

POLITICAL COMMUNICATION AND THE CREATION OF PUBLIC

POLITIČKO KOMUNICIRANJE I KREIRANJE JAVNOSTI

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Abstract

Political communication is an essential element of modern democracy, which in the times of transformed public and digitized media structures, leads to more sophisticated public management processes. New forms of narration reveal the dominant contents: the text is changed by "aestheticized" image, the critical depth - by narcissistic surface, and strong arguments and journalistic researches withdraw before marketing claims, spinning and tabloidization. By analyzing the daily press in Serbia, the authors determine how the press sprinkle itself with gold dust of PR services and agencies, mediating the reality in which powerful elite and rich advertisers live, but not ordinary citizens as well, impoverished, and concerned for the future. Instead of "Argus eye" of the public, press increasingly becomes a bulletin board of political parties and undercover tycoons, ground for ideological opponents slandering and discrediting. Reference political framework is created far behind the public scenes, so it can be concluded that Serbian society is still far from the participatory model of democracy, where citizens comprehensively participate in process of freeform thinking and will changing the community for the common good.

People, facts, values and events are part of every society, but only the media meaning, design, opinions and interpretations reveal the reality in which they reside. Rising poverty, unemployment, crime, corruption, conflicts ... are some of the problems today, but will they be understood depends on how the media present them. In addition, the politics is squandering its power in order to pack the language or visual symbols into a convenient informative package that will attract attention and public support. Personalities, actions and ideas make social

Sažetak

Politička komunikacija je suštinski element suvremene demokracije, što u vremenima transformirane javnosti i digitaliziranih medijskih struktura vodi sofisticiranim procesima upravljanja javnostima. Novi oblici naracije otkrivaju dominantan sadržaj: tekst se mijenja estetiziranom slikom, kritička dubina - narcisoidnom površinom, a čvrsta argumentacija i novinarska istraživanja povlače se pred marketinškim uvjerenjima, spinovima i tabloidizacijom. Analizirajući dnevni tisak u Srbiji autori zaključuju kako se ona dobrovoljno posipa zlatnom prašinom PR službi i agencija, posredujući stvarnost u kojoj žive moćne elite i bogati oglašivači, ali ne i obični građani, osiromašeni i zabrinuti za budućnost. Umjesto "Argusovog oka" javnosti tisak sve više postaje oglasna ploča političkih stranaka i prikriivenih tajkuna, poligon za blaćenje i diskreditiranje ideoloških protivnika. Referentni politički okvir kreira se daleko iza kulisa javnosti, pa se može zaključiti da je srpsko društvo još uvijek udaljeno od participativnog modela demokracije, sa sveobuhvatnim učesćem građana koji procesima slobodno formiranog mišljenja i volje mijenjaju zajednicu radi općeg dobra.

practice, in which the problem for some can be a benefit to others! Thus, the meanings may not be the same for all participants and observers, although operating in the same space and time, but maybe in the other political, psychological, economic, religious and social contexts. The desire to rule over others has imposed the battle for the generalization of reality, creation and management of concepts, mental representations constructed according to specific goals and purposes. The activity itself does not represent

doing, but when others perceive, interpret or comment on it, it gets the full meaning.

Politics is just one of many activities that we create every day. However, its actions are changing the whole community, and ways of action and behaviour determine the democratic potential. To manage one society means to manage communication flows, social situations and problems; in a word, to make decisions in the interest of the majority. Social evolutions direct and determine the character of social systems, while politics determines the depth and purpose of the processes themselves. However, in order to achieve political objectives in practice, it is necessary to construct favorable images of political agendas, decisions and personalities in order to enable this objectiveness. This means that the term *political communication management* /1/ is introduced in the field of public information. This concept is an integral part of the political system, and without it there is no formulation, aggregation or implementation of collective decisions. Politics cannot exist without communication because it is in direct correlation with the openness of the process, so it can be said that the presentation of political ideas in the essence means democratic framework and public support. In times of traditional media *consent production* /2/ was simpler and more efficient, because by monitoring of printing or by use of electromagnetic frequencies country easily provided access, influence and control facilities that were offered to passive audience. The ubiquity of the Internet and hybrid media has become a decisive factor in the interpretation of reality to the most of the population, so it can be stated that as the world of facts increasingly depends on the meanings served by media creators, constructing and reconstructing the events, problems, conflicts, friends, culprits.

