Çavuşoğlu	3	0,67	0	0,00	3	100,00	0	0,00
Li Keqiang	3	0,67	0	0,00	3	100,00	0	0,00
Bashar al Assad	3	0,67	0	0,00	3	100,00	0	0,00
Li Machang	3	0,67	0	0,00	3	100,00	0	0,00
others	244	54,59	0	0,00	227	93,03	17	6,97
total	447	100,00	5	1,12	418	93,51	24	5,37

Source: Mediameter research, January - March 2018

Distribution of frequency and value context of the appearance of individual foreign political actors outside the region: **Germany**

Germany	No.	%	Positive	%	Neutral	%	Negative	%
Angela Merkel	55	40,74	0	0,00	55	100,00	0	0,00
Sigmar Gabriel	15	11,11	0	0,00	15	100,00	0	0,00
German authorities	14	10,37	0	0,00	11	78,57	3	21,43
Gerhard Schröder	6	4,44	0	0,00	6	100,00	0	0,00
Martin Schulz	4	2,96	0	0,00	4	100,00	0	0,00
others	41	30,37	0	0,00	40	97,56	1	2,44
total	135	100,00	0	0,00	131	97,04	4	2,96

Source: Mediameter research, January - March 2018

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	145	31,05	13	8,97	128	88,28	4	2,76
Russian authorities	31	6,64	2	6,45	28	90,32	1	3,23
Sergey Lavrov	31	6,64	1	3,23	30	96,77	0	0,00
Maria Zakharova	29	6,21	0	0,00	29	100,00	0	0,00
Alexander Chepurin	23	4,93	0	0,00	23	100,00	0	0,00
Russian-Serbian Humanitarian Centre	12	2,57	0	0,00	12	100,00	0	0,00
Sergei Skripal	10	2,14	0	0,00	10	100,00	0	0,00
Russia's Ministry of Foreign affairs	10	2,14	0	0,00	10	100,00	0	0,00
Dmitry Peskov	9	1,93	0	0,00	9	100,00	0	0,00
Dmitry Medvedev	7	1,50	0	0,00	7	100,00	0	0,00
Russian armed forces	6	1,28	1	16,67	5	83,33	0	0,00
Sergey Shoygu	6	1,28	0	0,00	6	100,00	0	0,00
Russian Government	5	1,07	0	0,00	5	100,00	0	0,00
Russian embassy	3	0,64	0	0,00	3	100,00	0	0,00
others	140	29,98	4	2,86	133	95,00	3	2,14
total	467	100,00	21	4,50	438	93,79	8	1,71

Source: Mediameter research, January - March 2018

Distribution of frequency and value context of the appearance of individual and collective foreign actors outside the region: **USA**⁷

USA	No.	%	Positive	%	Neutral	%	Negative	%
Donald Trump	114	19,35	0	0,00	103	90,35	11	9,65
USA authorities	37	6,28	0	0,00	23	62,16	14	37,84
State Department	31	5,26	0	0,00	31	100,00	0	0,00
CIA	27	4,58	0	0,00	23	85,19	4	14,81
Kyle Scott	26	4,41	0	0,00	22	84,62	4	15,38
Wess Mitchell	25	4,24	0	0,00	21	84,00	4	16,00

7 I u ovom, kao i u prethodnih nekoliko tromesečja primećujemo povećan broj aktera iz SAD (589). U četvrtom kvartalu 2017. godine zabeležili smo 543 pojavljivanja aktera iz SAD, u trećem kvartalu 458, u drugom 565, u prvom tromesečju 2017. godine 763 pojavljivanja. U poslednjem tromesečju 2016. godine broj aktera iz SAD je bio višestruko uvećan (871) u odnosu na treće (396) i drugo tromesečje 2016. (222).

Rex Tillerson	19	3,23	0	0,00	19	100,00	0	0,00
Hillary Clinton	14	2,38	0	0,00	13	92,86	1	7,14
"USA administration"	14	2,38	0	0,00	13	92,86	1	7,14
Barack Obama	13	2,21	0	0,00	13	100,00	0	0,00
Hoyt Brian Yee	13	2,21	0	0,00	9	69,23	4	30,77
US Congress	12	2,04	0	0,00	12	100,00	0	0,00
Bill Clinton	10	1,70	0	0,00	10	100,00	0	0,00
Pentagon	10	1,70	0	0,00	8	80,00	2	20,00
Mike Pompeo	10	1,70	0	0,00	10	100,00	0	0,00
FBI	9	1,53	0	0,00	9	100,00	0	0,00
Melania Trump	8	1,36	0	0,00	8	100,00	0	0,00
US embassy	7	1,19	0	0,00	7	100,00	0	0,00
Jared Kushner	7	1,19	0	0,00	7	100,00	0	0,00
David Petraeus	7	1,19	0	0,00	4	57,14	3	42,86
George Soros	6	1,02	0	0,00	5	83,33	1	16,67
Demokratska stranka SAD	5	0,85	0	0,00	5	100,00	0	0,00
James Mattis	5	0,85	0	0,00	5	100,00	0	0,00
US embassy in Priština	5	0,85	0	0,00	5	100,00	0	0,00
US embassy in Sarajevo	4	0,68	0	0,00	2	50,00	2	50,00
Gregory Delawie	4	0,68	0	0,00	4	100,00	0	0,00
Stephen Bannon	3	0,51	0	0,00	3	100,00	0	0,00
George Bush	3	0,51	0	0,00	3	100,00	0	0,00
Ivanka Trump	3	0,51	0	0,00	3	100,00	0	0,00
Gina Haspel	3	0,51	0	0,00	3	100,00	0	0,00
others	135	22,92	0	0,00	120	88,89	15	11,11
total	589	100,00	0	0,00	523	88,79	66	11,21

Source: Mediameter research, January - March 2018

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	118	32,96	0	0,00	104	88,14	14	11,86
European Commission	44	12,29	0	0,00	41	93,18	3	6,82
Federica Mogherini	41	11,45	0	0,00	41	100,00	0	0,00
Johannes Han	29	8,10	0	0,00	29	100,00	0	0,00
Jean Claude Juncker	26	7,26	0	0,00	25	96,15	1	3,85
“European authorities”	18	5,03	0	0,00	13	72,22	5	27,78
European Parliament	18	5,03	0	0,00	17	94,44	1	5,56
Maja Kocijančič	10	2,79	0	0,00	10	100,00	0	0,00
Donald Tusk	6	1,68	0	0,00	6	100,00	0	0,00
Council of Europe	5	1,40	0	0,00	5	100,00	0	0,00
Sem Fabrizi	5	1,40	0	0,00	5	100,00	0	0,00
EU Delegation in Serbia	4	1,12	0	0,00	4	100,00	0	0,00
David McAlister	3	0,84	0	0,00	3	100,00	0	0,00
others	31	8,66	0	0,00	31	100,00	0	0,00
total	358	100,00	0	0,00	334	93,30	24	6,70

Source: Mediameter research, January - March 2018

Distribution of frequency and value context of individual and collective foreign political actors: **representatives of human rights organizations and Council of Europe representatives**

Human Rights	No.	%	Positive	%	Neutral	%	Negative	%
European court for human rights	15	33,33	0	0,00	13	86,67	2	13,33
Council of Europe	10	22,22	0	0,00	10	100,00	0	0,00
International court of justice in Hague	10	22,22	0	0,00	10	100,00	0	0,00
OEBS	4	8,89	0	0,00	4	100,00	0	0,00
others	6	13,33	0	0,00	4	66,67	2	33,33
total	45	100,00	0	0,00	41	91,11	4	8,89

Source: Mediameter research, January - March 2018

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

UN	No.	%	Positive	%	Neutral	%	Negative	%
United Nations	45	47,87	0	0,00	45	100,00	0	0,00
UN Security Council	23	24,47	0	0,00	23	100,00	0	0,00
António Guterres	10	10,64	0	0,00	10	100,00	0	0,00
UNESCO	4	4,26	0	0,00	4	100,00	0	0,00
others	12	12,77	0	0,00	11	91,67	1	8,33
total	94	100,00	0	0,00	93	98,94	1	1,06

Source: Mediameter research, January - March 2018

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

NATO	No.	%	Positive	%	Neutral	%	Negative	%
NATO	101	83,47	0	0,00	85	84,16	16	15,84
Jens Stoltenberg	7	5,79	0	0,00	7	100,00	0	0,00
others	13	10,74	0	0,00	10	76,92	3	23,08
total	121	100,00	0	0,00	102	84,30	19	15,70

Source: Mediameter research, January - March 2018

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	%
Hague tribunal	28	25,69	0	0,00	21	75,00	7	25,00
Ratko Mladić	24	22,02	0	0,00	24	100,00	0	0,00
Radovan Karadžić	7	6,42	0	0,00	7	100,00	0	0,00
Franko Simatović	4	3,67	0	0,00	4	100,00	0	0,00
Slobodan Praljak	4	3,67	0	0,00	4	100,00	0	0,00
Jovica Stanišić	4	3,67	0	0,00	4	100,00	0	0,00
Teodor Meron	3	2,75	0	0,00	3	100,00	0	0,00
Vladimir Lazarević	3	2,75	0	0,00	3	100,00	0	0,00
others	32	29,36	0	0,00	27	84,38	5	15,63
total	109	100,00	0	0,00	97	88,99	12	11,01

Source: Mediameter research, January - March 2018

Already from this cursory review of the frequency of the appearance of individual actors on the front pages of the selected printed daily newspapers from our sample, it is clearly noticed that the media treat issues from the domain of internal and external politics with unequal interest. The fact that foreign actors on the cover of daily newspapers in Serbia are present in a significantly smaller percentage (35.09% in relation to 64.90% of the frequency of the appearance of domestic political actors) speaks of the focus of domestic media on the field of internal politics, which often takes the appearance of fiction in interpretations of individual daily newspapers, about which there were more words in the part of the analysis, which deals with interpretative strategies in the media processing of certain topics. The reasons for a noticeable lack of interest for economic actors and their understanding of the social, economic and political situation in Serbia and the world remains enigmatic (only 4.62% of the total sample of actors are economic actors), contrary to the fact that economic issues and economic consolidation of the country are portrayed in the narratives of many politicians as key elements of future development strategies of the Serbian society.

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

Economic actors - individually	No.	%	Positive	%	Neutral	%	Negative	%
Miroslav Mišković	18	7,41	0	0,00	15	83,33	3	16,67
Dragan Šolak	16	6,58	0	0,00	10	62,50	6	37,50
Miodrag Kostić	8	3,29	0	0,00	7	87,50	1	12,50
Marko Čadež	6	2,47	0	0,00	6	100,00	0	0,00
Marko Mišković	6	2,47	0	0,00	6	100,00	0	0,00
Dušan Bajatović	6	2,47	0	0,00	6	100,00	0	0,00
Jelena Trivan	5	2,06	0	0,00	5	100,00	0	0,00
Zoran Babić	5	2,06	1	20,00	4	80,00	0	0,00
Milorad Grčić	3	1,23	0	0,00	3	100,00	0	0,00
Aleksandar Vlahović	3	1,23	0	0,00	3	100,00	0	0,00
Blagoje Spaskovski	3	1,23	0	0,00	3	100,00	0	0,00
Miroslav Bogičević	3	1,23	0	0,00	3	100,00	0	0,00
others	161	66,26	1	0,62	153	95,03	7	4,35
total	243	100,00	2	0,82	224	92,18	17	7,00

Source: Mediameter research, January - March 2018

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

Economic actors	No.	%	Positive	%	Neutral	%	Negative	%
Nikola Tesla Aeroport	25	5,23	0	0,00	25	100,00	0	0,00
SBB	19	3,97	0	0,00	17	89,47	2	10,53
RTB Bor	17	3,56	2	11,76	15	88,24	0	0,00
Vinci airports	16	3,35	2	12,50	14	87,50	0	0,00
Air Serbia	15	3,14	1	6,67	10	66,67	4	26,67
Gazprom neft	12	2,51	1	8,33	11	91,67	0	0,00
Electrodistribution of Serbia	10	2,09	0	0,00	10	100,00	0	0,00
PKB	9	1,88	0	0,00	9	100,00	0	0,00
Telenor	8	1,67	0	0,00	8	100,00	0	0,00
Smederevo Ironworks	7	1,46	0	0,00	7	100,00	0	0,00
Commerce Chamber of Serbia	7	1,46	0	0,00	7	100,00	0	0,00
Srbijagas	7	1,46	0	0,00	7	100,00	0	0,00
Railways of Serbia	5	1,05	0	0,00	5	100,00	0	0,00
Telekom Srbija	5	1,05	0	0,00	5	100,00	0	0,00
Delta holding	5	1,05	0	0,00	5	100,00	0	0,00
Agrokor	4	0,84	0	0,00	3	75,00	1	25,00
Belgrade waterfront	3	0,63	0	0,00	3	100,00	0	0,00
Etihad	3	0,63	0	0,00	2	66,67	1	33,33
Mitilineos	3	0,63	0	0,00	3	100,00	0	0,00
RBV	3	0,63	0	0,00	3	100,00	0	0,00
AIK bank	3	0,63	0	0,00	3	100,00	0	0,00
Eagle Hills	3	0,63	0	0,00	3	100,00	0	0,00
Traffic Institute CIP	3	0,63	0	0,00	3	100,00	0	0,00
Energoprojekt	3	0,63	0	0,00	3	100,00	0	0,00
Galenika	3	0,63	0	0,00	3	100,00	0	0,00
others	280	58,58	2	0,71	266	95,00	12	4,29
total	478	100,00	8	1,67	450	94,14	20	4,18

Source: Mediameter research, January - March 2018

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

IMF/World Bank	No.	%	Positive	%	Neutral	%	Negative	%
IMF	19	43,18	0	0,00	19	100,00	0	0,00
World Bank	12	27,27	0	0,00	12	100,00	0	0,00
James Ruf	3	6,82	0	0,00	3	100,00	0	0,00
others	10	22,73	0	0,00	10	100,00	0	0,00
total	44	100,00	0	0,00	44	100,00	0	0,00

Source: Mediameter research, January - March 2018

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 independent 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) actors from the past

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

Independent bodies	No.	%	Positive	%	Neutral	%	Negative	%
Anti-Corruption Agency	17	19,32	0	0,00	17	100,00	0	0,00
REM	13	14,77	0	0,00	12	92,31	1	7,69
Rodoljub Šabić	8	9,09	0	0,00	8	100,00	0	0,00
Fiscal council	6	6,82	0	0,00	6	100,00	0	0,00
National council for high education	5	5,68	0	0,00	5	100,00	0	0,00
Anti-Corruption Council	4	4,55	0	0,00	4	100,00	0	0,00
Brankica Janković	3	3,41	0	0,00	3	100,00	0	0,00
RaTEL	3	3,41	0	0,00	3	100,00	0	0,00
Pavle Petrović	3	3,41	0	0,00	3	100,00	0	0,00
Vladimir Vučković	3	3,41	0	0,00	3	100,00	0	0,00
others	23	26,14	0	0,00	23	100,00	0	0,00
total	88	100,00	0	0,00	87	98,86	1	1,14

Source: Mediameter research, January - March 2018

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

Analysts	No.	%	Positive	%	Neutral	%	Negative	%
Dragomir Anđelković	42	7,81	0	0,00	42	100,00	0	0,00
Bojan Klačar	19	3,53	0	0,00	19	100,00	0	0,00
Vladimir Pejić	17	3,16	0	0,00	17	100,00	0	0,00
Nebojša Krstić	16	2,97	0	0,00	15	93,75	1	6,25
Vladimir Vuletić	16	2,97	0	0,00	16	100,00	0	0,00
Dejan Vuk Stanković	15	2,79	0	0,00	15	100,00	0	0,00
Branko Radun	13	2,42	0	0,00	13	100,00	0	0,00
Dušan Janjić	12	2,23	0	0,00	12	100,00	0	0,00
Aleksandar Popov	8	1,49	0	0,00	8	100,00	0	0,00
Dušan Proroković	8	1,49	0	0,00	8	100,00	0	0,00
Boban Stojanović	8	1,49	0	0,00	8	100,00	0	0,00
Orhan Dragaš	8	1,49	0	0,00	8	100,00	0	0,00
Ljubodrag Savić	8	1,49	0	0,00	8	100,00	0	0,00
Milojko Arsić	7	1,30	0	0,00	7	100,00	0	0,00
Mahmud Bušatlija	7	1,30	0	0,00	7	100,00	0	0,00
Zoran Milivojević	7	1,30	0	0,00	7	100,00	0	0,00
Dževad Galijašević	7	1,30	0	0,00	7	100,00	0	0,00
Dragan Đukanović	7	1,30	0	0,00	7	100,00	0	0,00
Nemanja Nenadić	7	1,30	0	0,00	7	100,00	0	0,00
Vladislav Jovanović	7	1,30	0	0,00	7	100,00	0	0,00
Saša Borojević	7	1,30	0	0,00	7	100,00	0	0,00
Božidar Spasić	6	1,12	0	0,00	6	100,00	0	0,00
Zlatko Nikolić	6	1,12	0	0,00	6	100,00	0	0,00
Milan Kovačević	6	1,12	0	0,00	6	100,00	0	0,00
Ljubomir Madžar	6	1,12	0	0,00	6	100,00	0	0,00
Mario Spasić	6	1,12	0	0,00	6	100,00	0	0,00
Ljuban Karan	5	0,93	0	0,00	5	100,00	0	0,00
Zoran Stojiljković	5	0,93	0	0,00	5	100,00	0	0,00
Petar Vojinović	5	0,93	0	0,00	5	100,00	0	0,00
Aleksandra Joksimović	5	0,93	0	0,00	5	100,00	0	0,00
Dragovan Milićević	4	0,74	0	0,00	4	100,00	0	0,00
Mladen Kovačević	4	0,74	0	0,00	4	100,00	0	0,00

Miroslav Šutić	4	0,74	0	0,00	4	100,00	0	0,00
Marko Nicović	3	0,56	0	0,00	3	100,00	0	0,00
Živadin Jovanović	3	0,56	0	0,00	3	100,00	0	0,00
Draško Đenović	3	0,56	0	0,00	3	100,00	0	0,00
Dejan Gavrilović	3	0,56	0	0,00	3	100,00	0	0,00
Igor Avžner	3	0,56	0	0,00	3	100,00	0	0,00
Milan Antonijević	3	0,56	0	0,00	3	100,00	0	0,00
Darko Trifunović	3	0,56	0	0,00	3	100,00	0	0,00
Ratko Božović	3	0,56	0	0,00	3	100,00	0	0,00
Zoran Dragišić	3	0,56	0	0,00	3	100,00	0	0,00
Cvijetin Milivojević	3	0,56	0	0,00	3	100,00	0	0,00
others	200	37,17	1	0,50	199	99,50	0	0,00
total	538	100,00	1	0,19	536	99,63	1	0,19

