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**HOW  
TO MAKE** INTRA-PARTY  
**DEMOCRACY**  
**POSSIBLE?**

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INSTITUTIONAL FACTORS  
AND INTERNAL DYNAMICS  
OF INTRA-PARTY RELATIONS

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IN SERBIA

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Ilija Vujačić  
Zlatko Vujović

**Editors:**

Zoran Stojiljković  
Dušan Spasojević  
Jelena Lončar

**Reviewers:**

Vukašin Pavlović  
Čedomir Čupić  
Đorđe Vuković

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**Editors**  
**Zoran Stojiljković**  
**Dušan Spasojević**  
**Jelena Lončar**

# **HOW TO MAKE INTRA-PARTY DEMOCRACY POSSIBLE?**

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INTERNAL DYNAMICS OF INTRA-PARTY  
RELATIONS IN SERBIA**



**BALKAN COMPARATIVE  
ELECTORAL STUDY:  
IMPACT OF PERSONAL VOTE  
ON INTERNAL PARTY DEMOCRACY**

Belgrade, 2015



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# INTRODUCTION

This volume presents the first results within the regional research project Balkan Electoral Comparative study: Impact of personal vote on Internal party democracy. It is connected to the binary study we prepared with the colleagues from Montenegro. The Balkan Electoral Comparative Study is an international research project carried out within the RRPP – Regional Research Promotion Program in the field of social sciences at the Western Balkans conducted by CeMI from Podgorica, Faculty of Political Sciences from Belgrade, Kipred from Pristina and group of researchers from Sarajevo. The main goal of the Study is to test the hypothesis about the dependence between personalization of politics (in the actual case, the personalized electoral system) and intraparty democracy in the transitional, post-Yugoslav and post-communist context.

The primary aim of this volume is to offer an analytical and theoretical context for interpretation of findings from the empirical Comparative Candidate Study, which we presented in the binary study. In addition, it aims to serve as an extensive review of the previous research studies carried out in Serbia, which are relevant for our research questions.

Therefore the main idea and intention of this volume is to connect and present the most important findings on determinants of intraparty relations and dynamics in Serbia after the October 5th. This topic is becoming increasingly intriguing due to the increased awareness of political parties as the supreme actors which by usurpation of the decision-making process slow down and prevent further democratization of the Western Balkan countries. However, our research should not be understood as „witch-hunt“ but as an attempt to observe, through in-depth analyses, the mutually invigorating mechanisms preventing the power to be displaced from political parties and moved to the institutions of political system and the formation of common democratic mechanisms of division and mutual control and limitation of power. In that sense this research is the continuance of several previous research projects focused on strengthening of the parliament and its oversight capacities (for example, see our previous study within the RRPP program: „Democratic Performances of the Parliaments of Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Montenegro“).

The volume is divided into five parts. The first two parts are dealing with institutional design as the basic determinant of political behaviour – political and electoral system. In the first chapter entitled “Constitutional-Institutional Design of the Republic of Serbia”, Slaviša Orlović analyses the main foundations of the political system and their influence on political behaviour. The analysis particularly emphasises an unfavourable influence of political legacy and points to the obstacles in democratisation which Serbia faced with. Besides, the author pays attention to newly established institutions (such are the regulatory and control bodies) and their importance in the process of democratic consolidation.

## How to make intra-party democracy possible?

Another text, by the author Milan N. Jovanović, focuses on the electoral system, which is at the same time the central institutional dimension of our research. This chapter offers a detailed genesis of the electoral system (accompanied by the argumentation of changes pointing to the intentions of political actors), but the emphasis is on the political consequences of the adopted solutions. The author also points to the influences of international actors on the internal institutional design. Through three main conclusions, Jovanović points that Serbian model of proportional representation favours the dependence between the MPs and the party leader, and that it directs the identification of voters towards leaders, thus not stimulating the democratic intraparty dynamics while leading the system towards an uneven geographic representativeness of the parliament. This yields the instability of the party system as a consequence.

These conclusions can be interpreted also as a framework of the next chapter in which Zoran Stojiljković and Dušan Spasojević analyse the party system of Serbia both at the system level and at the level of individual parties. By using the methodological approaches adjusted to transitional societies, the authors point to the elements of stability and continuity in a very changeable political life of Serbia, as well as to possible sources of gradual institutionalisation and consolidation of the party system.

If we labelled the chapter on the electoral system as the main institutional vertical, than the fourth chapter entitled “Intraparty Democracy” is the theoretical framework of the entire project. The chapter starts with the development of research models and indicators and their adjustments to new and unconsolidated party system, with the aim to apply these indicators in the subsequent analysis of intraparty relations in Serbia. This analysis encompasses both the formal (legal and statutory) and practical approaches. The authors (Zoran Stojiljković, Vojislav Mihailović and Dušan Spasojević) in this chapter (as expected) conclude that the majority of parties in Serbia do not have a rich democratic practice, but that they are dominantly organised upon the leadership party model. A particularly dangerous seems the fact that this situation is not a product of a single factor, but of a synergy of institutional, value and historical influences, and the fact that non-democratic management of the parties is being transmitted and established as the management model in public institutions.

Finally, in the last, fifth chapter, Jelena Lončar and Boban Stojanović offer a review of electoral campaigns in the last 15 years with an aim of pointing to two main problems – the low level of ideological differentiation of parties and large importance of leaders in the campaigns. Without such insight it would be difficult to entirely understand the level of identification of voters with leaders and the parallel incapacity of a large number of party cadres to profile themselves in terms of programme or policy issues and create a recognisable image in the political public.

Zoran Stojiljković  
Dušan Spasojević

Slaviša Orlović

**PART ONE**

**CONSTITUTIONAL-  
-INSTITUTIONAL  
DESIGN OF THE  
REPUBLIC OF SERBIA**



# CONSTITUTIONAL- -INSTITUTIONAL DESIGN OF THE REPUBLIC OF SERBIA

*Table 1. The identity card of Serbia*

State/Characteristics	Serbia
Independent state since	1878 independence at the Congress of Berlin 2006 after the referendum in Montenegro 1918 Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes (First Yugoslavia) 1941 Capitulation and popular uprising 1942–1992 AVNOJ (the Anti-Fascist Council for the National Liberation of Yugoslavia), DFY (the Democratic Federal Yugoslavia), FPRY (the Federal People's Republic of Yugoslavia), SFRY (the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia) (Second Yugoslavia) 1992–2002 FRY (Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, the Third Yugoslavia) 2002–2006 Serbia and Montenegro (the State Union)
Unitary – federal/confederal state	Unitary
Population	7,120,666 (2011 census)
Organization of power (parliamentary, presidential, semi-presidential system)	Parliamentary-presidential system (semi-presidential)
Manner of presidential election	Direct
Unicameral or bicameral parliament	Unicameral
Number of MPs in the parliament	250
Number of convocations of the parliament after the introduction of multipartism	Ten (1990–2014)
The EU member, (the association phase)	Candidate status since March 1st, 2012
The NATO, Partnership for Peace member	Membership in the Partnership for Peace since December 2007

## The political and cultural heritage of Serbia

An unavoidable political feature of Serbia is its central position in the Balkans, the crossroads of civilizations and their influences, as well as a hyper-production of history and therefore the obsession with the past instead of the future. An insight into the constitutional elements in the political tradition of Serbia reveals Byzantine, Ottoman, Western European and Russian influences. The political history of Serbia has strong authoritarian and totalitarian layers whose influences reach the present days. Short-term democratic and more liberal parts of Serbia's transition are interrupted with authoritarian and totalitarian waves, making the relying on them uneasy. Throughout its history, Serbia stood at the crossroads of cultural and political influences, in the same time being both the bridge and the battlefield of three civilizations (Roman-Byzantine, Islamic and Western European) empires (Byzantine, Ottoman and Austrian-Hungarian), religions (Orthodox, Muslim and Catholic). The last deep trace was left by communism.

Although the multiparty system in Serbia was established in the same time as in other Eastern European countries, political changes and democratisation of Serbia significantly differ from other post-communist societies. This reflects in the UN sanctions introduced upon Serbia during the 1990s, the NATO bombing campaign, remaining with Montenegro within the FRY and then the separation of Montenegro through the referendum and the unilateral declaration of independence of Kosovo and Metohija. For the analytical reasons, it is necessary to make a distinction between the period from 1990 to 2000, when Slobodan Milošević was in power, and the subsequent period, that is, after the political changes in Serbia and the removal of Milošević in 2000. It is considered that the "character of the former regime significantly influences the quality and achievements of democratic changes" (Pavlović, 2004: 272). Serbia belonged to the tradition of single-party dictatorships. An important feature of these systems was the intertwining of the party and the state.

### Serbia in the 1990s – a general context

In many dimensions, Serbia during the 1990s was a devastated society (Orlović, 2008). This was contributed by long civil wars, economic and political isolation of the country (the UN sanctions), economic crisis, hyperinflation, decrease of the domestic product and general pauperization. The arrival of Slobodan Milošević to power three years (1987) before the demolition of the Berlin Wall, which symbolizes the fall of communism, bore consequences for the political transformation of Serbia. Becoming the head of the League of Communists of Serbia (SKS), Milošević had an opportunity to use all resources and control the political agenda of gradual pluralisation of Serbia. In Serbia during the 1990s, the Socialist Party of Serbia (SPS) was the "dominant party", which made an axis of all governments (1990–2000) and gave the President of the Republic throughout that period.

## **The political changes in Serbia in 2000**

The political changes in Serbia did not occur in the time of demolition of the Berlin Wall, but about ten years later. The fall of the regime in Serbia came after the victory at the “surprise elections” and the defence of that victory by peaceful protests on the streets in front of the Federal Assembly building. The “surprise elections” occur when authoritarian rules see their legitimacy starts to decline, when they suffer an increasing external and internal pressure and when they attempt to renew their legitimacy through elections, believing that thereby they will prolong their rule. Milošević’s term of office was to expire on June 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2001 and he called for early presidential elections for September 24<sup>th</sup>, 2000 (eight months before the expiry of his term in office). In such elections votes have the character of protest and it is rather voting “against” than “for”. The opposition is usually united in a frequently heterogeneous and “colourful coalition”. In Serbia, the opposition united under the name of the Democratic Opposition of Serbia (DOS). The changes were preceded by the change of public mood. The fall or the removal of the regime “usually causes a wonderful albeit short moment of euphoria, carnations and Champaign, which transformations lack, but also, the fall “creates a potential vacuum of authority which is not the case with the transformations” (Huntington, 2004: 118).

The manner in which the state transforms from the hands of authoritarian rulers to the hands of pro-democratic leaders has a significant influence on the quality and stability of democracy (Sodaro, 2004: 210; Pavlović, 2004: 273). Regarding the change of the regime, Juan Linz makes a difference between the reform and the interruption, Samuel Huntington between the transformation and the replacement of the regime, Michael Sodaro between the pacted transition (Latin America, Spain), revolution from below (Eastern Germany, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Baltic republics) and democratisation from above (Soviet Union). (Sodaro, 2004: 210). The transformation of the regime (according to Linz, the reforms) occurs when governing elites lead the creation of democracy. As emphasised by Huntington himself, the border between the transformation and the changes through negotiations is blurry and some cases can be classified into both categories (Huntington, 2004: 102). Spain became the model for subsequent democratisations in Latin America and Eastern Europe. The replacement of the regime (according to Linz, the interruption) occurs when the leading role in the creation of democracy is taken over by the opposition groups and when the authoritarian regime collapses or is toppled. The political changes in Serbia in 2000 had the elements of replacement and transformation of the regime. The replacement occurred at elections, while the elements of transformation exist in the negotiations between the old and the new political elites. The transition in Serbia was accompanied with an “unsurpassed legacy of the past“ (Mladen Lazić). In Serbia, the changes were carried out without the discontinuity with the former regime and were accompanied by the liberal deficit which was to reflect on the dynamics and success of the reforms.

A big mistake of the new political elite was that political changes have not been constitutionalised. A successful “peaceful revolution” of 2000 was not accompanied by a successful constitutionalisation of its effects. Instead of a more radical break up with the old regime, the strategy of the constitutional-institutional continuity has been implemented.

## POLITICAL INSTITUTIONS IN SERBIA

### The constituting of Serbia – the adoption of the Constitution

The constitutionalism in Serbia has since the beginning of the 1990s been facing the problem of adoption or amendments to the Constitution, with the issues of the implementation and respect of the Constitution remaining equally open (Stanovčić, 2003: 216). Political parties in Serbia even offered competitive constitutional models,<sup>1</sup> although the Constitution is a more permanent and long-lasting value than the party politics and inter-party competition. The Constitution is the highest legal act in a state. It is a social contract with the consent and the “sum of the unifying values” (Heywood, 2004: 555).

Since 1990, the Constitution in Serbia has been the subject of political competition (first in 1990: “elections, then the constitution, or constitution, and then the elections“, then in 2005: “elections for the constitution or constitution for the elections“). After the introduction of the multiparty system in Serbia in 1989-90, the opposition insisted on the new constitution, to be followed by the elections. Milošević wanted to keep both the power and the continuity and was in favour of the reverse order, which happened. After the political changes in 2000, Serbia did not use its constitutional chance considering the then existing two-third majority (of the DOS), 176 out of 250 MPs. It is clear that the window of constitutional opportunity (Bruce Ackerman), was open for a short time and very quickly it was replaced by the “imperatives of daily politics, which deepen the differences among the political actors” (Dimitrijević, 2002: 38). After the referendum in Montenegro (May 21<sup>st</sup>, 2006), the Assembly of Serbia passed on June 6<sup>th</sup>, 2006 the Decision on the reestablishment of the Serbian statehood.<sup>2</sup> The National Assembly on September 30<sup>th</sup>, 2006 unanimously (by votes of all 242 present MPs) adopted the bill of the new Constitution of Serbia and passed the decision on holding a referendum for confirming the Constitutional Bill on October 28<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup>, 2006. By majority of 53.04% of the total number of voters registered into the voters’ registry, the citizens confirmed the new Constitution and the National Assembly ceremonially proclaimed it on November 8<sup>th</sup>, 2006. Continuing the same special session, the Assembly passed the Constitutional Law for the implementation of the Constitution of Serbia. As emphasised

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- 1 The draft constitutions were offered by: Democratic Party of Serbia, Democratic Party and the G17 Plus, as well as by the Belgrade Centre for Human Rights, Professor Pavle Nikolić (the Constitution of the Kingdom of Serbia) and the Forum Iuris. The procedure for amending the constitution envisaged the two-third majority in the parliament and the referendum majority of the total number of registered voters.
  - 2 The Decision of the Assembly of Serbia of June 6, 2006, Official Gazette of the RS No. 48/2006



by Slobodan Vučetić: “The new Constitution enjoys a full legitimacy and legality due to the two undisputable facts. First, the bill was defined in a full agreement of all relevant parliamentary parties, by majority of much above the obligatory two-third, by votes of 242 out of 250 democratically elected MPs. Second, for the first time in the history of constitutionality in Serbia, the Constitutional Bill was confirmed at the citizens’ referendum” (Vučetić, 2006: 25).

The new Constitution of Serbia could be characterised as a republican, soft and codified constitution. This means that Serbia is a republic, that the Constitution is relatively easy (or not difficult) to be amended and that the Constitution is codified and contains 206 articles (Heywood, 2004: 545; Sartori, 2003: 223). It is a result of trade-offs and compromises about certain articles. Compromises and trade-offs reduced the quality of certain solutions. The social property was abolished, new bodies and legal institutions have been introduced, such is the Ombudsperson, High Judicial Council, State Prosecutors Council, State Audit Institution, constitutional appeal and similar human rights and freedoms, individual and collective, as a step towards the European standards, which had already been to a significant extent regulated by the Constitutional Charter of Serbia and Montenegro, that is, the Charter on Human and Minority Rights and Civil Freedoms (inviolability of the home, no death penalty, prohibition of cloning, human trafficking, sexual or economic abuse of people in a disadvantaged position, slavery and forced work). Private property was given the dominant role, while the city construction land and the agricultural land were granted a market character. The similar position of the Autonomous Province of Vojvodina was maintained, with a slightly higher economic autonomy, however envisaging the possibility for establishment of new autonomous provinces. The preamble of the Constitution defines that the Autonomous Province of Kosovo and Metohija is an integral part of the territory of Serbia with the right to “essential autonomy”. Comparing to the former constitution of 1990, the procedure of constitutional amendments is easier. The amendment to the constitution still requires a two-third majority of the total number of MPs, however abolishing the existing obligatory referendum and the confirmation by the majority of the total number of voters for the constitutional amendment to be adopted.

The new Constitution introduced the prohibition of the conflict of interest. Article 102 Paragraph 3 reads: “Deputy may not be the deputy in the Assembly of the autonomous province, nor an official in bodies of executive government and judiciary, nor may he or she perform other functions, affairs and duties which represent a conflict of interest, according to the Law”. Ministers cannot in the same time be the MPs. Pursuant to Article 126, “Member of the Government may not be a deputy in the National Assembly, deputy in the Assembly of autonomous province and representative in the Assembly of the local self-government units, nor may he or she be a member of the executive council of the autonomous province or executive body of the local self-government unit”.

The Constitution has its bad sides as well. Among the representatives of political parties there was obviously an agreement to adopt a solution according to which the MP mandates are decided by the political parties. For the sake of suppressing the transfer and trading with terms of office in the new Constitution of Serbia (2006), Article 102 Paragraph 2

## How to make intra-party democracy possible?

adopted the following solution: “Under the terms stipulated by the Law, the deputy shall be free to irrevocably put his/her term of office at disposal of the political party upon which proposal he or she has been elected a deputy”. In this manner the MP possesses the mandate only in the moment of signing an irrevocable blank resignation giving the mandate at the disposal of the party’s leadership. This might have been an attempt of introduction of imperative mandate which does not exist in the legislation of the European Union member states.<sup>3</sup> This provision was criticised by the European Commission, OSCE and Venice Commission. Slobodan Vučetić described the problem with this provision in comparison with other articles of the Constitution in the following manner: According to Article 2 of the Constitution: “Sovereignty is vested on citizens who exercise it through freely elected representatives”, then, “No state body, political organisation, group or individual may usurp the sovereignty from the citizens, nor establish government against freely expressed will of the citizens”, according to Article 5 “Political parties may not exercise power directly or submit it to their control”, and according to Article 100, MPs are “elected on direct elections by secret ballot”. Hence, “they are elected by citizens, and not by party membership of leadership” (Vučetić, 2006: 34).

Some of the basic constitutional solutions were met with sharp criticism. Serbia is defined as a state of Serbian people and all citizens who live in it (Article 1); however, this solution is not in accordance with the constitutional principle from Article 2 of the Constitution, according to which “sovereignty is vested in citizens”, which guarantees their equality. Certain constitutional solutions are abundant with contradictions and controversial attitudes. Thus Article 82 states that “economic system in the Republic of Serbia shall be based on market economy, open and free market”, but also that “the impact of the market economy on social and economic status of the employed shall be adjusted through social dialogue between trade unions and employers”.

An important novelty in relation to the former Constitution is that there is no more supremacy of the generally accepted rules of international law and ratified international treaties over the domestic law. Namely, according to Article 194 of the Constitution of Serbia, “ratified international treaties and generally accepted rules of the international law shall be part of the legal system of the Republic of Serbia”, if they are in compliance with the Constitution of Serbia. This means that hierarchically they are above the law and below the Constitution.

## Directly elected President (semi-presidential system)

In Serbia, the 1990 Constitution introduced the direct election of the President of the Republic. Considering that besides him there is also a government deriving from the parliamentary majority, these are the minimum criteria for the semi-presidential system. This<sup>4</sup> is a system with dual executive in which both the President and the Prime Minister

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3 Vladimir Goati states that the provision that mandates belong to the parties is valid only in Bangladesh, South African Republic, Panama and India. *Blic*, 24. 10. 2006.

4 Different terms are used for this system: semi-presidential (Duverger, Linz), premier-presidential

have the decision-making power. According to Arendt Lijphart, these systems are not a synthesis of parliamentarism and presidentialism, but rather an alternation between the presidential and parliamentary phases, depending on the parties' balance of power (Lijphart, 2003: 156). Dual-executive systems have been established in the states that won independence from other countries or dominant power and are perceived as a symbol of new nation.<sup>5</sup> The essential question in functioning of the semi-presidential system is the relation between the President and the Prime Minister. This relation can be clarified by asking who is on the head of the government, the President or the Prime Minister. In other words, in semi-presidentialism there are two possible realities; rotation of the presidential phase when presidential and parliamentary majorities are harmonised, and the parliamentary phase when this is not the case. We have already emphasised Lijphart's attitude that a semi-presidential system can function as an alternation between the presidential and parliamentary phases, depending on the balance of power between the President's party and the other parties. Slobodan Milošević became the leader of Serbia in 1986 after defeating Ivan Stambolić, the former President of Serbia, at the famous 8<sup>th</sup> session of the CKSKS (Central Committee of the League of Communists of Serbia). Milošević was the President of the Socialist Republic of Serbia from 1987 to 1990. After amendment to the Constitution, he was the President of the Republic of Serbia from 1990 to 1997. The Milošević's presidential mandate had the characteristics of a prevalence of presidential elements over the parliamentarian ones. Limited by the impossibility for repeated running for the President of Serbia, from 1997 to 2000 he was the President of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. During almost this entire period, Milošević was the President of the SKS (League of Communists of Serbia), that of the SPS, except for two years (1992–93) when this function was performed by Borisav Jović. After Slobodan Milošević, Milan Milutinović was elected the next President of Serbia. In the period when Milan Milutinović was the President of Serbia, the presidential function atrophied, with completely the same competences but significantly different levers. In the first phase, Milutinović looked like a "job keeper" who "does not interfere with his own work". After the end of Milan Milutinović's mandate, several serials of presidential elections were held, unsuccessfully due to a high threshold and the necessity to win 50% plus one vote. Upon amendment to this Article, at the 2004 presidential elections, Boris Tadić was elected in the second round, same as at the 2008 presidential elections. Tadić ran for the President of Serbia also at the early elections in 2012 when he lost from Tomislav Nikolić. In his first term in office 2004–2008, Tadić was a weak president because his party (DS) was in opposition. In the second mandate, 2008–2012, Tadić was a strong president because his party was in power. Tomislav Nikolić was the President of the Serbian Progressive Party (SNS) which won at parliamentary elections in 2012 and 2014. He fulfilled the promise given to the voters in the electoral campaign that he would withdraw from the position of

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(Shugart and Carey), presidential-parliamentary, bicephalous executive, „dual rule“, or „one country with two rulers“, particularly when it is about the cohabitation. Semi-presidential systems are: France, Austria, Finland, Iceland, Ireland and Portugal.

5 For example, the states emerged from the dissolution of the SFRY: Serbia, Croatia and other former Yugoslav republics

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the party president if he wins the presidential elections. Several months after the elections he withdrew from the position of the SNS president, thus significantly weakening his political position. Aleksandar Vučić was elected the President of the SNS, who after the 2012 elections was the Vice Prime Minister, and after the elections of 2014 became the Prime Minister of the Government of the Republic of Serbia.