Managing events and issues becomes a priority in political engagement, because without an echo in public opinion, there is no social recognition! The world of symbols is booming: a richer offer conceals the poverty of diversity; identification of national and ideological is camouflaged by the Potemkin scenery and discourse of seductive promises, while the complexity of real crisis is reduced to the world of political spectacles and peripherals. The events, issues, processes are filtered from the source of information, and content and genres are directed towards a predetermined directions. /3/ Signs, texts, sounds, noises, advertisements, messages, ideas are actualized at some point, from a certain perspective,

and from certain interest, reducing the reality to the state of the illusions, things and events. The mass media function nowadays as resonant ground on which representatives of government and parliament, political parties, trade unions, religious organizations, universities, NGOs and other agents present their views on the crisis and ways to resolve them. In addition, media are not neutral carriers of information, but increasingly active participants in the complex process of shaping public opinion. The world is in crisis, Europe is shaking under the financial shocks, while the articulation of the problem points to the weakness of the political system that offers a solution that is too slow. A large number of former socialist countries expect help from the European family, in the meantime trying to democratize their world and get closer to the world of rich. Political parties change to the same degree as the country and so does their communication behaviour. Increased social differentiation, pluralisation and globalization are changing the traditional framework of the state (the parliament, the government), introducing other agents to the sphere of decision-making (NGOs, trade unions, universities, religious organizations, lobbyists, etc.), making communication landscape denser and more colourful.

Exploring the content of daily newspapers in Serbia, we analyzed the quality of political communication, the degree of external consultation with the economy, science and other areas of society, the power of thematization and strategic positioning of information (agenda-building), /4/ the image of the leader and visibility of sources of information. Our goal is to show the changes in communication strategy, i.e. to verify whether information conveys ideological values. This means that in this paper we will focus our attention on articles, discursive structure of potential meanings and pleasures, as well as influence carriers and generators of social needs.

Methodology

We performed a quantitative analysis of the content of eight daily newspapers (*Politika, Danas, Večernje novosti, Blic, Kurir, Pravda, Alo* and *Press*), from the first to the tenth of March 2012, and studied three levels of media communication: *content* (information content and political effects), *structure* (genres, sources and streams of sending a message) and *process* (the political motivations and activist moments). Crisis is best developed in the society of risk; the political elite paralyzes conflict by institutionalizing

public space, power and legitimacy not realizing that by doing so they are hindering the process of democratization. In this paper we are not fully dealing with the capacity of government institutions and representatives to predict, control and solve the political dimension of crisis management, but we want to show the way they are created through a highly controversial and intense communication activity in the sphere of politics.

According to some estimates, /5/ the analyzed newspapers are the most popular ones with a significant impact on public opinion and it can be concluded that the political framework is formed as a result of their writing. In each issue we analyzed the content and we did not include Sunday supplements and advertising material. The units of analysis were the articles that in any way, including sources of information, dealt with topics relevant to public communication space. The research was based on a quantitative and qualitative analysis of a total of 1425 articles dealing with political issues, but the data was not compared at the level of individual print editions! Practitioners in the field of social measurements point out that the work of researchers "does not end with the simple description of a subject but continues with a critique of the actual state of things in terms of key social values, goals and resources of the main participants", /6/ which determines the goal of this paper.