Source: Mediameter research, January - March 2018

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	%
Serbian Orthodox Church	47	18,15	0	0,00	47	100,00	0	0,00
Patriarch Irinej	47	18,15	2	4,26	45	95,74	0	0,00
Metropolitan Amfilohije Radović	37	14,29	0	0,00	30	81,08	7	18,92
Teodosije, bishop	24	9,27	0	0,00	24	100,00	0	0,00
Alojzije Stepinac	7	2,70	0	0,00	6	85,71	1	14,29
Metropolitan Grigorije	6	2,32	0	0,00	5	83,33	1	16,67
Metropolitan Porfirije	5	1,93	0	0,00	5	100,00	0	0,00
Mitropolija crnogorsko–primorska	5	1,93	0	0,00	4	80,00	1	20,00
Pope Francis	5	1,93	0	0,00	5	100,00	0	0,00
Josip Bozanić, cardinal	4	1,54	0	0,00	4	100,00	0	0,00
Patriarch Pavle	4	1,54	0	0,00	4	100,00	0	0,00
Bishop of Bačka Irinej	3	1,16	0	0,00	3	100,00	0	0,00
Bishop of Eastern America Irinej	3	1,16	0	0,00	3	100,00	0	0,00
others	62	23,94	1	1,61	57	91,94	4	6,45
total	259	100,00	3	1,16	242	93,44	14	5,41

Source: Mediameter research, January - March 2018

Distribution of frequency and value context of appearances of individual and collective social domestic actors from **the media**⁸

Media	No.	%	Positive	%	Neutral	%	Negative	%
RTS	32	11,27	0	0,00	26	81,25	6	18,75
TV Pink	19	6,69	0	0,00	15	78,95	4	21,05
Dragan Bujošević	17	5,99	0	0,00	11	64,71	6	35,29
Željko Mitrović	12	4,23	1	8,33	11	91,67	0	0,00
TV N1	10	3,52	0	0,00	8	80,00	2	20,00
NUNS	8	2,82	0	0,00	8	100,00	0	0,00
TV Happy	8	2,82	0	0,00	8	100,00	0	0,00
Slaviša Lekić	8	2,82	0	0,00	7	87,50	1	12,50
Informer	7	2,46	0	0,00	6	85,71	1	14,29
Milorad Vučelić	7	2,46	0	0,00	7	100,00	0	0,00
Dragan J. Vučićević	6	2,11	0	0,00	6	100,00	0	0,00
TV Prva	6	2,11	0	0,00	6	100,00	0	0,00
Milomir Marić	5	1,76	1	20,00	4	80,00	0	0,00
NIN	4	1,41	0	0,00	3	75,00	1	25,00
Milan Ćulibrk	4	1,41	0	0,00	4	100,00	0	0,00
Kurir	4	1,41	0	0,00	2	50,00	2	50,00
TV O2	3	1,06	0	0,00	3	100,00	0	0,00
UNS	3	1,06	0	0,00	3	100,00	0	0,00
Politika	3	1,06	0	0,00	2	66,67	1	33,33
TV Studio B	3	1,06	0	0,00	3	100,00	0	0,00
others	115	40,49	1	0,87	98	85,22	16	13,91
total	284	100,00	3	1,06	241	84,86	40	14,08

Source: Mediameter research, January - March 2018

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 (239), lawyers (99) and other protagonists of current or completed court / investigative proceedings (137).

⁸ The actors who were the subject of the writing of other media, that is, the media companies that were reported by other media were presented.

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

Judicial system	No.	%	Positive	%	Neutral	%	Negative	%
Higher Public Prosecutor in Belgrade	49	20,50	0	0,00	49	100,00	0	0,00
Higher Court in Belgrade	32	13,39	0	0,00	31	96,88	1	3,13
Court of Appeals in Belgrade	29	12,13	0	0,00	29	100,00	0	0,00
Special Court in Belgrade	10	4,18	0	0,00	10	100,00	0	0,00
Prosecution for Organized Crime	10	4,18	0	0,00	10	100,00	0	0,00
High Council of Judiciary	9	3,77	0	0,00	9	100,00	0	0,00
Constitutional Court	5	2,09	0	0,00	5	100,00	0	0,00
Supreme Court of Cassation	5	2,09	0	0,00	5	100,00	0	0,00
Third Basic Public Prosecutor in Belgrade	5	2,09	0	0,00	5	100,00	0	0,00
Prosecution for war crimes	5	2,09	0	0,00	5	100,00	0	0,00
State Council of Prosecutors	4	1,67	0	0,00	4	100,00	0	0,00
First Primary Court in Belgrade	3	1,26	0	0,00	3	100,00	0	0,00
First Basic Public Prosecutor in Belgrade	3	1,26	0	0,00	3	100,00	0	0,00
State Attorney	3	1,26	0	0,00	3	100,00	0	0,00
others	67	28,03	0	0,00	65	97,01	2	2,99
total	239	100,00	0	0,00	236	98,74	3	1,26

Source: Mediameter research, January - March 2018

Distribution of frequency and value context of appearances of individual domestic social actors: **lawyers**⁹

Lawyers	No.	%	Positive	%	Neutral	%	Negative	%
Branko Lukić	4	4,04	0	0,00	4	4,04	0	0,00
Veljko Delibašić	3	3,03	0	0,00	3	3,03	0	0,00
Branislav Tapušević	3	3,03	0	0,00	3	3,03	0	0,00
Zora Dobričević Nikodinović	2	2,02	0	0,00	2	2,02	0	0,00
Zdenko Tomanović	2	2,02	0	0,00	2	2,02	0	0,00
Predrag Savić	2	2,02	0	0,00	2	2,02	0	0,00
others	83	83,84	0	0,00	83	83,84	0	0,00
total	99	100,00	0	0,00	99	100,00	0	0,00

Source: Mediameter research, January - March 2018

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	%
Milorad Ulemek Legija	29	21,17	0	0,00	29	100,00	0	0,00
Dušan Spasojević Šiptar	16	11,68	0	0,00	15	93,75	1	6,25
Mile Luković Kum	11	8,03	0	0,00	10	90,91	1	9,09
Zvezdan Jovanović	11	8,03	0	0,00	11	100,00	0	0,00
Ljubiša Buha Čume	6	4,38	0	0,00	6	100,00	0	0,00
Željko Ražnatović Arkan	5	3,65	0	0,00	5	100,00	0	0,00
Radomir Marković	4	2,92	0	0,00	4	100,00	0	0,00
Dejan Milenković Bagzi	3	2,19	0	0,00	3	100,00	0	0,00
others	52	37,96	0	0,00	47	90,38	5	9,62
total	137	100,00	0	0,00	130	94,89	7	5,11

Source: Mediameter research, January - March 2018

The following table shows all the actors who were linked by the media with the murder of singer Jelena Marjanović, as well as members of her family, acquaintances and friends. In the first quarter of 2018, these actors were present in 596 appearances.

⁹ Some lawyers in the texts of the media from the sample played the role of analysts, and are therefore shown in that group of actors.

Distribution of frequency and value context of appearances of individual domestic social actors: "The murder of Jelena Marjanović"

The murder of Jelena Marjanović	No.	%	Positive	%	Neutral	%	Negative	%
Jelena Marjanović	136	22,82	0	0,00	136	100,00	0	0,00
Zoran Marjanović	135	22,65	0	0,00	87	64,44	48	35,56
Jana Marjanović	74	12,42	0	0,00	74	100,00	0	0,00
Vladimir Marjanović	46	7,72	0	0,00	40	86,96	6	13,04
Miloš Marjanović	42	7,05	0	0,00	40	95,24	2	4,76
Zorica Marjanović	29	4,87	0	0,00	25	86,21	4	13,79
Teodora Krsmanović	21	3,52	0	0,00	21	100,00	0	0,00
Milica Marjanović	19	3,19	0	0,00	19	100,00	0	0,00
Marjanović family	14	2,35	0	0,00	6	42,86	8	57,14
Nenad Šipka	13	2,18	0	0,00	13	100,00	0	0,00
Uroš Marjanović	9	1,51	0	0,00	9	100,00	0	0,00
Zorica Krsmanović	9	1,51	0	0,00	9	100,00	0	0,00
Zorica Mitrović	6	1,01	0	0,00	5	83,33	1	16,67
others	43	7,21	0	0,00	41	95,35	2	4,65
total	596	100,00	0	0,00	525	88,09	71	11,91

Source: Mediameter research, January - March 2018

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 418 instances of quoting anonymous sources, or rather 19.24% of texts, which is about 4% less in comparison to the results from the previous quarter (24.11%).

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."¹⁰

A news form that contains the largest number of information obtained from an unnamed source is a report. Of the 1645 texts written in this form, 384 or 23.34% 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	1645	384	23,34
Article	165	30	18,18
Reportage	13	2	15,38
Commentary	89	2	2,25
Interview	210	0	0,00
News	38	0	0,00
other	13	0	0,00
total	2173	418	19,24

Source: Mediameter research, January - March 2018

¹⁰ M. Carlson, *On the condition of anonymity*, Urbana, Chicago, Springfield, University of Illinois Press, 2011, 7

Share of unnamed sources per analyzed media outlets

Media	Total number of texts	Unnamed sources	%
<i>Informer</i>	208	81	38,94
<i>Alo!</i>	196	55	28,06
<i>Večernje novosti</i>	327	75	22,94
<i>Kurir</i>	279	59	21,15
<i>Blic</i>	276	52	18,84
<i>Danas</i>	430	56	13,02
<i>Politika</i>	457	40	8,75
total	2173	418	19,24

Source: Mediameter research, January - March 2018

The largest number of texts containing information from anonymous sources (105) was recorded when it comes to *political life in Serbia*, however, the largest share of unnamed sources in relation to the total number of articles published on a topic was observed when it comes to the inscriptions concerning the murder of singer Jelena Marjanović. Of the 131 texts focusing on this subject, as many as 72.52% contain anonymous sources. Greater participation of unlimited sources is also present in the texts that talk about crime 54.55%

Number of texts containing information obtained from “unnamed sources” according to topics in the seven media from the sample¹¹

Topic/All media	Total number of texts	Unnamed sources	%
Political life in Serbia	614	105	17,10
Murder of the singer Jelena Marjanović	131	95	72,52
Kosovo/Belgrade and Priština relations	239	38	15,90
Regional cooperation/relations in the region	103	20	19,42
Crime	33	18	54,55
Economy	87	17	19,54
Russia/attitude towards Russia	71	14	19,72
Activities of the Government of Serbia	29	10	34,48
USA/attitude towards USA	48	9	18,75
Issues of faith, church and religion	28	9	32,14
Army	25	7	28,00

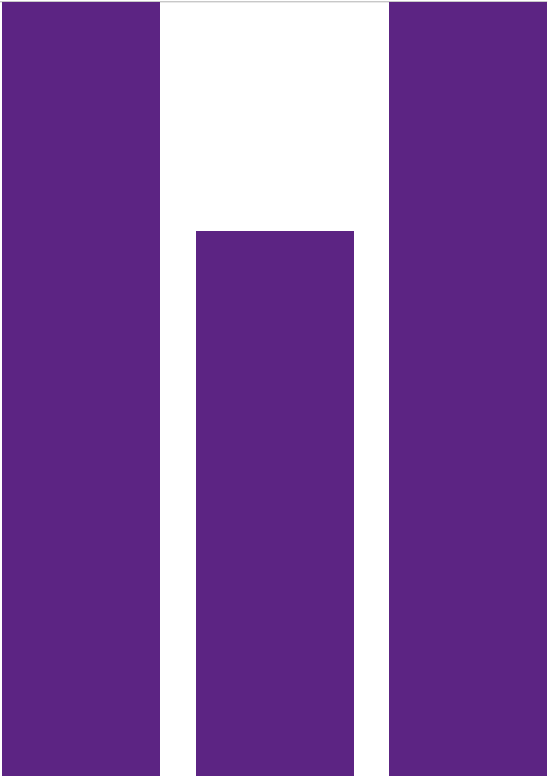
Source: Mediameter research, January - March 2018

Conclusion

The first quarter of 2018 does not differ significantly from the previous periods covered by the analysis of seven daily newspapers. Reports are still the most prominent genre on the front pages. After the report articles and comments follow. From the structure of the genres present in the newspapers, it's easy to see the differences in editorial policies. When we compare the structure of genres, balance, use of data from unnamed sources, and a combination of themes, the picture of the newspaper becomes truly comprehensive. In this quarter, the dominant topic that gave the tone to most daily newspapers was politics and political life in Serbia. Interestingly, there is a decreased interest in the region compared to the previous quarters, which was directly stimulated by two events that took place in Kosovo - the tragic murder of Oliver Ivanović and the arrest of Marko Đurić, head of the Office for Kosovo and Metohija - which simply pushed regional, but also almost all other topics in the second plan.

¹¹ Ten topics with the highest number of unnamed sources

4



Discourse
analysis

DEJAN VUK STANKOVIĆ

DISCOURSE ANALYSIS

Introduction

After the recently completed elections campaign in Belgrade the spirit of a fierce political debate continued in most print media from January to March 2018. Intense and direct confrontation between sharpened and hermetical political-value judgments, strengthened by discourse of insult and defamation, showed that the writing of print media is essentially based on the fight for every vote during the (seemingly) uncertain race for the Parliament of Belgrade.

Writing of print media, especially weeklies, testifies to the diversity of approaches, attitudes, arguments, figures of speech and conclusions which represent quite a dynamic media landscape in Serbia.

Even during the politically charged period, like the one marked by Belgrade elections race, the basic freedom of opinion and expression, especially the latter, was an undeniable right. More precisely, it was possible to publish and express oneself in various forms and send different types of messages. Also, numerous political orientations were present, from the radical right to the radical left. In short, in the analysed period there was no censorship nor auto-censorship in Serbian weeklies.

This overall conclusion is important for at least two reasons which, strictly speaking, are not from the political sphere. First, in Serbian media it is possible to legitimize any statement or an interpretive model which refers to the events, actors and socio-historical processes in the public domain. Additionally, interpretive codes have the power to continuously expand on the Internet, and often have a significant incentive for many TV reports or interviews. The outcome of that freedom is a powerful media polarization that overlaps with the lines of division which exist in a democratic society. Division into critical and pro-government media has converged with the division of the political actors who are a part of the government or official/unofficial opposition. Viewed from the perspective of writing, the Serbian society is similar to many traditional democracies. It is free and plural on the basic level. On the other hand, there is a rhetorical-polemical primacy over rational-argumentative discourse. In light of these circumstances, it is clear that the possibility of reaching an agreement in the media or the society is unimaginable. It is too abstract and difficult to maintain. On the other hand, the conflict is real and becoming more and more inevitable. Elections in Belgrade only amplified this media-political constellation.

In terms of contents, attack on the political opponents merged with the populist promises of prosperity and creation of optimism, and represented main elements of press content during the recently completed campaign. The matrix of challenging the political opponent or rather his way of thinking and acting, is

a radical and comprehensive. The model of radical criticism has been developed in detail, primarily out of the need for active participation of media in the election campaign but also to motivate the readers' revolt against certain political actors. This assessment applies to both pro and anti-government media.

There is a high level of criticism in weekly magazines towards the current government, especially its most prominent actor, the President of Serbia, Aleksandar Vučić. The attitude towards the government, as portrayed by the weekly newspapers, as well as the largest number of editorial columns in newspapers, is intoned with the critical pattern which varies depending on the orientation of the editorial board. Along with the negative obsession with Vučić, there is a strong critical narrative towards the Belgrade government led by the SNS, with a number of specific objections regarding the way of its functioning, competence of personnel, unfinished city projects, followed by the allegedly unlawful nature of the election campaign led in the capital.

In the context of the aforementioned negative obsession with the President of Serbia Aleksandar Vučić, it is necessary to emphasize two particular features of the weekly magazines:

Namely, structure-wise, there has been a significant presence of the interview as a journalistic genre. The interviewees are selected according to the political-value criteria which corresponds to the orientation of the members of the editorial board. There is a noticeable and pronounced tendency of repetition of interviewees with the aim of intensifying the effect of the message, both in value and political sense. Often, these are the prominent individuals in their professions, but there are also those who wish to represent themselves as such. This is mostly about a desire to position certain public figures (singers and actors, for example) as rolemodels with their civic stance which is almost in all cases negatively intoned against the government. It is a skillful transfer of social recognition to the domain of politics, a precise example of the fact that propaganda goes "hand in hand" 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 its control in 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.

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 interpretations 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 written or visual selection of reports.

Thus we live in the ambience where anyone can be against anyone, motivated by „their own“ reasons which are rarely 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 „judgmental“ mode of portraying actors, processes or events.

The front page also holds an important place, especially in the weeklies, 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 several possible ways to classify the weeklies, among which, for the purposes of this analysis, we will be mentioning two. 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 credibility, 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 however a difference in the tone of criticism. While *Vreme* and somewhat *NIN* (especially the domain of domestic politics and economics) are completely, directly and fiercely criticizing the government, weeklies *Novi magazin* and *Nedeljnik* apply a more moderate tone in expressing critical views. Their level of accusing and labeling is far lower than in the cases of *Vreme* and *NIN*.

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.