The head of the state and the head of the government have disproportional power and legitimacy (Shugart and Carey, 1992: 56). The President of the Republic, by the act of direct election, has a higher legitimacy than power, because the levers of power are concentrated in the government, that is, the Prime Minister's hands. According to Article 112, the President of the Republic "shall represent the Republic of Serbia in the country and abroad". The President appoints and dismisses upon his decree the ambassadors, upon the proposal of the Government. Pursuant to the new Constitution, the President, in accordance with the law, commands the army and appoints, promotes and relieves officers in the Army of Serbia. The President of the Republic is the head of the National Security Council.

The President promulgates laws upon his decree, but can also return the law to the National Assembly to reconsideration, with written explanation (reactive power). President Tadić used this competence in several occasions (Law on Government and Labour Law). If the Assembly decides to vote again on the law which the President of the Republic returned for deciding, "the law shall be adopted by the majority vote of total number of deputies" (that is 126), while according to the former constitution it was by the majority of the present MPs. This part of competence, although limited, showed its good sides in the conditions of fusion (and not division) of power between the Assembly and the Government. The new Constitution granted stronger positions to the President with regards to the Constitutional Court, as he appoints one third out of fifteen judges from the list of ten candidates proposed by the Assembly and proposes ten candidates among which the Assembly elects five judges (before he only proposed candidates for judges and president of the Constitutional Court, while they were elected by the Assembly). The President, for the violation of the Constitution, can be dismissed by the National Assembly by two-third majority, upon the decision of the Constitutional Court that such violation of the Constitution did exist.

The President of Serbia does not have a "proactive power" of proposing laws and passing decrees with the force of law, but only a "reactive" power of returning the laws. The nature of the president's position enables him to be much more popular than his party.

## The National Assembly of the Republic of Serbia

The parliament is the most important institution of representative democracy in the process of democratic consolidation. Written constitutions make it a place of honour and describe it before the executive and judicial power (Heywood, 2004: 758). As Sartori emphasises: "States that get away from dictatorship can have few choices apart the parliamentary one" (Sartori, 2003: 132). Unfortunately, the National Assembly of the

Republic of Serbia has been significantly marginalised. The supremacy of the executive power (Government), trading with mandates, voting from abroad (voting by absent MPs' cards), frequent changing of personal and party composition without elections, long waiting for some systemic laws and invisible work of parliamentary committees,<sup>6</sup> instead of an "incubator of democracy" made it a rather weak institution. At the parliamentary rostrum, MPs resemble gladiators in an arena, while among the parliamentary benches they reduced themselves to taster pushers and voting machine, without autonomy in their acts and performances. They are here only to verify the decisions made somewhere else. Laws are passed *through* the Assembly and not *by* the Assembly, through which they only pass like water through an instantaneous water heater. The parliament formally controls the government, but in fact the leading coalition's party leaders, sitting in the government, control the parliament through the heads of the parliamentary fractions and through the party discipline.

The position of the parliament is best reflected in its competences. In Serbia, the right to propose bills is granted to every MP, the Government, Assembly of the Autonomous Province, at least 30,000 voters and the Ombudsperson and the Governor of the National Bank, from the scope of their competences.<sup>7</sup> The Serbian parliament only elected the Governments, however not dismissing them, although in several occasions the opposition requested debate on confidence in the Government or some of its ministers. The assembly majority has almost always ignored the opposition's requests. For oversight and control of the Government, the Assembly of Serbia has on its disposal the institution of question time, parliamentary survey committees, and public hearings. Constitutional solutions and parliamentary practice significantly violated the representative function of the parliament. In practice, rather than being the representative of voters' interests, a MP has been reduced to a representative of his party fraction or party.<sup>8</sup> The anti-corruption strategy proposes the "introduction of elements of personalisation of the MPs' election into the electoral system". Considering that under the Law on the Election of MPs, "every third person on the electoral list is a representative of the less represented sex", 33% of the Assembly of Serbia are women. As for the political representation, Kosovo and Metohija are constitutionally part of Serbia, but the highest number of the Kosovo citizens is not represented in the parliament. The Assembly of Serbia has a weak

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6 The report of the Speaker of the Assembly of Serbia (2003–2006), among else states that the parliamentary committees held 862 sessions. The most diligent was the Legislative Committee with 121 session, and the least working was the Local Self-Government Committee that met only six times. The Committee for economic reforms has not even been constituted. *Danas*, 5. 12. 2006.

7 The Constitution of the Republic of Serbia of 2006, Article 107.

8 In the report *Evropeizacija Srbije, Monitoring procesa evropeizacije društvenog, ekonomskog, političkog i pravnog prostora Srbije*, on page 30 it is written: "The absence of representation helps the decision-making power to move or never to move into the institutions; it allows development of suspicious and to no one entirely clear and known out-institutional arrangements and personal trade-offs, prevents establishment of institutional integrity and therefore weakens the citizens' trust in institutions, favouring the development of corruption both in its legal and ethic meaning."

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geographic (territorial) representation. In the last few convocations, between eighty and one hundred municipalities and towns (out of 150 municipalities, 25 towns and the capital of Belgrade) have not had their representatives in the parliament. The problem is an overrepresentation of big cities, above else Belgrade and Novi Sad, the so-called “metropolisation” of political representation.

The size of the legislative body tends to be approximately equal to the cube root of the number of citizens (Lijphart, 2003: 179; Taagepera and Shugart, 1989: 173). For Serbia, that would be about 200 MPs. The Assembly of Serbia consists of 250 MPs, it is unicameral, and it has 20 parliamentary committees. In Serbia with the population of about seven and a half million, one MP comes to approximately each 20,000 citizens, which is in accordance with the regional average.

## The Government of the Republic of Serbia

In difference from the parliament which attempts to obtain at least a formal equality of its members, the executive power is usually pyramidal and organised per leadership structure, with an aim to be concentrated in the hands of the Prime Minister (Heywood, 2004: 617). According to Article 122 of the Constitution of Serbia, the executive power is concentrated in the Government which makes its actual core: “The Government shall be the holder of executive power in the Republic of Serbia”. Supremacy of the executive power is among else reflected in the fact that the leaders of the parties creating the governmental majority are the members of the government and through the heads of the parliamentary factions control the legislative power. According to the former Constitution of Serbia, the executive power is concentrated in the Government, which creates its actual core. Article 90 of the Constitution of Serbia reads that the Government “pursues the policy of the Republic of Serbia and implements laws, other regulations and general acts of the National Assembly, in accordance with the Constitution“. The new Constitution of 2006 goes a step further in enhancing the position of the Government and its Prime Minister. Namely, the Government now “establishes and pursues the policy” (Article 123). As Slobodan Vučetić emphasises: “The actual power of the Government is expressed, above else, in that it is almost the sole proposer of bills”. Further on, the Government implements the laws, by passing the decrees and other regulations and measures, which in fact expands and narrows or selectively implements certain legal solutions” (Vučetić, 2006: 36). Among the Government’s competences enhanced by the new Constitution is that it has been empowered for giving proposals to the Assembly for appointment and dismissals of attorneys, which was previously under the competence of the High Judicial Council. The President of the Republic cannot like before request from the Government to expose his attitudes about certain issues from his competence. Significantly enhanced is also the position of the Prime Minister, who “shall manage and direct the work of the Government, take care of coordinated political activities of the Government, coordinate the work of members of the Government and represent the Government” (Article 125). In addition, the ministers shall now “account for their work and situation within the competence of their ministries to the Prime Minister, Government and National Assembly”. In the period

between 1990 and 2014, Serbia held ten parliamentary elections and formed about ten republic governments (Orlović, 2014: 50–82).

Governments formed after the political changes of 2000 faced several challenges. The first big challenge to the new government was the cooperation with the Hague Tribunal (ICTY – *International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia*). The entire field of international cooperation of all governments after October 5<sup>th</sup> was and remained in the shadow of cooperation with the Tribunal. Đinđić's Government arrested Milošević and on June 28<sup>th</sup>, 2001 he was extradited to The Hague. Concluding with the extraditions of Ratko Mladić and Radovan Karadžić, this topic has been largely removed from the agenda. Another big challenge to the new governments is the unresolved status of Kosovo and Metohija which is an important state issue. The third challenge to the new governments was the relations with Montenegro, concluding with disassociation in 2006.

## **Public agencies, regulatory and control bodies**

After the political changes of 2000, several regulatory and control bodies have been introduced in Serbia with a role to control the executive power and perform a part of its tasks while remaining autonomous (Orlović, 2010: 231–260). These are the Securities Commission, Anti-Monopoly Commission, Radio Broadcasting Agency, Commissioner for Information of Public Importance and Personal Data Protection, Commission for Prevention of Conflict of Interest, Anti-Corruption Council etc. The aim of all these institutions is to take care about the respect of law and control the work of public authorities. Although having similar goals, the independent bodies significantly differ in respect of their legal status, manner of election and dismissal of their members, competences, manner, that is, source of financing and the level of independence (Table 2). There is a difference between the bodies established by the parliament and by the government. The bodies established by the parliament can according to their functions and competences be divided to regulators, controllers and correctors. While the role of regulators is to regulate and define a certain field, controllers' and correctors' role is primarily to control and influence the work of executive power, like the State Audit Institution, Ombudsperson, Commissioner for Information of Public Importance and Personal Data Protection. The government-founded bodies are, by rule, managerial bodies or some sort of agencies. Independent bodies also differ by whether the foundation of their existence has been regulated by the Constitution, law or in other way. The Constitution regulates the existence of the National Bank of Serbia (Art. 95), State Audit Institution (Art. 96) and Ombudsperson (Art. 138), High Judicial Council (Art. 153) and the Public Prosecutors Council (Art. 164). Apart from these laws, in fight against abuse of the government also important are those regulating the criminal acts of corruption, contained in the General Criminal Law and the Criminal Law of the Republic of Serbia, as well as in the Law on Enterprises.<sup>9</sup> The bodies elected

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9 General Criminal Law ("Official Gazette of the SFRY", No. 44/76, "Official Gazette of the FR Yugoslavia", No. 35/92 and "Official Gazette of the RS", No. 39/03), and the Criminal Law of the Republic of Serbia ("Official Gazette of the SRS", No. 26/77 and "Official Gazette of the

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by the parliament have competences delegated to them by the parliament. According to the criterion of competence, regulatory bodies can be classified into two main groups: those performing regulatory and control function in a narrow sense and those making meritorious decisions not only about rights and duties but also about managing and use of limited national resources (energy sources, telecommunications, radio frequency) (Beljanski, 2008: 68). The former group encompasses the Ombudsperson and the Commissioner for Information, and previously also the Republic Board for Resolving the Conflict of Interest. The latter group includes the Council of the Republic Broadcasting Agency (RRA) – now the Regulatory Body for Electronic Media (REM), Agency for Electronic Communications and Energy Agency.

Being new, these bodies have from the moment of their establishment been meeting different kinds of problems, from constituting, space and budget issues, to performing their activity. Since recently, both the number and the competences of the regulatory bodies have been enhanced. On the one hand, the parliament needs them for external control of the executive power, while on the other hand they take over a part of competences which by its nature belong to the legislative power. The highest number of these bodies and organs is of an anti-corruptive nature, that is, they are the obstacle to the tendency of spoiling the government (respect for human rights, suppression of corruption and money laundry, control of legality of public procurement, protection of competition, prevention of conflict of interest, provision of availability of information of public importance, control of the state budget expenditures, control of work of administrative authorities and public enterprises). The establishment of certain independent bodies in new democracies was conditioned by the European integration process. Another difference among the independent bodies is whether the foundation for their existence is regulated by the Constitution, law or in some other way.<sup>10</sup> Two main characteristics of independent bodies are their independence and accountability. Independence of independent bodies does not mean their separation or excommunication from other bodies, but autonomy in work and action. An important element of independence of independent bodies is their complete financial independence in relation to the government, that is, the executive power. Human resources resisting to political and other pressures are another important factor of autonomy of independent bodies.

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RS” 16/90 and 67/03), as well as the Law on Enterprises (“Official Gazette of the FRY”, No. 29/96 and 36/02)

10 The Constitution regulates the existence of the National Bank of Serbia (Art. 95), State Audit Institution (Art. 96) and Protector of Citizens (Art. 138), High Judicial Council (Art. 153) and the State Prosecutors Council (Art. 164). The majority of the independent bodies was formed on the basis of special laws or the laws regulating a certain field. Law on Public Procurement, 4. 7. 2002. 39/02; Law on Financing of Political Parties, 18. 7. 2003. 72/03; Law on Prevention of Conflict of Interest in Discharge of Public Office, 20. 4. 2004. 43/04; Law on Amendments and Supplements to the Law on Public Procurement, 21. 5. 2004. 55/04; Law on Free Access to Information of Public Importance, 2. 11. 2004. 120/04; Law on Protection of Competition, 16. 9. 2005. 79/05; Law on Protector of Citizens, 16. 9. 2005. 79/05; Law on the State Audit Institution, 14. 11. 2005. 101/05, Anti-Corruption Agency Act, 23. 10. 2008. 97/08, Law on the Prohibition of Discrimination 7. 4. 2009. 22/2009



Considering the taking over of a part of parliamentary competences, it is necessary to reduce the tendency that a part of parliamentary competences is referred or taken over by the regulatory bodies. The parliament is the only body with a legitimacy to pass laws. Regulatory bodies tend<sup>11</sup> to take over a part of competences that do not belong to them. A certain number of independent bodies have a regulatory role and delegated competence.<sup>12</sup> The term “regulatory bodies” to the largest extent encompasses the contents of their activities. Apart from the RRA Council elected by the Assembly, the leadership of regulatory bodies is appointed by the government for a defined period of time and it accounts for its work to the relevant ministries and not to the parliament, thus reducing the independence and public accountability of these bodies for their work.<sup>13</sup>

**Table 2.** *Comparative review of independent bodies in Serbia*

	Constitution	Law	Manner of appointment	Duration of the term of office	Number of members	Executive competencies	Can propose bills	Funding
Ombudsperson	Constitution	Law	Assembly	5 years – can be repeated	Four deputies, appointed by Assembly	NO	YES (from the field of his competences)	budget
Commissioner		Law	Assembly	7 years – can be repeated	Has a deputy	NO	NO	budget
State Audit Institution (DRI)	Constitution	Law	DRI Council, Assembly		President of the Council + 3 members	NO	NE	budget
Anti-Corruption Agency		Law	Agency board, Assembly of the Directors of the Agency	Board 4 years, Director 5 years	Board has 9 members	YES	NO	budget
Commissioner for Protection of Equality		Law	Assembly	5 years	Has 3 three assistants (not appointed by the Assembly)	NO	NO	budget
Commission for Protection of Rights in the Public Procurement Procedures		Law	Assembly upon the Government's proposal	5 years – can be repeated	5 (president + 4 members)	NO	NO	budget
Commission for Protection of Competition		Law	Assembly	5 years – can be repeated	5 (president + 4 members)	NO	NO	own income
Republic Broadcasting Agency		Law	RRA Council, Assembly	6 years	The RRA Council has 9 members	YES	NO	budget + own income

11 Republic Broadcasting Agency – RRA, Regulatory Agency for Electronic Communications and Postal Services – RATEL, Energy Agency – AE

12 This group of independent bodies can include: National Education Council, National Higher Education Council, Energy Agency, Agency for Electronic Communications and Broadcasting Agency

13 The Constitution of the Republic of Serbia in its fifth part entitled “Organization of Government” in the Chapter 4 referring to the public service, in Article 137 regulates the issue of delegation of public powers. Article 137 of the Constitution envisages that according to the law public powers may be delegated to specific bodies through which they perform regulatory function in particular fields or affairs.

## **Territorial organisation of Serbia (decentralization and local self-government)**

Local self-government can in theory be observed as an important element of vertical division of power (confederation, federation, regionalisation, and decentralisation). The starting point is the assumption that municipalities are the initiator and the pillar of democracy, however without being “municipal states”. It turned out (when it is about regionalisation and decentralisation) that democratic order is improved when activities are done on the venue closer to citizen and in the manner that recognises the specificities and characteristics of certain area. For citizens it is less costly if important tasks are performed at the local level. As once Slobodan Jovanović described it: “The system of decentralisation has more flexibility; it facilitates the adjustment of the administrative power to local needs and prevents excessive uniformity in public life. In a decentralised system, work is done easier and faster” (Jovanović, 1999: 15).

In the process of decentralisation, the terms devolution and subsidiarity are used. We speak about devolution when the higher level of power refers performing of tasks to the lower level, however keeping the control. That is the lowest level of dispersion of power, meaning entrusting of certain tasks for higher instances of power. Subsidiarity is a principle according to which performance of tasks is left to smaller and narrower units capable of doing that. The starting assumption is that the local level is more familiar with the needs, and tasks can be done more easily. What can be completed at the lower levels of power successfully, more efficiently and faster and where people are more interested, should not be lifted to the higher levels of power.

The Council of Europe adopted the Charter on Local Self-Government (September 1<sup>st</sup>, 1985) which preamble emphasises that “the local authorities are one of the main foundations of any democratic regime” as well as the “right of citizens to conduct public affairs is one of the main democratic principles, which most directly can be exercised at local level” (The Charter entered the force on September 1<sup>st</sup>, 1988 and was ratified by 32 members of the Council of Europe, France excluded).

Pursuant to the Constitution of 1990, Serbia was a centralised state, in spite of the fact that it had 150 to 180 municipalities (with Kosovo), the City of Belgrade, 29 regions and two autonomous provinces, Vojvodina and Kosovo and Metohija (Orlović, 2009: 23–57). Municipalities largely depended on the central government in Belgrade. This was particularly obvious in the Law of 1995 when they were deprived of their property. Certain autonomy has started to be returned to municipalities since 2002, with the adoption of the Law on Local Self-Government which took care of the provision of the European Charter on Local Self-Government of 1985.

The Constitution of 2006 opened the possibility for returning significant competences to municipalities in the field of managing construction land and office space, together with the right to source income, that is, fiscal autonomy. The latter is regulated by the Law on Financing of Local Self-Government of 2006. The Law on Local

Self-Government of 2002 introduced direct election of the president of municipality, which has been implemented since the local elections of 2004. This solution showed different results in practice. The disagreement of the directly elected president of municipality and the majority in the local self-government assembly (not the same party or coalition) brought conflict resulting even with a referendum about the recall of the president of the municipality. This led to blockade of municipal work, hampering budget adoption, obstruction and the like. Probably having in mind these circumstances as well, the Government of Serbia introduced interim administration in seventeen municipalities during 2005 and 2006. According to the new Constitution, the municipal assembly decides about the election of executive bodies of the municipality “in accordance with the law and the statute” while the election of executive authorities of towns and the City of Belgrade is regulated by separate laws. According to the new Law on Local Self-Government, mayors are elected in local self-government assemblies.

The Constitution of Serbia of 2006 opened the possibility for a more emphasised autonomy of Vojvodina and it envisages an essential autonomy for Kosovo and Metohija. Certain issues of autonomy of provinces and regionalisation are left to be solved by separate laws. Serbia shall, according to the law on territorial organization, have two autonomous provinces (Kosovo and Metohija and Vojvodina), 150 municipalities and 23 towns<sup>14</sup> plus the City of Belgrade as a separate territorial unit defined by the Constitution and the law. The essential autonomy of Kosovo and Metohija shall be regulated by a special law to be passed by the two-third majority in the Assembly of Serbia.

## Conclusion

Political institutions and state of democracy in Serbia are significantly influenced by political tradition and culture, geographic position and international context. During the 1990s the regime in Serbia was a hybrid “authoritarian regime in a democratic robe” (Pavlović and Antonić, 2007: 82). After the political changes of 2000 electoral democracy was established in Serbia, with elements of liberalisation on the road towards democratic consolidation. Neither the political institutions nor

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14 This law envisaged that the following places shall have the status of towns: Valjevo, Vranje, Zaječar, Zrenjanin, Jagodina, Kragujevac, Kraljevo, Kruševac, Leskovac, Loznica, Niš, Novi Pazar, Novi Sad, Pančevo, Požarevac, Priština, Smederevo, Sombor, Sremska Mitrovica, Subotica, Užice, Čačak and Šabac. Condition for obtaining the status of town per population – above 100,000 has been fulfilled by Zrenjanin, Kraljevo, Kruševac, Leskovac, Smederevo, Subotica, Čačak and Šabac. Valjevo, Vranje, Zaječar, Jagodina, Loznica, Novi Pazar, Požarevac, Sombor, Sremska Mitrovica and Užice got the status of towns due to their particular geographic position and extreme importance for certain regions of Serbia. Characteristic for Vranje, Užice, Loznica and Zaječar is that they are close to the state border, says the explanation of the law. *Danas*, 28. 12.2007.

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the democracy in Serbia have so far been entirely consolidated. Institutions have been introduced, however, without being a subject to defined rules in practice. It seems that new institutions are rather about the external needs of evaluation such as the conditioning on the road to European integration than the citizens' need for their internalisation and implementation. Non-institutionalised (unconsolidated) democracy characterises the situation of informal yet strong practice of clientelism, patrimonialism and corruption (O'Donnell, 1994: 59).

What makes Serbia different from other similar countries? These are three challenges: 1. it entered the transition as the state union of Serbia and Montenegro with unresolved relation of two republics until 2006; 2. cooperation with the Hague Tribunal and 3. unresolved status of Kosovo and Metohija. Transition in Serbia was accompanied by "unsurpassed legacy of the past" (Mladen Lazić). Two issues which made our road towards consolidated democracy significantly different and harder than the others are a fresh experience of the NATO intervention and the issue of the future status of Kosovo and Metohija, that is the completion of the national and state issue connected thereto. In Serbia the changes were carried out without the discontinuity with the former regime and were accompanied with liberal deficit which reflects on the dynamics of consolidation of democracy. "Liberal revolution" of 2000 without constitutionalisation led to speaking about the "betrayed revolution". Failed hopes and expectation and unfulfilled promises ("the larger the expectations, the larger the disappointments") led to stalemate and loss of trust in values and importance of democracy and its institutions. A hope for citizens and a chance for political elite is the candidate status for the EU membership and the majority commitment of citizens and all parliamentary parties to that road. Democracy, as well as politics in general, searches for balance and measure, that is, levelling and balancing, which has not yet been the case in Serbia.

Milan N. Jovanović

**PART TWO**

**THE ELECTORAL  
SYSTEM OF SERBIA**



## THE ELECTORAL SYSTEM OF SERBIA

The Republic of Serbia has a harmonized electoral system of representative bodies at different levels of power. For the election of MPs to the National Assembly, MPs to the Assembly of the Autonomous Province of Vojvodina and delegates to the assemblies of municipalities and towns, Serbia uses the system of proportional representation with single constituency, closed blocked party list, 5% threshold and D'Hondt formula for transformation of votes into seats. The current electoral model has not been constituted simultaneously at all levels. It is a political institution in the Serbian political system with a very dynamic genesis, where different variances of majority and proportional electoral systems have been used. The experiences of the key actors of the electoral process and the consequences yielded by the applied electoral systems have strongly determined the shaping of the current electoral model and therefore it is important to point to the key moments of the electoral reforms.