Results

Topics - - politics, election, leaders, Europe and sometimes Kosovo

In a democratic society politics is based on a broad platform that reflects the complexity of social relationships. This means that information is not hierarchically delivered by the government as executive authority or parliamentary majority with its representativeness, but should reflect the strategic interests of the community. In doing so, the media is always interested in conflict paradigm because it raises the ratings and circulation, while politicians should impose topics important to the public interest. The identity of people living from journalism /7/ is becoming more vulnerable since public relations agencies, spokespeople, lobbies, analysts, major companies and political centers tend to overtake the role of the subject of communication processes, indirectly threatening the autonomy and ethics of professional newsrooms. /8/ The profession is gradually being redefined, and a journalist who decides on the con-

tent of message (*decision makers*) is replaced with a journalist (*decision takers*) that executes someone else's orders. What is overlooked is that democracy is not about the amount of information but a chance for every individual to freely participate in receiving and sharing information, which gives a qualitatively different role to the Internet and social networks.

The emergence of the global media market marked the transformation of journalism and a struggle for each customer caused the development of an aggressive, often sensational, intolerant and tabloid journalism. Societies tend to grow constantly, while in reality a struggle for essential survival of the hungry and disappointed masses is concealed. Propaganda campaign benefits the elites that finance them, but so as to ensure that the public does not realize the truth the noise in communication area is amplified. Hence the concern about social problems seemingly comes to the fore, while nearly all parties use the same tricks. Analysis of the daily newspapers in Serbia shows that discourse about social problems and their political resolution is a strategic move. Even 60.77% of the analyzed articles in focus contain general political issues and debates (exp. *Politika*, March 1: *Serbian 'Fiat' presented to the world* (1 and 5 p.); *Press* March 3: *The effects of obtaining the status of EU candidate: Serbia optimistic again* (pages 4 and 5); *Blic*, March 6: *Economists agree with Tadic: the end of crisis in early 2013* (the whole page 4) etc. The decline of cities in the provinces, structural unemployment, rising crime, criminal privatization, dissatisfaction in the field of agriculture and many other social conditions are accepted as unpleasant companions of transition, inevitable stage prior to introduction of the new world order. Hence, the articles dealing with these topics appear rarely and mostly in tabloids (*Pravda*, March 6: *Strikes continued in Kraljevo, Kruševac, Smederevo: Workers threw eggs at democrats* (1 and 6 p.); *Pravda*, March 7: *Unhappy workers take to the streets: half of Serbia on strike* (1 and 7. p.). Interference of politics and economy indicates presence of invisible interest groups, dubious contracts, unfulfilled promises, and the situation that 80 workers lose jobs every day, but still there is no critical reporting or a research approach! Uproar in media content conceals duplicity in quality of media coverage of events: even though workers in Novi Pazar, Kraljevo and Cacak are on hunger strike over unpaid wages at this moment, nothing has been published about it!

(Number and %)	<i>Politika</i>		<i>Danas</i>		<i>Večernje novosti</i>		<i>Blic</i>		<i>Pres</i>		<i>Kurir</i>		<i>Pravda</i>		<i>Alo</i>		Total	
Politics, society, events	102	68,9	123	68,3	63	35,8	147	65,6	54	54	113	55,9	170	66,7	94	67,1	866	60,8
Economy	20	13,5	19	10,6	28	15,9	16	7,1	10	10	16	7,9	20	7,8	13	9,3	142	10,0
The World and Serbia	8	5,4	25	13,9	40	22,7	34	15,2	26	26	43	21,3	43	16,9		0,0	219	15,4
Culture, fun	2	1,4	2	1,1	5	2,8	4	1,8	3	3	10	5,0	6	2,4	20	14,3	52	3,6
Cronicle	16	10,8	11	6,1	40	22,7	23	10,3	7	7	20	9,9	16	6,3	13	9,3	146	10,2
Total	148	100,0	180	100,0	176	100,0	224	100,0	100	100	202	100,0	255	100,0	140	100,0	1425	100,0