Image of the Government – authoritarian, clientelistic, does not respect democratic values, with no results achieved in the sphere of economy, extremely and clearly manipulative

Presentation of the most common messages about the government that are diffusely spread in weekly newspapers and editorial columns, should begin with the examination of the broader picture of the socio-historical, political and cultural reality formed in the above-listed media. The general image of the society is negatively determined. Serbian society is shown as deeply and fatally decadent, with almost no progressive and enlightened areas of life. All events and processes are depicted as morally controversial and politically unacceptable. Most of the messages are treated as false and everything that happens is destructive to the very social substance. Of course, the assumption is that such a deeply controversial reality is produced by a morally corrupt society and in many ways, immature elite in power. This idea is clearly expressed by the actor Radoslav Milenković, who places his moral and political judgement even in the aesthetical-art sphere by using a work of Dutch painter Hieronymus Bosch to present his political thesis: “The ecstasy on which you cultivate and implement your ambitions can not compensate for the lack of content, so the final result is grotesque. This identification of personal ambition, vanity and dream about oneself makes the whole thing hilarious, no matter how bitter, difficult or sad it actually is. This discrepancy between what is imagined and what is, makes the whole experience a Bosch painting – opaque dance of freaks ... In essence, aesthetically, and because of this such a disparity and distortion, reality takes on the form of a comedy. There is no harmony between the expressed and unexpressed, between content and form. We live in such a time... our political reality, its incidence and everything it simulates is based not on knowledge but on arbitrariness. It is not based on the essence of human nature and the world in which the human race has survived, despite everything, all these millennia.”¹

A society characterized by radical and moral decadence is a form of social and political organization that destroys all attempts for enlightenment- such as freedom, rationality, personal dignity and concern for others. Current political and socio-cultural context is determined as degenerate, extremely dangerous and anti-progressive. Politicologist Jelena Đorđević, a professor at the Faculty of Political Sciences in Belgrade points this out: “I will be free to add that as far as our society is concerned, there is a pervasive depression, hopelessness and disorientation, which is not surprising. The feeling that we have no future, that the world is corrupt, that our politics are a part of this or that conspiracy discourages people, kills their spirit. Currently, because of the way this government demonstrates power by force, people

¹ Radoslav Milenković „Politika postaje groteska [Politics is becoming grotesque],“ interview with Tanja Nikolić Đaković, *NIN*, No. 3499, p. 24

think it's useless to fight since those in the power will finally succeed in their intentions through lies, pressure and violence. In addition, the tabloid propaganda enhances the feeling of helplessness through stories on different versions of global conspiracies. The worst thing is, although we are not aware of it, that all this impacts our self-awareness and dignity. ... all institutions are silent, streets do not mean anything, a public word has no effect. Institutions don't fulfill their role, nor are they aware of it – they simply follow the dominant discourse imposed by the government. Not to mention the aggressive and rude jargon- everyone knows about this. Unfortunately, it seems that the majority does not care since they enthusiastically enjoy this manner of speaking and the vulgar tabloid jargon of all kinds”.²

According to the judgement of Jelena Djordjević, it is indisputable that the complex undemocratic political practice and so-called tabloid culture have a broader socio-cultural context with internal dynamics of annihilation and suppression of enlightenment: “This is the cultural context in which the majority is brought up and educated. The whole environment we live in is contaminated - anger, poverty, hopelessness, indifference, numbness, absolute lack of any concern to the society as a whole, selfishness, all kinds of violence, including verbal. This is a dominant model imposed daily from the top, non-stop, characterized by deep political and cultural divisions that do not allow us to move from a standstill.”³

Of course, as the quote indicates, there is a political intention to produce this state in the society. This basic hypothesis is not proven, but is accepted as a starting point from which a number of negative value conclusions related to the current government are more or less consistently carried out.

Characteristic genre of (default) negative writing about the current government continues with the Deputy Editor in Chief of *NIN*, Vesna Mališić who on the occasion of a series of incidents between right-wing groups and their opponents is equally negatively obsessed with the current government: “... When the Head of State mocks the ‘American N1 television’, when he unreservedly criminalizes political opponents, encourages anti-European performances, when televisions are treated as propaganda booths, when ministers attack political opponents or argue with the governments in the region – it actually opens the door to the violence that followed thereafter. This game with fire is absurd for the government whose mouth is full of Europe, peace and stability and who verbally proclaimed those as highest values. This senseless, irrational mathematics, after which the score of the ultra right-wing and democratic forces will make a political profit for the authorities, lacks the simple truth – the one who draws the devil will finally see one. Poor consolation is that in the end of the lullaby, the government will have to meet, face to face, with the ghosts of past it woke up and gave power to.”⁴

Along with outlining the broader political and social moment, one of the preoccupations of journalists in the weeklies, as well as their interviewees, was a question of the nature and functioning of the current government. Power-obsessed Aleksandar Vučić and Serbian Progressive party are negatively portrayed primarily from the liberal-democratic standpoint.

2 Jelena Đorđević „Palanačka kultura kreira politiku [Peasant culture is creating our politics],” interview with Nadežda Gaće, *Novi Magazin*, No.358

3 Ibid, p.23

4 Vesna Mališić, „Igranje vatrom [Playing with fire],” *NIN*, no. 3502, p.4

The government is described as “authoritative”, “oppressive”, “non-democratic”. It is especially important to note its disputed legitimacy in democratic terms, that aims to diminish and void the mass support received in several election cycles over a short period of time. Because of this political plan, any thought of a democratic government is intensively and extensively undermined. In addition to this general political motive, characterized by the consistent editorial policy and political orientation of the majority of Serbian weeklies, the presence of the message was strengthened by a very dynamic election campaign for Belgrade Parliament that took place from January to March.

With the purpose of illustrating this authoritarian regime more closely, sarcastic anecdotes are chosen as a scenic way to convey a strong political message. Thus, on the anniversary of this weekly, the Editor in Chief of *NIN* cleverly refers to the opinion of the former Editor about the importance of this weekly and the significance it had for different regimes, repeating the message that the county is ruled by one and only one man based on all written and unwritten rules.

“One of *NIN*'s Editors thus formulated the relationship between *NIN* and wide readership: ‘*NIN* is read by influencers, not by those it influences on’. Ironic, but precise and accurate. According to that criterion, however, one copy of *NIN* would be enough. If he was alive I am not sure that Brana Petrović would repeat these words today. If he did, I think I know who would receive this one copy.”⁵

Identical message was sent by the famous basketball coach Duško Vujošević, who said for *NIN*: “The absolute dictatorship we are witnessing today is the answer we got to the ‘white voting sheets’ and all those who thought that only DS would be punished, that the punishment would bypass their yard. Today we have a ruler who, instead of conducting a policy, fulfils his own whims. The way he does this is the same – whether it is the demolition of the sports club, Savamala, a media or anything else. This is what worries me the most. Democratic elections mean equal conditions for all. If we want to present ourselves as a democratic society, it is necessary for us to be democrats especially during the election campaign. It's hard to respect the will of the majority whose victory comes as a result of the undemocratic electoral process ... I think the West will remain indifferent to all violations of democratic norms until after the issue of Kosovo is resolved. They need him to complete this task and they know that he is able to control even the most problematic and most aggressive forces and make them accept his solution in peace. The form is similar to the gay parade. It is obvious that they are going to recognize Kosovo and that the only purpose of internal dialogue is to gain the public support to what the leadership has already decided.”⁶

The above-said is only a recycled version of the omnipresent geopolitical thesis on the “agreement” between the president Vučić and the West. According to the alleged agreement, the West will tolerate Vučić non-democratic forms of rule that oppose vital Western political values in return for acceptance of Kosovo's statehood. It is also indicative that Vujošević directly linked Vučić with football fan groups in order to encourage the thesis on the President's friendship with hooligans and his inclination to violence.

5 Milan Čulibrk, „Jubilej [The Jubilee],” *NIN*, No. 3500, p.3

6 Duško Vujošević, „Navijači su bili i ostali Vučićeva vojska [Football fans were and remained Vučić's army],” Interview with Olja Bečković, *NIN*, No. 3503, p.23

In a similar spirit, with greater emphasis on current Serbian government then on the Europe and the United States, former Serbian President Boris Tadić says in one of his many interviews: „Today we have a political and media monologue of one party, and the polarization between democracy and autocracy, freedom and unfreedom, normality and abnormality and finally between political stands. Today it is more important whether one supports the autocratic system than its political program because in a political autocracy program is a piece of paper. Even if we do not share key political objectives with all opposition parties, we share a common goal – a fair electoral process. Today we have no room for democratic competition so all parties that accept basic democratic principles should coordinate activities to ensure these principles. Serbia is a country in a social and political experiment, and its citizens are guinea pigs for testing the effects of systematic spreading of lies through the controlled media and organized political oligarchy. All populists and autocrats from the Baltic to the Adriatic are carefully learning from each other and once again trying to break down the foundations of democracy on the European continent, while preserving only its shell to hide their true intentions.”⁷

Similarly to Vujošević, Tadić's thinking also includes a specific “Kosovo supplement”. In fact, he openly claimed, although with no concrete evidence to support this claim, that the President Vučić, former President Nikolić and Minister of Foreign Affairs of Serbia Ivica Dačić, are ready to ignore all Serbian interests in Kosovo in return for remaining in power. “Today it is clear that in order to stay in power Vučić, Dačić and Nikolić were willing to give up everything that they swore in, and it is also clear that the negotiation process for Kosovo was lead in an amateurish and servile way, without the respect for minimum of national interest, such as the protection of historical and cultural heritage.”⁸

Undemocratic, or more precisely, repressive nature of the government, is reflected in the already well-known phrase – “control over the media.” Opposition's interpretation of media and political reality was given plasticly and with an excess of negative emotion by one of the former leaders of the Democratic Party, Dragan Đilas: “This kind of harassment over the media and citizens has not been seen even during the darkest dictatorships. Sometimes I think that the mechanisms of authoritarian rule exercised by Vučić are worse than the ones Milošević used. We need to stand in the way of this division of people into traitors and thieves, of this hatred which is poured daily from the elite in power on to the citizens. Nothing good can come out of this. There will definately be new elections, we are already champions in this, and since he promised to foreigners that he will change the constitution beacuse of Kosovo and Metohija, I believe that the elections will fall in the end of this or beginning of next year.”⁹

The undoubted semantic harmony with Đilas, Tadić, Vujošević and editor of *NIN* Milan Ćulibrk, is present with the director Goran Marković, a member of the Movement of Free Citizens led by the former Ombudsman Saša Janković. Marković speaks sharply about the nature and functioning of the current government, with the inevitable pessimism and hope that died after the October political “revolution” of 2000. Marković's discourse is paradigmatic since it represents a typical way of thinking and understand-

7 Boris Tadić, „ Nikad ne bih potpisao Briselski sporazum [I would have never signed the Brussels agreement],“ interview with Jelka Jovanović, *Novi Magazin*, No. 350, p. 21

8 Ibid, p. 21

9 Dragan Đilas, „ Ako SNS opet osvoji vlast, Beograd se neće oporaviti vekovima [If SNS takes over the power again, Belgrade will not recover for centuries],“ interview in *Nedeljnik*, No. 317, pp.49-50.



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ing of events rooted in the minds of liberal intellectuals: “The little hope that we received after October 2000 today doesn’t exist, even in traces. We are in the midst of dictatorship that I fought against as a young man, never believing that it could come back again. Truth is not only absent, it is prohibited. Orwell feared over a path man chose, but he certainly never dreamed that he gave a good idea to today’s rulers – a big brother. Look around you – we are living in Orwell’s ‘1984’ “. ¹⁰

George Orwell and his apocalyptic and dystopian vision of a totalitarian society is an intermediate step towards Marković’s political fiction about the tyranny that has hung over Serbian destiny.

After the careful diagnosis of the current situation in politics and society, Marković prophetically announces the change of political order, frivolously using the concepts of dictatorship and tyranny, intimidating the public, with the aim to morally and politically discredit the government, using the democratic-liberal point of view: “The first thing the future tyrant will do is isolate and scare people. In a totalitarian society this is the prerequisite. Then he will prevent the flow of information, reaching the point of total control over media. Then begins the next stage - the introduction of lies and propaganda as a replacement for what media are actually for: telling the truth. This way, people will be deprived of the ability to think and judge. So, at the moment when the truth completely, or almost completely disappears, comes the final stage - terror. To illustrate, this is the moment when they start knocking on your door and taking you away. We are fortunately still in the prelude to this phase, but it cannot be said that it is not planned in future.” ¹¹

Care for the people and society is also expressed in the interview of an opposition MP and a retired university professor, Žarko Korać. In the manner of an ‘expert on the political task’, Korać speaks in length about the implications of the SNS government on the psychological level of Serbian society. Combination of fragmented academic thinking, that is, pale contours of academic matrix and sharp moralistic judgments meet in the following quote: “The problem with any kind of authoritarian leader, Vučić included, is a terribly destructive atmosphere in the society. The result is total cynicism with the majority of the population. People are so cynical that they make fun of indisputable facts, they don’t trust anyone and they believe that the whole political system should be abolished. Another result is anxiety, people are tense, nervous, unhappy. They fight in stores, queues... bad mood, disbelief, because they can not decide on anything, the leader treats them like a rag and continuously intimidates. He says if you’re good, you shut up and do what I tell you to do, think what I tell you to think and everything will be fine. The moment one raises a question he threatens the system, he suffers terrible aggression and is exposed to media lynch.” ¹²

Another in a series of examples “of academia applied to daily politics” is the attitude of Vuk Jeremić’s National Party member, Psychologist and former leader of the Democratic Party of Serbia (DSS), Sanda Rašković Ivić, whose attitudes are openly and with cynical enthusiasm transferred to the reader by Dragoljub Žarković, Editor in Chief of *Vreme*: “Vučić ‘caught’ a part of the citizens, a little more than one

10 Goran Marković „Titova strahovlada je opereta u poređenju sa ovom sadašnjom [Tito’s authoritarianism is an opera in comparison with today’s],” interview with Branko Rosić, *Nedeljnik*, No. 351, p.38

11 Ibid, p. 39

12 Žarko Korać, „Vođe plaćaju cenu onda kada padnu sa vlasti [Rulers pay the price once they step down],” interview with Tanja Nikolić Đaković, *NIN*, No. 3504

million people, and particularly those humiliated and offended, became enchanted by him. By performing his circus charade in the media that he occupied, he rules them. He keeps giving them hope by blaming the ‘guilty’ ones and promising to punish them. *They are practically his medium, these desperate people* who are turned into junkies of hope. They are so hooked on this hope, without it they cannot survive and Vučić keeps selling it to them without actually doing anything. From some he even stole, like pensioners for example.” ¹³

Of course, the whole critical discourse by both opposition parties and public figures is unimaginable without the negative obsession with Aleksandar Vučić’s persona. Political criticism is infused with personal animosity which is openly expressed by the participants in the public debate. The distinctive critical key that is originally politically irrelevant, since it essentially doesn’t deal with public policy, in a free impression on the personality of the President, describes him as a promoter of kitsch and a coward. Thus, literary critic Božo Koprivica says: “Public speaking has become a gross play. It is not even kitsch as kitsch can be interesting in a bar, in literature, in music if dosed properly. Everything has to have a little kitsch. However, it annoys me to hear that Vučić is some kind of a major political and propaganda master. Hold on people, the man is the ultimate coward. It wasn’t by accident that I said he feels good only among his parrots; he pushes someone out to say what he thinks. Otherwise, he has no clue about anything, he only imitates Tito, and visits factories and things alike. He looks to me like some kid from the school playground who claims that he can play, and then, when they realize they can not play, they kick him out of the team.” ¹⁴

In the ongoing quest to prove the manipulative and morally decadent nature of Vučić’s government there is an fixation on “details”, which will allegedly “demystify” the “great truth” about the government, especially its first man. “Vučić as a man of great and constant lies” is the slogan that results from analysis of the response to the provocative questions during Aleksandar Vučić’s visit to Croatia in the winter of 2018. When asked about the statement of the Republic of Serbian Krajina in 1995, as a territory which does not belong to Croatia, President Serbia reacted with a combination of indifference and necessary oblivion focusing on current challenges.

However, this media maneuver encouraged and led Teofil Pančić, journalist of *Vreme*, to start “awakening” and reminding the citizens of Serbia and the region about the right-wing past of the current president of Serbia. In the manner of “moral awakener of the society in oblivion,” in a morally condemning way, Pančić almost angrily notes: “Back in Glina. Vučić was caught in a miserable, amateur lie. Perhaps because his reflexes became completely dulled in the conquered Serbia, but he forgot that there wasn’t a paid army behind him to protect him from himself. But, much more important and far worse was the lie he was caught in then the one he uttered, relativising it: ‘This does not matter. It did not kill anybody, nor did it burn anybody’s house’. Living here in the last quarter of a century meant being exposed to a machine-gun fire of quite shameless, reckless lies. However, I can not remember a more all-inclusive lie than this one told by Vučić. So what killed all those people, was it a game of Monopoly?! This was an

13 Dragoljub Žarković, „Od Vrginmosta do Savskog mosta – Šta je Vučić govorio u Glini, čiji je Branko Pešić i kako se beogradski izbori marginalizuju [From Vrginmost (bridge) to Sava bridge – what was Vučić saying in Glina, whose is Branko Pešić and how are Belgrade elections marginalized],” *Vreme*, No. 1415, p.5

14 Božo Koprivica, „Ne pružati otpor nije biblijski! [Not showing resistance is against the Bible!],” interview with Filip Švarm, *Vreme*, No. 1412, p.26

incredibly gigantic eruption of a lie, at least a hundred kilotons powerful, radioactive lie which, when its explosion was heard outside Serbia, reached the moon, that is how loudly it detonated. And here nothing happened: we passively agreed to lies, even if we don't believe in them we don't take them very seriously, and all we do is wonder to someone else's wonder. After all, if we were not this way, there would be no Vučić today, he would be a nobody and nothing. To us, to Croatia, to anyone between heaven and earth."¹⁵

Pančić's political expression about the President of Serbia is almost symmetrical with the one of the Editor in Chief of *Vreme* Dragoljub Žarković, who qualifies Aleksandar Vučić as a man prone to abuse and neglect of statistics that describe political and economic reality. For *Žarković*, Vučić is a true manipulator and a political demagogue in the original sense of the word. This is expressed in his column in *Vreme*: "Vučić is like a magician who pulls out only those tables and Charts that suit him from the sack, and hides under the table the things he doesn't want to give answers about. Pigeons and rabbits jump out of his hat and he uses magic tricks – now you see it, now you do not."¹⁶

Period from January to March 2018 wasn't lacking the strong rhetorics on the issue of the relations of the Government of Serbia towards European policy. President's commitment to European integrations is in fact understood as a political-media mimicry, with an aim to strengthen his position in the eyes of the West. European preference of Aleksandar Vučić is, based on the judgment of certain parts of the public, fundamentally disputeable. It exists solely for foreign or media-political use. On the other hand, his pro-Russian attitude is genuine and corresponds to the authoritarian nature of his rule. This view, otherwise omni-present in the liberal-civil opposition circles, was expressed by Predrag Korksić Koraks, a cartoonist and ardent supporter of the opposition in all periods of the local political pluralism. Koraksić says: "All this is a big lie and I have no illusions that we will ever get to Europe. Flirting with Putin and Russia tells me that all this Europe talk is not happening and that Vučić is saying one thing to the West and another to the local Russophilic public. Of course, I am convinced that everything has to break and collapse like a house of cards. With the naked eye you can see a permanent decline. Vučić has invaded the entire country and there is no doubt that this is autocracy. It is a system in which his servants existentially depend on him. It goes from the top with Sinisa Mali, Vesić and other hypocrites down to the lower levels like a metastasis."¹⁷

Semantically almost identical, and with a concise and accurate description of the current policy of the Government of Serbia, Dragan Šutanovac has offered the view of the Democratic Party: "This is a creeping dictatorship with elements of enormous aggression, violence, despicable pressures, indecent agitation. This country has a government which is declaratively committed to EU, but doing everything contrary to EU values."¹⁸

15 Teofil Pančić, „Čovek od gline [A man of Glin (clay)],“ *Vreme*, No. 1415, p. 18

16 Dragoljub Žarković, „Od Vrginmosta do Savskog mosta – Šta je Vučić govorio u Glini, čiji je Branko Pešić i kako se beogradski izbori marginalizuju [From Vrginmost (bridge) to Sava bridge – what was Vučić saying in Glin, whose is Branko Pešić and how are Belgrade elections marginalized],“ *Vreme*, No. 1415, p.5

17 Predrag Korksić Koraks „Karikatura je presuda vlasti [Caricature is a judgement to the Government],“ interview with Zoran Preradović, *NIN*, No. 3500, p. 40

18 Dragan Šutanovac, „Neko će u istoriju, a neko će u zatvor [Someone will go down in history, and someone will go to prison],“ interview with Tanja Nikolić Đaković, *NIN*, No. 3503, p.11

These specific “meeting points” in a public speech, represented by typical examples best illustrate the semantic and rhetorical unanimity in views between representatives of the opposition and certain groups of intellectuals, also showing the paradox of devotion to the European integrations in Serbia. The pro-European Government of Ana Brnabić, strongly supported by President Vučić, undoubtedly successful from the point of opening of chapters in the EU accession process is however exposed to relentless and mostly empty criticism precisely by those who recognize EU as a strategic goal of Serbia and the basis for future progress of society.