### GENESIS OF THE REFORM

In the development of the electoral system two phases can be clearly distinguished. The first is related to the beginning of re-democratization, the period 1990–2000. It is characterized by party disputes about the electoral system and frequent changes of the electoral law. The second phase started in 2000 with the introduction of the proportional representation with single constituency and it has practically been lasting until today. This phase is characterized by the stability of electoral system for the election of MPs and frequent changes of the system of election of delegates in local self-government assemblies, President of the Republic and MPs to the provincial parliament of the AP Vojvodina (Jovanović, 2012).

Same as in many post-socialist countries, the choice of the electoral system had the importance of the crucial decision which shaped the first party cleavage and the conflict of old and new elites for positioning in the political arena (Goati, 1992: 160). The Socialist Party of Serbia (SPS), the successor of the League of Communists, pleaded for

## How to make intra-party democracy possible?

the majority electoral system, justifying it by the stability of the government and the need to change the decades-long suspension of elections through the delegate system by direct voting for candidates and not only for parties. The opposition parties were against such model, emphasizing that it will reduce multipartism in the beginning of the democratization process. They requested proportional representation with the lowest possible number of constituencies, because they were only in the phase of formation, without members, organization, activists and money (Jovanović, 1997: 124–129). The most consistent opposition proposal included 11 constituencies for the election of 222 MPs – 51 from the territory of the AP Vojvodina, 30 from the territory of the AP Kosovo and Metohija, and 141 from the central part of the Republic – unblocked lists and preferential voting, distribution of seats by the Hagenbach-Bischoff method and the D'Hondt formula for the remainder (Kojen, 1990: 363). Only the New Democracy proposed a mixed electoral system. By the will of majority – the ruling Socialists – without an agreement with the opposition, the two-round majority electoral system was adopted for the first multiparty elections. The „virus“ of the conflict about the electoral design will accompany, in various manners, the anamnesis of the electoral system of Serbia until today ( Pajvančić, 1999: 54).

The majority model produced the expected effects: with 46.8% obtained votes the Socialists won almost 80% of seats and formed a homogenous government. The fabrication of majority produced an extreme disproportionality and distorted the voters' will (Goati, 2001: 31). The two-party system, as the opposition predicted, was not established: there were as many as 15 parties in the parliament. However, neither a stabile government was established: two governments took turns in two years (Jovanović, 1997: 143–144). The underrepresented opposition opted for non-institutional action. Frequent, mass and violent protests resulted in summoning the Round Table of the government and the opposition and the first electoral reform. The main Round Table discussion was about the number of constituencies: the opposition insisted on one, whereas the government proposed 18 constituencies. The dilemma was cut by the Prime Minister of FR Yugoslavia Milan Panić who together with the FRY President Dobrica Ćosić was the one who summoned the Round Table. The opposition did not sign the final Round Table act, but the government fulfilled what had been agreed: the parliament adopted the new electoral law, so it can be said that the first electoral reform was the result of the agreement between the old and the new elites. The Republic MPs were elected in nine large constituencies, from blocked list, with 5% threshold and the highest quotient method for the distribution of seats. The parties were obliged to allocate one third of the obtained seats to the candidates according to their order on the list, and the remaining number according to their free will on the basis of internal rules. That electoral model was applied in two electoral cycles, in 1992 and 1993. The result of the former one was the minority SPS government with a short term of office. The latter one resulted in the first coalition government of the SPS and the New Democracy, a party from the camp of the main opposition rival, the DEPOS coalition. Thus the voters, parties, candidates and MPs were getting used to one of the main characteristics



of the proportional representation – that electoral rules can produce the government which neither the voters wanted nor the parties promised and expected (Jovanović, 1997: 170–173).

By using the changes of the rules for election of federal MPs adopted upon the initiative of the Democratic Party of Socialists of Montenegro, the SPS, before the 1997 parliamentary elections, increased the number of constituencies – from nine to 29 (Goati, 2013: 66). The designers believed that the increase of the distortion in transformation of votes into seats in smaller constituencies would enable them to obtain a larger number of seats in the parliament. The opposition thought that this act cancelled the consensus achieved at the Round Table and boycotted the elections. The consequences were the government of national unity, formed from the SPS and the Serbian Radical Party's (SRS) MPs, with almost a two-third majority in the National Assembly.

This period was also marked by numerous problems in functioning of other electoral institutions. At all elections there were serious objections to the records of voters, inaccurate electoral registries or manipulations with the registration and deletion of voters. The lack of electronic records left space for double voting. The elections were under a permanent shadow of disputing and examples of electoral fraud at certain polling stations, particularly in Kosovo and Metohija where the boycott of the members of the Albanian national minority left space for various abuses of the electoral procedure. This devalued the legitimacy and destabilized the political institutions. Such electoral practice culminated at the local elections in 1996 when upon the OSCE intervention the results of the elections of delegates in 15 municipalities were cancelled, thus preventing the electoral fraud (Vodinečić, 1997).

The defeat at the elections for the House of Citizens of the Federal Assembly and the President of the FR Yugoslavia in 2000, the political overturn of October 5<sup>th</sup> and requests for calling for extraordinary elections for MPs ended the first phase in the genesis of the Serbian electoral system. Already on October 9<sup>th</sup> the electoral system was unanimously changed: single constituency was introduced, parties were granted absolute freedom to independently allocate seats to the candidates from their lists. After ten years of opposition's fight for constituting Serbia as a constituency, the law was changed upon the SRS proposal, by votes of the Radical and Socialist MPs. Therefore this reform as well can be considered a result of the elites, more precisely, the reforms were the consequence of supra-pressures which the change of power at the federal level produced in the political system.

The first reform of this electoral system in this period occurred upon the intervention of the Constitutional Court of Serbia. Namely, the electoral law envisaged that exclusion from the party for any reason can be the reason for termination of mandate. The practice of „blank“ resignations was based thereupon. The resignations were activated even in cases of expressing an opinion other than the official one. By using the mentioned legal provision, the Democratic Opposition of Serbia (DOS), a coalition of 18 parties, excluded the Democratic Party of Serbia (DSS) from the coalition and revoked mandates

## How to make intra-party democracy possible?

of its MPs. The Constitutional Court intervened with a decision that „the law cannot give the political parties the competences which may result in changing the composition of the National Assembly“, that the „problem of maintaining the party discipline cannot be solved in that manner“ nor it can „establish the legal accountability of MPs towards the subject which nominated them“ (Decision of the Constitutional Court, Official Gazette of the RS 57/2003). That was the first intervention of an external factor in electoral law which alleviated the domination of party leadership over the MPs.

The second change of electoral rules occurred soon. Single constituency emphasized the effect of the legal electoral threshold, so that after the 2003 elections the minorities, except for the Hungarian one, remained without their representatives in the parliament. Because of that in 2004 the electoral law was amended, abolishing the threshold for the national minority parties (Law on Amendments to the Law on Election of MPs, Official Gazette 18/04). This reform was opposed only by the MPs of the Serbian Radical Party who proposed the 3% threshold to be kept for national minority parties as well, because the complete abolishment would violate the principle of equal position of all actors in electoral race (Vučićević and Jovanović, 2015: 104).

The third intervention in the electoral system was made by the new Constitution of 2006, by general consensus of party elites. Attempting to suppress the widely spread practice of party-switchers, the authors of the constitution practically legalized and codified the practice of the so-called „blank“ resignations: „Under the terms stipulated by the Law, a deputy shall be free to irrevocably put his/her term of office at disposal to the political party upon which proposal he or she has been elected a deputy“ (The Constitution of the Republic of Serbia, Article 102, Para 2). By defining that the replacement of the MP whose mandate was terminated shall be made from the list, the Constitution in fact prejudiced the type of electoral system, thus also defining stricter criteria for the change thereof (Marković, 2006: 17).

The fourth intervention in electoral law in this phase was in fact caused by the critique of the mentioned constitutional provision. The Constitutional Court proclaimed unconstitutional the right of parties to independently allocate mandates and took the attitude that, for the sake of protection of constitutional principle of direct elections, the seats must be allocated according to the order on the electoral list (Decision of the Constitutional Court, Official Gazette of the RS 34/2010). In the same time, the Venice Commission of the Council of Europe criticized these electoral institutions as contrary to the principles of good electoral practice. Logically, the European Commission in its Progress Report of 2010 and the European Parliament in its Resolution on Serbia of January 2011 repeated that blank resignations are contrary to the free mandate of MPs and the democratic principles of elections (Jovanović, 2011a: 238). The Parliament did not react on the warnings of expert and academic public or even on the decision of the Constitutional Court; however, it did react on the attitudes of the EU institutions. The Law on the Election of MPs was amended and the mentioned solutions were excluded from the electoral system (Law on Amendments to the Law on the Election of MPs, Official Gazette 36/11).

## THE ELECTORAL SYSTEM FOR THE MPS OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

In spite of these several important changes, the electoral system nevertheless gained the character of an „unchangeable“ institution. Therefore we shall present the constituency, design of the ballot and the procedure of transforming the votes into seats, as the electoral institutions with the highest manipulative effect (Law on Election of Members of the Parliament, Official Gazette of the RS 35/00)<sup>1</sup>.

### Constituency

The establishment of a single constituency for election of MPs resolved the decade-long dispute of the ruling parties and the opposition. Serbia as a single constituency brought a set of advantages for the electoral process. First, it removed the possibilities for using the electoral geometry for maximization of votes and seats. It disabled the gerrymandering, not only in respect of extreme inequalities in the size of constituencies which existed in the majority electoral system, but also in respect of the size of constituency in proportional representation which distorted the transformation of votes into seats. Second, a maximum proportionality was ensured for transposition of votes into seats. Third, it increased the chances of smaller parties to obtain a parliamentary status, thus reducing the number of wasted votes. Fourth, a single constituency emphasized the characteristic of MP's mandate as the representative of all citizens and not of narrow parts which partial interests may make him insensible for the general interest.

However, a single constituency also produced a set of problems in political representation, party and electoral system, which together with other elements of electoral system unfavourably influence the consolidation of democracy: depersonalization of MPs and delegates, breakup of the connection between the voters and the representatives and metropolization of representation.

### Voting – the design of the ballot

A voter in Serbia has no possibility to express his preference for some of the candidates from the chosen list. The electoral lists are closed and blocked for personalization of the voters' will. His choice is reduced to voting according to personal party preferences, without a possibility to evaluate the candidates and decide on their election.

The ballot states the name of the list, the head of the list and the first on the list. Since this is a category voting, the voter votes by circulating the ordinal number before the

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1 Note: The institutions of the electoral system analysed in this chapter do not cover the territory of the AP Kosovo and Metohija. The SC Resolution 1244 exempted this province from the FR Yugoslavia/Republic of Serbia jurisdiction and put it under the UN protectorate.

## How to make intra-party democracy possible?

name of the list. The order of lists on the ballot is defined on the basis of the order of submission and confirmation of the lists.

A constituency in which all 250 MPs are elected disables the implementation of preferential voting. Technically this would mean long, unclear and confusing ballots. The design of the ballot guides voter to choose exclusively the party and its leader. During the voting, the voter has no possibility to get informed – about all candidates on the list he will vote for. The voter votes but does not elect – the election of MPs is essentially left to the parties. They determine the order of candidates on the voting list, with only one legal obligation, that at least every third candidate should be from among the ranks of the less represented sex, thus providing the representation of women.

*Table 3. Elections in Serbia 1990–2014, basic data*

1990.		1992	1993	1997	2000	2003	2007	2008	2012	2014
first round	second round									
registered voters										
7.036.303	4.352.573	6.774.995	7.010.389	7.210.386	6.508.856	6.511.450	6.653.851	6.749.688	6.770.013	6.765.998
voters										
5.030.440	2.103.771	4.723.711	4.300.440	4.139.080	3.752.170	3.825.471	4.033.586	4.141.176	3.912.904	3.592.375
invalid votes										
		275.861	171.824	164.307	898.000	49.755	65.468	88.148	170.995	114.001
spill votes										
		653.257	380.855	310.159	217.098	536.421	378.465	99.992	414.740	699.036
number of electoral lists										
		104	84	89	8	19	20	22	18	19
number of lists that won mandates										
15		9	8	8	4	6	11	8	11	7
index of effective number of parties										
1,64		3,74	3,27	3,15	2,91	4,8	4,59	4,56	7,07	12,29
index of disproportionality										
23,65		10,22	9,31	7,98	5,34	6,42	5,16	2,18	7,27	3,07
index of electoral volatility										
						47,6	22,29	20,72	27,56	32,98

Taken from: (Jovanović, M. Vučićević, D. 2014:26)

The closed blocked list enables the parties to form the list by combining different criteria: the need to have the party leaders in the convocation, presence of the MPs from the places from which the party gets the most of votes, or from the places for which there is a particular interest; planning of human resources for performing important tasks in the parliament – working bodies, parliamentary party fractions, parliamentary officials; meeting of the age, educational, territorial and similar criteria.

## **Distribution of seats**

The distribution of seats is done by the Republic Electoral Commission (RIK) with professional assistance of the Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia. The seats are distributed according to the highest quotient system. In an event of two lists having the same quotient and only one remaining seat, it will belong to the list which won more votes.

Only the electoral lists which passed the threshold of 5% of the number of voters who appeared at the polling stations enter the distribution of seats. In case that none of the lists pass the threshold, the seats shall be distributed by the same method – the highest quotient.

The national minority parties and coalitions of these parties participate in the distribution of seats even when the number of their votes remains below the threshold. This category encompasses all parties which main goal is representation of and advocacy for the national minorities' interests and protection and improvement of the rights of the members of national minorities in accordance with international standards and which are registered as such in the registry of political parties. The decision of the list fulfilling the conditions to be exempted from the threshold effect on the basis of representation of national minorities is made by the Republic Electoral Commission upon the proposal of the submitter of the electoral list.

The threshold acts as a corrective factor: by reducing proportionality of the electoral system, it decreases the number of parliamentary parties and encourages the formation of the parliamentary majority and the government. However, its effect in the electoral system is reduced. This does not seem true at the first glance, because the number of dispersed votes is high. In the actual electoral model of six electoral cycles, the number of dispersed votes was only once below 100,000 votes, and there were the cases, like in the last elections, that every fifth vote of the voters who appeared at the polling stations was a wasted vote. The structure of electoral lists in fact shows that parties successfully avoid the threshold effect. Parties by rule stand in multiparty coalitions – independent standing in the actual electoral model is an exception reduced to the SRS or the DSS and the parties of larger national minorities. The large number of wasted votes and the large number of the parliamentary parties speak about the weak effect of the threshold.

## THE ELECTORAL SYSTEM FOR THE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF SERBIA

As a part of bicephalous executive, the President of the Republic of Serbia does not have an “active power“ like the one at the disposal of the National Assembly and the Government. According to the constitutional competences and the position in the political system, his power is low. Only the manner of election makes him a “strong” political institution (Marković, 2004: 354). The President of the Republic of Serbia is elected directly. The manner of election was defined by the Constitution in the beginning of re-democratization, while other elements were elaborated by the electoral law (the Constitution of the Republic of Serbia and the Law on the Election of the President of the Republic, Official Gazette of the RS 1/90).

A dispute occurred already in the procedure of enactment of the law. The opposition opposed to the proposed solution for the nomination for the head of the state to be supported with 10,000 signatures. Considering this a rigid criterion aimed to prevent the weak opposition to stand for election for the President of the Republic, it demanded the conditions for nomination of MPs and the President to be equalized. Threatening to boycott the elections, the opposition managed to have its demands incorporated into the electoral law. Thus the first presidential elections in Serbia had extremely liberal rules for nomination and very rigid conditions for elections. Suffrage, citizenship, residence, 100 signatures of voters, and statement on acceptance of the nomination were the only criteria for running for the function of the President of Serbia. However, the obtaining of the mandate for this function implied very rigid conditions. The first one reflects in the turnout threshold: the elections were valid under the conditions that at least 50% of the registered voters appear at the polling stations. The mandate of the President would belong to the candidate who won the majority of votes of the voters who cast their votes. Otherwise the second round of elections would be organized in 15 days, in which the two best ranked candidates would compete. The turnout threshold remained valid for the second round of elections as well. The failure to fulfil this condition meant repeating of the entire electoral procedure. Mild conditions for nomination enabled as many as 32 candidates to enter the race for the highest function at the first elections (Jovanović, 2008: 81).

Two years later, the first premature elections for the head of the state brought significant changes. The conditions for the passive voting right were prescribed: the candidate had to have residence in the territory of Serbia for at least a year before the call for elections. The number of signatures for supporting the nomination was increased to 10,000. For the first time the budget funds were allocated – 15,000,000 dinars – to be distributed equally to all candidates (Law on Amendments and Supplements to the Law on Election of the President of the Republic, Official Gazette RS 79/92).

The next intervention in the electoral law for the election of the President of Serbia occurred in 2002. Namely, attempting to alleviate the effect of the turnout threshold, the legislator deleted from the voters' registry the voters of Albanian national minority, which had already boycotted all electoral cycles. This, however, was not sufficient for the success of elections. The elections for the head of the state were repeated for three times because the turnout threshold had not been met: twice in the second round in two cycles in 2002 and once in the first round in 2003. Repeating of elections, entering a sort of electoralism and institutional crisis caused the revision of the electoral law. It was carried out with party disputes and intervention of the OSCE which was earlier as well warning that the high turnout threshold might be an obstacle in the election of the President of the Republic. Finally, in 2004 amendments to the electoral law abolished the turnout threshold, changed the manner of financing and for the first time enabled the citizens living abroad to vote in diplomatic-consular offices (Law on Amendments and Supplements to the Law on Election of the President of the Republic, Official Gazette of the RS 18/04).

The actual legal framework for the election of the President of the Republic was adopted in 2007. The President of the Republic is elected for the five-year term of office. Same person may not perform this function more than twice. Active and passive voting rights are equalized and the same as for the election of MPs. Elections are called for by the Speaker of the National Assembly not later than 90 days prior to the end of the term of office of the incumbent President of the Republic. Candidates for this function may be proposed by registered parties, coalitions and groups of citizens. In addition to usual documents on voting right, residence, citizenship, consent about the acceptance of the nomination, the proposer shall submit at least 10,000 citizens' signatures verified by court and a coalition agreement, if any. Voting is direct, by circulating the ordinal number before the name of the candidate with the name of the candidate's proposer next to it. The candidate who obtains the majority of votes cast by the voters that voted shall be elected President. If none of the candidates obtain this number of votes, the second round of elections shall be organized with participation of two candidates with the highest number of votes. The candidate who receives the highest number of votes in the repeated ballot shall be elected. (Law on Election of the President of the Republic, Official Gazette of the RS 111/07).

## HARMONIZATION OF ELECTORAL SYSTEM WITH INTERNATIONAL STANDARDS

Five fundamental principles: general, equal, free, secret and direct voting right are the axioms of democratic elections. They are protected by the international community acts and as such fall among the European electoral heritage. In the context of research for this study, we shall analyse the harmonization of the electoral system of Serbia with

## How to make intra-party democracy possible?

the above mentioned principles in a manner envisaged by the Code of Good Practice in Electoral Matters of the European Commission for Democracy through Law – Venice Commission. Since Serbia as a member this year opens the negotiations on certain chapters, the principles in the EU umbrella document in the field of elections have imperative strength which a country member must meet before the full membership.

## Universality

Active and passive voting right in the electoral system of Serbia is extremely liberally defined. Legal age – at 18, citizenship, residence and business capacity are the only conditions for obtaining active and passive voting right. The electoral law does not determine the period which a voter or a MP, delegate and President candidate must spend in the place of residence in order to elect or be elected for the MP, nor it defines the age limit for the election of the President of the Republic which, comparatively observed, is a frequent condition. Incompatibility with the MP function is envisaged only for holders of judicial and other functions elected by the National Assembly, as well as for officials and employees in the republic authorities, however not preventing the possibility for exercising the passive voting right. Serving a prison sentence, carrying of criminal proceedings, final judgements for any act, are not a legal obstacle for exercising the active or passive voting right. Hence, the legal system does not recognize the possibility for deprivation or suspension of the voting right, except in the case of business incapacity. A citizen can be deprived of business capacity only by the court decision, and ipso jure it is the deprivation of civil rights.

The electoral system does not recognize the possibility for foreign citizens to participate in the elections. Such possibility is neither envisaged for the local self-government level, election of delegates for the assemblies of municipalities and towns, which is the practice in some developed democracies.

*Table 4. Main elements of the electoral system in the electoral year*

Electoral year	ELECTORAL SYSTEM OF SERBIA PER ELECTORAL YEARS			
	National Assembly 250 MPs	Assemblies of towns/ municipalities 30 to 90 delegates	President of the Republic of Serbia	Assembly of the AP Vojvodina 120 MPs
1990	Majority – two rounds Turnout threshold 50% first round		100 signatures of citizens Turnout threshold 50% Mandate: majority of cast votes	
1992	Proportional 9 constituencies Electoral threshold 5% List closed-blocked D'Hondt method	Majority – two rounds Turnout threshold 50% first round	10,000 signatures of citizens Turnout threshold 50% Mandate: majority of cast votes	Majority – two rounds Turnout threshold 50% first round Majority Relative majority



*Institutional factors and internal dynamics of intra-party relations in Serbia*

1993	Proportional 9 constituencies Electoral threshold 5% List closed-blocked D'Hondt method			
1996		Majority – two rounds Turnout threshold 50% first round		Majority – two rounds Turnout threshold 50% Second round – three candidates
1997	Proportional 29 constituencies Electoral threshold 5% List closed-blocked D'Hondt method		10,000 signatures of citizens Turnout threshold 50% Mandate: majority of cast votes	
2000		Majority Relative majority		Majority – two rounds Turnout threshold 50% Second round – three candidates
2001	Proportional Single constituency Electoral threshold 5% List closed - blocked Parties allocate mandates D'Hondt method			
2002			10,000 signatures of citizens Turnout threshold 50% Mandate: majority of cast votes	
2003	Proportional Single constituency Electoral threshold 5% List closed - blocked Parties allocate mandates D'Hondt method		10,000 signatures of citizens Turnout threshold 50% Mandate: majority of cast votes	
2004		Proportional Single constituency Electoral threshold 3% List closed - blocked Parties allocate mandates Hare-Niemeyer formula	10,000 signatures of citizens Mandate: majority of cast votes	Mixed: 60+60 Majority – two rounds Turnout threshold: 50% Proportional Single constituency Electoral threshold 5% Lists of national minorities – natural threshold List closed-blocked Parties allocate mandates D'Hondt method

## How to make intra-party democracy possible?

2007	Proportional Single constituency Electoral threshold 5% Lists of national minorities – natural threshold List closed - blocked Parties allocate mandates D'Hondt method			
2008	Proportional Single constituency Electoral threshold 5% Lists of national minorities – natural threshold List closed - blocked Parties allocate mandates D'Hondt method	Proportional Single constituency Electoral threshold 5% Lists of national minorities – natural threshold List closed - blocked Parties allocate mandates D'Hondt method	10,000 signatures of citizens Mandate: majority of cast votes	Mixed: 60+60 Majority – two rounds Turnout threshold: 50% Proportional Single constituency Electoral threshold 5% Lists of national minorities – natural threshold List closed-blocked Parties allocate mandates D'Hondt method
2012	Proportional Single constituency Electoral threshold 5% Lists of national minorities – natural threshold List closed - blocked Allocation of mandates per order on the list D'Hondt method	Proportional Single constituency Electoral threshold 5% Lists of national minorities – natural threshold List closed - blocked Allocation of mandates per order on the list D'Hondt method	10,000 signatures of citizens Mandate: majority of cast votes	Mixed: 60+60 Majority – two rounds Turnout threshold: 50% Proportional Single constituency Electoral threshold 5% Lists of national minorities – natural threshold List closed-blocked Allocation of mandates per order on the list D'Hondt method
2014	Proportional Single constituency Electoral threshold 5% Lists of national minorities – natural threshold List closed - blocked Allocation of mandates per order on the list D'Hondt method			

The liberal approach to the voting right is as well reflected in the voters' registry. The voters' registry is an electronic registry of voters kept ex officio by the ministry in charge for administrative affairs. As a public document, it is permanently and regularly updated, at least once a year. The registry system includes the use of all registries kept by the state and local self-government authorities. They are obliged to submit to the local self-government services entrusted with the task of voters' registration the data about all changes important for the accuracy of the voters'

registry. Voters have the right to a permanent insight into the voters' registry – directly and electronically, and can request entry, deletion, changes, corrections and additions to the data. All changes in the voters' registry are made on the basis of a ruling by the competent authority against which a complaint or claim can be filed to the administrative court. Voters are entered into the voters' registry with the name, family name, name of one of the parents, personal ID number, accurate address, residence abroad if any, with notes whether the voter will vote at the polling station in the country or abroad. The voters' registry is concluded 15 days before the date schedule for voting, and the total number of voters is published by the Republic Electoral Commission (RIK) in the media. Subsequent interventions into the voters' registry can be made only by the RIK upon its decision, 72 hours before the voting date at the latest. This possibility is reserved for exceptions which mostly pertain to execution of judicial decisions and does not deviate from the Venice Commission's principles of good electoral practice.