Table 1. Total number of articles of a political nature associated with Serbia

The choice of topics to be monitored, the page where the text is published, the way of reporting about political leaders and parties, their appearance on the photographs, the context and tone of the analysis of an event, as well as many other means of presentation can significantly influence attitudes of the readers. Thus, public space is gradually transformed into a politically-funny kindergarten which is easily manipulated, because fewer and fewer voters at the polls decide the fate of the disinterested majority! The selection of topics and interviewees define the ideological patterns and legitimate political figures and the public presentation of their views, ideas, thoughts, beliefs, and statements direct readers to the ideological goal. This is the theory of Framing, which involves the selection and emphasis: to frame something means to choose some aspects of perceived reality ... "and make them more prominent in the

communication text in such a way as to promote individual definition of a problem, causal interpretation, moral evaluation and / or recommended treatment of the problem". Relevance of information and interpretation of events always interact with the interests, context and judgment of recipients where the role of the editorial criteria is important for the final assessment of what will be published. We should think about the aspect of "estradiation" of political scene (e.g. Minister of the Interior and President of the Socialist Party Ivica Dacic performs at public events as a singer, President of Serbia and the Democratic Party Boris Tadic dances while musicians hold honorary positions at the party meetings and local celebrations)? This may attract attention but it is hard to believe that these phenomena enable mobilizing and attracting new members.

(%)	<i>Politika</i>	<i>Danas</i>	<i>Večernje novosti</i>	<i>Blic</i>	<i>Pres</i>	<i>Kurir</i>	<i>Pravda</i>	<i>Alo</i>	Total
EU candidate status	18,9	12,2	10,2	21,4	15,0	7,9	9,0	18,6	13,8
K and M	4,7	9,4	13,1	8,9	3,0	6,4	16,9	2,9	9,1
Elections	32,4	30,0	18,8	21,9	43,0	26,2	19,6	25,7	25,7
Leaders	13,5	12,2	9,1	14,7	7,0	17,8	12,9	25,0	14,2
Economy	10,1	8,9	15,3	10,7	7,0	9,9	12,9	9,3	10,9
Relations with the outside world	8,8	16,7	15,9	12,1	22,0	13,4	18,0	4,3	14,0
Crime, corruption, justice	11,5	10,6	17,6	10,3	3,0	18,3	10,6	14,3	12,4
Total	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0

Table 2. Representation of thematic areas in the analyzed newspapers

Newspapers in Serbia force the ideas we should think about by selecting topics, concealing political interests that sometimes instrumentalize the public. Nearly a quarter of the analyzed content (25.68%) dealt with the upcoming elections, 14.17% referred to the activities of political leaders (of which

nearly four-fifths to the representatives of the authority), 13.75% of the content dealt with the obtaining of the status of EU candidate, while the content about the fate of Kosovo and Metohija was almost marginal: only 9.13%. In contrast to the world's press where tabloids mainly report on the lives of celebri-

ties, Serbian tabloids also cover political scene, especially forcing sensationalist approach, conflicts with political opponents and unverified information. Thus *Kurir* reported: *President of Serbia and the Democratic Party state: We will fight the sinful* (March 4, 4 and 5 p.), and several days later announced: *War of Democrats and Progressives: (Sutanovac: Toma is an undertaker – Nikolic is expert only in managing graveyards in Lesce or Orlovaca)* (March 10, p 1, 2 and 3). The meaning is skillfully transferred from the topic of the article to some leaders, and hides under the guise of research political and interest confrontations, as directed by well-camouflaged ordering party. The fact that no law has defined the issue of media ownership indicates disorganization of media space which allows for personal and ordered confrontations with ideological or business opponents to take place in the media.

Media platform generated in such way to change its support as “the wind blows”, promotes party interest which indicates the failure of democracy: a system of spinning news rarely produces accurate and balanced media content; at the same time, open competition generates the imposition of topics and manipulation. By performing a detailed analysis, we realized that some newspapers are pushing certain ideological views. In order to confirm this assertion we have investigated the presence of *persuasion*. /9/ From 1425 analyzed articles, we found elements of persuasion even in 618 (43.36%). The readers in Serbia are mostly persuaded that joining the EU is the right path (18.28%). Great efforts have been invested to make people believe in the governments’ ultimate showdown with crime and corruption as well as the progress achieved in the reform the judiciary (15.06%), while reporting on situation in Kosovo and Metohija was quite realistic(7.93%). Significant dealing with foreign topics is also evident, which besides some connection with European and global political scene may be a strategy for avoiding hot stories in the country, but also implies the greater influence of foreign capital in media ownership!