After all the pseudo-psychologically-moral and political argumentation which “showed” that the current president of Serbia is an authoritarian ruler, with unstable and problematic individual psychology, ready to use violence and spread fear all for the sake of maintaining power, the discussion was transferred to the field of political and the social-economic scene.

Economic policy, reform of judiciary and Kosovo policy of the Government of Serbia were the subjects of fierce debate in the analysed period, including a wide range of critical “forms”: from political criminalization, ‘expert’ charges, to unilateral interpretations of statistical data which show the socio-economic state in the country.

The murder of a prominent political leader of Kosovo Serbs, Oliver Ivanović, has launched a range of different and very strong accusations against the current government, especially President Vučić. Vučić is accused of being an accomplice in the murder on several interrelated levels. The first and most striking aspect is outlined in the thesis that the government deliberately gave up control over all spheres of life in Serbian parts of Kosovo. The starting point of this thesis is that it is so-called *withdrawal of the government from Kosovo*, which is the idea contained in the Brussels Agreement signed between Belgrade, Priština and the EU, led to the formation of criminal groups who, according to different statements, rule the Serbian communities in Kosovo.

In this sense, an informal criminal group also stands behind Ivanović's murder, and the responsibility of the authorities is precisely in allowing it to exist. This thesis is put forward by Rada Trajković, a political activist from Kosovo, a close associate of the assassinated Oliver Ivanović: “After all, why would they kill us, when there is already an installed mafia group that kills Serbs as a part of Albanian project. I don't know the price of what I am about to say, but I have to say this; I have to explain the historical responsibility of Serbs who do not realize that this is reality. The international community is aware of the Serbian president's unclear conscience, but is silent because they are awaiting the betrayal of Kosovo. They will surely process him, no doubt, they are just waiting to quickly fulfill the agenda that they have planned. Since the signing of the Brussels Agreement and a hand-over to Kosovo system, we have a terrible eviction of Serbs, we have Kosovo without Serbs.”¹⁹

It is interesting that the great fighter for the «Serb thing,» Rada Trajković labels and judges very tendentiously and confidently only on the basis of her own intuition, while missing the relevant evidence. And, Trajković's propaganda speech was prominent on the subject. Her discourse confirms that there are

19 Rada Trajković, “Vučić je praktično predao srpsku zajednicu mafiji [Vučić practically handed over the Serbian community to the mafia],“ an interview with Olja Bečković, *NIN*, No. 3501, p. 10



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no important arguments in political discreditation, nor any basic logic, but mere desire to achieve an effect with politically passive part of the citizens.

Another “indisputable evidence” of Vučić’s involvement in Ivanović murder is a negative campaign against Oliver Ivanović guided by the people «close to the authorities». Negative campaign allegedly led by certain media created a climate for the liquidation of Oliver Ivanović. This is clearly represented by the journalist of *Vreme*, Filip Švarm: “It is not known who the perpetrators and the financiers of the murder of Oliver Ivanović are. We are supposed to believe that they will be discovered and brought to justice. But now something else is clear. And that is that the extremists are both on the Serbian and the Albanian side - more precisely, the mafia clans and their political infrastructures - they are ready to do everything in order to permanently keep the atmosphere of fear and anarchy that characterizes the north of Kosovo. Hate speech and raising national tensions for the sake of power and daily political points determine their positions ... In his hyper-emotional policy (of Aleksandar Vučić), permanent aggression is directed against dissidents in the entire public life. When it comes to this last one, one should not forget that during the campaign in Kosovo’s local elections, the municipal candidates of the Civic Initiative «Serbia, Democracy, Justice» quit the race due to a series of pressures and threats. Also, Pink Television, where every Vucic’s letter and gesture is followed, a propaganda video was broadcast accusing Ivanovic of not shedding a single tear over a young Serbian man Milos Scepanovic, while crying about his Volkswagen for 15 days.»²⁰

Almost exactly the same messages in connection with the murder of Oliver Ivanović, came from the president of the Democratic Party and a former defense minister, Dragan Šutanovac, who in an interview for the weekly newspaper *Vreme* says: “If people from the state authorities Marko Đurić and others, pronounce someone to be a traitor or a foreign mercenary, then the legal protection for this man is simply taken away. Then every fool can do what they want, they can throw a rock at a man or shoot him. That is the great responsibility of this government. I do not think that he was killed by a ‘complete idiot’ by chance, but thanks to the media lynch. This ‘idiot’ probably thought he was doing someone a favor because the man was clearly the opponent of the state leadership. There are a significant and serious number of security services in Kosovo and Metohija that have to answer the questions: who shot Oliver Ivanović and who was the inspirer.»²¹

In line with the criminalization discussion about Oliver Ivanović, journalist Filip Švarm did not miss an opportunity to vigorously and unreservedly attack the behavior of Serbian president and his unscrupulous «permanent campaign» in which he showed a lack of democratic political culture and a deficit of personal competence. Švarm’s approach is clear.

In fact, the idea is that anything that happens in Serbia or the region, controversial for any reason, becomes used for the continuous repetition of negative messages about Aleksandar Vučić: «The President of the Republic had to use even such a traumatic event, for his constant political campaign. That is why, after his address, there was a particularly painful feeling. It could not alleviate anything, including the

20 Filip Švarm, “Hronika najavljenog ubistva [The Chronicle of the pre-announced Murder],” *Vreme*, No. 1411

21 Dragan Šutanovac, “Ne ide se lopatom na bager [You can’t attack an excavator with a shovel],” interview with Zora Drčelić, *Vreme*, No. 1411, p. 19

fact that not even the opposition handles the discussion about this in the right way. Because everything is absolutely in Vučić's hands: a complete concentration of political power, complete domination over the media, and full authority over the vertical and horizontal powers in the country. Together with his soldiers, his tireless quarreling with opponents has long ceased to be troubling. Now it's very dangerous.»²²

Not only was the murder of Oliver Ivanović an incentive to express the fierce political criticism of the current government. Equally inspiring was the idea of an internal dialogue on Kosovo and Metohija proposed by the Serbian president in the second half of the year.

In the already common manner of the relevant representatives of the so-called liberal public, Dragoljub Žarković from *Vreme* challenges the legitimacy of the idea of internal dialogue in Serbia. His intention is to challenge any democratic credentials of government. Vučić's non-democratic authority is such that he does not have a «moral right» to lead this dialogue. This right has been lost due to the general state of affairs in the country, especially when it comes to the treatment of political competition and the critical public: «How is the dialogue possible in the situation of insisting on 'them' and 'us', and isn't the President of the Academy right when he says that the dialogue is lead with 'mutual blame-shifting, accusations and divisions and as such loses every meaning?' I would add prejudice to this. And unfortunately, this is all we can see in this moment on the public scene.»²³

A very similar and more accurate attitude about the nature of the internal dialogue on Kosovo was expressed by archbishop Amfilohije Radović, who often accuses Serbian president of betraying Serbian national interests: «The leaders of the 'public dialogue' obviously have the regard only for those who agree with their ideology, i.e. who accept their monologue as the last word on the Kosovo-Metohija, an issue that is being debated over for almost 650 years!»²⁴

Regardless of the different value and political point of view with Žarković and Amfilohije, former senior official of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the current leader of the party «Levica Srbije» Borko Stefanović agrees: «Now we come to the so-called "internal dialogue" on Kosovo. It is a smokescreen of the regime to hide a narrow maneuvering space that leads only to a binding, comprehensive agreement with Priština. This agreement is one of the points of the SNS regime's consent to the Western allies and they have to fulfill it. The internal dialogue serves as an alibi to Vučić who appears to listen to different opinions about Kosovo and that he makes a decision himself. He needs a cover for the decisions he has already made. For this purpose, he leads some conversations with the like-minded people, with people who have the need to repeat the long-overdue and unrealistic proposals for Kosovo. These talks are routine, without content and form, with a label tagline how it is of utmost importance to enter a new phase of resolving the Kosovo problem, bearing in mind the «mistakes, lack of courage and intelligence of the previous Governments». It is unlikely that anyone with integrity and personal dignity will agree to be part of this charade in which Vučić

22 Filip Švarn, "Hronika najavljenog ubistva [The Chronicle of the pre-announced Murder]," *Vreme*, No. 1411, p. 4

23 Dragoljub Žarković, "Đavolske muke sa dijalogom – o popovima i političarima i zašto na razgovor zovu samo one koji veruju u svog Boga [Infernal troubles with dialogue - about priests and politicians and why only those who believe in their God are called to talk]," *Vreme*, No. 1410, p. 5

24 Amfilohije Radović, "Dijalog o Kosovu traje 650 godina [Dialogue on Kosovo lasts 650 years]," interview with Nataša Jovanović, *Pečat*, No. 502, p. 18

tells the already anesthetized and disinterested public that, after long and difficult talks, he agreed to a comprehensive binding agreement with Priština.»²⁵

The illegal arrest and public humiliation of Marko Djurić in Kosovo was a new opportunity for criticism at the expense of the authorities and the Chief negotiator of Serbia in Brussels. Thus, the editor of *Vreme*, Dragoljub Žarković, in a recognizable, brisk manner, talks about the arrest of Đurić: "It is no wonder that there are more and more conspiracy theories that all this is a set up charade. He recalls Vučić's statement prior to the visit of Serbian officials who said that they would cross the administrative border one way or another. And since they crossed it 'in another way', therefore, illegally, the ROSU (Kosovo Police) was given a reason for an intervention that was more averse than rational and had all the implications of torture, which probably led the Kosovo authorities to show who the boss is. Suspicions about the scenario have reinforced and subsequently extracted information that the web portal *pravda.rs* published the news about the arrest of Marko Djurić, five hours before he was actually arrested. I am not sure that the two sides in this dispute agree on such a play, if that is the case. But, I do not doubt that they are capable of using every opportunity that the 'opponent' gives them for deception and later on satisfactory handshake. They show power, fairness, and prove what they need at a particular political moment.»²⁶

In the same manner, but another occasion, journalists of newspaper *Vreme* use the motive of Kosovo policy of the Serbian government for an open political match with the government. Already established governor of opposition in a set of leading-on questions and accusatory statements, journalist Zora Drčelić and journalist Slobodan Georgiev, reacted to the case of banning the match between junior women's teams of Serbia and Kosovo in Kovilovo. After the state banned the match because of the possible outbursts, the critics were very involved in a continuous campaign against the current government. Even the competent risks assessments of about the safety of participants in the game was not a reason enough for lowering down the tension in a very critical moment for the Kosovo issue. On the occasion of the ban on the game, with a surplus of anti-government political commitment and a lack of necessary restraint, journalist Zora Drčelić insinuatingly writes: «When an international handball game between juniors of Serbia and junior 'so-called Kosovo' was canceled, on that same day Aleksandar Vučić, President of Serbia, met in Brussels with Hashim Thaci, the so-called president of the so-called Kosovo. A normal person had to wonder: why didn't the president of Serbia ever cancel his 'match talks' with 'the so-called president of the so-called Kosovo' since in his diplomatic discussions he in fact recognizes his 'so-called' function and his so-called 'state'? Where is this 'so-called' difference then? Why, therefore, didn't the president cancel his diplomatic match with Thaci when it was as Minister Nebojsa Stefanović put it, 'contrary to all our interests'? Well, because he would be disqualified. And he, of course, would not be disqualified, he wants to be in the game both on the outside and on the inside ... Vučić's policy is a policy of double arches, a policy for external and internal use, a duplicity that has so far successfully ensured its political existence.»²⁷

25 Borko Stefanović, "Samo ne stolica u UN [Just Not a Chair in the UN]," *Vreme*, No. 1411, p. 8

26 Dragoljub Žarković, "Kosovski ciklus – Zamrzavanje konflikta doprinosi podgrevanju sukoba, o čemu smo imali pokaznu vežbu u Mitrovačkom dvoru i na ulicama Prištine [The Kosovo cycle - Freezing the conflict contributes to the upheaval of conflicts, we had demonstration exercises in the Mitrovica court and in the streets of Priština]," *Vreme*, No. 1421, p. 5

27 Zora Drčelić, "Kosovsko proleće Aleksandra Vučića [Kosovo Spring of Aleksandar Vučić]," *Vreme*, No. 1421, p. 6

In attempt to remain a consistent critic of nationalism, at all costs and regardless of the context, the fiery admirer of sports, journalist Slobodan Georgiev speaks about the fore-mentioned prohibition of the match and interprets himself as a detainee of an abstractly understood national interest, once again highlights that the sport is instrumentalized by the authorities for the daily political points: «So-called national interest is placed above the sport interest, which is why most of the children ran to the field to play sports in the first place. Now they are being told that some national interests are above their sport. In addition, the forbidden game in Kovilovo showed that the state is easily surrendered before the crowd of hooligans, fans who like to sing patriotic songs.»²⁸

The areas of the judiciary were an important part of this analysis in the period January-March 2018. The reason is understandable with regard to the current reform of the judiciary through constitutional and legal changes, which requires the opening of chapters 23 and 24 in the process of European integrations. The views of the critics of the government, according to the unwritten rule, were very harsh. Their «clarity» is further strengthened by the actualization of former justice representatives appointed to experts who need to «support» the pre-occupied newspaper editorial position, through which they publicly advertise for the needs of developing critical discourse with a greater or lesser basis. Journalist of the weekly newspaper *NIN* Sandra Petrušić informed the general public that constitutional changes confirm the lack of expertise of the proposers and the excess of the political influence over the institutions. Summary of her attitude is that incompetent government cannot promote the rule of law offered by constitutional reform, since it is only capable of pursuing its political interests. She explicitly and unquestionably states: «Although the constitutional changes belong in the field of the judiciary alpha and omega of our road to the EU, the authorities have transferred them to the sphere of unlawful activities, dealing mostly with the satanization of judges and prosecutors. Under these circumstances, it was easy to completely disguise the expert discussion and turn it into a reality show, like everything else our society. Finally, we got an 'advanced' state in the sense of the progressives: hairdressers and locksmiths became intellectual-professional pillars of development and actively contributed with their knowledge and skills to the Government's Action Plan for Chapter 23. Also the experts who will be involved in drafting the amendments to the Constitution have already been appointed since it has been decided that the legal profession, represented by judges, prosecutors and the civil sector, is not fit after all to contribute to the process of drafting a new Constitution. He simply cannot understand that the democratic principle of branches of government (legislative, executive and judicial) ceases to exist when the SNS wins the elections, as the SNS wants absolutely everything. Along with this, he insists that 'all' this is legitimately given to them in a form of a reality show under the name of 'public debate'. Not happening- replied the profession and left the debate. We don't care, replied the regime and formed a new, better and 'older' associations overnight, which would give legitimacy to their partition of the Constitution.»²⁹

Simultaneously with the unprofessional and voluntary minded government, she talks about the (in) complete implementation of constitutional reform. It is a thesis that the current government has received a «green light» for this kind of judicial reform, as it is ready to deal with the issue of Kosovo. This view is represented by Dragana Boljević, President of the Association of Judges, which has a significant public and political influence. On the subject of the reform of the judiciary, she says: «We have heard that there

28 Slobodan Georgiev, «Obrana Srbije na sedmercu [Serbian Defence],» *Vreme*, No. 1421, p. 12

29 Sandra Petrušić, «Javna rasprava u krugu prijatelja [Public Discussion in a Circle of Friends],» *NIN*, No. 3506, p. 28

is again some kind of trade deal on the table that the government is expected to soften the situation regarding the Brussels agreement and in return it will receive a carte blanche for the judiciary.»³⁰

The proposed solutions on the selection of prosecutors, in the opinion of (the media exposed) prosecutor Goran Ilić, do not contribute to the creation of institutional guarantees that they will be independent and in the service of citizens. On the contrary. The proposed solutions make the pressure from the political elites possible: «Amendments proposed by the Ministry carry out the relocation of political influence from one authority to another, multiplication and concentration of political influence. If things remain like this, at least when the prosecution is concerned, citizens will find it much more difficult to reach justice, especially when someone influential and politically powerful is on the other side.»³¹

The former President of the Supreme Court of Serbia, Vida Petrović Škero, in an interview for the newspaper *NIN*, gave a significant contribution to the creation of a negative image of government. Quite resolutely, she brought the current judicial reform into question, arguing that it does not contribute to the minimization of political influence on the process of election and functioning of the judiciary, which is also a request of the EU in the process of enlargement but also a civilization value. «That we must have a system in which executive and legislative power will influence the expert branch of government, is a very dangerous claim. Another thing that should never be said is that the independent judiciary is fetishism, an ideological myth in a situation where representatives of judiciary who behave as if they were above all. What our government does not understand, and it would have to understand if it really wants to be an equal member of the EU one day, is that the independence of the judiciary is not the right of the judge, but the citizens' right. The citizens are the ones who, when they enter the court expect to get a fair decision independent from politics and from tycoons.»³²

In support of the thesis that politics significantly interferes with the work of the judiciary, she quotes a public comment by the Serbian president regarding the course and outcome of the trial of the former Minister of Economy in the government of former Prime Minister Vojislav Koštunica, Predrag Bubalo. It's important to note here that after Vučić's comment, there was no difference in the legal decision within the trial in question, and that is, it did not in any way affect the change of the court's position, as it was pre-insinuated in the statements of individual public figures, alluding to the pressure of the authority on the court. Nevertheless, a negative qualification was held in the public that the president of Serbia questioned the normal functioning of the legal order: «President Vučić, speaking to the public on the case of Minister Bubalo, said: 'When we were working on the case, the prosecutors said they had a clean case, but the court considered it different'. He worked on the case at the time he was the prime minister?! And he is convinced that the evidence was collected, just as Vučević is convinced. How can they know when a judgment has not yet been drafted? How the executive has an insight into the evidence collected by the prosecution, let alone analyze whether this is sufficient. There are courts for this, and without them the prosecution,

30 Dragana Boljević, «Političari podržavaju najlošije sudije [Politicians Support the Worst Judges],» interview with Ivan Pejčić, *Novi Magazin*, No. 361, p. 18

31 Goran Ilić, «Teška poruka vlasti tužiocima [Heavy Message to Prosecutors],» *Novi Magazin*, No. 355, p. 20

32 Vida Petrović Škero, «Vlast je zgazila pravosuđe [The government is above the judiciary],» an interview with Sandra Petrušić, *NIN*, No. 3498, p. 26

which is a party to the proceedings, could immediately determine one's guilt and impose penalties.»³³

After the judiciary, the focus in critical discourse is shifted to another important area for both politicians and society as a whole - to the economy. The questions of economic growth, the effects of fiscal consolidation, and the management of public enterprises are placed in the epicenter of political criticism.