The support to the nomination requires the submission of 10,000 signatories of voters. Since Serbia is a single electoral unit, this number is significantly lower than the limit of 1% of signatures in relation to the number of voters recommended by the Venice Commission. The signatures are collected at separate forms in the indirectly defined period: not later than five days after the call for elections the RIK is obliged to publish the forms for collection of signatures, and they can in fact be collected until the deadline for submission of the electoral lists – 15 days before the voting date. The signatures must be verified by the court. In one segment this aspect of general voting right deviates from the international standards. Namely, the national minority parties must also submit 10,000 signatures, thus practically disabling the candidacy to many national minority parties. The Republic Electoral Commission by its decision enabled the minority parties to support the list with 3,000 signatures, but the Constitutional Court declared this decision unlawful.

## **Equality**

This international standard implies three aspects: numerical equality of votes, equality of electoral strength and equality of chances of electoral actors, however not the equality of results or proportional representation of parties and sexes.

The equality of voting right is expressed in the phrase „one person one vote“. The voter has one vote and can cast the vote only once. The electoral system has a set of mechanisms ensuring the respect of this basic institution of the electoral law: keeping of records which disables the entry of voters at several polling stations; identification of voters at voting, marking the voter by ink and pre-voting control by special lamps.

A single constituency eliminates possible problems with passive and active electoral geometry characteristic for a large number of both single-member and multi-member

## How to make intra-party democracy possible?

constituencies. In that context the electoral system is also free from the procedures related to determination of constituencies' borders, criteria for their formation and the like.

The third aspect of equality pertains to an equal treatment of parties and candidates in the electoral process. The electoral system of Serbia guarantees the equality of actors in electoral race by combining the principles of „rigid“ and “proportional” equality - equal treatment of all parties and determination of a party's position according to its electoral strength, number of votes and seats. These criteria are the basis for the formation of electoral administration, regulation of electoral rules in electoral campaigns, access to media and financing.

Media are obliged to professional and unbiased presentation of parties and candidates on the principles of objectivity, equality and protection of public interest. In this context the participation in programme realization is prohibited to journalists and presenters who are candidates or members of party bodies. In the same time the indirect propaganda is prohibited as well. Broadcasters are obliged to exclude from their programmes the documentary, acting, entertaining and other shows featuring party officials and electoral candidates. Broadcaster is not obliged to provide paid airtime for electoral promotion. If choosing to do so, such programmes must be specially labelled – “electoral programme” - and available to everyone under the same conditions. Broadcaster can allocate up to five minutes of paid programme to the verified lists. If some voting lists are not interested in paid airtime, it cannot be given to other participants in the elections. Extraordinary, broadcaster can broadcast a programme within the commercial time in an uninterrupted duration of no longer than 30 minutes, but only once during the electoral campaign. The public broadcasting service is obliged to provide for equal and free presentation of all submitters of electoral lists. Broadcasters from this category are forbidden to broadcast programmes in paid airtimes devoted to electoral campaigns, except for broadcasting spots in advertising blocks.

Equality in financing the electoral campaign reflects in legal limits of funds which can be allocated from the budget for electoral activities and the funds which can be collected from legal and natural persons. The Republic, AP Vojvodina, municipalities and towns allocate 0.07% of budget funds in the electoral year. These funds are allocated according to two criteria: 20% is equally distributed to all submitters of electoral lists, 80% is distributed 30 days after the elections to the lists which won seats proportionally to the number of the seats obtained. Any other kind of funding from public sources: public enterprises, use of the so-called state resources, foundations etc. is prohibited. Natural persons can give for electoral campaign a total of 20 average salaries at the Republic level, and legal entities up to 200 average salaries at the Republic level.

The principle of equality is satisfied also in respect of the position of national minorities in the electoral process. The electoral system in Serbia does not practice

guaranteed seats for the members of national minorities, but it contains the elements of affirmative action. The Constitution regulates the position, rights and protection of national minorities in details: minorities are normatively guaranteed all individual and collective rights including the right to representation in representative bodies. Allowed establishment of ethnic-based parties, milder criteria for registration of national minority parties, natural threshold for access to the minority lists in distribution of seats, are the main mechanisms protecting their equality in the electoral process. This is further contributed by a single constituency because territorial dispersion of national minority members is not an obstacle for its proportional representation.

The international standard of equality is fulfilled also in case of sexes. The Constitution guarantees an equal representation of women and men. That constitutional principle has been transformed into a legal norm that one of three candidates must be of the less represented sex. Blocked list and absence of preferential voting ensures that the principle of candidacy is maximally realized in the distribution of seats: the law in fact provided the quota of at least one third of women from each electoral list and in the National Assembly as a whole.

## **Freedom of elections**

Freedom of forming and freedom of expressing opinion are two different aspects of freedom of elections bounded by the international standards of good electoral practice. The electoral system of Serbia by its legal institutions regulates these aspects in compliance with these standards.

Freedom of voter's right to form his opinion has been derived from the constitutional guarantees for freedom of thinking and expressing opinion and is regulated by the electoral law in more details. Voters have right to objective information on everything in the electoral process – parties, candidates, programmes, electoral procedures. Therefore the freedom of elections is permeated with the principle of equality – the presentation of electoral actors. Media and electoral material provide for the contents in national minority languages, thus ensuring the equality of voters. In the same time it is prohibited to force to or prevent voter from voting, as well as to calling to account, that is, requesting someone to declare if he voted, for whom he voted or why he didn't vote. All the above mentioned guarantees of freedom of elections are sanctioned by electoral law, with very severe penalties for breaches committed by the electoral and state authorities and individuals within them.

Another aspect, the free expression of the voters' will, concerns the procedures related to the election day – voting and preventing of election fraud. The duty to provide the conditions for voting – poll stations, appropriate premises, electoral material and the like – is under the competence of electoral authorities, and of all authorities of local-self

## How to make intra-party democracy possible?

government and state administration. Polling stations are in the vast majority of cases permanent and known to the voters. Gradually, particularly in rural areas, due to decrease of population and therefore of voters as well, condition for forming a polling station is not fulfilled and then the exercising of voting right is connected to travel to a farther centre which can discourage the turnout and hamper the voting, particularly to elderly people. However, formation of polling stations for at least 100 voters should prevent eventual abuse and electoral fraud.

Voting is the phase in which irregularities and electoral frauds most frequently occur. The legal regulation of this phase of the electoral process is in compliance with the international standards. Apart from identification of voters, marking by ink as a way for preventing double voting, it is envisaged that once a voter gets the ballot nobody else may come in contact with the ballot until the counting. The ballot is printed on a special paper protected by various kind of protection which prevents possible forgery. All ballots are marked before the submission to the voters and all are in the possession of the electoral committee.

The electoral law in Serbia does not envisage voting by letter. This form of voting is excluded not only for the possibility of family voting, but also for the possibility of abuse. Instead, it envisages voting out of polling stations for sick and incapable persons who advise the electoral committee in due time. They cast their vote in presence of three members from the expanded composition of the electoral committee, of three different submitters of electoral lists, and the ballot is packed in a special envelop, entered into the minutes and placed into the ballot box. Voters in army service, military exercise or schooling in military institutions or serving criminal sanctions, by rule, if not let homes on the election day, vote on the poll station closest to the place of military service, military exercise or correctional institutions. For these groups of voters, special voters' registries are made. Voters with residence abroad vote in diplomatic-consular offices of the states which allow such practice. Voting at these poll stations is led by electoral committees composed of representatives of three different submitters of electoral lists appointed by the RIK, and according to specially compiled extracts from the voters' registries.

The international standards recommend simple voting procedure and determination of results focused on the ratio of the number of cast votes and the ballots. The procedure for establishing results in our electoral system is in compliance with this international standard. Votes are counted at the polling station. Upon closing the polling stations the number of unused ballots is determined and they are sealed in a separate envelop. On the basis of the extract from the voters' registry the number of voters who cast their votes at the polling station is defined and then the ballot box is opened in order to count the number of valid and invalid ballots as well as the number of votes for each list, i.e. candidate,

if it is about the election for the President of the Republic. If the number of ballots in the ballot box is higher than the number of voters who cast their votes in the extract from the voters' registry, the electoral committee is dismissed and the elections at that polling station are to be repeated.

The voting is attended by all members of the electoral committee, their deputies, representatives of submitters of electoral lists and registered representatives of non-governmental organizations dealing with elections and human rights, together with representatives of international organizations registered for monitoring the elections. They have right to insight into all acts of the electoral committee, can draw the attention of the president of the voting committee to the observed irregularities and request their registration into the minutes of the work of the electoral committee. The minutes contains all relevant data about voting, from opening to closing of polling stations, course of voting, number of registered voters and cast votes, number of voters who voted out of the polling station, number of valid and invalid ballots, number of votes for each electoral list or candidate if the voting is for the president of the Republic, all remarks and observations of the members of the electoral committee. The minutes are signed by all members of the electoral committee. It is filled by pen on the form providing an accurate copy in six folds. The first fold of the minutes with all electoral material is forwarded to the RIK immediately and latest within 18 hours after the closing of the polling station. The second fold of the minutes is placed on the polling station, whereas the remaining copies go to the four first-ranked electoral lists on that polling station. Other participants have right to obtain a copy of the minutes within 12 hours after closing the polling station. The Republic Electoral Commission does the check-up and confirmation and procession of results at the polling stations with the assistance of the Republic Statistical Office. The submitter of the list can delegate a representative who will oversee the procedure of entry and statistical procession of the results from the polling stations. The Republic Electoral Commission shall publish the electoral results not later than 96 hours after closing of polling stations. When the procedure for filed objections and complaints is completed, if any, the RIK will publish the names of the candidates who got the MP mandates ten days after the publication of the final results.

Official results are published by the RIK. The data published by the media are treated as unofficial. However, the practice of biased reporting has not yet been eliminated: transmission of partial results; results from rural area, smaller polling stations, certain regions; often media do not warn the audience that these are unofficial, temporary and changeable results, etc. This can frequently provoke suspicion in final electoral outcomes, strengthen political divisions and tensions, weaken the legitimacy of the elected officials in political institutions, which is not in accordance with the principles of good electoral practice.

## Secrecy

Protection of freedom of elections implies the secrecy of voting. It is guaranteed by the electoral law and there are technical conditions and procedural rules enabling the respect of secrecy. Voting is individual. There is no practice of family voting, mutual control of voters, voting for other; lists of those who voted or didn't vote are not published. Breaches of these procedures of the secrecy of voting are sanctioned. Certain electoral cycles give examples of violating the secrecy: voter fills the ballot in public, destroys the ballot, takes it out of the polling station etc. These are individual, excess cases which do not jeopardize the electoral process as a whole. However, often such violations of secrecy remain unpunished, which is not in compliance with the international standards.

## Directness

The electoral system fulfils the international standard of direct election of representatives to the national parliament and local self-government assemblies. However, this standard was suspended in practice until recently. Namely, from 2000 to 2011, parties had full freedom to distribute the mandates to the candidates not respecting their order on the list. Thus in fact the electoral list was blocked for voters, but not for party leaderships. This severely cancelled one of the four founding principles of democratic elections – directness. The Constitutional Court by its decision declared such legal solutions unconstitutional and revitalized the principle of directness.

## CONSEQUENCES OF THE ELECTORAL LAW

The model of proportional representation with single constituency, legal threshold of 5%, closed blocked list has been in use for the longest period of time. Six convocations of the National Assembly and three convocations of local assemblies were elected according to this model. Hence, a lot of time and elections passed and the consequences can be observed. We shall point to the biggest ones (Jovanović 2011; Orlović 2011).

First, depersonalization of representatives and their complete turning to parties and party leadership, with alienation from voters. To put it more simply, the representatives and delegates do not have a base – citizens do not know who is representing them. Blocked list excludes the need of candidates to fight for voters' sympathies. This is left to the party leader. Candidate fights to be as close to the leader and to the top of the electoral list as possible. In return, voters are guided to



base their voting preference on the leader, thus impeding the relation between the citizens and the MPs. Moreover, parties also believe and expand the awareness that this is a desirable state of democracy. The absence of direct voting in return as well destroys the existing few democratic procedures in the parties.

Second, deformation of territorial representation. From 2000 to 2014 we had an overrepresentation of MPs from Belgrade: in average 80 seats in the National Assembly were occupied by the MPs from the capital. About 22% of voters control about 33% seats in the National Assembly. Same is true for Novi Sad. The average percentage of MPs coming from these two cities combined is about 40%, and they make only about 26% of the electorate. The overrepresentation on one side produces the underrepresentation on the other. In the same period almost 100 municipalities were without any MP residing in their territory. There are at least 1.5 million voters living in them. These are mostly small, underdeveloped and devastated municipalities. To make the irony worse, these municipalities still have a bit higher turnout than the overrepresented regions. This situation jeopardizes the realization of one of the fundamental principles of a democratic electoral system – equality of vote – which is also constitutionally guaranteed (Jovanović, 2008).

Third, the fragmentation of party system, both electoral and parliamentary. The average participation in electoral cycles with this model is about 20 electoral lists. However, apart from the national minority parties and some exceptions, all parties run in coalitions. It is clear that coalitions bypass the effect of the electoral threshold aimed at rationalization of the number of parties in the parliament. This speaks about a low level of institutionalization of the party system, fragility of even the few most important parties, encouragement of fractionalization in parties and practice of crypto-coalitions. Such phenomena do not make a good ambience for functioning of political institutions and system as a whole. The example of the government formation shows how much this is unfavourable. We have an electoral system in which citizens, when voting, don't know what kind of government they will get. They chose the leaders whom they trust, by voting for their lists, surrendering to their providence of knowing what government is the best. It is a bad system for citizens, dysfunctional for consolidation of democracy and stabilization of the party system (Jovanović, 2012b: 38).

The analyzed consequences of the electoral law have the character of a trend. However, in other elements of the electoral law there are also solutions requesting significant reforms. The electoral authorities and electoral administration are still under the strong parties' control: procedures for protection of the electoral law are complicated; courts are not trained for solving disputes within the electoral law – these are the elements of the electoral system with a space for improvement in accordance with the international standards of good electoral practice.

## ELECTORAL REFORM - INITIATIVES

Proposals of parties, expert public and non-governmental organizations are directed to resolution of exactly these problems. Several initiatives request direct voting for candidates in single mandate constituencies and proportional distribution of seats; higher number of constituencies; unblocked list and mixed electoral system. These mechanisms are seen as a solution for better connection of representatives and voters. In the same time a scaled threshold for coalitions is proposed, spanning from 5% to as much as 25% for coalitions of four and more parties. In that context the reduction of number of MPs is proposed as well, from 250 to 150. All these proposals essentially pledge at enabling citizens to directly elect MPs and delegates and to preserve proportionality of votes and seats.

Initiatives for electoral reform are also directed to other segments of the electoral system. The proposals cover “departyisation” and professionalization of electoral authorities, with formation of unbiased and professional electoral administration. In the media sphere changes are requested to emphasize the equality of electoral actors and limit the use of money. In that context there are different ideas how to further improve financing of parties at elections. Particularly emphasized are the proposals for more precise and efficient protection of the electoral law and the role of judiciary in this segment of the electoral process.

Zoran Stojiljković  
Dušan Spasojević

## **PART THREE**

# **SERBIAN PARTY SYSTEM**



## SERBIAN PARTY SYSTEM

This chapter analyzes the main characteristics of the party system of Serbia, starting from a brief review of the development of political pluralism, and attempts to compare the changing and noninstitutionalized system with the existing theoretical models. The observed instability notwithstanding, the second part of the chapter attempts to point to a set of relatively permanent ideological and programme positions occupied by the relevant parties, however emphasizing the change of political agenda in the last 15 years and a narrowing of the ideological spectrum. This will be further enhanced with an analysis of party electoral and post-electoral coalitions and social foundation of political parties, as well as with a concise analysis of the institutional framework (the manner of financing of political activities) shaping and favouring certain behaviour.

### DEVELOPMENT OF POLITICAL PLURALISM IN SERBIA

Political and party pluralism in Serbia started to be renewed in the last years of the existence of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. Symbolically important dates are January 6<sup>th</sup>, 1989, for the establishment of the Serbian People's Renewal as the first opposition party in the then Socialist Republic of Serbia, and July 27<sup>th</sup>, 1990 for the establishment of the Socialist Party of Serbia (SPS) as an organizationally transformed party – successor of the former regime. Since legal provisions on formation of political parties were rather flexible, many registered parties appeared very soon, and their number reached nearly 600 in the middle of the first decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

An analysis of the development of party pluralism from the 25 years time distance indisputably requires certain dual matrix – one, for consideration of the first 10 years of (*blocked, delayed*) transition and another, to be used for consideration of the period after October 5<sup>th</sup>, 2000. Having in mind that these two periods differ in numerous characteristics, and that the aftermath of the October changes saw the collapse of the

## How to make intra-party democracy possible?

party system and its subsequent profound reorganization, our attention will primarily focus on the last 15 years. However, neither this period has been homogenous or stable, so within it we can distinct the period after the parliamentary elections of 2012 as a new and analytically separate entity, both due to the change of direction of party competition and the emergence of dominant party, and for the so-called *the second change of power* which can be used to denote the consolidation of electoral democracy (Huntington, 2004).

In spite of the analytical advantage we give to the later period of development, the interval between 1990 and 2000 cannot just simply be overlooked because of the large influence it had on the further transition of Serbia. Here we don't consider only the political, economic and social consequences of the events from the so-called „nineties“ (and which to a large extent still define the topics and course of the Serbian transition), but also the models according to which the first parties in the multiparty system had been founded, the established mechanisms and practice of multipartism, as well as the very relations (of distrust and hostility) among the parties and their leaders.

Comparative studies of post-communist transitions often use the concept of *tabula rasa* to explain a free, unlimited and symbolically empty political field existing in the beginning of transition, both on the side of political supply (freedom of political actors to offer party platforms) and on the side of political demand (absence of clearly articulated demands of citizens). In spite of strong and argumentative critiques which Kitschelt (1995: 451) addressed to this thesis, it can be claimed that the process of creation of the first parties in Serbia was pretty chaotic, creative and, above else, created by a narrow political elite (both communist and dissident) which formed the first party platforms according to their assessments and beliefs, without a particular interaction with party membership and structures. As formulated by Atila Ag, the first divisions were „the result of competitive political and ideological projects within the elites, and not of a deeper structural divisions in the society“ (according to Stojiljković, 2006: 161).

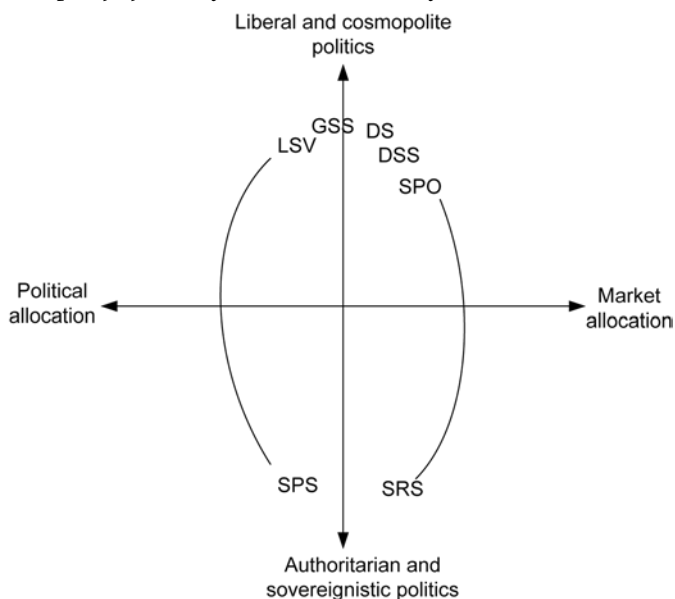
Also, the first division lines in Serbia were based on identity issues, which is not strange having in mind the process of dissolution of Yugoslavia which marked the period 1990-95, followed by the Kosovo conflict as the most important process in the second half of that decade. However, the ideological positions of the parties were not unchangeable even in this short period of time.

In difference from other post-communist societies, the opposition in Serbia did not manage to impose the division between the communists (old regime) and anti-communists (reformist forces) as the most important political issue, or to exploit the national issue, because Milošević had already preventively done that through „the happening of people“ and thus marginalized the criticism from these positions. In fact, the rightist (anti-communist, nationalist, monarchist and orthodox) position pursued by the most important opposition party - the Serbian Renewal Movement (SPO) - enabled the Socialist Party to formally occupy at least in the beginning a more moderate, more central and pro-Yugoslav position (Obradović, 1996; Stojanović,

1996), and to leave the incitement of nationalism to other actors (particularly having in mind the existence of the common Yugoslav space and activity of nationalist parties in other republics). With development of the conflict in the territory of the former Yugoslavia, the SPS was more and more taking over the nationalist position and Slobodan Milošević the role of the protector of the Serbian nation.