Voices/sources - government and illusion of pluralism

The manner of communication with citizens significantly defines the character of the government and forms of political behaviour. The space for different ideas and programs, critical voices and dialogue is narrowed by significantly shaping the daily agenda of the ruling party combined with the state institutions and those in power. The influence of civil society is very weak, while the presence of opposition parties and public hearings is almost marginalized. *Who speaks and who is silent* in the press, is one of the best indicators of social equality. Government, ministries, state institutions (22.06%), political leaders (26.58%), the president of the state (4.73%) and political parties (12.39%) dominate as sources of information in almost every influential newspaper Serbia. If we take into consideration the data on direct information obtained from PR departments and public opinion research agencies (5.16%), we will realize the influence of the ruling parties which firmly control the whole media space. A growing number of news items are the result of processed press releases or spinned information produced in government public relations agencies, delivered from spokespeople and similar services, and the number of phone interviews is in increase. Industrialization of journalism imposes new imperative: to create as much information at little cost, so pseudo “free” packages of data and images that can arrive at newsrooms at any moment are becoming powerful tools in dealing with public opinion. These articles are more and more frequent since they represent “*facts that should not have been collected, stories that should not have been written and photos that should not have been taken*” (Newsom, Scott 1985:230). Official sources thus perform supervising function undetected, without the fear of being accused of violating human rights. Academicians and ordinary citizens are therefore becoming a part of “table decoration” on transparency of the communication community (8.59%), while influence of civil society in Serbia is not worth mentioning for the time being (10.46%).

Sources	<i>Politika</i>	<i>Danas</i>	<i>Večernje novosti</i>	<i>Blic</i>	<i>Pres</i>	<i>Kurir</i>	<i>Pravda</i>	<i>Alo</i>	Total
Head of state	7,6	5,6	5,2	4,0	10,6	3,8	2,4	2,5	4,7
Government, ministries, state institutions	29,7	23,2	31,4	17,5	10,6	23,6	19,6	19,2	22,1

Political leaders	26,9	13,6	7,6	38,2	21,3	27,5	32,5	38,3	26,6
Political parties	6,9	14,1	14,0	6,8	21,3	11,0	13,3	19,2	12,4
Foreign sources	9,7	14,1	12,8	4,0	17,0	11,0	10,2	5,8	10,0
PR sevicies, Agencies for poll	2,8	9,0	2,9	5,6	7,4	3,3	5,1	5,8	5,2
Representatives of public organi- zations, churches...	13,8	9,6	8,7	15,9	5,3	12,1	7,8	5,8	10,5
Academic leaders, ordinary citizens	2,8	10,7	17,4	8,0	6,4	7,7	9,0	3,3	8,6
Total	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0

Table 3. *Information sources*

Sources of communication power in transitional societies are increasingly more controlled and closed. It is an imperative to participate in a political game so as to be visible in the media arena and the line between the government and the press is weakening and as the election campaigns approaches it almost disappears. Attention is focused on information representing utilitarian interest, certain issues, idea, scandal, process... The border between natural into media developments is at the verge of the philosophical - communicological plain, ethics and aesthetics, the inter-space between the truth and interests. Media opinion is therefore not the product of logical rules, since it is formulated in accordance with the editorial policy of the media and social interests of the dominant elites, and is thus more susceptible to influence of propaganda. Politics pushes useful stories created in accordance with interests of the covert elite, and public interest becomes a cover for ideological confrontation with opponents!