Opening the issue of GDP growth - in opposition to the media - represents a political response to officially published data on unexpectedly high economic growth and fiscal discipline. In order to minimize the current positive trend, Comparative statistics from the past few years have been called to «help» in order to minimize the current positive trend. Out-of-context analysis, more precisely a rough comparison of data, without considering the current economic challenges or rather a part of structural economic problems, arises from the intention to relativize positive developments in the economy. In this context, *NIN* Editor in Chief Milan Ćulibrk writes: «For the past six years, total GDP growth in Montenegro and BiH has been twice, in Albania and Macedonia three, and in Romania four times higher than in Serbia. In the whole region, only Croatia is worse, but since 2015, it too has grown faster than us.»³⁴

Along with the story on general economic indicators, the economic viability of concrete economic projects is also put into question. Thus, the former director of JAT, contests the economic account for the launch of the AIR Serbia project, pointing to the losses of one and the other company: «The losses of Air Serbia are higher than the losses of JAT. In the period 2010-2012, the net losses of JAT Airways were about EUR 105 million. If we do not count the state subsidies, the net losses of Air Serbia in the period 2014-2016 they were 150 million euros. What did we get then?»³⁵

That the economic policy of Serbian Government is poor, is confirmed by the businessman Milan Knežević, an independent contractor, often present in the professional public as a protector of small and medium-sized enterprises. In his view, the burden of fiscal consolidation was paid off by the creative part of an economy that is export-oriented. In the light of this circumstance, any talk on the economic progress is outrageous. Knežević says for *NIN*: «The highest price of fiscal consolidation has already been paid by half-hearted companies, of which the state takes money and finances their competition, mainly foreign companies that function as flow water heaters: all imports, to hirings, the cheapest workforce and then export.»³⁶

In the desire to comprehend the criticism comprehensively, even at the cost of consistency, citizens with the lowest incomes are considered as losers in the process of economic reforms, especially fiscal consolidation and tax policy, while big investors are protected with low taxes: «Look at the country with the greatest inequalities in Europe, look at wages, economic policy, clientele and party employment in the public sector, media monopoly, experiments with the judiciary and independent state organs. Or a servile relationship to corporate capital. Did you see anywhere else that someone does what they did

33 Ibid, p. 27

34 Milan Ćulibrk « Puževim korakom jurimo komšije [We are competing with neighbors in snail speed],» *NIN*, No. 3498, p. 11

35 Predrag Vujović, «Naplaćivanje vode pred zatvaranje radnje [Charging for water before closing the store],» *Vreme*, No. 1419

36 Milan Knežević, «Zagrobni život srpske privrede [The Afterlife of the Serbian Economy],» *NIN*, No. 3508, p. 28

with Fiat Crysler and the strike in Goša? Does the dissatisfaction of our small and medium-sized entrepreneurs say something? Does linear taxation say anything? Tax rates go up to 15 percent in Slovenia, up to 50 percent in Slovenia and Croatia, and when democrats come from Germany, they are surprised by regressive taxes. A regressive tax, as it is in our country, is relatively worse for the lowest earnings. Instead of being like Robin Hood, the government is like the Superhik (comic character) – it takes from poor to gives to the rich. Why is there no property law yet?»³⁷

Low economic growth, the burden of fiscal consolidation in the face of entrepreneurship and the ordinary citizen, as well as the unsuccessful government projects, such as Air Serbia, are some of the key points of the analysis economic policy that created a negative image with the aim of complete relativization and even abolishing the mere idea that Serbia has made some progress in the field of economy.

In print media, the right of citizenship was also given to idea of partocracy, as a main obstacle to the economic development, and the (ab)use of this term has induced a negative attitude to the economic policy of power. The development of this idea is strengthened by the fact that the government has still not finished the process of professionalization of running public enterprises, and based on the new Law on Public Enterprises. Emphasizing the motives, partocracy is seen as an obstacle to economic development, something that is definitely not a new idea. It is largely present in public opinion and is relying on a rooted negative stereotype towards politics and politicians. Accordingly, for this motive, as a rule intervene whenever necessary to try to mobilize a passive part of the population.

The appropriate space is given to attitudes that are strongly advocated by prof. Dr. Danica Popović in accordance with daily political and marketing need. She says in an interview for the weekly newspaper *Vreme*: «And now you see that nobody can get a job if he is not a member of SNS, that the economy is scandalous, that the judiciary does not work ... nothing is alive, but there is no deficit. This is the situation we are in. It all depends on the party. They hold the economy. Even the opposition parties are sometimes in power, at some local parts of the country, and they live there. This was the case even before the SNS when they had power at the local level. It is a sign that they give to each other, that they will always do so. In a style -I will not take everything from you; I'll leave you so much that you can survive, so that you can keep your head above the water-. This is the parasite system, autocracy that has been introduced long ago, and since 2001 it has shamefully increased, especially when the DSS came to power, when everything was based on a party basis and when public contests were abolished by state-owned enterprises and after that you have no jurisdiction, you do not have legislative power, you have no way to fight for anything.»³⁸

Nevertheless, the culmination of a negative picture of the Serbian economy stems from the negative obsession with the political leader of Serbia, Aleksandar Vučić. The manifestation of the mentioned moral-political inclination is contained in the words of the former mayor and leader of the DS Dragan Đilas, who writes for the newspaper *Vreme*: «How can a man who never sold one old book and who only

37 Zoran Stojiljković, «Razorna kombinacija neoliberalizma i klijentelizma [A Destructive Combination of Neoliberalism and Clientellism],» an interview with Ivana Milanović Hrašovec, *Vreme*, No. 3507

38 Danica Popović, «Gomila laži, beznađa i neuspeha [A bunch of lies, hopelessness and failure],» interview with Radmila Marković, No. 1413, p. 29

has politics in his work bioCharty talk about economy? This is why we are at a standstill and it will be worse, as long as those who run the state are attacking those who have done something in their life.»³⁹

The opposition's image in the media-no moral credibility or democratic legitimacy, while constantly challenged to survive on the political scene

Similar to the general image of the Government, the opposition's image is predominantly negative. A special role in ascribing the negative values to the opposition parties has the daily *Informer*, both in daily published texts as well as in the editorial columns by Dragan J. Vučićević. His columns misconstrue the characters on the political scene in a morally-political sense the same way they critically approach the opposition media and non-government organizations, followed by an almost inevitable reflection at the period of rule of the 5th October elections winners.

The main theses of these texts could be summarized in these three mutually related points that form the mentioned author's approach: 1. the current opposition has no moral credibility (due to the highly corrupted political group that makes its biggest part) or political capacity to lead the country as a consequence of the unsuccessfully lead process of transition in Serbia, 2. in the opposition-friendly media and in the printed media which make the majority of them at the present moment, the Government is attacked without any rational argument and with the explicit goal to be unlawfully overthrown, 3. there is an undoubted discrimination of anyone who does not oppose the Vučić's Government in the media which directly support the opposition parties.

Vučićević's criticism of the Serbian opposition scene is as equally directed at the opposition's role of the political life, as it is directed at the media which have the explicitly critical attitude towards the Government. His criticism is always based on the *ad hominem* principle and extremely personalized which results in a persuasion and suggestion effect. By stigmatizing certain characters, their psychological profile is emphasized which makes them unworthy of any function or role in the public life in Serbia. The *Informer* Editor in Chief's texts are relevant to understand the media-political scene in Serbia, at least when it comes to these three mutually related reasons. First of all, the style and content of the messages reflected in his texts suggest the interest in politics and curiosity about public affairs with the less educated classes of society that make the most of this tabloid's readers and that at the same time have been verified loyal voters in the elections. Secondly, the daily *Informer* is of essential importance for the Government, because it continuously questions the negative criticism and media-political image of the Government which are almost constantly created and reproduced by the critically oriented media. Finally, the *Informer* is an unquestionable leader in the world of the printed daily media, when it comes to creation of the negative image of the current opposition as a political figure.

39 Dragan Đilas, "Vučić je ekonomska neznalica [Vučić is an economic ignoramus]", *Vreme*, No. 1420

In the period between October and December 2017, Vučićević analyzed the media scene in Serbia, offering mostly negative estimate of the radically oriented media and the opposition's image on the social media. Also, he was actively engaged in the criticism of the Europe-oriented public, while openly expressing support to Russia and its political leader Vladimir Putin.

Such political set of values of the *Informer's* Editor in Chief does not lead towards the conclusion that there is a similarity between the attitude of Dragan J. Vučićević, that is, his editorial staff, and that of the Serbian government, as it is claimed by the many public figures while commenting on freedom of the media and defining this daily as the ruling party's journal, since the Government itself is an active member of the European integration process as well as an advocate of the regional peace and political stability.

What remains clear is that the way in which information is conveyed in this daily is predominantly critical, that the moral stigmatization of the certain public figures is often used which results in affirmation of certain values with the readers.

In that sense, the Euro reform oriented opposition is stripped of any principle and moral credibility. In accordance with this thesis about the opposition's acts, the Editor in Chief of *Informer* claims that the opposition is ready to use any means to take over the rule in Belgrade, including the protests which might resemble those protests in Ukraine at the Maidan Square, which escalated into political violence and resulted in the overthrow of the Government in 2014: "I don't have any doubts that if Đilas-Janković-Jeremić joined with Šapić, Šutanovac and other wanna-be leaders of DOS win in March in the capital, the very same moment we will have a major crisis of the Government at every level. The yellow pages which still form the majority of our media will be happy to deny the legitimacy of SPP and the President Vučić's rule of the republic; the foreigners will activate their 'sleepers' from all sides and at all levels, even those at the very top of the ruling coalition; the tycoons, Mišković being only one of them, will not spare their dirty money. To cut the long story short- within 15 days we will have a complete chaos wherein the figures financially more powerful than the foreigners themselves and more supported than ever 'other Serbs' will not fail to create a violent, street, bloody scenario of the Ukrainian sort."⁴⁰

Vučićević notices the absence of a democratic political principle in the disapproval of Ljubiša Preletačević Beli's candidacy, who personifying a political parody managed to win 10% of the votes during the previous elections thus occupying the very third place: "The attempt of Đilas, Šapić, Janković, Jeremić, Šutanovac and other so called leaders of the so called opposition to ban the list of Ljubiša Preletačević Beli at the elections in Belgrade clearly points to at least three things. Firstly, Đilas and Šapić and the rest of them know pretty well they will face another electoral failure on 4th March, so by attacking Beli and accusing this comedian from Mladenovac of cooperation with Vučić, they are trying to first take away a few votes from him, but also to prepare an alibi for their inevitable and God knows which in a row, shameful electoral defeat. Secondly, by accusing Beli of frivolity and state mocking, the DOS wanna-be leaders are trying to present themselves as serious people and the only ones who are capable of leading this city and this country. This is why the very same Beli who in the last year's presidential campaign in their media was referred to as 'an important proof of democracy' and celebrated as 'an authentic rebellion of the oppressed against the theft-based system' (the quote of Jovo Bakić in the daily *Danas*), is now

40 Dragan J. Vučićević, "Najvažniji izbori [The most important elections]", *Informer*, 13th January 2018, p. 5

proclaimed to be a dirty game of the regime and 'the project of Vučić's secret police!?! Thirdly and most importantly, Đilas, Šapić, Janković, Jeremić and Šutanovac's strike on Beli definitely and unmistakably proves that the thing called the opposition in today's Serbia has no principle, or ideology, nor any kind of democracy. Thus, it is good that the episode with Beli happened. It is great that at this example the worst hypocrisy of DOS's plunderers and frauds came to daylight. So don't get surprised if in next elections 'the frivolous Beli' wins more votes than 'the serious yellow experts'!"⁴¹

Vučičević also points to the transformation of the so called opposition's propaganda. That is how from the level of criminalization or more precisely political accusations and labeling despite the lack of any relevant judicial decisions, we move to the identification of the Government with the moral evil. The cause, and at the same time to proof to support this statement, the Editor in Chief of *Informer* finds in accusing the opposition leaders and representatives of certain media for the political responsibility for Oliver Ivanović's tragic death: "First the so called independent journalist publicly accused the President Aleksandar Vučić of Oliver Ivanović's murder. Then the President talked back stating that this 'journalist' should be ashamed of himself for accusing the state of 'political murders' without any evidence and claimed that neither him or anyone coming from SPP had anything to do with the assassination of SDP's leader. And what happened next? Supported by the so called leaders of the so called opposition, *NUNS* openly accused Vučić 'of drawing a target at Janjić's forehead!?! Alright, am I crazy or what!? How is it possible to have a democracy and freedom of speech when Janjić without any argument accuses the President of the country of a murder, but we call it a terrible crime when Vučić responds to that?"⁴²

Dragan J. Vučićević's intention is not only to characterize the opposition as inconsistent in a political and democratic sense and thus draw a certain number of citizens closer to the current government. Similarly, his intention is not only to respond to the negative campaign by a counter campaign of media-political dissuasion. The opinion communicated by Vučićević is that the purpose of elementary incompetence present in the opposition is a rational and concrete influence that should contribute to the progress of a political process in the country. Lead by the above stated, Vučićević uses two mutually related strategies:

1. He makes a direct comparison between the political programs of the Government and the opposition, which "naturally" leads to the support of the Government
 2. He defends the idea of the absence of the opposition's program
- The presence of these strategies is illustrated by this quote: "Vučić, you're a faggot! Vučić you're a thief! Vučić, you're a jerk! Vučić, you're a dictator! These four ingenious sentences sum up the total opposition's politics today and here, in Serbia and in Belgrade too. If there is anyone who dares claim the opposite they should try remembering any other lucid ideas of Đilas, Janković, Jeremić, Šutanovac, Radulović, Obradović... Come on, please remind us of any constructive and realistic proposal suggested by DOS leaders during the whole election campaign. Just please do not mention Đilas's 'proposal' of free kindergarten and school books 'on the house'. That can be called many names, but not realistic. There are no ideas, or proposals or realistic plans, just the wish to take over the Government *nolens volens* and rob the state's fund. Let's analyze it one by one. Vučić and his crew build Belgrade Waterfront and the opposition says-he will stop it as soon as he takes over the Government. Vučić and his crew make

41 Dragan J. Vučićević, "Zabrana Belog [The ban of Beli]," *Informer*, 24th February 2018, p. 5

42 Dragan J. Vučićević, "Pripreme za finalni haos [The preparations for the final chaos]," *Informer*, 24th January 2018, p. 5

a musical fountain and rebuild the square in Slavija and the opposition says – they will knock it down and bring back Dimitrije Tucović's grave!?! Vučić and his crew announce the metro construction and the opposition says-it will never happen, it's a pure phantasmagoria (the same way they referred to Belgrade Waterfront three or four years ago). Vučić and his crew announce they will reconstruct the Belgrade suburbs because the citizens need the new sewer system and the opposition says-it's a scam and that is how they buy out the votes from the ignorant of the suburbs, (the quote: Vuk Jeremić)!?"⁴³

Apart from that, Vučićević's analysis of the Serbian opposition makes a contrast between the opposition and the leader of SPP-Aleksandar Vučić in the context of his authority in the foreign affairs. Vučić's exquisiteness surmounts any kind of political orientation and competence of other competitors on the political scene, be it associates of the Government or partners in the opposition. This is especially insisted on when it comes to his resistance to the USA. Placed in the wider context of the USA's influence in the region story, Vučićević's move is intended not only to insist on Vučić's uniqueness, but also on his opponents' political worthlessness and futility: "Mitchell's visit to Serbia showed that unfortunately nowadays, there is no one apart from Aleksandar Vučić, the very President of the country, who dares say to the Americans yes and no; what Serbia will and what Serbia won't do no matter the circumstances. Everybody else, including the Prime Minister Brnabić and the Minister of Foreign Affairs Dačić, when they see some of the more highly ranked American diplomats they seem to lose their ability to think rationally. They immediately start babbling and playing back the worn out phrases while panicking not to rebuke the Empire. Poor dears, they don't understand that the strongest ones only respect the strong. So, what to do now? We can't win and we mustn't lose."⁴⁴

However, the suggestion of the opposition's limitations in potential and capacity is not solely based on the fact that it is all about different political positions while not only defamation of politically-moral character of its representatives is used. In different dailies there have been realistic comments on the opposition's "immaturity of their own fault" and their incompetence in political tactics. Thus Ljiljana Smajlović, a columnist in the weekly *Nedeljnik* says: "If the Sunday is referred to as Stalingrad battle, as put by the opposition's leader, does it mean the opposition decided to take on the role of Hitler, or maybe Stalin? I guess the parallel here is that by the fall of Belgrade Stalingrad the whole governing pyramid would also fall down and that Vučić wouldn't be able to survive politically the loss of the capital's plunder, as well as that the local elections in March 2018 would signify the same as the Yugoslav presidential elections in 2000. The misfortune of Vučić's opposition is that Vučić has none of the Milošević's nonchalant despise towards the opposition and its media. This president of Serbia does not approach the Government as something he was naturally predestined for or something that just fell into his lap. On the contrary, Vučić perceives every village in Serbia as Stalingrad. Each elections to him are a matter of life and death. In that sense, the opposition can end up with the worst and that is what they called for and desired-to have a remake of the Stalingrad battle on Sunday. No matter how hard I try, I do not seem to understand the opposition's huge appetite for the nineties' old narrative and heating up the old political meals that expired long time ago."⁴⁵

A similar insight into the opposition's fragility is recognized by a columnist of the weekly *Nedeljnik*, Zoran Panović, who points at its inability to understand the nature of Vučić's domination in the political battle

43 Dragan J. Vučićević, "Kraj opozicione politike [The end of the opposition's politics]," *Informer*, 17th February 2018, p. 5

44 Dragan J. Vučićević, "Tramp, Mičel i Srbi [Trump, Mitchell and the Serbs]," *Informer*, 17th March 2018, p. 5

45 Ljiljana Smajlović, "Glas Angele Merkel [The voice of Angela Merkel]," *Nedeljnik*, No. 321, p. 18

of Serbia: "Spontaneity precedes manipulation in the structure of acceptance of Vučić's charisma and that is what the opposition fails to understand while trying to take him down with ad hoc coalitions, instant and recycled leaders at the power peak of this progressive leader."⁴⁶

The opposition's portray in the mentioned media is characterized by (at least) these two relevant ideas: a component of explicitly repulsive values present in the texts dominated by defamation of political values often very obvious in Dragan Vučićević's texts, the Editor in Chief of *Informer*, as well as a realistic account of the opposition leaders' flaws in the political tactics. Caused by the need to present candidates and programs before the upcoming elections, in the period between January and March, self-victimization and auto-heroization of the opposition were left out. The need for a clear and motivating message won over the opposition leaders and their media helpers' prime intention to emphasize their psychologically moral and politically historical exquisiteness.