Thanking both to the non-democratic mechanisms of rule and to pacification of conflict and signing of the Dayton Accords, the opposition during the course of time managed to establish the democratization of society as the main goal of gathering, which ultimately led to the first electoral defeat of Socialists at the local elections in 1996 and three months of protest walks of citizens, which established the model for non-institutional defence of electoral results (Spasojević, 2010). These protests enabled for certain regrouping to occur within the opposition bloc, and strengthening of civic and liberal options, such were the DS (Democratic Party), LSV (League of Social Democrats of Vojvodina) and GSS (Civic Alliance of Serbia), and emphasis on the civic and democratic ideas within the DSS (Democratic Party of Serbia) and the SPO. Having in mind the main ideological and programme positions, the party system could before the turning point be graphically presented in a form of an extended horseshoe (because of domination of the value topics over the economic ones) which on its lower, authoritarian pole gathered the SRS (Serbian Radical Party) from the right and the SPS from the left, stronger side, while its upper (and rather narrowed) pole was occupied by a group of opposition parties (Stojiljković, 2006: 227). In spite of numerous ideological differences between the parties within these two

*Figure 1. The party system of Serbia at the end of 2000*



## How to make intra-party democracy possible?

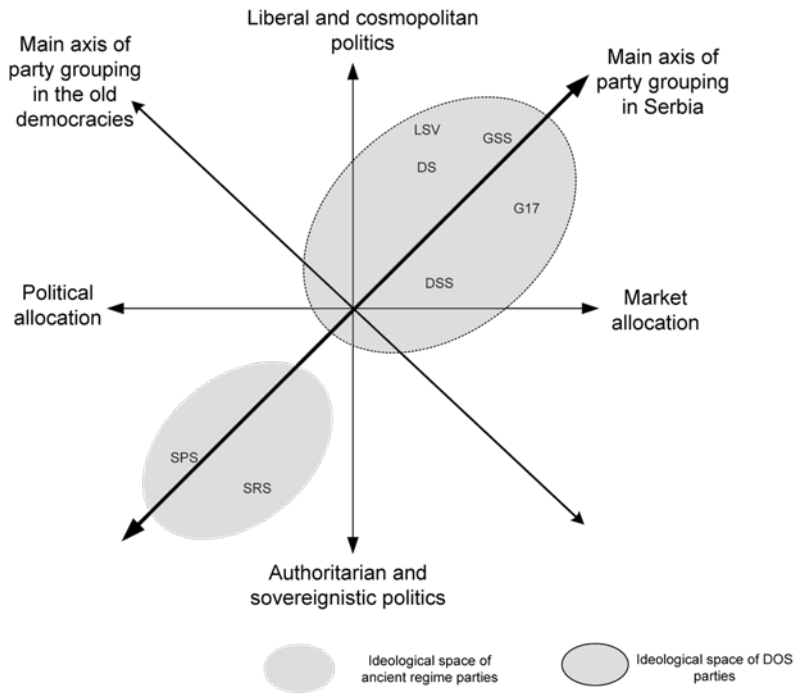
pole positions, the relation towards Milošević's regime was without a doubt the most important criterion of distribution of parties which 10 years after the introduction of multipartism led to the situation characteristic for Eastern European founding elections – „one list against the communists“.

The conflict in Kosovo postponed the political resolution of this dichotomous division; however, it somehow surprisingly occurred after the premature presidential elections of September 24<sup>th</sup>, 2000, after which it entered into the already common phases of structuring of party systems in the first years of post-communist transition – the fragmentation and pluralisation phase (Bielasiak, 1997). However, already this phase revealed certain specificities of Serbian transition which can be linked to the first ten years of multipartism. Namely, the arrival on power of the colourful DOS coalition (Democratic Opposition of Serbia) from the party system aspect led to a much faster and (ideologically) deeper division and fragmentation of the party system in comparison with other Eastern European countries. This speed is a product of the established distrust and rivalry among the most important parties of the ruling coalition and of the depth of the problems which the government was facing with. In difference from, for example, the Czech Civic Forum, in Serbia there was no consensus about many elementary issues – starting from those deriving from the dissolution of Yugoslavia, through foreign-political preference, to the main economic foundations of the future market economy. The disputes within the ruling DOS coalition only facilitated the return of the old regime forces to the political scene, which to an unexpected extent happened already at the first elections after 2000. Also, since the old regime parties returned to the political scene in a shorter period of time, the level of their reformation and distancing from the past was significantly lower than among the other Eastern European parties – the successors of the *ancient regime*. The best indicator of the depth of this division and non-reformation of different ancient regime forces is the assassination of the Prime Minister Zoran Đinđić committed by the criminal structures created in the time of the former regime.

The first lap time of the transitional Serbia was measured in 2004 at the parliamentary elections. The then established positions showed a significant stability and establishment of more permanent relations among the actors. The bloc of democratic parties divided into three main groups: pro-European and reformist group around the DS (also joined by smaller but politically visible and influential parties like the GSS or the LSV), more conservative and moderate group around the DSS and the group around the G17 profiled primarily through the liberal economic attitudes, while in the cultural-value field it was closer to the DS. On the other hand, the old regime parties continued their work in new circumstances – the Socialists primarily attempted to save the party from disappearance by balancing between occasional cooperation with the democratic bloc parties and preservation of the old ideological positions, while the Radicals embraced the role of an anti-system party and positioned themselves as the party – successor of the Milošević's politics. Upon



*Figure 2. Kitschelt's inversion on the example of Serbia (2004)*



the formation of the DSS minority government, the party system entered a relatively calmer phase which postponed the unavoidable conflicts.

Observed from the systemic aspect, the configuration of the party system was not a surprise. Grouping of more liberal and pro-market oriented voters on one pole and more conservative population which requested a stronger role of the state in economy and protection from transitional troubles on the other pole is in accordance with the practice of other transitional states (Kitschelt, 1995). In spite of Sartori's suggestion that unconsolidated and weakly institutionalized systems cannot so simply be compared with theoretical models, the use of the model of moderate and polarized pluralism in fact has a strong explanatory potential in the Serbian case. Orlović (2011: 53–58) thinks that the political system of Serbia from 2000 to 2006 and after has the characteristics of polarized pluralism since the DSS and the DS were replacing each other at the central party position in relation to which the bipolar oppositions were being positioned (the DS and the SRS in the first phase, the LDP (Liberal Democratic Party) and the DSS in the second phase), and that after the formation of the DS–DSS–G17

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government and later the Mirko Cvetković's government it moves to the phase of moderate pluralism. This is further contributed by the institutional design and the election of the DS President Boris Tadić for the President of Serbia already since 2004, which introduced the cohabitation character.

Stojiljković and Spasojević (2013) base their interpretation on the thesis that polarized pluralism was being developed in its full strength in the period 2007–2008. In spite of participation in the same government (the second term of office of Vojislav Koštunica 2007–2008), the DS (together with the G17) was in the same time fighting with the DSS for prevalence within the former democratic bloc and with the SRS for winning the power in the state. The peak of the polarization was sublimated in the choice between Europe and Kosovo in which the Europhilic bloc managed in the same time to polarize the political spectrum by strengthening the centrifugal characteristics of the system (significantly assisted by the LDP) and to formulate a comprehensive position „Both Kosovo and the European Union“ with an obvious tacit prevalence of the latter goal. The electoral schedule and the fight for presidential position in two rounds (2007–2008), as well as the parliamentary elections in May 2008 after which the Socialists chose to form the government with the Democrats led to the victory of one pole of the former bipolar opposition and incentive for transformation towards a moderate pluralism. The final phase in this transformation and in the same time in the consolidation of the minimum democracy in Serbia happened with the division among the Radicals and the emergence of moderate, formally pro-European Serbian Progressive Party (SNS) (Spasojević, 2011).

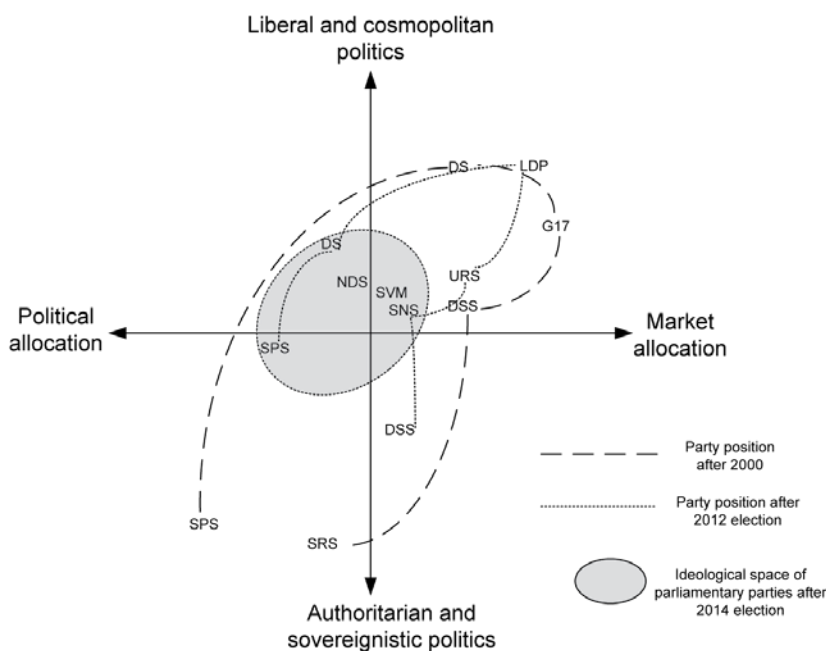
An additional incentive to the changes came from the legal framework as the year 2009 saw the adoption of a new law on political parties, aimed at introducing an order into the functioning of the parties and also at leading towards merging at the political scene through the introduction of more restrictive criteria for registration of political parties, i.e. the necessary 10,000 signatures for the registration (1,000 for the national minority parties). Although the number of the registered parties was significantly reduced (their number at the moment in Serbia is a bit more than 100), the ambiguous legal solutions in respect to the interpretation of the national provision led to an overgrowth of the national minority parties, while the lack of political will brought an insignificant progress in the general regulation of the field. The peak of weakness in this respect is the entry of the party None of the Above to the parliament, through abuse of the national minority threshold (the party was registered as the Vlach party without being anchored in this national minority).

The period from 2010 to the parliamentary elections of 2012 once again was the calm before the storm. The perception of stability of the established system of moderate pluralism was enhanced by stabile support of voters (and reduced support to the pole parties such were the DSS, SRS and LDP) and the established consensus about the basic issues (European integration, above else). Nevertheless, the result of presidential elections 2012 and the victory of Tomislav Nikolić marked

the entry into another turbulent period with an uncertain outcome. Namely, after the extraordinary elections of March 2014, the SNS list independently won the majority of seats, while the NDS (New Democratic Party, later called the SDS – Social Democratic Party) separated from the DS, with staying out of the parliament of the DSS, LDP, URS (former G17) and again the SRS. The party system of Serbia after 15 years regained the form of a system with the predominant party (although it is too early to claim that it is indeed the case).

If we analyse the change at the level of individual parties, there is undoubtedly a big instability and the flow of voters among the parties. If we observe the change from the party system level, it can be said that it is a continuity of narrowing of ideological space (Figure 3), caused by the change of hierarchy of social cleavages, that is, the main division lines. Simply said, the biggest portion of parties and voters accepted the European integration as the basis, without other topics by which the parties' profiles would be distinguished so far. This is further contributed by the finding that the corruption was the primary topic of the last elections, and that the electoral result was shaped by the perception of corruption and not by the debate about the measures for its reduction (Spasojević and Stojanović, 2014:48). Same, one can notice the Markus' thesis (1998) that some positions within the system are fixed but that the actors advocating them have been changing during the course of time.

*Figure 3. Narrowing of the ideological space in Serbia (Stojiljković and Spasojević, 2013a: 455)*



## RELEVANT PARTIES

After the system-level analysis, we are moving to the analysis of the most important actors. The concept of relevant parties serves to direct the researchers' attention to the actors influencing the political process and to eliminate from the analysis the parties existing only on paper or in the periphery of the political decision-making. Sartori (2002) proposes two criteria – the coalition potential (the usefulness of the party for the government) and the blackmailing potential (capacity of the long-term opposition parties to influence the behaviour of actors with the coalition potential). There are other criteria as well, but they rather rely on quantitative (independent running at elections, participation at more than 50% elections and the like) than on qualitative data, which in the case of Serbia which in a quarter of a century of multipartism has two turning moments is not too useful. On the other hand, Sartori's criteria are designed as to encompass also the radical parties in polarized systems (anti-systemic parties), which seems extremely important and useful in our case.

In spite of the Sartori's note that the electoral strength is not the most important criterion, it is most logical to start the analysis of actors from the biggest and centrally positioned Serbian Progressive Party. The Party was established in 2008 and during the last few years it imposed itself as the strongest party in Serbia with excellent electoral results. However, here it is not about a new political actor and the complete splitting of voters, but about a redefined actor who used the resources, knowledge and positions in the former SRS to facilitate the process of creating a new party (in that sense the SNS is more similar to the Janković's Positive Slovenia, and different from (entirely) new parties such is the Croatian Live Wall). If insisting on continuity, it can be claimed that the SNS inherited from the Radicals the economic voters – transition losers to whom the story about the corrupted and tycoon government of the Democratic Party had already been well known. On the other hand, the SNS during the course of time gained ever stronger pro-European attitudes justified not so much by ideological and value matrix but by a realistic approach to politics. The popularity of the SNS is primarily based on the popularity of the Prime Minister Vučić which enables the party to take rather flexible programme attitudes formed on the grounds of the Prime Minister's personal assessments. In principle, this is a dominantly populist reinterpretation of the neoliberal and pro-European matrix with emphasized the idea on the need for change of the national mentality. Of course, when a party has 50% of voters, it is hard to expect its high level of ideological homogeneity. Nevertheless, running the state in a longer period of time necessarily requires taking of more clear positions and produces programme oppositions and the need for stronger positioning of the party.

The SNS coalition partner in the government of Serbia is a party which is also linked to the first period of multipartism – the Socialist Party of Serbia. After 2000, this party entered the process of reform which implied gradual distancing from the Milošević's legacy, which symbolically ended by entering the government with the DS and signing the declaration on reconciliation in 2008. However, also in case of the SPS numerous

elements of continuity can be observed, both with the Milošević's period and with the period of the former Yugoslavia. This continuity shows the Socialists' desire to profit on nostalgia and on assurance that the old regime was better (similar to the *Ostalgie* phenomenon in Eastern Germany), however with this position being refreshed by modern alter/anti globalist attitudes and a negative attitude towards the NATO. In absence of a clearly profiled social democratic party in the bloc of parties of the then DOS, the SPS took the position of the main party of the (old) left. The ideological profiling is further contributed by a long-term coalition arrangement with the Pensioners' Party – PUPS (which enhances the redistributive politics among the oldest voters) and the United Serbia (which equally plays on the card of economically strong state (however at the local level) and moderate nationalism and conservatism. Yet, the disharmony of the left position in programme manifests with simultaneous participation in the governments which after the break out of the 2008 crisis carried out a neoliberal policy of austerity and rationalizations, is the main reason for probably the largest gap between the electoral messages and behaviour and moves of the government.

The bloc of opposition parties since the 2014 elections is characterized by fragmentation and constant turmoil within the parties. The central position here belongs to the Democratic Party which together with the DSS carried the largest burden of democratic changes, but also took over the biggest blame for the poor transitional results. If we had been writing this text immediately after the 2012 elections, we could have pointed out that the DS gathered a moderately reformist and market-oriented portion of the society and that the party was consolidated at 15–25% of the electorate, however with a very good coalition potential. The electoral defeat in the second round of presidential elections 2012 led to an internal turmoil and splitting of the party into two in electoral terms almost equal parts – the DS and the NDS (SDS), although the DS kept a larger portion of the party structure. The competition of these two parties revealed the full influence of personal and leader-wise in the Serbian politics, as well as the absence of programme consistence even in the case of the party with the highest level of intra-party democracy (Stojiljković and Spasojević, 2013a: 457). Of course, the government only additionally enhanced these conflicts, often using non-democratic institutional and non-institutional mechanisms. Nevertheless, the current rating of both parties is to the largest extent the outcome of the results of their rule and the negative effects in the period of crisis 2009–2012, which additionally hampers the return and reconstruction of the democratic position.

The situation is similar also in the field once occupied by the Liberal Democratic Party, for which today fight the parliamentary New Party (coalition party of the DS), the non-parliamentary party Restart movement and the LDP which didn't pass the threshold at the elections of 2014. The strength of this bloc was historically linked to a strong liberal and reformative attitude and critique of excessively comprehensive approach of Democrats in the Tadić time, but new actors more and more emphasize economic liberalism as their programme basis. Nevertheless, since these are new parties, their relevance is questionable while the fact that they address a small voting base of maximum

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10% of citizens doesn't benefit them and necessarily imposes the expansion of their electoral platforms.

On the other hand, the bloc of parties on the right, national wing attempts to insist on articulation of cultural-value issues at the expense of the economic ones. This bloc encompasses old parties like the DSS and the SRS, together with new party movements like Dveri (which has not yet managed to prove its relevance). All these parties attempt to formulate an Eurosceptic platform in the same time insisting on the Kosovo issue. The number of voters at this pole (about 15% at the last elections) shows that this is a position with a significant voting base, however for now without a political actor who will transform it to parliamentary mandates.

To this list of larger national parties we should add stabile parties of national minorities – above else the Alliance of Vojvodina Hungarians (SVM), Bosniak Party of Democratic Action (SDA) and the Sandžak Democratic Party (SDP), as well as the Albanian Party of Democratic Progress. Most prominent in this group are the SDP and SVM which attempt to upgrade their minority identity with social-democratic ideas (SDP) and advocating for Vojvodinian attitudes (SVM). Finally, the list is concluded with smaller, but institutionalized parties – two from the already mentioned coalition led by Socialists (PUPS and the Unique Serbia) and the League of Social Democrats of Vojvodina, together with primarily leader-based New Serbia and SPO.

Institutionalization of the party system as well as of individual parties can also be observed from the aspect of their social foundation, that is, the structure of their electorate. The Cesid (Vuković, 2010) starts its analysis from three main lines of cleavage: historical-ethnic (relation towards minorities and decentralization), political-cultural (relation towards traditionalism, sexual minorities and the EU membership) and socio-economic (attitude towards the market economy). The next step is classification of the responses into five clusters, i.e. value structures: modernists (19%), modern conservatives (19%), autocrats (21%) and nationalists (15%), as well as a large group of indecisive (26%), followed by a comparison of the defined groups with party identification of the respondents.

According to the obtained findings, the average citizen of Serbia is tolerant towards national minorities (71%) traditionalist (64%), who is rather in favour of decentralization (39% : 27%) and the EU (39% : 25%) then against them, while having serious dilemmas about the acceptance of the market economy (31% for and 21% against with almost half restrained), and a strong homophobic attitude (49% with one fifth of tolerant and one third of indecisive). When given a choice of the leading ideological directions, almost two fifth of citizens chose social democracy, which is contrary to the absence of parties formally positioned and simultaneously perceived as such.

In an attempt of interpretation of this finding a Weneger's thesis (2000) seems inspiring and correct: that the issue of legitimacy of democratic institutions in post-communist, transition countries can be narrowed to the concept of social justice and different perception of citizens of these countries about the social justice and its political-

-ideological presenters, in which the social democratic concept is recognizable and advantageous in Serbia.

Four years later at 2014 elections the changes of value profiles were much smaller than the changes of electoral political jerseys; however in combination with demographic characteristics they yielded very indicative findings about social and cultural profiles of party supporters.

*Table 5. Demographic characteristics of party supporters (Vuković et al, 2014)*

	SNS	DS	SPS	DSS	NDS	LDP	SRS	DVERI	AVERAGE
Female	45%	80%	59%	11%	44%	41%	33%	46%	51%
Male	55%	20%	41%	89%	56%	59%	67%	54%	49%
Age 18–29	13%	13%	12%		7%	22%		46%	16%
Age 30–39	18%	20%	17%	20%	27%	17%	8%	31%	19%
Age 40–49	12%	27%	12%	30%	13%	6%	15%		15%
Age 50–59	25%	13%	24%	25%	20%	39%	31%	8%	22%
60 and above	32%	27%	34%	25%	33%	17%	46%	15%	29%
Without elementary school	6%		7%						4%
Elementary school	17%	7%	29%	21%	13%	22%	17%		15%
Vocational schools	24%	7%	12%	21%	25%	17%	17%	15%	23%
High school	40%	47%	26%	21%	44%	28%	33%	31%	38%
College/University	13%	40%	26%	37%	19%	33%	33%	54%	20%
Up to 10,000	48%	14%	47%	35%	33%	40%	33%	50%	46%
10,000–20,000	25%	43%	37%	24%	25%	60%	50%	38%	34%
20,000–30,000	18%	14%	17%	35%	33%		17%	13%	13%
Above 30.000	9%	29%		6%	8%				7%
Neutral conformists	34%	13%	21%	41%	29%	33%	17%	23%	27%
Neutral traditionalists	19%	20%	18%	24%	29%	11%		23%	20%
Intolerant traditionalists	21%	13%	32%	35%	14%	6%	67%	46%	20%
Conformist non-regionalists	19%	20%	18%						12%
Tolerant modernists	7%	33%	11%		29%	50%	16%	8%	22%

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Bringing the electoral party identification into correlation with socio-demographic characteristics and value profiles, Vuković (Vuković et al, 2014: 104–107) first analyzes the supporters of the three parties – opponents to the EU integration – the DSS, DVERI and SRS. Having in mind the value division of the electorate in Serbia, the characteristics of the cluster „intolerant nationalists“ were detected among the supporters of these three parties significantly above the average.

Within this value bloc there is a further division according to demographic criteria of party supporters. In the structure of all three options there is a higher number of men, but this correlation is brought to the maximum in case of the DSS with 89% of males in the total number of supporters. On the other hand, in difference from the Radicals, in the structure of the DSS and Dveri we have an above-average educated population, in the case of Dveri with as many as 54% highly educated in the total number of supporters. What dominantly divide this group are the age groups. Thus the supporters of Dveri are dominantly positioned into the youngest groups of respondents (18 to 39 years of age), supporters of the DSS into the category of middle-age generations (age 40 to 59), whereas the SRS is being anchored among the oldest compatriots, those above 60 years of age.

The supporters of the LDP and DS are prevailingly coloured with the characteristics of the „tolerant modernists“ cluster. The demographic indicators notably show that the education of the supporters of these two parties is above average; in the case of the LDP younger and middle-age persons are above average (from 18 to 29 and from 50 to 59), and in the case of the DS the middle-age persons (age 40 to 49). The key difference is in the gender structure. Among the LDP supporters there are a bit more males than females, while in the case of the DS the participation of women is predominant, with as many as 80% of the total number of respondents.

When it is about the SPS, the structure of party supporters has two differentiating characteristics. One is of demographic character and pertains to the fact that an above average trust in this party comes from the respondents with elementary school (sometimes even uncompleted) as their educational background. Although lacking the dominant value characteristic like some other parties, the number of their voters defined as „intolerant traditionalists“ is above average. So, while (intolerant) traditionalism in combination with higher education leads towards the DSS and Dveri, combined with the low education it most often ends up in support to the coalition around the SPS.