Creation and use of political leaders

So-called *leader campaign* is a very important part of political propaganda. Its purpose is to publicly post, favor, praise, glorify, etc....support a specific figure, but in a negative context (demonization, insults, reviling, mimicry, and similar performances) it may create a counter-image of an important person (head of state, leaders of political parties, public figures who do not share the idea desired). The message will be more easily accepted if there is a powerful and persuasive source, so this leads to the absurdity that success does not depend on the value of the message, but the authority of the one who publishes it. Boris

Tadic, president of Serbia and the Democratic Party is the most present politician. A third of total number of quotations belong to him (30%), while the first opposition rival has almost half the space (15.59%), which does not correspond to the situation in the field. The public refuses to believe in spinned news, but the creators of marketing campaigns fail to hear the public opinion. Thus, information about the evident decline in circulation, elites interpret as the consequences of the global crisis not even considering a loss of credibility? The media market knows no morals and structure of messages that are spread across the network represent strategic resources. The task of the press is not only to inform, but to persuade and seduce while articles seem like a mould from the same workshop. (E.g. March 3 *Alo* published an article: *Tadic: Better days are coming* (page 3); *Večernje novosti*, *Kurir* and *Blic* published identical headlines: *Here come better days* (1 and 2 p.); *Politika* is little more creative – *Boris Tadic: I am sure that better days are coming*. Political communication in a closed system does not work, because the task of liberal propaganda is not to persuade by force, but to simulate freedom. The fact that a large number of print media indirectly receives money from government funds indicates the similarity of editorial criteria, as well as overt political influence on the content of the information! /10/ In a digital era, images are regaining its function, since readers flipping through newspapers opt for a theme subconsciously identifying with the person in it. The fact that images of Boris Tadic dominate newspapers with 38.70% is no longer surprising since it illustrates duality of functions which are separated in every democratic society: the president of a state

and the president of a political party in power. The images of his direct political opponent Tomislav Nikolic are public three times lower: 11.50% and it is interesting that a fewer number of photographs are of Aleksandar Vucic (12.26%). There are also a large number of photographs of the president of the Social-

ist Party and Minister of Interior Ivica Dacic! There are a number of methods based on the form of content in the political propaganda and it is necessary to repeat the information and images in a long and continuous period of time so as to ensure that the recipient keeps the content.

Leader's photo	<i>Politika</i>	<i>Danas</i>	<i>Večernje novosti</i>	<i>Blic</i>	<i>Pres</i>	<i>Kurir</i>	<i>Pravda</i>	<i>Alo</i>	Total
Boris Tadić	50,0	52,0	68,0	35,5	51,7	20,4	28,6	33,9	38,7
Tomislav Nikolić	7,1	8,0	4,0	16,1	13,8	13,0	19,0	9,7	11,5
Mlađan Dinkić	14,3	20,0	0,0	16,1	10,3	14,8	9,5	11,3	12,3
Ivica Dačić	0,0	4,0	8,0	19,4	10,3	13,0	14,3	8,1	10,3
Vojislav Koštunica	0,0	0,0	4,0	3,2	0,0	3,7	0,0	1,6	1,9
Čedomir Jovanović	7,1	4,0	4,0	0,0	3,4	1,9	9,5	6,5	4,2
Aleksandar Vučić	7,1	0,0	8,0	3,2	3,4	22,2	14,3	19,4	12,3
Dragan Đilas	14,3	12,0	4,0	6,5	6,9	11,1	4,8	9,7	8,8
Total	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0

Table 4. Frequently published photos of leaders

Few individuals realize that the political battle moved to communication area, that instead of real problems the public is offered media performance while the sense of responsibility and guilt is transferred from the government to citizens by using transfer of meaning. Avoiding making difficult decisions ordinary people delegate party representatives but instead of general good they worry about personal interest or the interest of a political party! When talking about democratic challenges of media there has been a rise in interest in the role which political leaders will have in the future. /11/ By personalizing campaigns they direct the meaning to their own actions, which helps the readers to form their own views and opinions. Leaders create crisis and crossroads to attract public opinion and offer assessments of further events. Verification of the accuracy of information lacks in the analyzed media. Only one source is used in almost 53.75% of all articles and 5.62% of the articles have no source or it cannot be identified. Therefore, only a little more than a third of the articles meet professional standards. If we com-