Merciless media-political war in the vortex of the city elections; political characters' images; Belgrade elections 2018

Belgrade City Assembly elections posed a central political topic in the period between January and March 2018, due to many reasons, some of them more important than the others. Proved more than once, the printed media in Serbia were specifically sensitive about and oriented at internal affairs, that is, at the political parties' happenings, while all the other political, economical and societal topics fell into their shadow. The Belgrade elections became wider and much more complex in nature from a simple voting for a local government body stripped of institutional "omnipotence" and legal powers. The reason is the specific bet which was politically, symbolically and in the media ascribed to this political process. The printed media followed it and created images of political figures, analyzed the conditions of this political game and left space for different mostly negative estimates of the City Government's work while going to great lengths to interpret the elections' results.

The bet of Belgrade elections was not only political, but in some cases even historical. Thus, Đorđe Vukadinović, a member of the opposition, an analyst and a researcher of the public opinion, writes about the necessity of a unique opposition list and also refers to Belgrade elections as elections where the bet is bigger than the local votes. This is literally about a survival battle of democracy and the need to maintain "the basic political stability and decency": "If at least a half is true of what the representatives of NDB, DP, SDP, Enough is Enough and Dveri have been saying in the assembly and in the media about Aleksandar Vučić, his party, friends and relatives-or if at least they believe all of it-then there is absolutely no dilemma that they had to unite with anyone who could help them put an end to this evil. I repeat-if Vučić's regime is such as they describe it, and I think it is, then there is no place for political experiments and "workouts", the survival of democracy as well as a future possibility of a few true and unpredictable elections are at stake."⁴⁷

46 Zoran Panović, "Tri spiska [The three lists]," *Nedeljnik*, No. 321, p. 21

47 Đorđe Vukadinović, "Beograd pred izborom [Belgrade before a choice]," *Vreme*, No. 1410, p. 18

However, as a researcher of the public opinion Vukadinović is trying to reach a significantly higher level of "dramatization and raising the bets" in the Belgrade elections race, by commenting on his own research made simultaneously with the pre-election game: "With the risk of sounding too dramatic, I dare say this is about the question whether in the foreseeable future a trend of collective madness and social downfall could take place, since it has been emerging clearer and clearer behind the fixed up statistics and embellished TV reports."⁴⁸

As a consequence of dramatization and "the temperature rise", the expectations of the opposition leaders as well as voters have been heated up too. Belgrade elections are a kind of "a window of chances" for the beginning of changes in the Serbian government. In the context of the given idea is the comparison between the presidential elections in Belgrade results and the alleged potential of the opposition in the current local race for the Assembly of Belgrade. This is what a journalist of weekly *Nedeljnik*, Nenad Čaluković writes about: "However, the results of the presidential elections as well as the electoral experience within the last two decades in Belgrade where the citizens-oriented option could hope for success-clearly show why the elections in March are being treated as if they are the last realistic chance for the opposition. They are also the first serious test for Vučić since he took over the Government. Vučić knows that the loss at the elections in Belgrade could be the beginning of an end of his rule or at least a chance to seriously shake it up. This is the whole idea which I think the opposition's leaders are aware of."⁴⁹

Probably the most illustrative interpretation of Belgrade elections' importance for the "new beginning" is offered by a *Novi Magazin* journalist, Mijat Lakičević, who writes: "The one having the keys of Belgrade has the keys of Serbia too, so no wonder that sabers and spears are being sharpened. Belgrade has a bigger symbolical and political importance than practically the economical one. Actually, one cannot go without the other."⁵⁰ Simultaneously, the expectations and the importance of Belgrade for the opposition's leaders have been presented many times too. This dimension of the Belgrade citizens voting was most illustratively summarized by Boško Obradović, the leader of the party Dveri: "By Vučić being overthrown in Belgrade, many things will change in Serbia and it will be the big beginning of his complete overthrow from the Government."⁵¹

On the other side, the media close to the Government such as the daily *Informer*, clearly insist on the elections' importance too, but slightly differently motivated. This is reflected in their attempt to encourage a big portion of electorate of SPP by insisting on the election's importance: "The upcoming Belgrade elections are not only elections for Belgrade. These are the elections for Serbia where the collective destiny of Serbs will be decided about. At these elections we will decide where, how and with whom we want to go and whether it is going to be forward or backward. We will decide whether we want a serious country or a tycoon-supported improvisation such as DOS made it in 2012 and whether we want an independent and free Serbia or a vassal country whose buttons are pressed by Brussels and Washington. You say I exaggerate because at the local elections we will decide about sewer system, public

48 Ibid, p. 19

49 Nenad Čaluković, "Zašto su izbori u Beogradu najvažniji od 2012. godine [Why the Belgrade elections are more important than the year of 2012]," *Nedeljnik*, No. 316, p. 18

50 Mijat Lakičević, "Na izbore sa firmom Vučić [To the elections with the Vučić company]," *Novi magazin*, No. 314, p. 18

51 Boško Obradović, "Beograd na vodi je najveća perionica para na Balkanu [Belgrade Waterfront is the biggest money laundering in the Balkans]," an interview with Milan Čulibrk and Zoran Preradović, *NIN*, No. 3502, p. 11

transport, kindergartens and schools? Yes, that is true and then again not. Because if the upcoming Belgrade elections are purely communal and local in nature, then what are Đilas, Janković and Jeremić doing here? Could it be that the NATO's Vuk Jeremić the Glutton will personally deal with the sewer system expansion at Banovo Brdo, or will Saša Janković reform "City Waste Disposal" and how much do you think the tycoon Dragan Đilas cares about kindergartens?! Finally, if the elections in March are only about Belgrade what in the world is Miroslav Mišković doing there?! How come that the owner of Delta is personally gathering all the opposition leaders offering them money in an attempt to put them in one row standing against Vučić? What do you have to say? Yes, it is true that the SPP's list bears the name of Aleksandar Vučić, but he is not on that list. His name is there so that we would understand that these elections are not local, but the most important national elections since 2012.⁵²

Judging by the articles of the printed media close to the Government, it is clear that the Belgrade elections had a multidimensional bet of a tremendous importance. Thus the articles about it were occasionally dominated by pathos of dramatization, restlessness and projected expectations, or strong emotions of refusal and indignation, depending on circumstances or precisely on events that took place. However, an important motif of the discourse creation, especially the critical one, was the insisting on the chance to overthrow the Government as being highly probable.

In that context, the opposition leaders took this elections campaign as an opportunity to express and affirm themselves as researches of the public opinion. One of the loudest ones in that intention was Boško Obradović, the leader of Dveri, who took membership in the program coalition union with "Enough is enough" movement lead by Saša Radulović. Convinced he was offering something new and innovative, he presented the electorate in the following way: "There is a division of the electorate in Belgrade between those who are satisfied with the current government of SPP and will probably vote again for Aleksandar Vučić and his seven dwarfs, and those who want to go back, to the times when DP ruled, and they get to choose between six to seven DP's products. But there is a big number of voters, who do not want the current government nor the old one, but rather something new and different, uncompromised, and Dveri with the pre-election cooperation with 'Enough is Enough' movement showed that the third option is possible. Based on the newest research, the census was not our problem and we could have entered the elections independently, but our logic was to unite the opposition powers and make a stronger list that presented an alternative to the parties of the new and the old government. We wanted to aim at the double digit score and become the decisive power of the future government in Belgrade."⁵³

In order to raise the voter turnout of the opposition, it was not enough insisting on the Belgrade elections importance, so from time to time a projection of results was offered which was a clear suggestion to vote and support the opposition. Đorđe Vukadinović, the opposition member and the editor of the website *Nova Srpska Politička Misao* was invited to support the idea of elections with an unpredictable outcome and to help the printed weeklies in it too.

In an almost programmed text about techniques to create an atmosphere of uncertainty in the media,

52 Dragan J. Vučićević, "Najvažniji izbori [The most important elections]," *Informer*, 13th January 2018, p. 5

53 Boško Obradović, "Beograd na vodi je najveća perionica para na Balkanu [Belgrade Waterfront is the biggest money laundering in the Balkans]," an interview with Milan Čulibrk and Zoran Preradović, *NIN*, No. 3502, p. 12

this social and political worker wrote: "Serbia is a deeply divided country, in which endemic division, hatred and paranoia are not only spread uninterruptedly on a daily basis, but also encouraged from the very top of the state. In this division there is no place for illusion - 'their' half is always unquestionably bigger and stronger and they have no doubts, questions or hesitation. Belgrade is just a partial and conditioned exception, that is, thanks to its slightly more favorable demoChartic structure (meaning that people in Belgrade are still a bit more educated and informed), this falling behind is not so dramatic, which with the maximum and true voter overturn of all from this side, in theory might result in a truly uncertain electoral race, without which there is no democracy and freedom of choice (and vice versa) even if it was not for the malign and criminal political top of the state."⁵⁴

One of the big favorites at the elections in Belgrade, Dragan Đilas, pretty euphorically and confidently adds to Vukadinović's attitude about the importance of elections and the supposed uncertainty.

Confident about his prophetic skills, that is, his power of noticing and understanding trends within the electorate, Đilas claims the following: "Since the ruling parties cannot have over 380,000 votes no matter what they did, it means that 450,000 and one more vote are enough for victory. It is important that the citizens of Belgrade understand that they could be that one vote themselves. Belgrade elections have a wrong system because the major is not chosen directly. I was looking for a way to change that, but my party did not support me. That is why today we do not know who the major candidate of the governing list is. If we had been united, we could have overwhelmed Vučić at these elections. The system would work for us too, not only for them."⁵⁵

Following Vukadinović's suggestion, Đilas goes on with his pre-electoral narrative stating the allegedly obvious difference between the SPP's Belgrade and the Belgrade at the times when he was its major. To him the difference is clear: "With their own eyes people can witness the way the city looks on a daily basis, so I believe they know or remember how it all was 4 or 5 years ago when mothers had the full maternity packages and now they have nothing, when children had free school books, when we built kindergartens, helped the retired, bought busses, invested into public transport and made some things better than they are now. Now they can see that no elementary school is being built, there are no new kindergartens or health centers. It is all the matter of a common sense, not only the messages coming from channels such as Pink, Prva, Happy or tabloids. Also, this is illustrated by the numbers from the elections in 2014, when 815,000 people voted and SPP and SPS had 463, 000 votes. Three years later, at the presidential elections, one hundred thousand more people voted and Aleksandar Vučić got 403,000 votes. The number of the voters increased, the Government certainly added some to the lists by itself because we know what was going on at the polling places, but again it is 60,000 voters less. It is evident that there is no chance for the Government to have more than 380,000 votes at these elections and no serious researcher will claim there is. According to my expectations 900,000 people will vote in Belgrade and starting from 5th March they are the opposition."⁵⁶

54 Đorđe Vukadinović, "Igra u opstanak demokratije [Democracy survival game]," *Vreme*, No. 1414, p. 24

55 Dragan Đilas, "Mi i SNS smo dva nespojiva sistema [SPP and us are two irreconcilable systems]," an interview with Dragana Pejović, *NIN*, No. 3505, p. 12

56 Dragan Đilas, "Vučić zna da ih u Beogradu ne vole [Vučić knows they don't like him in Belgrade]," an interview with Jelka Jovanović, *Novi Magazin*, No. 354, p. 18

However, in order to increase his own role and also to find an alibi for a possible future defeat, the former mayor also spoke of unequal conditions of the elections, although he agreed to the elections for “higher political goals”: “It is not possible, in this kind of unequal conditions at all to get to the voters in the right way, no matter how many municipalities we’ve visited. Let me remind you that the Serbian Progressive Party began to surround our booths with some of its praetorians and people, of course, are afraid to come closer. They called people on landline and mobile phones and struck fear into a large number of them making them think they had to vote for the government so that their position would not get worse. In the media, we were represented hundreds of times less than the government that promises, from morning to night on television, models that some people probably believe are already infrastructural facilities. Nevertheless, I am optimistic, I believe that many wise voters who know how we live and see how the city is being led in the wrong direction.”⁵⁷

In addition to the discussion about the role that elections carry, but also the analysis of the conditions under which elections are held, the predominant part of the space in print media, understandably, is dedicated to political messages and interpretative matrixes on which the mentioned messages are based. One of the messages, perhaps the most striking one is the attitude: “The authority in Belgrade, led by the Serbian Progressive Party, is criminal, more precisely, it functions as an organized criminal group (mafia) that has taken the state from its citizens by stultifying any form of consistent respect of the laws and customs of democracy.”⁵⁸

The main rhetorical strategy used is the strategy of criminalizing the authorities, more precisely its equalization with the organized criminal group. It is a conscious “forgetfulness” of police-court practice and various journalistic codes, “amnesia” in relation to journalistic standards of the profession, with a clear goal of degrading the authorities and provoking the revolt of the population in the specific conditions of tension that the electoral process carries. The criminalization of the authorities was thus “spiced up” with a series of personal and moralist accusations at the expense of the main protagonists of political life. Of course, this time also the criminalization was directed primarily towards Vučić and the more visible actors of the city government.

Completely in accordance with the strategy of criminalization, Dragan Šutanovac, at the time, still a leader of the Democratic Party, said: “It is led by the little in the name of the big boss. In Belgrade, the profession, knowledge and experience are no longer respected. Those who lead it see it as a prey. Belgrade is a city in which Vesić and Mali dig up the streets to have their photos taken, so that somebody would make money, they put a kitsch New Year’s lights in September and strip it in the late spring. They’ve imprisoned Belgrade, while Vesić and Mali, as his jailers, decide what and how things are done and where the metro merges nothing with anything. That is why our goal is to free Belgrade from them, because of which many today want to escape from here.”⁵⁹ For this oppositional politician, however, the attitude towards Belgrade as an urbanistic whole is disputable, given the function of the city adminis-

tration and a series of unfinished affairs in the process of ownership transformation export: “to digging up the city as it comes to mind, various planning without consulting professional people, raping the common sense of citizens where you charge them for heating, then from that money you make a fountain or some mast, then promoting vulgarity and primitivism in Belgrade which has never been like this. Turning of advertisements into show business showing that the night life is cheap, great fun, nice women, all together from Belgrade have made a trade fair which some young people with a small allowance money come to in order to have a fantastic time. All of it has to change.”⁶⁰

Along with Šutanovac’s request for a change, the opposition narrative on the capital of Serbia, is linked to the allegedly criminal activities characterizing the city administration. Mockingly and contrary to the standards of the profession, for example, a fountain on the Slavija square is mocked, and the object of irony and malice are almost all other attempts to raise standards in the lives of the citizens of the capital. The example of such a writing style and sharp critical messages are found in the text of Dragoljub Žarković, the editor-in-chief of the newspaper *Vreme*: “Belgrade is swarming with known and yet undetected scandals, the city is governed in an intermediate way, almost a cousin-like way, foreigners are given the land and the right to multi-decade dividends, almost every night there is a killing event known for a mafia manuscript, the current government makes a real chaos in city and rail transport, talks about restoring the facades and they have barely painted them and the first April rains will wash away this makeup, Belgrade is being ghettoized by developing centers of “social suitability” by opening facilities that do not envisage a visit of the ordinary world, building a senseless and costly fountain on Slavia, cynically claiming it was a project of Đilas’s city administration, and not mentioning that the project included underground passages for pedestrians...”⁶¹

The regular topic, which almost gets the status of a column, is also the topic of “Belgrade Waterfront”. In the form of an interview, in the weekly newspaper *NIN*, after the city elections, the attempt to stultify this urbanistic project has continued. The interlocutor, a specialist in the order of architects, was chosen in order to gain a “war” against the authorities through the power of “arguments” of the profession. The rhetoric of the selected interlocutor of *NIN*, however, escaped from the discourse of the profession, overlapping with the everyday political discourse of the regime’s opponents, so that it contained only a little bit of an expert analysis. Architect Dragoljub Bakić, in a conversation with Olga Bečković, a *NIN* journalist, in an obvious oppositional enthusiasm, categorically states: “The Belgrade Waterfront project will speed up the changes. Because it is a cultural atomic bomb that will first destroy the government that designed it. There was a tsunami of an arrogant power and self-will. The tsunami that took down the public interest. Sava amphitheater, one of the most valuable locations of Belgrade, has been squandered forever. Belgrade cannot bear the idea that there should be two million square meters of something. It’s an impossible mission! Belgrade is one of the oldest European cities with continuous residence, its silhouette starts from Ušće, through the Belgrade Fortress, the St. Michael’s Cathedral and its tower to the belfry and the Temple of St. Sava. You know what ... the one who is building ‘Belgrade Waterfront’, he hates Belgrade. There is no dilemma there for me.”⁶²

57 Dragan Đilas, “Ako SNS ponovo formira vlast, Beograd se neće oporaviti vekovima [If the Serbian Progressive Party re-establishes power, Belgrade will not recover for centuries],” an interview with the editorial staff, *Nedeljnik*, No. 317

58 Dragan Šutanovac, “Neko će u istoriju, neko će u zatvor [Some will go down in history and some to jail],” an interview with Tanja Nikolić Đaković, *NIN*, No. 3503

59 Ibid, p. 13

60 Ibid, p. 13

61 Dragoljub Žarković, “Pričvrpljivanje opozicije – borba za opstanak – potvrda da u politici važi slogan ili jesi ili nisi lav [Putting a pressure on the opposition - the struggle for survival - confirmation that a slogan, either you are or are not a lion (ili jesi ili nisi lav), is valid in politics],” *Vreme*, No. 1416, p. 5

62 Dragoljub Bakić, “Svi su na neki način ucenjeni ili korumpirani [Everyone is in some way blackmailed or corrupt],” *NIN*, No. 3509

After all aspects of the project have been brought into question, Bakić projects the chaotic state of things on the entire city of Belgrade. “Belgrade is badly managed, and it is also ugly” – is the motto of this oppositional architect. Although audible, this criticism is more political expression than a thoughtful attitude. The reason is the lack of arguments, but also the excessive amount of propaganda rhetoric: “There is a chaos in the country, a chaos in the capital, a chaos in the minds of people, and it’s no wonder people voted like this. What are they watching on television, which newspapers are they reading? Belgrade is one sad story, surrounded by favelas and ghettos of refugees who build illegal houses without infrastructure. The central municipalities of Vračar, Bulbuder, Professor colony are ruined... from the beautiful sunny streets were built canyons, no houses were built according to the project, 3-4 floors were built on... You cannot do that and have a beautiful city. You will have an ugly city, which will be appealing only to third-rate tourists who will have cheap, banal, show business-like, primitive entertainment here. Improvisation of a country where everyone is silent.”⁶³