In the case of the SNS it is hard to make a profile of the party which has won one half of electorate at the elections. However, some specificities or differences can nevertheless be observed. In the structure of supporters of this party there is a lower number of highly educated than the average and that is the only demographic characteristic in which they are significantly different. On the other hand, in value sense there is no dominant value determination; only observed is an important absence from the cluster of those who, according to taken values, we call „tolerant



modernists;, and on the other hand, a significant presence in two clusters where conformism is prevailing is indicative. (Vuković, 2014: 104–107).

## PARTY COALITIONS

All dynamics and (hidden) internal logic of political life is at its best expressed by numerous inter-party and also intra-party closing and distancing, unifications and (re)dissents and divisions. In a quarter century long history of the multiparty system in Serbia, there is almost no remaining example of absence of different forms of cooperation at numerous levels of power, even among the parties with extremely opposed political positions. In a short interval which has nevertheless been charged with historical changes, we faced almost uncountable electoral and post-electoral, opposition and ruling coalitions. They are formed as programme coalitions of similar parties and party families, but also as broad tactical coalitions directed towards (one-time) taking of power.

As a consequence, Serbia at its 10 national parliamentary regular and extraordinary elections, in addition to the experience of single-party, majority (1990) and minority (1992) governments of Socialists, has also experienced numerous coalition governments, both majority (like the minimum majority governments from 1993, 2007, 2008 and 2012 or broad ruling coalitions like the one of as many as 18 actors gathered within the DOS in 2000, or the one around Progressivists in 2014) and minority coalition governments (the DSS government of 2004).

Particularly interesting were the experiences of the government and „system without opposition“ created due to the boycott of elections in 1997 by the majority opposition parties, as well as of a short-term, transitory government of co-ministers from among the ranks of Socialists, SPO and DOS in late 2000. All these governments and coalitions were formed behind the illuminated political stage. The achieved agreements frequently surprised not only the supporters and voters, but also the activists and lower echelons of party leaderships. Logical question is if there is some system in that (apparent) chaos, or, are there some regularities and logic in inter-party regrouping?

The first obvious and clear precondition is the very logic of the achieved electoral results, meaning the election-based division of political forces. The main imperative is to gain the parliamentary majority and satisfy and harmonize the narrow party interests and „create“ the majority government. Otherwise, a possibility remains for the formed minority government to function on the basis of an agreement on external, parliamentary support of some of the (semi) opposition parties. In the case of the Serbian government in 2004, the solution was found in then rather shocking parliamentary support to the first minority government of Koštunica and the DSS by the SPS.

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Previously, the formation of pre-electoral coalitions is the result of assessment of assumed, positive (synergic) effects of associating, or the very (im)possibility to pass the electoral threshold (5%) or obtain a majority. The existing legislation as well as the distribution of political forces are therefore only the precondition for building a developed electoral strategy and understanding of dynamics of political life.

The achieved electoral results, however, often enable various post-electoral combinations and alternative scenarios. Initially, by rule, in accordance with the theory of minimum electoral victory, that is the maximization of the electoral gain, the problem of provision of the parliamentary status or, on the other hand, parliamentary majority, is resolved by allying with the lowest possible number of partners. By rule, this is coalition allying with programmatically close parties. If that is not enough, the next step is allying with parties from the second round, the *second-choice* partners. Only if these possibilities are exhausted, the arrangement with programmatically distanced parties may possibly be accepted.

This principal rule in practice, however, has numerous exceptions and deviations. First of all, the social context of crisis and the need to produce key constitutional, political and social changes often require formation of broad coalitions and „national unity governments“. Frequently, particularly in the conditions of fragmented party scene, the logic of fierce struggle for the same electoral clients leads to conflicts and breakup of the programmatically closest parties. As a consequence, they often search for coalition partners beyond their own political family.

The logic of interparty rivalry about the taking over the „control package of shares“ of power leads to numerous situations in which the logical combination which is ultimate at the first glance is either not entered or is being left. If mutual exchange of arguments and blackmails result in failure of negotiations, the remaining partner(s) resort to the party which support instantly resolves the problem, however permanently remaining the basis for shakes and conflicts.

The overall history of the relations of the DS and the DSS including the fall of the second Koštunica's government after the breakup about the response to the (self)proclamation of Kosovo is only one among numerous atypical examples and situations. Neither seldom are the parties, particularly the small ones from the political centre, with enviable above-proportional coalition potential which act according to the rule: who gives more. The Radicals, however, until the 2008 elections, that is until the breakup and separation of the SNS, were almost an exemplar of a party with extremely limited coalition but high blackmailing potential. Hardly anybody wants to make (central) government with them, but in a defensive manner – by strength and number of the won seats - they practically determine who will have to join in order to form the government.

In practice, frequently the destiny of an expected and desirable party alliance is not decisively influenced either by programme or tactical differences and disputes, but

by personal disputes and (un)realized ambitions and vanities of the party leaders. Having in mind the electoral system, it is no wonder that the largest portion of intra-party conflicts ends in division of the party and building a wall of non-cooperation between the former allies.

Finally, the decisive influence on political life is not exercised only by party leaderships and prominent figures. Beyond the political arena, the direction and contents of politics and political arrangements is as well influenced by the foreign „veto players“, through their support or opposition. The representatives of the key organized interest groups and associations – employers, trade unions, non-governmental organizations, professional associations or, on the other hand, church and army, are lobbying for their requests, offering tacit or open support in return. Dissatisfied with political offer and big transactional costs that have to be paid for the support, the civil actors can also decide to enter the field of politics through direct, political and electoral engagement (G17 PLUS, Otpor, Strength of Serbia Movement, Dveri).

In the countries like Serbia, an extremely important role is also played by the foreign „veto players“, such are the high representatives of international economic and political associations, governments and business associations of the key states, or supranational party federations. The government of Socialist and Democrats is maybe the best illustration in this respect. All of them, by their action of non-action, can (in)directly favour or disfavour certain solutions and individual parties, coalitions and leaders.

## FINANCING OF POLITICAL PARTIES AND ELECTORAL CAMPAIGNS

The electoral process in modern democracies cannot be imagined without mass campaigns, rallies, conventions, big marketing strategies and actions, in a word, without political celebrations and rituals aimed at public – at voters who possess the most precious political currency: their trust and vote. Consequentially, campaigns are becoming more and more expensive, while the control of cash flow in politics more and more important for maintenance of minimum standards of democratic participation.

How much, again, it is difficult to provide that rules and standards in this field are actually effective, is illustrated by the fact that an elementary rule about the obligation of publishing the reports on financing exists in only 62% out of totally 114 states from which the data within the Pinto-Duschinsky research (2002) were collected. Here the researchers agree in the assessment of widespread inefficiency in implementation even of this elementary rule as well.

The basis of these processes is more and more made of international standards and recommendations – „soft legislation“ like the Recommendation 1561 of the

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Assembly of the Council of Europe of 2001. For example, this recommendation formulates common rules directed against corruption in financing of parties and electoral campaigns founded on the principles of: reasonable equality of public and private financing; honest criteria for distribution of state givings to the parties; rigid rules for regulation of private donations and definition of upper limits of electoral expenditures. They also include the total transparency of parties' accounts, creation of an independent auditing body and creation of a prescribed system of sanctions for breaches of the rules, envisaging the possibility of suspension of financing from the state budget (Kregar and Marko, 2004: 94–99). Hence the free and fair elections and transparent party and parliamentary life exposed to the public scrutiny would indeed make the *sine qua non* of democracy.

In Serbia, only after the changes of 2000 the Law on Financing of Political Parties of 2003 regulated in a coherent and relatively comprehensive manner the financing of regular party activities and financing of electoral campaigns. However, the key weak point of Serbian practice was the legal solution according to which the oversight and control of the party budgets and campaign costs were divided between the Committee on Finance of the Republic parliament and the Republic Electoral Commission, the body which composition and work is dominated by the party representatives. Consequentially, while this law was enforce, no political actor was sanctioned for violating legal provisions, although the prevailing assessment of the public was that the amounts and indirect givings were much higher than the amounts presented in the reports of political actors.

Practically, the only exit from the vicious cycle was to legally change not only the controllers but also the rules of the game and ultimately the actors' behaviour. The Law on Financing of Political Activities from 2011 in relation to the previous solution introduced four key advantages. Above else, it is comprehensive because, besides parties' action it regulates the action and financing of other political subjects – coalitions and lists of groups of citizens. Second, it abolishes limitations in respect of total height of funds from private sources – political actors can collect and purposefully spend as many funds as they enjoy the citizens' trust and support. In the same time, there are clear limitations in relation to the height of individual contributions in order not to depend on a small number of rich and influential. Limits are posed at 20 average salaries for natural persons and 200 for legal entities – the amounts which are significant, but not such that their giver could „buy“ a party. Anonymous and illegal contributions and the contributions by donors who might be in the conflict of interest are still prohibited. Remarks that due to exponential growth of expenditures the total costs of (media) electoral campaign should also be limited were met with the attitude that this can be achieved indirectly through limitation of broadcasting time and prices of paid times in media, above else the electronic ones.

Finally, it provides for the public availability of income and expenditures data, including those about the height of individual contributions, if they exceed the value of average monthly salary. Instead of party-controlled bodies, the control and oversight shall be performed by an independent body – the Anti-Corruption Agency. With assistance of civil society organizations, besides subsequent control of correctness of the reports, it also carries out the parallel monitoring - the assessment of the accuracy of the presented amounts.

The system of measures and sanctions from warnings to civil, criminal and political-administrative sanctions which deprive the culprits from a part or the whole of the funds from public sources should be proportional to the breach and have an appropriate effect. Like in the majority of other countries, it is important that the statute of limitations of breaches has been extended to five years, which leaves enough space for their procession.

The practice of control of elections held in 2012 and 2014 shows, however, that the problem of in-depth control of cash flows in politics and sanctioning of bypassing the law through electoral and post-electoral trading with influence has not been resolved. This is, for example, the practice in which, in order to avoid legal limitations, the actual contributors are hidden behind the formal givers of contributions who are often social cases or business unsuccessful legal entities.

The credit arrangements for party campaigns as well often hide intertwined interests of party oligarchs and leadership and bank owners, which only leads to an unequal political game. The cartelization of party scene, besides possibility of practically unlimited credit indebtedness available only to big parliamentary parties, is strongly supported by the principle that electoral winners are double rewarded – both by distribution of funds for regular financing only to actors who enter the parliament and the application of the same model for distribution of five fifths of (limited) public funds for the campaign.

An indirect evidence of the presented theses is the fact that seven political parties (SNS, SPS, DS, NDS (now SDS), DSS, LDP, URS), participated with more than 85% of expenditures of all political subjects in electoral campaigns in 2012 and 2014. Also, the incomes of these seven political parties exceed 90% of incomes of all political subjects. The actual loss of the parliamentary status of the DSS, URS and LDP only added speed to the cartelization trend. On the other hand, uncertain financial destiny and agglomerated financial loses of electoral losers – the LDP and URS, above else, as well indirectly speak about the extent to which both the party elites and their financiers and creditors rely on the assessment that the status of parliamentary party and the closeness of state treasury can cover all

debts and irrational expenditures. Ultimately it is nevertheless realized that the money is an important, however not a sufficient condition for success in politics<sup>1</sup>.

## CONCLUDING REMARKS

At the first glance, the party system in Serbia in the last 25 years showed a high level of instability and changeability, both at the system level and at the level of individual parties. However, these instabilities show certain elements of predictability and their dynamics can be compared with other transitional societies if local context is adequately defined and used in the analysis.

Above else here we think about the legacy of the difficult identity topics derived from the dissolution of Yugoslavia and rapid disintegration of institutions and legal system accompanies with impoverishment of economy and population in the first decade of transition. All this to a significant extent defined the initial steps of transition and consolidation, and therefore the institutionalization of party system, however also reducing/limiting possible domains in that direction. Of course, the role of political elites and citizens in that process is not at all naive and unimportant.

With all this in mind, writing of such a text in the moment when the system is passing through the second crucial period which outcome is far from predictable, is not a rewarding job at all. However, observing the existing phases of development, we can assume that the party system shall move towards the higher level of institutionalization in the new context. This above else means clearer opening of democratic topics and party positioning in relation to these topics. On the other hand, the cultural-value set of topics shall for long remain the source of votes in this territory, to which the actors will resort whenever they assess that the cost in relation to the superior international community and region states will be acceptable. Finally, the role of international actors and their interest in deeper dealing with domestic circumstances (e.g. opening of chapters in the negotiations with the EU) can to a large extent accelerate and shape the process of institutionalization of the system, and therefore the establishment of the new division of power among the political parties.

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1 The amendments to the Law on Financing of Political Activities of 2014 reduced the public financing of electoral campaign from 0.1% of the expenditure to 0.07% of the lower, revenue side of the of the budget, as well as the funds for regular financing from 0.15 to 0.105 % of the budget. Only the dominant SNS can stand this situation relatively easily. Furthermore, as before, a part of budget funds amounting to 20% is equally distributed to all proclaimed electoral lists, while the remaining 80% of funds is distributed to electoral lists which passed the threshold proportionally to the number of won seats. In the same time, however, a disputable provision was adopted, according to which parties may purchase real estate from public funds as well.

Zoran Stojiljković  
Vojislav Mihailović  
Dušan Spasojević

**PART FOUR**

**INTRA-PARTY  
DEMOCRACY  
IN SERBIA**





## INTRA-PARTY DEMOCRACY IN SERBIA

The issue of the intraparty democracy, or the democracy of intraparty relations, becomes an increasingly important and frequent topic, both in the academic circles and among the practitioners. This issue is not new and there are numerous authors and works in political theory attempting to answer the question whether political parties have to be democratized from inside in order for democracy to exist in the society?

One side in the classical debate about the necessity of democracy in the parties thinks that „if democracy is not only a form and procedure but also has a political and intrinsic value, than the question is why to believe parties which recommend democracy as the best general system of political decision-making, without being ready to implement it on themselves“ (Pavlović, 2006: 41). On the other hand, authors like Sartori think that „internal democracy of political parties is not important at all, because the issue of democracy is posed and resolved in the area beyond the parties, that is, in their mutual relation, interaction and competition and not in the internal life of the parties“ (Pavlović, 2006: 41).

This debate is also embodied in the choice between democracy and efficiency – is it possible to achieve an „optimum balance of efficiency and democracy of organization and action if wanting to avoid the fate of a non-functioning debate club on the one hand or of a reduction of party organization to the praetorian guard of the ‘party Caesar’ on the other?“ (Stojiljković, 2005: 19). On the practical level, the mentioned dichotomy is a difference between the proclaimed statutory principles and actual functioning of political parties, i.e. between the proclaimed democracy and actual oligarchic and authoritarian tendencies.

Of course, this issue becomes additionally intriguing in transitional, post-communist societies, above else in the context of the concept of political accountability. Political accountability is here understood in two main directions – as the accountability of political parties towards their voters and members (and in that context as an issue of the intraparty democracy) and as the accountability (or responsibility) of political institutions towards the society. In this latter sense (non-democratized) political parties appear as an obstacle to the work of public institutions, both due to the strong party discipline, lack of political will and, generally, tendency for the power (of public

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institutions) to be further concentrated in the hands of party elites deciding who will occupy the positions in the government.

Therefore, we can conclude that the primary research questions are (1) whether political parties in Serbia in formal sense have been established as democratic institutions, (2) to what extent the probable more or less democratically tailored robe of distribution of power differs from its actual anatomy and physiology, (3) what are external and internal reasons for existence of discrepancy between the proclaimed and real, and (4) in what way the possible deficit in internal democracy of parties influences the functioning of democracy in Serbia.

## FOUR THEORETICAL MODELS OF INTRAPARTY RELATIONS

Relations in the party or party as the system of power-sharing relations are mostly defined by (un)equal position and role of its membership and leading bodies in creation and realization of party politics. Party leaderships, by rule, carefully hide both from the public eyes and from the own membership the internal armature and anatomy of their parties, while the public performance is served by more or less well tailored, democratic robe of the Statute and the Rules of Procedures. Only when a serious division occurs in a party, a small part of truth reaches the public about the number and influence of members, network of party committees, grey eminences or actual origin of the funds in the party's treasury, that is, about the actual physiology of the parties.

Although in majority of the parties the internal relations are at least formally democratically regulated by statutes and other formal organizational rules, there is a tendency (for numerous reasons) to reduce the decision-making power to the narrowest leading circle, and even to the leader himself. Michels (1990: 302–314) described this practice and tendency as “the iron law of oligarchy“ after analysing the practice of German social-democracy in early 20<sup>th</sup> century.

Two polar, ideal-type models of internal relations make a non-democratic model in its monocratic and oligarchic sub-variance on the one hand, and “participatory-democratic“ model on the other.

In the essence of the non-democratic model is the tension established between the democracy and the organization. There is no democracy without institutions and organizations, but with their development and strengthening it gradually disappears. Michels defines this position with the statement “who says organization, says the tendency towards oligarchy“ because organizational structure and dynamics divide every party to the leading minority and the led mass. The leader, from the (party) servant of people, becomes „the commander of the party army“ (Stojiljković and Spasojević, 2013b: 12).

Another, polar participative-democratic model of „transparent parties“ is based on the idea of direct elections and party referendum and poll, supported and enabled

by „electronic democracy“. Basically, this is the critical taking over of Weber's ideas about (approximately) equal qualifications for leadership, its minimum, coordination competences and direct elections for public function holders.

The third, „competitive-elitist“ model is in fact a democratic redesigning and realistic reformulation of leadership and, particularly, oligarchic model of intraparty relations. In this opinion, within democratic procedures, the party executive, divided to a larger or smaller number of competitive party elites in mutual changeable relations of conflict and coordination, fights for sympathy and support of party masses which role has mostly been reduced to cheering and applauding.

According to this logic, the oligarchization of parties does not necessarily need to have a negative final effect, because their competition enables the final word and decision to be made by the citizens – voters. Sartori and Schumpeter equalize realistic, functioning democracy with competition of the elites. As a starting point, the outcome of intraparty struggles determines who and how will participate in the intraparty game for voters' support (Schumpeter, 1996).

The fourth „representative, polyarchic“ model starts from the Dahl's concept of polyarchy, that is the plural distribution of power. It is possible to maintain both the elements of decentralization and dispersion of power within it, and even the active participation of the membership. In a certain way, the plural method is a realistic, reduced variance and alteration for the participative model.

## INDICATORS OF INTERNAL RELATIONS

A network of criteria and indicators is practically linked to the segments and sequences of the decision-making process, that is, its five key elements and phases (Stojiljković and Spasojević. 2013: 13).

The first one is composed of a set of rights and obligations of the party membership, together with its possibility and capacities to actually realize them. The first, starting level of the analysis is therefore a critical evaluation of the position and influence of the „party people“ – the action potential, competence, level and kind of motivation and expectations of the membership, together with different bases and reasons for its identification with the “own” party.

Observed as a model, the high level of aspiration, feeling of competence and the dominance of programme or problem-wise identification with the party, in a word – the membership characterized with mobility, activity and criticism is the profound assumption for existence of participative parties or at least polyarchic structure of their internal relations. On the other hand, the party members who gathered on an interest-calculative basis cannot be much interested in party democracy or engaged in party activities, because they are connected with the party leaders at the basis of clientelism.

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The second set of indicators is composed of formal and actual rights of party minorities and their capacity to institutionally express them within the party through its wings and factions. Attempting to limit the internal democracy, the leadership exaggerates the fear from divisions and refers to the attitude that a party is not a debate group but a functional efficient organization which does not endure public exposure of differences which the competition and the public interpret as weakness.

The third, derived from the previous ones, is made of domination of subordination, or the principle of subsidiarity in the party – the centralizing or decentralizing trend in the internal decision-making process. The subordination indicates the domination of oligarchic relations or the leadership principle in the party. Subsidiarity, or the acceptance of principle to refer the decision-making to the lower levels of organization on which it yields optimum results, supports the plural or participative model.

The fourth criterion for detecting the relations is the official and real distribution of power, that is, the division of power and competences between the party legislative and executive at the different organizational levels. They define mutual relations and division of competences and power, in analogy with the division to branches of power, between (and within) the bodies of different kinds of competences – legislative (assembly, the main board), executive and executive-political (head of the party, executive board, party apparatus) and control-judicial organs and bodies of the party (oversight and statutory committees).

In parliamentary parties, besides the above stated forms of pluralisation of power, also relevant is the relation of power between the party headquarters and the its parliamentary faction. Although not making a part of the party structure in a narrow sense, the parliamentary faction is an important centre of power and holder of certain procedural rights in the work of the parliament, and the representative of the state-legal aspect and function of the party.

The creation of the party cartel which, by professionalization of politics, besides position parties includes, to a measure of their participation in the distribution of status privileges, immunity and the „pie of power”, the opposition parties and MPs, creates and maintains the common „guild“ interest of the political elite. It is additionally strengthened by instability and fragmentation of the political scene, enabling the MPs for a far broader manoeuvring space and more elastic behaviour in mutual communication than it is possible for the „hard“ party structures.

This global tendency is confronted by two factors with a reverse prefix and effect: a) rigid mechanisms and procedures of disciplining and control of the parliamentary faction, as well as b) occasional waves of re-ideologization and increase of importance of the programme principles which narrow the manoeuvring space for trade-offs and compromises in the parliament (Beyme, 2002: 154).

The following, fifth criterion, is related to the assessment of distribution of power and influence in two key internal processes: the party electoral process and the control over the party finances, their income and expenditure sides. For example, the

impossibility for the party leader or its elite to impose their personnel selection and „favourites“ without previous complex process of negotiating and trade-offs with the local party authorities speaks in favour of the existence and domination of competitive-elitist or „polyarchic“ structures and relations. On the other side, the direction of the party patrons together with direction of the public financing sources to the party headquarters contributes centralizing, oligarchic or leadership tendencies in the party.

The starting methodological stronghold for the analysis has been introduced by Angelo Panebianco who defined power as the „control of zones of uncertainty“, defining the following seven zones of uncertainty or indicators of power: political leadership, internal communication, relations with the environment, definition of rules and competences, finances and recruitment and advancement of human resources (Panebianco, 1988: 36).

The power is undoubtedly asymmetrically distributed; however, it is in the same time relational and, at least to some extent, reciprocal. Critically referring to Michels and his „iron law of oligarchy“, Panebianco states that, if it is a law at all, it is certainly not the iron one (Panebianco, 1988: 22).

Of course, this is only a network of basic indicators and merely ideal-type models of internal relations in political parties which in practice to a larger or smaller extent deviate from the „advertised“ statutory solutions.

## INTERNAL RELATIONS: THE CASE OF SERBIA

In political life of Serbia, however, among 101 registered parties only about sixty give occasional signs of life by participating at the elections and providing elementary data about their existence and functioning. For not more than about fifteen of them it could be said that they possess at least elementary developed capillary organizational network, i.e. that they are more than a „van party“ accommodating the boss and his „numerous“ supporters.