pare that with the high influx of information from official sources (state or government, the president, ministries, political parties, leaders and PR professional services) it is evident that a significant part of the content is discreetly created by the authority. In stable democracies, state elites are considered to be reliable sources of information, and often take priority in reporting. In societies in transition this may not be the case, since the number of media outlets is declining because of restructuring and journalists and editors, due to cost reduction, spend more time in the office developing into processors of recent press releases, statements and information. In this way, centers of power occupy the space of researchers, dictating new rules of the game which can explain why the practice of not signing the article or not having a source is widespread. If one respects the old rule of journalism that any information must have at least two independent sources, then the empirical data shows that the content of Serbian daily newspapers is very unreliable and too ideologized!

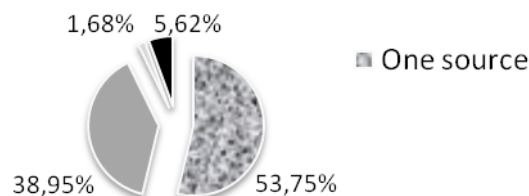


Figure 1. Number of information sources

Conclusion

Democracy involves individuality and dialogue, conflict of ideas and opinions, communication between the government and the opposition, which may play an important role in achieving certain political goals. Expectation that politics will give the media over to citizens and ideals of truth is a big misconception. *"It is just as likely as the hypothetical situation that the politics, deprived of media pressure, once organizes a reasoned debate in the campaign as well as free and fair elections, not a spectacle for the voters"*, concluded Nikolas Luhmann, a German sociologist. The Holy Trinity: politics, media and capital is increasingly intertwined in a network of interdependence and power. Only crossing of individual opinions and collective consciousness results in unique attitudes, beliefs and behaviors. Hence the politicians appearing in media nowadays are trying to present personal, party and religious interest as public interest. In the new order the nature and the function of publicity have changed, since the media is the bearer of its diversion and distribution. The trick is to create the illusion of reality, while the media story takes place under strict canons of Hollywood narrative: the political authorities in time start symbolizing the truth, instead of becoming a true social authority. The goal is to create a wider picture of the political events, appropriate context, because it than loses the reference value of information. Political leaders reduce misunderstanding and conflict among its counterparts, and at the same time encourage and intensify conflict with non-members. This creates an invisible boundary between people to whom it is reported and about whom the report is, and in empty space there are many warm human stories whose function is to distract attention from the current political decisions. Political culture fades before glaring media images which have a function to create common beliefs, judgments and conclusions. Social awareness is crushing, while an individual related to the party becomes an active advocate of particular interest. The media is becoming a notice board for political romantics, totalitarian apparatus for controlling the mass consciousness, transmissions of minority governing. Serbian society is changing faster than our media, which undermining a number of traditional values, norms and beliefs do not offer adequate replacement for what they promote. Hence, more and more information, do not reflect reality, but participate in its creation! So the media is trying to offer a reality, not to report on it! Today's democ-

racy is being transformed into a system that will be completed at some time in the future, while it is reality that the media is more actively participating in the construction of social image. Interest networks of politicians, tycoons, journalists and advertisers filter messages they send to the public and have obedience and passivity as a final target. In this way the media system becomes closed, controlled, static, monotonous and transparent, self-sufficient, and even deprofessionalized. By analyzing the content of several leading daily newspapers we have shown that in Serbia in the context of social and political issues pluralism of opinion is absent which can cause the spreading of specific partocratic capitalism. The ultimate loser is the audience who dazes by promises, speed and colourfulness can much harder distinguish truth from lies.