The relevant similarity between the position of the engaged intellectual and the opposition leader, in this case, Dragan Đilas, is almost obvious. In one of many interviews, the former leader of the Democratic Party clearly claims that there is a clear and final difference between the Serbian Progressive Party and his coalition government. His insistence is on a value difference which brings the speech in connection with the attempt to gain a certain layer in the electorate that nearly almost permanently left the once powerful European reformist parties in 2012. Therefore, evoking the content of the message and rhetoric by which it is expressed almost spontaneously goes along with Đilas. The echo of the reminding campaign by which the leader of the democrats Tadić defeated the former leader of the Serbian Progressive Party, Nikolić is more than clear. “I do not believe in a system in which the president of the state will say that those who think differently are wretches, miseries, traitors and criminals. You cannot say that the wife of one of the opposition’s candidates is the head of the narco-mafia and after that continue to be a politician. And the head of his party says he got a little carried away. Well, let him be carried to an institution of some that is for such cases. That is why he cannot go along with the Serbian Progressive Party. Because these two systems are incompatible.”⁶⁴

Although the city elections are not those in which the reflection on the republican government and the legally elected president is expected, the negative obsession with Aleksandar Vučić was the most used topic in the opposition discourse. Thus, Boško Obradović, the leader of the Movement Dveri, in an interview with the weekly newspaper *NIN*, says: “For me, Vučić’s dismissal is the biggest priority of all and a condition for the beginning of political changes, but we must not allow that, as after the fall of Milošević and Tadić, everything remains the same, because regardless of the change of government, Serbia is ruled by political mafia: corrupt politicians, prosecutors, judges, politicians, bankers and media magnates. The essence of the change is to break this corrupt system. Belgrade Waterfront it is the largest money laundering project in the Balkans and therefore it is the first one to be re-examined.”⁶⁵

63 Ibid

64 Dragan Đilas, “Mi i SNS smo dva sistema nespojiva [We and the Serbian Progressive Party are two incompatible systems],” an interview with Dragana Pejović, *NIN*, No. 3505, p. 10

65 Boško Obradović, “Beograd na vodi je najveća perionica para na Balkanu [Belgrade Waterfront is the biggest money laundering in the Balkans],” an interview with Milan Čulibrk and Zoran Preradović, *NIN*, No. 3502

Along with the negative obsession with Aleksandar Vučić and his people, it can be said by default, criminalization and polemic about the question of democracy in Serbia remain in the spotlight of the atmosphere under which the elections take place. This topic has not been “presented” for the first time by the opposition as it is a constant narrative of every election cycle, since Aleksandar Vučić and the Serbian Progressive Party came to power. In the mentioned context, one of the candidates, former leader of the Democratic Party and mayor, Dragan Đilas, says openly: “There will be no fair and honest conditions, but it does not mean that we should give up the fight. Vote buying has already begun, people with packed bags with the labels of the Serbian Progressive Party are visiting houses and apartments, threatening people by saying they are on the list. But besides all this, we have the strength to prevent theft in the polling stations and to come out as winners.”⁶⁶

As part of the narrative of the already presumed irregularity of the elections, apparently, the atmosphere and procedures in the election campaign should’ve been presented as irregular. The presumed intention is to form a “comprehensive” picture about the characteristics of political life in Serbia, that is, to portray it as essentially non-democratic, chaotic and tense, and above all burdened with abuses of public resources, media and state functions. In this context, the article of the journalist of the weekly newspaper *Vreme* Ivana Milanović Hrašovec should also be understood. She, referring to the elections, states: “The election campaign for Belgrade, which began on January 15th, is not much different from other campaigns in the last few years. Like all of the previous ones, it is excessively focused on the media and excessively functionary. Harnessed in almost all media even before announcing the elections, with noticeable removal of critical thinking, with increased tone, with plans and promises that rise to the point of breaking and with less and less scrutiny against opponents.”⁶⁷

The polemic of the campaign particularly emphasized, with an undoubted intent, a “terror” of authorities over the opposition. There is no minimal suspicion or concern about the rhetoric of the opposition representatives in the article of the journalist of the newspaper “*Vreme*”, and there is also no analysis of the content of the electoral messages of the opposition leaders. On the pillar of “political shame” as in the films with “scapegoat bad guys” it has to be the authority only, where this time, actions of the opposition, program and effect are wrapped up by the “veil of amnesia”.

In the same spirit is also the following statement: “Only this time, such aggressively dictated campaign in its intent to ‘cleanse the terrain’ penetrates to the deepest pores of the towns, reaches to the ordinary, everyday life, turning into the deep disdain of the ‘other’ and direct intimidation. Vučić’s already seen technique of seduction of a ‘small, ordinary voter’ based on ‘a better life’ and stories of discord between him and his ‘working class’ and the opposition as ‘non-working’ has been giving results so far. After the quarrelsome, intolerant vocabulary in addressing his opponents, otherwise a habit in the (non)culture of everyday life in Serbia, the president boasted that on his side are the most valuable and most successful, “the best doctors, professors, fighters for citizens’ rights, artists.”⁶⁸

66 Dragan Đilas, “Mi i SNS smo dva sistema nespojiva [We and the Serbian Progressive Party are two incompatible systems],” an interview with Dragana Pejović, *NIN*, No. 3505, p. 12

67 Ivana Milanović Hrašovec, “Izbori u gradu opsena i straha [Elections in the city of oppression and fear],” *Vreme*, No. 1414
68 Ibid, p. 6

Therefore, as the conclusion follows, the engagement of well-known figures and professionals on the list of the Serbian Progressive Party is disputable, and the appearance of the leader of the largest party in power is equally undesirable. Moreover, according to the judgment of the aforementioned journalist, disputable are those who ever thought of identifying with the Serbian Progressive Party or becoming a part of it, to the extent that it is a negative evolution of the political system of practice, so that the current political order becomes more authoritarian and less free than the order of Slobodan Milošević from the 1990s: "Why is it then, considering that his party is being support by top officials, the president of Serbia had to personally join in the campaign for Belgrade, why did the list have to bear his name and why are people disgusted because of certain names listed, and especially because of the 'arrogance and aggression'. Viewed even through the history of modern autocratic Serbia, the inherent fall onto local party branches was not characteristic even for Slobodan Milošević."⁶⁹

In order to shadow the city elections in another way, the so-called motive of "functionary campaign" was used. In that context, Ivana Milanović Hrašovec writes: "What is more distinctive about these elections than the previous ones in Belgrade is the intensity of the functionary campaign in which the highest state officials are engaged. An additional, not at all negligible advantage to ruling parties has provided a long pre-campaign - in which it was speculated whether there will or will not be early city elections, and then there will be also associate republican ones. It should be added to this that the only secure opposition stage - the parliament - has been 'locked' for months, as well as during the last year's presidential election. And, of course, the media are more propagators of government than reporters, in large part due to a pronounced functionary campaign."⁷⁰

By writing about the campaign run by the government, the issue of engaging and using the refugee associations and their champions in the political fight for Belgrade is significantly addressed. Regarding this topic, journalistic discourse should have had the function of "enlightenment". Thus, the "demystified" intention of the authorities is to use the so-called "safe voice" of members of the war-torn parts of the former Yugoslavia. As they noted, the president of Serbia was also invited to help, which, in their opinion, completed the picture of alleged manipulation and abuse in the election process. Davor Lukač, journalist of *Vreme*, openly writes: "In every pre-election campaign, whether presidential or local, the Serbian Progressive Party and its satellites without exception engage the phantom associations of refugees, displaced people, Krajišnici, Serbs from across Drina, etc., whose representatives (mostly one-man show), as a rule, almost stereotyped, give absolute support to the 'wise policy of Aleksandar Vučić', which will bring them prosperity. The latest case, prior to the current elections in Belgrade, is the appearance of, until recently unknown to the public, Coordination of the Association of Refugees and Displaced People in Serbia, whose president, Milan Žunić, at a press conference for the Serbian Progressive Party triumphantly stated that the 48 associations that are gathered 'represent the majority of Krajišniks' and that they all support Vučić."⁷¹

Unlike the authorities shown exclusively in a negative way in all aspects relevant to the election campaign, the opposition had a visibly different treatment. It is noticeable, above all, through an almost ab-

solute presence in the largest number of opposition printed editions, that is, a large space for presenting different arguments, associations and accusations, unlike the representatives of the authorities, who are not nearly provided with such treatment.

Generally speaking, the tendency to make the oppositional action appear more stratified was visible, in order to give it "the wind at its back" by attributing various positive characteristics and "bypassing" the obvious deficiencies. Thus, the various analyzes, most often, varied the attitude of the extraordinary bravery of the opposition, moral firmness and political excellence, just as they tried to predict good results in the upcoming election race and the victory "at your fingertips".

The already quoted Ivana Milanović Hrašovec, journalist of the weekly newspaper *Vreme*, when stating the weaknesses and limitations of the opposition, considers them to be exclusively the result of the brutal "repression" of power that lasts continuously, which is intensified during the election campaign itself: "The opposition which is silenced in the media and outcasted, itself was broken into columns and little columns, when it comes to resistance to the ruling party and Aleksandar Vučić, sounds unique. However, it is prone to public outbursts, occasional stings, but in the overall struggle over its own identity or censorship, it does not leave the impression of a unified force that wants a final victory. The extent to which the opposition is realistic in perceiving its own forces, how politically thought-out, and how it performs behind-the-scenes and calculating, remains under a question mark in the minds of many voters. Flooding of the lists and various orientations only further emphasizes the confusion, and as there is already a rich choice of 14 lists, there is every opportunity to forget about the main thought of the voters with whom they always go to the elections. And it goes: It's important to win."⁷²

The last sentences in the article of the journalist of *Vreme* point to the intention to, with the help of the media, break out of the general indifference or resignation that is characteristics, for a long time, only for (exceptional) voters. Journalism in this, but in many mentioned examples, takes on the character of political engagement, an unhidden political determination that often brings a call, either directly or indirectly, to action.

On the other hand, in the analyzed print media close to the authorities, a negative narrative dominated every opposition action. The opposition is described as non-democratic, inclined to use any means to overthrow the current, democratically elected government. In these media, the notion of opposition was understood very extensively, at the same time media and politically inflammable. In that sense, the opposition is not only understood as an alliance of parties that offer an alternative to the government and criticizes its moves in institutions and the public, but it is the backbone of parties, critical media, non-governmental organizations, critically oriented public intellectuals and non-governmental organizations, and also tycoons. (Too) broad definition of the opposition, therefore, in many cases, enabled the most diverse attacks on opponents of the current government of all kinds. Also, the motto of "unity" of all opponents and critics of the government has often been used, in order to increase the "credibility of threats" on the non-institutional demolition of democratically elected authorities through the argument of numbers. In the light of the aforementioned political optics, Dragan J. Vučićević, writes: "Do not have

69 Ibid, p. 6

70 Ibid

71 Davor Lukač, "O Krajino, noćas si daleko! [Oh Krajina, tonight you are far away!]" *Vreme*, No. 1415, p. 12

72 Ivana Milanović Hrašovec, "Izbori u gradu opsena i straha [Elections in the city of oppression and fear]," *Vreme*, No. 1414, p. 8

any doubt, if in March in the capital, Đilas-Janković-Jeremić take victory along with Šapić, Šutanovac and other DOS leaders, at that very moment we will have a crisis of power at all levels. The yellow, unfortunately, still more numerous media will immediately grab the opportunity to challenge the legitimacy of the Serbian Progressive Party and President Vučić in the republic; foreigners will activate all their 'sleepers' on all sides and at all levels, including those at the top of the ruling coalition; tycoons, of whom Mišković is only one, will not complain about the dirty cash; in a word - within 15 days we will have a general chaos in which financially even more powerful and supported by the foreigners as never before 'drugosrbijanci' will not shy from any violent, street, bloody scenario of the Ukrainian type."⁷³

The analysis of analogy with Ukraine is also relevant, precisely the conditions that prevailed before and during Viktor Yanukovich's resignation. This analogy should show not only the tendency of the opposition to non-democratic methods of overthrowing power, but also their ideological and every other commitment to the West. The media-political message of the opposition as an overthrowing and violent is interlaced with a mini-conspiracy theory, which also recursively appears. It is a matter of understanding that there are, against the government, secret or public it depends on the context, an agreement between domestic tycoons, foreigners and opposition parties. The aforementioned alliance is prepared, in Vučićević's vision, to do anything to gain power: "Abundantly supported by the tycoons that get nervous more each day and never-ending foreigners, they will try to use the next elections in Belgrade to provoke the final hopelessness and chaos. And that is why even now, more than a month before the date fixed for voting, they are talking about a 'big election theft'!?"⁷⁴

At the same time, the opposition, above all that of the Euro-reform, was presented as a politically empty, that is, deprived of any consistent worldview and concrete conductive ideas. Its common and only slogan is hatred towards the current president of Serbia. This idea is depicted through the prism of the binary, somewhat Manichaeism optics, according to which the opposition has been assigned the role of politically unconstructive moral evil, while the Serbian Progressive Party government, embodiment of dedication and practical advocacy for the common good: "Vučić, fagot! Vučić thief! Vučić, pig! Vučić, dictator! In these four ingenious paroles, all opposition policies have been consolidated today and here, both in Serbia and in Belgrade. Whoever claims otherwise let him try to recall any conceited ideas of Đilas, Janković, Jeremić, Šutanovac, Radulović, Obradović... Please, do remind us of any constructive, realistic proposal that candidates of Democratic Opposition of Serbia made during this election campaign. Just do not mention to me Đilas and his 'proposal' that kindergartens should be free and that textbooks for elementary school grow on trees. Because that is everything, but real and serious. So, there's no real idea here. There is no coherent proposal or realistic plan."⁷⁵

The government is portrayed as dictatorial, axial, violent, manipulative, deprived of any political democratic principles and moral scruples in public speech. At the same time, the opposition has been described and evaluated negatively, from a standpoint of national dedication, identified as overthrowing, deprived of political competence, prone to intentions and intrigues, unscrupulous, suspicious toward the common man, loyal to tycoons, and (hated) West. The powerful spirit of the journalistic sectarianism

73 Dragan J. Vučićević, "Najvažniji izbori [The most important elections]," *Informer*, 14. 01. 2018, p. 5

74 Dragan J. Vučićević, "Pripreme za finalni haos [Preparations for the final chaos]," *Informer*, 27. 01. 2018, p. 5

75 Dragan J. Vučićević, "Kraj opozicione politike [The end of the politics of the opposition]," *Informer*, 12. 03. 2018, p. 5

has also been carried over to numerous election interpretations, which included different, mutually exclusive, often from the point of view of the argument that is not convincing, but rhetorically suggestive, conclusions.

Interpretation of the outcome of elections has had different political and value qualifications. Thus, the description ranged from the "catastrophic Vučić's victory" (Švarm), "The end of the fifth October republic" (Miladinović-Čaluković) until the acknowledgment of the domination of the Serbian Progressive Party over Vučić's inveteracy in the political conspiracy of Kosovo (Vrzić).

This state of affairs points to the surplus of ideological charge in the approach, analysis and conclusions, which again, very clearly, confirmed the position of representative-engaged journalism as the main excellence of writing in the weekly press and columns of the main editors of daily newspapers.

One of the more relevant examples of undoubted political determination is evident in the interpretation of the election result of the editor-in-chief of the newspaper *Nedeljnik*. The par excellence of an example of political determination is the attitude of the editor of the weekly newspaper *Nedeljnik*, Veljko Lalić. His opinion on the outcome of Belgrade's elections could be sorted as a sadness or lament over the missed opportunity of the opposition: "If Đilas went after Apel 100 in these elections, it would probably be a victory. Or if Janković had waited a year. This is how the great hope of the civic option that has won 24% of votes in Belgrade last year with Saša Janković, as well as unrealistic about Vuk Jeremić, who had only been seen by Đorđe Vukadinović in the second round, melted last year."⁷⁶

In addition to the lamented missed opportunity of the opposition, critically-acclaimed journalists showed a clear tendency to degrade the success of the Serbian Progressive Party and confirm the political legitimacy of Aleksandar Vučić. Thus, columnist of the weekly newspaper *Nedeljnik*, Goran Nikolić, clearly states: "Only for the naive, convincing victory of the Serbian Progressive Party in the elections was a surprise. Even if that party had significantly below 40%, it would allow it to have an absolute majority in the city assembly. Therefore, who will rule in the City of Belgrade did not come into question, but the desire of the regime to humiliate the opposition as much as possible can explain the dirty campaign. The political battle could have been much more decent, of course not completely, and the Serbian Progressive Party would again have its 56 members. But this is not the style of their rule. For the populist parties, the most important thing is to create a strong voter bases and this is a pretty good description of what the current ruling party in Serbia did. What the Serbian Progressive Party has been doing since coming to power is, first of all, preserving this support by satanizing the opposition (the identical thing has been successfully applied by Milošević for 13 years). Compared to Milošević's rule, the achievements of this regime are truly impressive, as they often like to emphasize. Of course, this is not a consolation for a man who would like to live in a democratically organized society, which succeeds in achieving a sufficient level of investment for economic growth at least at the level of the region, and in which the debate on important national or social issues is conducted openly, taking into account the intellectual elite's attitude. However, it is becoming increasingly clear that this regime, even if it wants, cannot offer this to Serbia."⁷⁷

76 Veljko Lalić, "Kraj petooktobarske republike [The end of 5th October Republic]," *Nedeljnik*, No. 321, p. 4

77 Goran Nikolić, "Privid pobede [An illusion of victory]," *Nedeljnik*, No. 321, p. 34



Nedeljnik, 8th March 2018

One of the more striking reflections on the outcome of the elections is contained in the attitude of the journalist of the newspaper *Nedeljnik*. According to the opinion of journalists Nenad Čaluković and Veljko Miladinović, the Belgrade elections represent the end of ideologically profiled parties that have played a significant role in Serbia's political life since 5th October 2000. In particular, Čaluković and Miladinović state: "These elections may have brought the expected winner but have unexpectedly 'cleared' the old political parties. In addition to the socialists who have grown with the country since the introduction of the multiparty, all parties that have at least the appearance of tradition (rooted in the nineties) and ideology in their 'DNA' are left below the census and attached to breathing apparatus. If, after the triumph of Vučić's interest and populist catch-all concept, a crucial turning point was sought to finally bring to an end the ideology of Serbian politics, these Belgrade elections are an ideal opportunity. This time the reason for the smiles has only Aleksandar Vučić – after the convincing, perhaps the symbolic and greatest victories so far, in the elections on which he did not formally participate. It sounds just as absurd as for the patrons of the Fifth of October, and above all the tradition of the Democratic Party, that the party that gave and appointed mayors from 1997 to 2014 won less than five percent in each of Belgrade municipalities, including and Vračar and Stari grad where the Democrats won even in the first elections after the introduction of the multiparty. The failure of the Democratic Party, although 'failure' sounds like a sweet talk for a total debacle in Belgrade, on the eve of marking the 15th anniversary of the murder of Zoran Đinđić, and the marginalization of the Democratic Party of Serbia, say that the last stronghold and connection to the ideas that were promoted on the 5th October 'have fallen'. And that this is the ultimate end of the 'republic of the 5th October' and the parties that once made changes."⁷⁸