Observation of the projected party structure and organizational design of the internal decision-making process shows a growing resemblance among the relevant parties. Thus, for example, the position of the membership – criteria for admittance and termination of membership, rights and obligations as well as position and competences of the main party organizational forms are defined in an almost uniform way. Very similar are as well the definitions of the schemes and mutual relations of bodies established on the vertical, territorial realm.

### *Party membership – rights and obligations*

For example, the party statutes most frequently do not have clearly defined criteria for admittance of membership. It is enough to fill in the entry form and one becomes a member – apart from the statement of accepting the programme and statute, there

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are no other conditions for admittance. In big parties the admittance is decided by the local board, in the smaller ones – the higher party organs (presidency or the MB/EB).

In his study „Partijske borbe u Srbiji u postoktobarskom razdoblju“ /*Party struggles in Serbia in the post-October period*, trans. note/, Goati shows that party statutes empower the party members to participate and assist in shaping and realization of the party politics which among else implies that „in the periods of electoral campaigns, they engage in propaganda activities, such are the participation in party gatherings, pasting posters and coaxing friends and relatives to vote for the party candidates“ (Goati, 2006: 125).

Thus, for example, the third part of the statute of the Democratic Party precisely defines the conditions for membership, rights and obligations, as well as the position of membership in the Party. A DS member can become every adult citizen of Serbia who voluntarily signs the entry form and accepts the programme and the Statute, providing that he/she is not a member of some other political organization (The DS Statute – Articles 14 and 15). Thus defined conditions for becoming a party member are almost identical in other parties as well.

The statutes of the relevant Serbian parties state that by the act of joining the party the members automatically obtain active and passive voting right within the party. The exemptions are the Democratic Party and the Democratic Party of Serbia, which statutes envisage a six month period as the condition for exercising the active and passive voting right.

According to the DS statute, the members are entitled to equally participate in activities, freely express their opinion, submit proposals and start initiatives, participate in definition and realization of the political party. It can be said that these rights are the standard rights of the members of political parties in Serbia.

It is particularly necessary to pay attention to the right to express own opinion. In the majority of political parties, like, for example, in the case of the DSS, the statutes limit this right; the DSS statute envisages that every member of that political party has right to participate in party's functioning, to express his opinion about all issues and give proposals and initiatives, but only as long as they are in accordance with the programme and the statute of the party (Božović, 2013: 60). This limitation of rights to give proposals and initiatives speaks to a large extent that non-democratic principles of organizing political parties are expressed not only in practice, but also in documents of political parties.

### *The relation towards minorities in the party*

The above right of giving proposals and initiatives is closely connected with the issue of party's relation towards own minorities. Again, almost all political parties regulate these rights in a similar manner. Thus according to the DS Statute: “Party members who disagree with the majority decision have right to continue to advocate and defend

their opinion, but only within the Party bodies“ (The DS Statute – Article 24). Usually this article is accompanied with an annex according to which “Party member cannot be called to accountability for the expressed opinion or voting within the Party bodies“ (The SNS Statute – Article 20). This manner declaratively emphasizes the right which party dissenters should have within the party. However, it is clear that such right, limited to expressing the opinion within the party, significantly violates the principles of democracy within the political parties. An interesting exception in this sense is the Liberal Democratic Party. The LDP members who disagree with the decision of the party’s majority according to the statute have right to advocate and defend their opinion, both within the party and publicly (Stojanović and Jović, 2013: 154).

If we observe the right to a dissenting opinion through the right to formation of factions, the situation is similar. Factions are defined as „relatively organized and structured part of a political party – a group of its members distinguished from the whole: a) by accepting different programme views to a number of relevant political and intraparty issues and b) by possessing an intra-group fractional organization and discipline“ (Stojiljković, 2008: 79). In difference from informal groups or wings, factions are institutionalized within the party and accepted as its separate part. Therefore the existence of factions can be taken as an important indicator of existence of intraparty democracy, i.e. readiness to tolerate the existence of different opinion within the organization in a longer period of time and in a formalized way.

Sartori divides factions to personal, in which the faction members follow one inviolable leader, and confederative or coalition, which do not have one leader but many lower leaders. According to the role performed in the party, he distinguishes factions of the bandwagon type, which join the winners in internal party conflicts and are satisfied with small rewards, then the veto factions which obstruct decision-making and factions aimed at taking of power and imposing of certain politics (Goati, 2011: 171).

The explicit right of forming the factions within the party is stated in the statute of the New Party – according to the Article 8 of the Statute of the New Party, party members have right to form a faction within the party. The faction can be formed by 15% of the overall number of party members, but it is interesting that the faction implies: „voluntary organization of party members who consider that the fulfilment of the programme and political goals should be reached by implementation of different methods of political action in relation to the methods defined and adopted by the majority of the Party members“ (The NS Statute – Article 8). Therefore, the New Party statute allows only deviations in the manner of achieving the programme solutions, but not the alternative programme solutions. Another exemption in this respect is the Social Democratic Union which not only allows the existence of factions but also envisages their proportional representation in all party organs (Jovanović, 2013: 246)

The statutes of other political parties in Serbia do not support the existence of factions within the parties. At the practical level the Democratic Party is the best example for the manner in which Serbia solves the problems with emergence of factions. Every

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stronger opposition to the party leader led to the separation of a part of the party and formation of new political organizations (from the DSS to the SDS).

Hence, we see that the parties stick to their non-democratic principles when it is about the deliberation within the party, particularly in the case of potential alternative programme solutions. Some parties go even a step further in insuring the non-transparency of their action. The DSS statute contains an article explicitly stating that the party member can be excluded for revealing to public the material from the meetings (Stanić and Janković, 2013: 93).

Unfortunately, statutes of some parties still contain the provision on blank resignations. Thus the SDPS (Socialist Democratic Party of Serbia) statute contains an ultimately disputable article reading: „accepting the nomination, every candidate of the Party for any function in the legislative and executive authorities shall commit in writing that he/she will resign from function he/she was elected to in case of termination of his/her membership in the party or violation of the party’s programme and statute” (The SDPS Statute, Article 10).

### *Design of party institutions – election of leadership and its competences*

Another important set of indicators about the intraparty relations pertains to the manner in which the parties elect their leaders and leaderships. Above else, the focus is on the criteria which a candidate should meet prior to confirmation of nomination and on the democratic character of the process of selection of delegates for the body which elects the leadership. In both cases, there is a broad scope of possibilities between completely or relatively open process on the one hand and the process which significantly favours the candidates enrooted in the existing party elite and structure on the other.

In the already mentioned study „Partijske borbe u Srbiji u postoktobarskom razdoblju“ Goati states that the „process of election into the managing bodies at the lower levels of party pyramid is subject (...) to ‘prior control’, that is, approvals which in the parties in Serbia are in the competence of the Main Board, Presidency of the Executive Board“, as well as that one can note „disrespect of some definition marks of free and equal elections, such are the secrecy of voting, obligatory larger number of candidates and equality of participants in the electoral competition“ (Goati, 2006: 113).

Rather than a rule, the history of intraparty elections in the Democratic Party is an exception at the political scene of Serbia. The DS is one of the rare parties which history was characterized by changing of presidents and officials at the party elections. Still, this can be observed from two angles. On the one hand, this is a rare example of democracy of intraparty relations, while on the other hand the fact that the candidates defeated at competitive elections for the party president (Čavoški, Mićunović, Vuksanović, Živković and Tadić) sooner or later left the DS and formed new organizations speaks about the lack of tolerance for party minorities and about non-democratic relations within the party.



## PARTY LEADERSHIP

On the upper part of the party pyramid the position and basis of reproduction of the power of the party leader are crucially important for the character of relations inside the party. In principle, the leading position of the leader depends on his skill of coordination (and manipulation) the relations within the leading core, and also on the support of membership and realization of electoral results, i.e. the capacity to keep the party in the orbit of power.

Analyzing the position of party leaders on the basis of the set of their statutory defined competences, Goati (2006) establishes distinction to, at least formally, weak leaders, with only coordination-representative competences at their disposal and strong leaders, who also formally possess the rights to proposing and appointing, i.e. self-selection (nomination and co-opting) of their own associates.

Starting from the set of competences as a formal criterion, parties in Serbia can be divided into three characteristic groups. The first one is composed of those with the highest statutory competences of their president, and these are the parties still (or until recently) headed by the founding leaders, such is the Serbian Radical Party, Serbian Renewal Movement and the Democratic Party of Serbia. Another group is composed of the parties which leaders have somewhat weaker formal competences: the Serbian Progressive Party and the Democratic Party. Finally, to the third group of parties with statutory „weakest“ presidents we put the Liberal-Democratic Party and the Socialist Party of Serbia.

However, the party leader, as stated by Goati, „regardless the statutory prerogatives is the key figure of the party because of concentration of huge power in his hands“ (Goati, 2006: 154). No matter whether we could characterize certain party president as statutory strong or weak, all or almost all leaders of political parties in Serbia have large actual political autonomy. An excellent example for illustration of the above is Article 49 of the statute of the Serbian Progressive Party, which allows the President to extraordinary, in case of emergency, for prevention of undesired consequences for functioning of the party, dismiss presidents and municipal and county boards of the Party – in addition, the leader has the possibility to himself define the “cases of emergency“ which empower him to decide about someone’s (un)suitability (Bulatović, 2013: 302). Similar provision in the PUPS statute envisages the possibility that in urgent cases the party president can pass a decision of executive character from the competence of other party organs, when passing of such decision cannot be delayed and when it resolves an important issue or prevents harmful consequences for the party (Statute of the PUPS, Article 91).

However, one needs not to search for such „loopholes“ in the statutes in order to illustrate the power of party leaders in Serbia. The „standard“ competences of party presidents are sufficiently illustrative. Thus, for example, according to the mentioned division to statutory weak and strong presidents, the president of the Socialist Party of Serbia belongs to the statutory weak ones. Nevertheless, the statute envisages that

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the party president represents the party in accordance with the law, the statute and the party programme, and to take care about realization of programme tasks and goals of the party, on implementation of the congress's decisions, to implement the policy and expresses political attitudes. All these fall among the standard competences of the president as the public representative of the party.

The actual source of power of political party leaders lies in chairing the party bodies and the personnel policy, so that the party presidents either appoint or propose the members of the party organs which sometimes they themselves chair. This leads to concentration of power in the hands of a small number of party officials who owe their appointment to the party leader.

The already mentioned SPS president has competence to propose candidates for the vice-president of the party, members of Presidency and president of the Executive Board. Besides, he approves the election of presidents of provincial and local organization. Party president summons the meetings of the Main Board and Presidency and chairs them, while also chairing the meetings of the Executive Board of the Main Board (Vušurović and Džulović, 2013: 272–273). Once again we remind that with such competences the SPS president still belongs to the weak leaders of political parties in 'Serbia.

The SPDS statute, for example, also shows the tendency of concentration of power in the hands of the president. According to the statute, the party leader chairs the most important bodies of the party (Congress, Main Board and the Presidency of the Party). The party president also proposes vice-presidents, presidents of the Executive Board, president of the Political Council and Secretary General and appoints the members of the Presidency up to the full number of members. Besides, he coordinates the work of the parliamentary faction, proposes candidates for MPs and proposes the electoral programme (The SDPS Statute, Article 51).

Even broader competences can be observed with the PUPS president. The statute defines that the party president, among else, governs the Presidency and the Main Board of the party. Besides, the statute envisages that the party president can terminate the execution of the Executive Board's decision and return it for reconsideration. If in the reconsideration the Executive Board passes the same decision, the party president can summon the session of the Presidency (led by the party president and composed of members he proposed) within 30 days at the latest in order to make the decision about the disputable issue – thus granting the party president the veto right against the decisions of the Executive Board of the party (The PUPS Statute, Article 90).

## EXTERNAL AND INTERNAL CAUSES OF PARTY DEMOCRATIC DEFICIT

Globally observed, Serbia established formal intraparty and minimum electoral democracy, but their deepening is a very slow and uncertain process. In fact, the

absence of intraparty competition promotes party discipline as the supreme virtue. On the other hand, internal non-democracy of the parties is reflected as non-democracy of political institutions, absence of critical thinking, public debate and political accountability. These two *non-democratic features* form a vicious cycle and a feedback which hampers breaking the formed relation of power.

The above mentioned intraparty relations in Serbia are a consequence of several determinants – in our opinion, it is above else the „flammable mixture“ and synergic action of the dominant and through political legacy formed authoritarian pattern of worship and/or adulation towards leaders, relied on clientelist relations expanded and strengthened within the partocratic order, which is all founded in formal institutional rules (electoral system above else). Here we should add global flows of de-ideologization and cartelization of parties. All the stated elements lead towards increase of distance between the almost mythical leader and the obedient membership.

## AUTHORITARIANISM OF CITIZENS AND ILLEGITIMACY OF PARTIES AS THE DOMINANT DIMENSION OF POLITICAL CULTURE.

The practice of intraparty relations unfortunately shows a deeply enrooted authoritarianism and leadership characteristics in almost all parties. The best indicator is the fact that the largest number of parties in Serbia is led by the leaders who entered the scene in early 1990s. However, in this the party activists and members do not differ much from „ordinary“ citizens.

Authoritarianism is understood „as noncritical, idealizing relation towards authority, i.e. as exaggeration of importance of authority, leader, hierarchy, discipline and obedience“ (Kuzmanović, 2010: 91). Kuzmanović emphasized that according to the research findings, 64% of citizens of Serbia agreed with the claim „Without a strong leader each nation is like a headless man“, with as many as 43% agreeing with this statement most strongly. Only 13% of citizens of Serbia reject this thought. With the claim „What this country needs the most, more necessary than laws and political programmes, are several strong, tireless leaders whom the people can trust“ agreed 56% of respondents, whereas this claim was explicitly rejected by only 13%. The claim „For success of a group it is most important to find an energetic, rigid and just leader whom everybody will obey“ was adopted by 57% of the citizens of Serbia, out of which 36% without any reserve. This claim was again rejected by only 13% of citizens. Kuzmanović concludes that the findings show that the citizens of Serbia generally link the success of any group including a political party primarily to the “strong-arm” leader who should be obeyed without objections (Kuzmanović, 2010: 91–92).

On the other hand, if we observe authoritarianism through passivity, that is, the absence of political participation, findings are very similar. The share of politically active citizens does not exceed 5%, i.e. only every twentieth respondent belongs to

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the circle of politically active ones (Mihailović et al, 2008: 15). The next strong third of citizens belongs to the group of politically informed, but not permanently active in this field. Then, the circle of occasional, and only electoral participants, encompasses an even more massive group. Almost one half of citizens is rarely in politics. On the other hand, every seventh citizen of Serbia is entirely out of politics, i.e. 14% of them belong to the apolitical group.

On the other hand, public opinion surveys show that political life of Serbia is characterized by a high density of party membership, i.e. that the share of party membership in the electorate continually ranks between 8% and 12%. However, if we measure the membership in a political party by activity of its members, then the situation is rather different. The share of constantly engaged party members does not exceed 10-20% and they represent „an activist core and action and human resource ‘reservoir’ of the parties“ (Stojiljković, 2008: 331). The next fifth of citizens is ready to occasionally engage in party activities.

This can also be explained by relation of citizens towards parties. Namely, the research findings show that only every fourteenth respondent, i.e. only 7% of them, is satisfied with the work of political parties (Mihailović *et al*, 2007: 34). The next third of respondents is neither satisfied nor dissatisfied with their work, while 63% express dissatisfaction. Namely, a large number of citizens, almost two thirds, shows political cynicism and accepts the attitude on „self-purpose of parties“, i.e. the claim that parties in practice serve only to interests of their leaders, as well as assurances that only those who want to gain some benefit from the politics are interested in the parties today.

Also, there is a two-third agreement about the attitude that parties only make people quarrel and that because of „parties and party affairs we cannot agree about the most important issues“. A bit ironically seems also the consent of almost three fifths of party members that only those who want to gain some benefit from parties are interested in them. About credibility of parties and intensity of relation of citizens with parties speaks also the fact that nearly one half of those who will vote at elections claim that they will cast their vote for the least bad option.

## THE INFLUENCE OF THE ELECTORAL SYSTEM ON INTRAPARTY RELATIONS IN SERBIA

When speaking about the consequences of the majority, i.e. the proportional representation systems on the intraparty relations, the Duverger's theory on the influence of the electoral system on the party system as well as the indirect influence of electoral system on the intraparty relations, come to the fore. In the states having the system of proportional representation „parties play the key role because of voting for the lists, i.e. for the party, in difference from the majority system where there are no lists and voting is for the candidate“ (Orlović, 2012: 23). The variances within the proportional representation also bear significant consequences for intraparty relations.

Regarding the influence of the electoral system on the power of party leaders, it is important to pay attention to the two particularly negative characteristics which until recently were the features of the electoral system of Serbia: the indirectness of the electoral system (a specific kind of closed electoral lists) and blank resignations.

The Law on the Election of MPs of 2000 introduced the right of the list's proposer to define who obtains the mandate, completely independently from the candidates' position on the electoral list. This established an indirect proportional system, because of the mediation of political parties in an additional level between the citizens and the parliament. Goati calls this form of proportional system „an endogenous Serbian-Montenegrin innovation“ unknown in the electoral systems theory (Goati, 2011: 17).

On the other hand, the parties in Serbia started to use blank resignations in the post-October period, with an excuse that in that manner they attempt to prevent the MPs to switch the parties and party factions – the so-called „purchase of MPs“. „The majority of them did this by providing in advance from the members of their party faction the signed backward-dated resignations which the leaderships would activate if the MPs show an intention to leave the party. And that, in fact, meant the establishment of the imperative mandate“ (Goati, 2011: 12). The extent to which the party leaders were ready for agreements when it was about their interest to preserve the power is clearly obvious from the easiness of the agreement that the possibility of depriving the MPs from their mandates should be adopted as the constitutional solution in 2006, so that Article 102, Para 2, of the current Constitution of Serbia reads that: „Under the terms stipulated by the Law, a deputy shall be free to irrevocably put his/her term of office at disposal to the political party upon which proposal he or she was elected a deputy“. Political parties in Serbia changed their attitude towards blank resignations only upon the influence of the EU and the Venice Commission in 2010.

Although both above mentioned solutions were changed, the indicated specificities of the proportional representation and the institution of blank resignations left consequences (the misbalance of political power) which will hardly be corrected soon. The proportional representation with closed electoral lists used in Serbia both at the republic and the local level did not by itself contributed the strengthening of the political parties' elites; however, the fact is that the Serbian party leaders are responsibly for compiling the lists of candidates for elections at all levels confirmed the inviolable status of the party leadership.

## CLIENTELISM AS THE PRIMARY RELATION OF PARTIES AND SOCIETY AND PARTOCRACY AS THE MODEL OF RULE

Kitschelt (2000), upon different incentives for engagement of party membership and leadership, notices three types of parties in the post-communist countries: programme, clientelist and charismatic. The members of the programme parties indirectly realize the compensation for their engagement „through politics which

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influence is not limited only to party followers“ (Kitschelt, 2001: 32). Panebianco calls the membership led by these motives the „true believers“, who through the membership in programme parties in a way fulfil their needs in pursuit for identity (Goati, 2007: 136).

Kitschelt considers the charismatic parties the „transitory form“ between the programme and clientelist parties, due to an unavoidable „spending of charisma“ of the leader and the necessity for these parties to base themselves on firm foundations of programme decisions or egoistic interests (Goati, 2007: 137). Charismatic parties, above else, are characterized by the attempts of their membership to be close to the party leader.

Kitschelt defines clientelism as a specific manner of „exchange“ between the constituency as the principle and the politician as an agent in a democratic system. Clientelism is a transaction, i.e. direct exchange of citizens' votes for a direct gain or access to employment, goods and services (Kitschelt and Wilkinson, 2007: 2,7). When speaking about the clientelist parties, this exchange is carried out between the party elite and its members. Such parties provide for selective benefits to their membership: either in the form of MP mandate, certain function in the government at the republic or local level, in the form of job in the state administration or public enterprise. Since parties have at their disposal numerous such „lures“, there is always a myriad of pretenders; however, in spite of the huge supply which is not surprising considering that the party member-card is the easiest and fastest manner for reaching the work booklet, the parties still do not base their choice on education or qualifications, but exclusively on loyalty.

Parties in Serbia can hardly be classified to the rank of programme parties. It would be the closest to say that the political parties in Serbia are charismatic, leadership parties, with an emphasized clientelist tendency. When politicians invest in administrative-technical structure instead of interest aggregation and program formation, they create clientelist linkages among their followers (Kitschelt, 2000: 849). Clientelism in Serbia is enhanced by the position of the state as the biggest employer and service purchaser<sup>1</sup>.

“The state job” became maybe the most important „lure“ of political parties when it is about the recruitment of the future membership, and even the leadership. As a consequence, the supremacy of political parties from the state framework slowly spilled over to the society. Kasapović states that „the most dangerous structural consequence of the partocratic system of power (...) is the adjustment and subordination of the state and society to the needs of the ruling party/s” (Kasapović, 2003: 268). Not only the leading,

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1 According to various sources and statements of certain governmental representatives, the state and public sector employs between 500,000 and 700,000 workers, which is one third of the actually employed in the Republic of Serbia, according to the data of the Republic Statistical Office. To these employees the state is the only employer. (<http://sindikalizam.org/2014/09/10/trazimo-da-drzava-kao-poslodavac-postuje-svoju-zakonsku-obavezuna-socijalni-dijalog-sa-nama/>) – accessed on 5. 4. 2015.

but any position within the public enterprises became the subject of competition for the membership of the ruling political parties, which led to the accelerated collapse of the given enterprises. „The merit-based system is replaced with the patronage system and the system of division of the spoils“ (Orlović, 2011c: 59).

It can therefore be concluded that the fact that the selection of human resources is dominated with the criteria in relation to the party membership and loyalty, and that in return they are obliged towards their party to pay „the gained“ position, speaks that here it is about a specific form of corruption. „Party ‘bought’ and paid them with the obtained position, they pay the „debt’ to the party – both literally in money, and in other forms of purchase of votes and loyalty“<sup>2</sup>.

It is enough to see who are the directors and members of managing boards of public enterprises across Serbia and the manner in which they obtained these positions, to be clear why we claim that there are clientelist elements in the political parties in Serbia.

The competences which the president and the leadership of the party have the personnel policy of the party on the one hand and the widespread clientelism among political parties in Serbia on the other show why this is one of the causes of „intangibility“ of party leaders. The vicious cycle and synergic effects of the phenomena we are speaking about motivated the authors to denominate Serbia as a state with elements of partocracy. Partocracy is the „situation in political system in which political parties prevail the „constitutional state authorities“ (Orlović, 2011c: 58).

The authoritarian cultural matrix which existence we proved in Serbia and the specificities of the electoral system enabled the political parties to rule the parliament (Stojiljković et al, 2012; Orlović et al, 2012), while the lack of professional state administration, i.e. inclusion of tasks from the administrative scope to the post-electoral spoils of political parties marked the supremacy of the parties both over the executive and the administrative branch of power.

Based on the above it becomes clear why Goati thinks that the concept of partocracy is not strong enough for Serbia. In Serbia, instead of speaking about partocracy which is an universal feature of democratic orders because the parties are fairly the most influential actor, „we can speak about parto-despotism. This concept emphasizes stronger than the previous one that the parties are not satisfied with their supremacy over other subjects, but they attempt to make these subject senseless or to cancel them (e.g. the parliament)“ (Goati, 2011: 18).