The work was done within the research project No. 179008 and No. 179074 funded by the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Serbia

Notes

- /1/ This means *"planning, implementing and controlling the complex process of transferring content and intersubjective construction of reality by political actors"* (Zerfaß A. & Oehsen, H.O. 2011:11).
- /2/ Noam Chomsky by revealing the propaganda model under the supervision of the state bureaucracy, registers five filters that censor the content of the information: "1) size, ownership and profit orientation of the mass media, 2) the impact of marketing and business owner, 3) a source of news, 4) *"anti-aircraft artillery"* and *attacks on the media*; 5) *anticommunism as anti-surveillance mechanism*" (Čomski, 2004:153-207).
- /3/ Edelman Murray says this in a different way: "silence is full of meaning when it means avoiding the problem that would cause division if it was mentioned"(2003:37).
- /4/ This agenda represents an attempt of political actors to give to the influential media the most favorable or the most important topics to them.
- /5/ "The Press publishing group" data at the end of January 2012. The highest recorded sale had *Blic* (about 150,000), then *Pres* (about 130,000) and *Večernje novosti* (120,000), *Kurir* (about 80,000), *Politika* (about 45,000), *ALO* (30,000), and *Danas* (12,000). Analyzed newspaper bought more than three-quarters of readers of the total circulation of daily newspapers in Serbia (about 650,000 copies)!
- /6/ Branković Srbobran: *"Dnevna ekonomija vremena žitelja Srbije"*, *Kultura polisa*, in: *"Običan dan – istraživanje dnevne ekonomije vremena"*, Novi Sad, 2009., page 17.

- /7/ Journalism was all the way to to the twenties of the last century "a profession in which skills were gained by practical training in newsrooms, but with the growth of ethical narratives partly became a profession that does not communicate directly with consumers (such as lawyers or doctors), but through the media" (Radojković, Miroljub: "Novinari kao profesionalna grupa", *Sociološki pregled*, vol. XXXVII (2003). NO. 3-4, page 241).
- /8/ More in: Jevtović Zoran, Petrović Radivoje: "Javno mnjenje i demokratski deficit u dobu multimedija", *Srpska politička misao*, No. 4. Beograd, 2010, page 105-126.
- /9/ The part of the work that is most responsible for the analytical study is: the political statements that caused readers to occupy certain positions were measured, and particular attention was paid to their political orientation (eg, Serbia has to see it's future in Europe, the Democratic Party is the only barrier to corruption and crime , etc.). More in: Milosavljević i dr.: *Analitika medija*; Media Plan Instiut, Sarajevo, 2010.
- /10/ In late September 2011. the Serbian government adopted the *Report on the pressures and the media control* of the Anti-Corruption agency, headed at that time by Verica Barac. Of the 30 major analyzed media (12 dailies, 7 weeklies, 6 TV and 5 radio stations), 18 was with non-transparent ownership. Hence it is not surprising that the conclusion was that they were under "a full political control." Thus, the state grants the news agency Tanjug free loan of around 170,000 euros for elections, while the Ministry of Environment, the Privatization Agency, Ministry of Economy, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Agriculture and fifty more government institutions were paing selected media for promotional campaigns and advertising services, without public control, with the aim personal and party promotion. The report indirectly points to the power of two major agencies for public relations: Multikom Group, representing a stake of a Dragan Djilas, the deputy leader of the Democratic Party, and Mekenek Erikson, owned by Srdjan Saper, the president advizer and high-ranking member of the ruling party, for which is said to monopolize the commercial space worth about 175 million euros. Convolutet tangle of money, politics and influence proves corrupt system, but also the morality of Serbian society that suppressed *The Report*, and only after the death of the author recognized its value!
- /11/ More in: Sarcinelli, U. (2007): *Partelenkommunikation in Deutschland: zwischen Reformagentur und Reformblockade*. U: Weidenfeld, werner (izd.): *Reformen kommunizieren, Herausforderungen an die Politik*. Gütersloh: Bertelsmann Stiftung, page 109-145, or Uwe, J. (2004): *Der Wandel der Parteien in der Mediendemokratie. SPD und Labour Party im Vergleich*. Frankfurt a. M.; Campus.
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