Zoran Panović, a columnist of the newspaper *Nedeljnik* says that after the election collapse, the presence of certain opposition lists in the Serbian Parliament is controversial, highlighting the controversial character of the multi-party system in the era of the dominance of a political leader like Vučić: "The general and essential failure of the 24th list, altogether, is reflected in the fact that for 28 years since the introduction of pluralism, we have an obscure multipartyism in the shadow of personal power. The parliamentary status of Enough is Enough party (Dosta je bilo), Dveri and New Party (Nova Stranka), after Belgrade elections, is latently absurd."⁷⁹

The motive of lament for a missed opportunity for the opposition is also reflected in the commentary from the columnist of *Vreme* by Teofil Pančić. His review of the election results is the synthesis of a political realism, a sharp criticism of the political and moral "imperfections" of the opposition, and a bitter, somewhat resigned appeal to a new credible leader who would be an alternative to Vučić, in every sense. Unlike many opposition commentators, Pančić is almost "painfully" open, deprived of pathetic and burdened with a strong suspicion of political talent of the opposition politics in Serbia. He writes: "Maybe somebody should inform Ne-davimo-Beograd supporters, that they have not only failed but are ruined, as well as almost everyone else: when you participate in the ritual of parliamentary democracy, staying under the censuses is a catastrophe. This cannot be relativized. You blew up, spilled the voices in the wind, finished. You did not qualify for participation, you did nothing, you are nowhere to be found, not that you are not the government, but if we are talking straight, you are not even an opposition. Only

78 Veljko Lalić, "Kraj petooktobarske republike [The end of 5th October Republic]," *Nedeljnik*, No. 321

79 Zoran Panović, "Tri spiska [Three lists]," *Nedeljnik*, No. 321, p. 20

someone who, in a small circle of friends, imagines to publicly exist.”⁸⁰

After a rhetorical “devastation” of politically-non-political innovators from civic initiatives, after criticizing their political uncertainty and futile moralistic hermetism, Pančić raises questions about the quality of Dragan Đilas as a candidate, in the light of the support of Vuk Jeremić and Saša Janković. At this point, he is completely honest: “It is possible that after Đilas, Saša Janković and Vuk Jeremić, who together on the presidential elections in the territory of Belgrade, carried over thirty percent of the votes just over a year ago, now, together with the ‘charismatic’ former mayor as reinforcement managed to have less than nineteen? So, where did your votes disappear? Of course, part of the explanation is that Janković has ‘fallen’ a lot since then because he did not really work in practical politics, and Jeremić today is no more than a walking avatar of an unsuccessful attempt to create some kind of new Democratic Party of Serbia (i.e. ‘democratic-national’ wooden iron) with a different facade. But the second part of the outcome must be sought in Đilas himself. That is, even more so in the fact that the opposition did not have the will or the mind or whatever to oppose to the regime’s octopus, instead of a man perceived as someone who is from the very heart of the political (communal and financial) establishment, some politically completely uncompromised, and to the many favorite public figure. Well, do they think that Vučić is crazy because he was sprawling in the deep background of all his repulsive party snouts and pushed the so-called ‘prominent public figures’?!”⁸¹

The saga about the powerlessness of the opposition, its, mildly speaking, “eternal disagreement” was not announced without reference to Aleksandar Vučić and his victory. Its important part is media-political mimicry (hiding politicians at the level of Belgrade behind the list of well-known and recognized non-party figures) and manipulation. Nevertheless, the culmination of Pančić’s anti-Vučić’s passion is reflected in the presentation of Vučić as a political leader who embodies the spirit of “self-indulgent gaps”. The meaning of these attacks that emanate beyond the boundaries of the rational is that it is more difficult and more suggestive to challenge the victory of the Serbian Progressive Party. Therefore, the victory of the ruling coalition is explicitly degraded in various ways, despite that it is indubitable and regular. In this context, for the next negative obsession with the democratically elected Serbian President, Teofil Pančić writes: “And as for the one who was glad on Sunday night, the secret of his success is in perfect correspondence with the spirit of time. And that is the spirit of empty self-love. Since there is nothing in it, you can go to that empty place to project whatever you want, and to hope that your wishes will be fulfilled. Today it is a recipe for the success of an individual, and a recipe for the rotten decay and deterioration of society.”⁸²

In the same spirit continued the editor-in-chief of the newspaper *Vreme* Filip Švarn. This medium also showed an undisclosed intention to completely dispute any kind of democratic legitimization of the Serbian Progressive Party and leader Aleksandar Vučić. This is most often expressed as a combination of anger and political idiosyncrasies, manifested in a politically poisonous rhetoric stemming from moralism, political stigma and permeated with a strong call for revaluation of the ruling political establishment. The combination of “political revolutionary” and bitter nihilism can be seen in a series of ex-

80 Teofil Pančić, “Pejsaž posle bitke [Landscape after the battle],” *Vreme*, No. 1418, p. 21

81 Ibid, p. 22

82 Ibid, p. 23

amples. Thus, the aforementioned journalist Filip Švarn says: “The last Vučić’s victory - achieved in the key and strongest stronghold of the opposition - has therefore far-reaching consequences. They will feel it on their own skin, together with everyone else, and most of the Serbian Progressive Party’s voters. It is about that the regime fully legalized authoritarianism, arrogance and hate speech, ended the equalization of the ruling party and its interest groups with the state, hopelessly divided the country into ‘us’ and ‘enemies’, strengthened the rule of fear, loyalty, lies and general corruption ... Prosperity and standard to the extent of more than ever became the hostages of privileged individuals, and poverty, emigration and depopulation is a permanent state of Serbia. When this adds to the existential dependence of the broad layers of political arbitrariness and the support from abroad, the local stabilizers are the foundations for a long and limited limitation of the rule of one man. Few people are able to see an alternative to the above. without any ideology other than a crazed, permanent campaign - the Serbian Progressive Party started preparations for the Belgrade elections in May 2017.”⁸³

Degradation of the democratic character of the Belgrade elections, continued in two more articles, published in the post-election number of *Vreme*. Thus, journalist Radmilo Marković finds that there is a number of irregularities in the voting procedure. His proceedings are based on the intention of challenging the electoral procedure, with the ultimate consequence of contesting the election results. Marković, despite the well-known fact that the ballot papers were signed without any objection, emphasizes: “During the election day, there were so many irregularities that it was difficult to list them. The law prohibits the duplication of lists at the polling station - in order to record ‘right-wing’ voters - it became a regular thing. Buying votes, organizing the balloting, voting with green ballpoint pens as evidence of a completed contract, voting without documents, are just some of the variants that could have been observed on March 4th.

And there were many, many more irregularities. For example, CRTA (Center for Research, Transparency and Accountability) observers, other than those mentioned above, have also reported that the secrecy of voting is not guaranteed in many polling stations. Cardboard panels were not properly installed, so there was no angle from which the voter could vote, and a member of the board could not see who they voted for.

Also, members of the Serbian Progressive Party showed by their example that the massive violation of the Policies of Polling Station Board should be done: they used mobile phones at the polling station and demonstrated their orthodoxy by photoCharting a card with circled number one, with their own ID card on it. Not even the numbers of ID cards were hidden, everything was transparently posted on social networks. In many cases, situations of bying the votes have been immortalized - they were photoCharted or recorded by observers, party activists and citizens.”⁸⁴

After Radmilo Marković announced a number of objections to the election process, and at the same time challenged the legality of election results, another powerful “moral protest” followed the “political troubles” in Serbia that took place with the victory of Aleksandar Vučić and the Serbian Progressive Party.

83 Filip Švarn, “Katastrofalna Vučićeva pobeda [Catastrophical victory of Vučić],” *Vreme*, No. 1418

84 Radmilo Marković, “Glasanje u atmosferi straha [Voting in an atmosphere of fear],” *Vreme*, No. 1418



Vreme, 8th March 2018

The radical form of political expressionism, which is a permanent feature of analytical journalism in Serbia, is strongly expressed in the article, by its content, a very related, political pamphlet, signed by Andrej Ivanji, columnist of *Vreme*. This journalist confronts the world of “competent” and the world of the Serbian Progressive Party, “trying to outwit all the hopelessness of the current political moment and accusing the government for the current moment. This article is also an article that should strongly motivate the action against the authorities, and it is written with the recognizable absence of rational criticism and beyond the necessary distance to the subject of the analysis. The government is thus presented as a subtle, blackmailing, violent, in short, ready “to do everything” for its own (self) maintenance. Ivanji writes: “In Vučić’s democracy, most of the people employed in the public service do not dare to say publicly what they think politically under their name and surname, they must not go to a protest against the authorities because some sub-agent might recognize them and they could get fired. Many prominent figures do not want to publicly criticize the government anymore, to be too exposed, because they are no longer ready to penetrate them through the sewer of Pink and informational sewers. Business people do not want to lose jobs or end up in prison. Even children in schools are fundamentally restrained from the shafts at the expense of the one who ‘grin, whine and flaunt’ so as not to inconvenience the teachers and get a lower grade. This authority can dismiss or arrest a teacher or businessman who are friends with the opposition; a public service journalist who dares to pose an awkward question. They can fire and chastise a hundred and a thousand of them but could not punish thousands of them. Only no one wants to be the first, keeping in mind a parole of the band Čorba ‘only dumb fools die for ideals’.”⁸⁵

In Ivanji’s literary-political universe, the government is absolutely responsible for everything. It produces a state of endemic social division, disrupts the good traditions of democracy, manipulates the original fears of the broadest layers of the citizenry. The power of the Serbian Progressive Party and Vučić is the embodiment of moral evil: “In the black and white Essen system, “us and them”, in which “we” must constantly and preventively trample “them” so as not to have “the Macedonian scenario” or, God forbid, to have a repetition of the “October 5th”, it makes sense: anyone who does not admire Vučić must hate him and those haters should lose because they disturb the harmonious love of the leader towards the people and the people towards the leader. A terrifying idea of what might happen is that Vučić will, in time, really believe that anyone who criticizes him hates him. Now, he is just lying.”⁸⁶

Charges corpus is quite extensive and the list is endless. Filip Švarn however summarises in a few conclusions what many public figures already stated: “All in all, the elections ended with Vučić’s catastrophic victory. There is little to be optimistic about.”⁸⁷

On the contrary, a journalist and Editor in Chief of weekly *Pečat*, Nikola Vrzic gave a different, more realistic and deliberatable perspective. He said: “Current Government stroke out without any palpable achievements, defying common laws of physics and neutralizing on their left and right everything they have nourished, which is unfounded hope they will adjust the Government to the measure which is acceptable to the current opposition. Quite the opposite happened. Numbers and figures which are the essential proof, unlike political preferences, witnessed the sincere victory of SNS and not only due

⁸⁵ Andrej Ivanji, “Njihov grad [Their City],” *Vreme*, No. 1419

⁸⁶ Ibid

⁸⁷ Filip Švarn, “Katastrofalna Vučićeva pobeda [Catastrophical victory of Vučić],” *Vreme*, No. 1418

to the absolute majority of votes and immense difference in comparison to the opponents. With 336 thousand votes, SNS surpassed their Belgrade elections score by 15 thousand votes in 2014 and 10 thousand votes on Parliamentary elections in 2016. In addition to that, SNS and SPS (366 thousand and 50 thousand) together have now won approximately 13 thousand votes more than last year's number of votes Aleksandar Vučić, their common leader, won. What is the secret to Vučić's success? Election theft, manipulation, media blockage... Let's not fool ourselves... these are all excuses rather than satisfying explanations. With opposition supervision and NGOs, theft in polling stations is impossible and also never been done, except maybe in Kosovo in the 1990's. There is no doubt that the Government will use all available mechanisms in order to pump up the score, however there is an immense difference between first and second placed for it to be bribed with sandwiches, packets of oil, flour and such benefits. Same goes for media scene. Fact is that majority Government oriented media hitched to help, often going beyond the limit of decency, but also the fact is that similar media bias, though a little more sophisticated, occurred earlier under the influence of the current Government at that time. Also, there is the fact that the opposition oriented media, which we will not name, is more available for it to use and still doesn't support the debatable victory of Vučić and the defeat of the opposition. Even if the manipulations and media images contributed to the immense difference in votes, also did SNS's dedicated and detailed field work and serious organisation of the Party."⁸⁸

Vrzić questioned the attitude of the opponents on the manipulations and unequal conditions as the main issue of SNS and Vučić's dominance. His arguments contain a combination of the obvious as well as the numbers and figures which are the proof of the electorate state. The criticism coming from the opposition is the pure alibi for their failures and do not demonstrate a single significant political life component whatsoever. Hence, Vučić's longevity of political-media charisma and his election power, should be looked into elsewhere, rather than in simplified story on comparative resource advantage of the Government in the political competition.

Vrzić raised Vučić's loyalty to Kosovo political vow as one of the essential elements of his charisma. Vučić is like Milošević, a politician who cares about and glorifies "Serbian Sacred Country". That is the reason why he is a leader and a political winner despite difficult social and economical conditions and number of loud criticism which is daily oriented towards him. "Just like Vučić now, Serbian people recognized Milošević as their leader. When? Then when he reclaimed Kosovo. Neither Milošević nor Vučić went under due to bad economy. Milošević went under only when people thought he handed Kosovo over. Vučić is a fact we have to live with because the nation decided that way, and nothing could destroy him but himself. And the way he could do that is by signing legally binding treaty with Kosovo which is expected of him to do, because final loss of Kosovo and the continuance of such chain could remind the nation of the chronic lack of money, the vastness we are in and arrogant party officials we are surrounded with. The success of elections could lead Vučić to think he signed a blank contract with the nation to do things his own way, but he should be aware of the fact that by voting for him they trusted him to fight for them until the end".⁸⁹

"On the 15th anniversary of assassination of Đinđić and also 18th of the October 5th, Belgrade elections

88 Nikola Vrzić, "Vreme Vučića [The time of Vučić]," *Pečat*, No. 510, p. 3

89 Ibid, p. 5



Pečat, 9th March 2018

finally put an end to dosism. I'm not sure if you've noticed, but Democratic Party headed by Boris Tadić and Zoran Živković barely got 2,2 percent of votes while Čeda was at the level of statistical error with 0,2 percent. When you add up Đilas, Janković, Jeremić and Velja Ilić (19%), it is clear that nowadays in Belgrade not more than one fifth of voters support dosism, the system we lived in between 2010 and 2012. This result comes as no surprise. Or it could be a surprise to the ones who believed the images shown on social media, yellow print trash and tycoon controlled media."⁹⁰

"The reason of the opposition debacle is a reflection of their constant reproduction of negative sentiments towards the SNS leader and the President of Serbia Aleksandar Vučić. The final end to dosistic politics in Belgrade and consequently the whole Serbian region, was a result of politics becoming hatred. Hatred towards Aleksandar Vučić and everything that surrounds him. That type of hatred is the worst, it's pathological and it blinds and blunts. With that being said, blinded and blunted dosists have been struggling for the last six years in the dead end of complete antipolitics. They can't understand that Serbian people are not naive and inexperienced any more and that they couldn't be blinded".⁹¹

Editor in Chief of Informer Dragan J. Vučićević and others who were Government oriented, stated that the victory of SNS in Belgrade elections was confirmation of citizens' maturity. According to them, the victory was undoubtedly convincing, clear and undebatable.

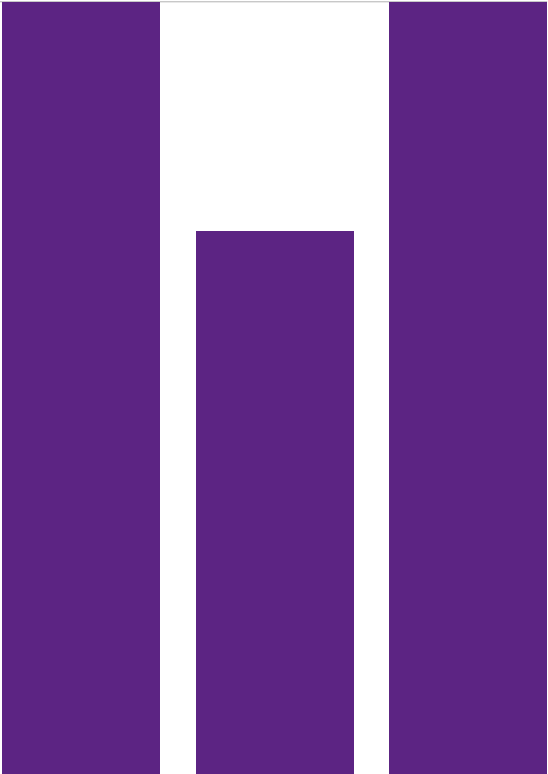
Belgrade elections confirmed constants in presenting political actors and processes in Serbia. Main actors's images were dominantly presented as negative. No matter if the actor is a part of the Government or the opposition, he is a subject of numerous and various detailed and skilfully rethorical disputes. The election process itself was also looked at from a different perspective. For anti-Government media, it was disputable in all phases. In other words, the "problematic" electoral process resulted in a "problematic" outcome.

The opposition's focus was constantly on disputing social circumstances and rules that apply to the elections, both during Parliamentary elections in 2016, and Presidential ones in 2017. On the other hand, the Government oriented media do not dispute the electoral process nor it's result. According to them, Serbia reached a developed extent of it's political institutions and practices and it can be considered a democratical country. What goes for elections, goes for the public. For the opposition's journalists and parties, the public is conjunction of chaos, confusion and unfreedom. On the other hand, pro-Government media sees the public as polemic, divided, fraught with "everlasting" conflicts but undebatably free and dynamic. From printed media perspective, political actors' and processes image is a testimony of uncompromising differences existence and fatal conflicts with no anticipated possible reconciliation.

⁹⁰ Dragan J. Vučićević, "Kraj politike [The end of politics]," *Informer*, 10. 03. 2018, p. 5

⁹¹ Ibid, p. 5

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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 securitisation 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.

Velimir Ćurgus Kazimir was born in Novi Sad in 1948. Since 2002, he is the director of the Ebart Media Archive, the unique media documentation center in Serbia. He was a journalist and editor of the cultural section of *Politika* newspapers from 1988 to 1996. He is one of the founders of the Independent Association of Journalists of Serbia. He authored several books of prose and essays on culture and cultural policy. His works have been translated into English, French, German, Spanish, Polish and Japanese. He has won the International Prize for essay of the journal *Lettre Internationale* in Weimar in 2000. He's member of the Serbian PEN Center since 1987. He has edited several books on the relationship between politics and the media. He is author of several projects in the field of research, media and culture. He conducted studies of the media scene in Serbia and the influence of media on the political and social reality in particular.

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