## DIRECTIONS OF (DEMOCRATIC) CHANGES

The presented analysis, based on a larger number of surveys in complementary fields, undoubtedly points to that the political parties in Serbia have not been established

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2 <http://www.politika.rs/pogledi/Srecko-Mihailovic/t26222.lt.html> – accessed on 5. 4. 2015.

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in a manner which enables them for an enviable level of intraparty democracy. Such finding is not a surprise. What is to a certain extent surprising is the fact that many non-democratic characteristics are embedded in party statutes, and that in Serbia it is often not about the discrepancy between the prescribed and the practical but about the leadership regulation from the very beginning.

What worries in our findings is the fact that such intraparty relations are a consequence of the synergetic effect of political culture, institutional framework, social-economic design, and that the established supremacy of the party leader(ship) can hardly be balanced by the change of only one parameter. The additional worry is caused by spilling of negative effects of non-democratic relations to the state institutions and the establishment of partocratic and clientelist relations at the level of the entire society, meaning that the case of Serbia can serve as a paradigm of debates whether the parties must be democratic in order to create a democratic society.

So, in order to reach the changes and move towards the problems and moving toward the proclaimed polyarchic model of distribution of power it is necessary that we have the parallel processes of:

- (1) coming down from the scene of the „founding fathers“,
- (2) personalization of the electoral system which result is turning of candidates towards the will and taste of voters and not only of party nomenclature,
- (3) reduction of the system of post-electoral division of political spoils – the rush of party commissaries to the leading positions in the (over)developed public sector, and also the
- (4) emergence of a rational, informed and informed voter.
- (5) The next, fifth factor of the democratic redesign of the parties is the very critical reading of their organizational pattern and the practice of rectification of (non) intentional structural non-democratic “inserts “. Observed from another angle, it is about the answer to the question what in the organizational pattern and rules contribute that the formal democratic model in practice functions as an arena for fighting and/or making of coalitions within the party leaderships.

The rectification of these “democratic flaws“ would in our opinion, with the preceding factors of long historical duration, certainly contribute the democratic redesign of the intraparty relations.



Jelena Lončar  
Boban Stojanović

**PART FIVE**

**ELECTORAL  
CAMPAIGNS  
IN SERBIA FROM  
2000 TO 2014**



## 1. ELECTORAL CAMPAIGNS IN SERBIA FROM 2000 TO 2014

The main aim of electoral campaigns is the mobilization of voters' support and the influence on the electoral process and result (Slavujević, 2007: 13). To that end, political parties spend enormous amounts of money, engage advisors and public opinion agencies and lease advertising space. Research studies, nevertheless, show that campaigns exercise much stronger influence on solidification and crystallization of voters' attitudes than on changes of their attitudes and decision to vote for certain party (Denton, Woodward, 1990: 172). In addition, candidates shape political agenda during the campaign, provide legitimacy for previously made decisions, and prepare voters for the future ones. Through promotion of programmes and electoral offers, candidates inform the public on important social problems and offer proposals for their resolution. Because of this, the analyses of electoral campaigns are an important source of information about the strategies and direction of behaviour of political actors, key social problems and development of democracy. This chapter analyses the characteristics of campaigns for parliamentary elections in Serbia from 2000 to 2014. Parliamentary elections in Serbia were held five times after the democratic changes, in: 2003, 2007, 2008, 2012 and 2014. Only the 2012 elections were regular; all others were early elections.

There are at least two reasons for writing this paper. First, previous literature offers numerous texts analysing certain aspects of individual electoral campaigns. The majority of them analyse topics in the focus of the given electoral campaign. In spite of their importance, there is still a lack of papers that would somehow summarise and compare the key characteristics of different electoral campaigns. Similar was the guiding idea of Slavujević who in 2007 published a book on electoral campaigns in Serbia; however, it primarily focused on electoral campaigns during the 1990s. Therefore our paper is limited to the period after 2000.

Second, characteristics of campaigns depend on the society in which they are unfolding, on economic and political situation in the society, political and electoral system, social cleavages, social cohesion, fundamental values, as well as characteristics and goals of parties (Slavujević, 2007: 17). Electoral system is an obvious example. In majoritarian electoral systems and open lists systems, individual local candidates are more visible and the candidates are expected to run personal campaigns, while in the systems of proportional representation, particularly those with blocked lists such is the case in

Serbia, parties and party leaders are in the focus of the campaign. Having all this in mind, the analysis of campaigns will help us determine the dominant problems in Serbia and the direction in which the society has been developing after the democratic changes. We are interested to find out the main characteristics of the electoral campaigns in Serbia since 2000 and the similarities and differences among them. The paper therefore analyses the priority topics in the campaigns, character of campaigns and strategies and manner of communication with voters. After the analysis of campaigns after 2000, the concluding part of the paper offers a review of the key characteristics of electoral campaigns in Serbia.

## KEY THEMES IN THE CAMPAIGNS

This section examines key themes in electoral campaigns in the period from 2000 until today. Depending on political, social and economic context, the topics in campaigns differed from one election to another. Almost all electoral campaigns were dominated by social and economic issues, except the electoral campaigns of 2000 and 2008, when the dominant topics were the change of the regime and symbolical-identity divisions. After the Democratic Opposition of Serbia (DOS) victory in the elections of 2000, social and economic issues have gained increased visibility in electoral campaigns. The campaign for the 2008 elections was an example of identity-symbolical campaign. After these elections, the change in the party system of the Republic of Serbia, which came with the emergence of the Serbian Progressive Party (SNS) and coincided with economic crisis, has brought very pronounced social-economic topics in the campaigns. The campaign before the last elections in 2014 was the campaign with an emphasized domination of economic topics (Stojiljković, Pilipović et al., 2014).

### Elections and campaign in 2000

Parliamentary elections of 2000 were held in a specific moment, in the aftermath of the elections for the President of the FRY. Federal, municipal and local elections were as well held in this period. In sense of importance, the presidential elections were of particular significance. "Politically observed, the presidential elections were more important than any, because at them the competitor to the opposition candidates was Milošević, not only the most powerful political figure of the ruling regime but also his type of rule" (Goati, 2013: 164). After the election for the FRY President, the defeat of Slobodan Milošević at this election and the change of the regime on October 5<sup>th</sup>, parliamentary elections followed in December. "Scheduling the December elections for the National Assembly of Serbia neither came as a consequence of legal obligation (parliamentary term of the republic MPs lasted until September 21<sup>st</sup>, 2001) nor of an arbitrary decision of the ruling coalition, but of unavoidable political pressure of forces that won the September elections" (Goati, 2001: 264).

The social and political context of that time completely determined the contents of the electoral campaigns and their key topics. As the main political actor of the previous period, the Socialist Party of Serbia (SPS) had several key topics in the electoral campaign. One of them was, above else, the renewal of the country after the bombing and creation of an impression in the public opinion that the AP Kosovo and Metohija was not lost in the 1999 war. On the other hand, the SPS led aggressive and negative campaign against the opposition, accusing them to be betrayers and foreign mercenaries. “Thematic axes of the electoral campaign remained the same, but the intensity and ruthlessness of critiques against the opposition gave the tone to the entire electoral campaign of the SPS and made it a negative<sup>1</sup> and irrational campaign of confrontation, campaign of frightening the voters, extremely unusual for ruling parties which, by rule, lead positive constructive campaigns, campaigns of integration“ (Slavujević, 2007: 138–139). The key topic, which the SPS attempted to exploit, was the patriots’ success in the previous period in the defence and renewal of the country, while on the other hand it attempted to entirely discredit the opposition.

The Serbian Radical Party (SRS) entered the campaign in 2000 primarily by distancing from the SPS and the former government. This party accused the SPS and the Yugoslav Left (JUL) for deference before the international community and attempted to shift all the responsibility for the situation in the state to the former coalition partners in the government. On the other hand, after the formation of the DOS on August 7<sup>th</sup>, 2000, this political coalition, extremely heterogeneous by nature, tried by positive campaign to reach the abstainers first. The Democratic Opposition of Serbia in its campaign created the atmosphere of victory and complete collapse of the Slobodan Milošević’s regime. It opened a broad spectrum of topics, first of all by emphasizing complete changes in the society, together with the improvement of the international position of the country. The DOS electoral campaign also opened the topics of the AP Kosovo and Metohija advocating for the broader autonomy of the province as well as the cooperation with the Hague Tribunal.

## **Elections and campaigns in 2003**

Parliamentary elections in 2003 were also the elections held in a specific social environment, first of all having in mind the assassination of the Prime Minister of the Republic of Serbia Zoran Đinđić on March 12<sup>th</sup>, 2003. In addition, the DOS government after the exit of the Democratic Party of Serbia (DSS) had problems with securing the parliamentary majority, and when the Social Democratic Party (SDP) left the government nothing else remained except to call for elections. Due to high expectations

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1 „While the concept of positive campaign implies the course of the electoral campaign based on promotion of benefits, merits and success of the candidate, presentation of his/her attitudes, solutions, policies to be carried out if securing the mandate at the elections, negative campaign is the concept that encompassed drawing the public attention to weaknesses, flaws and wrong decisions of the rival candidate“ (Stojiljković, 2011). On the other hand, dirty campaign is presentation of false accusation on the account of the rival candidate. Electoral campaigns in Serbia often combined the elements of negative and dirty campaigns.

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of citizens after the changes of 2000, above else in the field of economy and improvement of the living standard, these elections opened apparently new topics. "The general characteristic of this electoral campaign is a fierce critique of the politics of the toppled government and the commitment of all participants in the elections to social issues as the thematic axis of their campaigns. And that meant an almost frivolous competition about who will promise a larger number of new jobs and newly built apartments, better standard, lower taxes, more favourable loans etc." (Slavujević, 2007: 145).

All electoral actors, being aware of the social situation in the state, turned towards social topics as the key ones. Although not giving up its nationalist politics, the SRS turned to promotion of social topics. Their campaign was primarily based on critiques against the former government (DOS, and above else the DS – the Democratic Party), but they proposed a contract in 20 items with every citizen of Serbia as a plan of exit from difficult social and economic situation. The campaign emphasized the negative sides of the changes of 2000, like big social stratification and problems with privatization, addressing in that manner the losers of transition. The Democratic Party of Serbia posed as a thematic axis in this electoral campaign the critique of the government it had left, above all of the DS, and emphasized the importance of amending the Constitution and establishing efficient institutions. Although a part of the previous government, the G17 Plus on the one hand fiercely criticized the government, while on the other hand as the priority topic of its electoral campaign it placed the economic and social development based on the social-democratic model instead of the liberal one. The Democratic Party faced a big problem in the electoral campaign. It was the target of all attacks, both of the opposition and the recent coalition partners, but it remained consistent and chose the promotion of Serbia in the EU and continuing of privatisation as the axis of its campaign. However, it did not remain silent against the context of the campaign and the messages of other electoral actors, so it as well introduced many social topics into its agenda.

## Elections and campaign in 2007

The electoral campaign of 2007 was in fact the continuance of the referendum campaign for passing the new Constitution of the Republic of Serbia in 2006. „The electoral campaign was very long – officially it lasted for two months and a week, from the date of call for elections (November 11<sup>th</sup>) to the electoral silence (January 18<sup>th</sup>). Unofficially, the campaign had practically never stopped and was continued to the pre-referendum campaign for the new Constitution, particularly by the parties which were fervently engaged in that campaign“ (Gredelj, 2007: 43). The key topics in the campaign this time as well were economic and social, with the exception of the main party of the previous government, the DSS. This party in the campaign emphasized its statehood orientation and merits for the adoption of the new Constitution. In addition, the DSS campaign was entirely oriented towards the promotion of what had been done in the previous period and it permanently emphasized that Serbia had never moved faster towards the prosperity, i.e. that the state was on the right reformative path. The key features of

the DSS campaign were: first, differently from the majority of parties in this electoral campaign, the symbolic campaign aimed at presenting the DSS as a state-building party; second, an extreme personalization of the campaign in the form of the promotion of its leader Vojislav Koštunica. “However, its main characteristic is that the entire graphic equipment of promotional products – state symbols, colours of national flag and also the slogan *Long Live Serbia* and the corpus of messages launched in the context of the worn-out phrase *The People Knows the Best*, promoted the DSS as the “state-building” party through panegyrics to the party leader, V. Koštunica“ (Slavujević, 2007: 151).

The Serbian Radical Party in this campaign also insisted on social and national topics. Having in mind the party’s rating and dissatisfaction of citizens by the actual situation, this party created a winning campaign, i.e. convincing citizens through the campaign that they were the definite winners of the elections. The Democratic Party entered this electoral campaign from a much better position than in the last electoral cycle. They were the government’s opposition and from that position they could criticize it; however, they were cautious having in mind that the DS leader Boris Tadić was the President of the Republic since 2004. In the campaign they insisted on the topic of association of Serbia to the European Union, as well as on economic and social topics. The economic development was the key message of this party, embodied in the electoral programme *For a Better Life*. This time again, the G17 Plus entered the campaign completely leaving aside the state and national issue, while relying on economic issues and expertise.

The electoral campaign of 2007, although similar to the former one in relying on social topics, was nevertheless significantly different from all the previous ones. Tanja Nauparac argues that the parties for the first time in the 2007 electoral campaign became more cautious and moderate in giving promises. Although still speaking about the increase of living standard and economic development, the parties were nevertheless more moderate in giving promises and did not go into a complete social demagogy. She also maintains that it was the first time that the campaigns of political parties were positive instead of negative, i.e. that the parties addressed their own electorate, while the negative sides of the campaign, i.e. mudslinging the opponents, insults and polemics this time remained aside (Nauparac, 2007: 57).

## **Elections and campaign in 2008**

The electoral campaign of 2008 was in many of its characteristics different from all the previous ones. In difference from the campaigns of 2003 and 2007, we have a campaign that combines social and national topics, however in stronger symbolic and identity meaning. The elections were held in the aftermath of the unilateral declaration of independence of Kosovo by the Kosovo Albanians, which influenced the tensed atmosphere during the campaign and “further enhanced the identity elements of the campaign because a large number of the EU country members recognized the independence of Kosovo, which additionally complicated the position of supporters

of the European integration in Serbia” (Spasojević, 2011: 133). Unilaterally proclaimed independence changed the direction of political competition. The key topics of the campaign were Kosovo and Metohija and the European integration. The campaign of the SRS continued the politics of opposing the European integration, and after the declaration of independence of Kosovo that opposition became ever stronger. The DSS entirely repositioned itself and became a sharp opponent of the European integration. On the other hand, the DS, G17 Plus, the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP), and even the SPS continued with messages that the European integration must not be given up. Consequently, two identity blocs were created in the campaign. “At the most general level, this is the dilemma of where Serbia is going, to which broader community or culture it belongs, and what its dominant values are. This dilemma was formulated in the choice between the West (symbolically and practically expressed through the European Union, NATO and other international organizations gathering liberal democracies of the Western hemisphere) and East (which symbolically could be represented by Russia, partially China, non-aligned or some other countries)” (Spasojević, 2011: 124). However, the issue of the actual identity conflict in this electoral campaign remains disputable. Srećko Mihailović contends: “The dilemma ‘Kosovo or Europe’ can, however, be declared false (unrealistic, unrealizable, and unachievable). In fact, an ideologically stretchable story appeared in the campaign, about the advantages of the “both/and” logic versus the logic “either/or”. It can rather be talked about the “Kosovo-centricity” and “Euro-centricity” than about a strict politics of “preserving Kosovo” or “entering Europe” (Mihailović, 2008: 18). What characterized the electoral campaign itself as well as the electoral results was the promotion of economic topics in the campaign, which the coalition “For the European Serbia” indeed did.

The campaign of 2008 was a dirty campaign. “Simulation of politics, “estradiation” of political performances, making a political spectacle, presenting and submitting of “dirty laundry” and even the theatricalisation of the entire political scene – were the characteristics of this electoral campaign and the accompanying politics of the majority of political parties and the majority of media” (Mihailović, 2008: 11).

## Elections and campaign in 2012

In parallel with the parliamentary elections, presidential, provincial and local elections were held as well. The political context was such that the opposition since 2008 requested new elections, but the government remained the entire term in office. These were the elections in which the SNS (party created by separation of a part of the SRS parliamentary faction into a separate parliamentary faction in 2008) participated for the first time since its establishment. The key topics in the campaign were the exit from crisis (primarily economic and social one) and the fight against corruption. The formation of the SNS and taking of a large number of voters from the SRS in a way consolidated the party system and the national consensus was achieved regarding the European integration. The issue of Kosovo and Metohija was pushed backwards, and



the key issue of the elections was who would convince the voters that s/he is capable for dragging the country out of the economic and social crisis. However, neither this campaign “offered solutions and programmes which would help researchers to more closely define the ideological and programme positions of participants in the elections, voters to make an informed choice or all of them to make a post-election check of the accountability of the future Government for what it promised to voters and how much of these promises was fulfilled” (Stojiljković, A, 2012: 32).

Although the campaign started as prevalingly thematic, it more and more resembled a leadership one, putting the leaders into the centre of attention (Tadić, Nikolić, Dačić, Dinkić, Jovanović). The Democratic Party emphasized in its campaign the continuance of fight for new jobs and attraction of investments, while the SNS besides economic and social rhetoric paid a lot of attention to the fight against corruption., “One of the topics started in its campaign, the SNS seemingly wanted to make the basic criterion for assessment of personal qualities of their party leaders and the strongest rival” (Atlagić, 2012: 67). The Socialist Party of Serbia in its campaign attempted to awaken the ideas of social justice and announced interventionism in economy in order to protect workers and their jobs. On the other hand, the DSS decided to base its campaign on the idea of political, economic and military neutrality and in that way distanced itself from the dominant topics of the campaign. The campaign of the Liberal Democratic Party emphasised the necessity of a political turnover through “new politics” and “new economy”. The United Regions of Serbia (URS) as a new actor on the political scene tried to present new ideas in the campaign emphasizing the importance of decentralization, regional development and new economic programme. A group of researchers monitoring the electoral campaign of 2012 concluded: “Based on an analysis of the proposed public policies in the electoral manifests, a conclusion could be derived that among the topics gladly spoken about by the participants there are three thematic groups: 1) fight against poverty, social policy, measures for increase of employment; 2) foreign and regional policy and 3) fight against corruption and crime” (Stojiljković and Pilipović, 2012). The campaign, however, lacks the proposals of policies pertaining to human rights and quality of life. Political parties almost entirely neglected the issues of anti-discriminatory policies, gender equality, environmental protection, position of elderly people, freedom of media, as well as the problems in education, culture and health care. This, on the one hand, is the consequence of insufficiently differentiated political offer, while on the other hand of the depth of the key existentialist and social problems that entirely occupy the political agenda (Lončar, 2012).

## **Elections and campaign in 2014**

The electoral campaign in 2014 was entirely different from all previous ones, for many reasons. “First of all, these elections were the confirming elections, the outcome of which was in principle known in advance. Because of that the fight among the opposition parties turned into the fight for future coalition partner,

which significantly distorted the electoral platforms” (Spasojević, Stojanović, 2014: 61). The dominant topics in the campaign were primarily economic and social, although the SNS practically continued the campaign from 2012 connecting these topics with the results achieved in the domain of fight against corruption. If we look at the structure of electoral messages per thematic fields in the 2014 campaign, we shall see the confirmation of the above. Economy and social policy are represented with 68%, political topics 14%, education 7%, corruption 6%, health with 5%. If we observe the representation of topics per parties, we will see that all the parties adjusted to the general thematic campaign except for the DSS, whose electoral messages in the campaign were dominated by political topics with 56%, followed by economic and social topics represented with 41%. Economic and social topics were the most represented with all other parties: SPS (67%), URS (90%), LDP (75%), DS (57%) and NDS (New Democratic Party) (44%). It should be particularly kept in mind that the messages sent by the parties were of general type in 83% of cases and that actual proposals emerged in only 17% of cases during the electoral campaign (Atlagić, 2014: 149–151), which points to the lack of clear ideological and programme position of parties about the direction of development of the country and resolution of big socio-economic problems.

The key message promoted in the campaign was related to economic reforms, and parties differed regarding the direction in which the reforms should be unfolding. The main thematic division in the campaign was “for austerity” and “against austerity”, i.e. for other mode of exit from the economic crisis and solving problems in public finances. However, although it seems that the campaigns were led in a positive context, that they were exclusively thematic, they were also both negative and “dirty”. According to Slavujević: “Although it was less negative and *dirty* than the 2012 campaign, the 2014 campaign was neither positive, which is one of the characteristics of programme campaigns, but prevalingly negative, and often even *dirty* campaign” (Slavujević, 2014: 23). Based on the electoral campaign monitoring, Stojiljković argues for the 2014 campaign: “It might be concluded that elections of 2014 are the first elections with emphasized domination of proposals of public policies at electoral market” (Stojiljković, 2014a: 29). Same as previous elections, the parties before the 2014 elections did not focus on the fields that go far beyond the key economic issues. Hence, in this campaign as well we could not see to a significant extent the proposals of policies in the fields of human rights and quality of life (Lončar, 2014).

## PERSONALIZATION OF POLITICS – LEADERSHIP CAMPAIGNS

In the previous part of the paper we have shown that parties in almost all electoral campaigns except in the electoral campaigns of 2000 and 2008 focused on socio-economic issues with giving of abundant fairy tale promises and thundering critique

against the former government. The next key characteristic of the campaigns in Serbia are leadership versus programme campaigns. In this sense the campaigns in Serbia do not differ much from the campaigns in other democratic states. "Almost no country today in the electoral period is an exception from the generally known phenomenon. The smiling portraits of candidates in tailored suits on the billboards and in the newspapers" (Caspi, 1996: 173). Leadership (personalised) campaigns above else are the feature of presidential systems, or parliamentary systems in which the MPs are elected through majority electoral system. Leadership campaigns can also be met in the societies without profound ideological or even any significant differences among the main competitors (Slavujević, 2009: 192).

The general point, on the basis of insight into the electoral campaigns in Serbia, is that they are extremely leadership campaigns. Campaigns were leadership even when the dominant topics were essentially identity-oriented (elections of 2008). Except that the leader appears as the bearer of the message, he himself (his personality) is very often also the essence of the message addressed to voters. Citizens recognise the leaders not only as the bearers of the electoral message, but the electoral decision is based on personal characteristics of the party leaders. Leadership campaigns are dominant in Serbia, and we find two reasons for this. The first is, certainly, the political culture of citizens and their political history, the leader cult which is deeply embedded in the political memory. Citizens themselves create the trust in leader. Another answer is related to the parties themselves, that is, to their essentially non-democratic orientation and personalisation of party politics. The heads of the parties seldom change, and the occurred changes did not happen out of the party members' desires for change in the party's leadership. If we observe the changes of heads of the parties in the last 20 years, we will see that the parties are extremely leadership and non-democratic. The only example, which is an exception from the rule, is the DS in which the changes of party president through elections are frequent.

Vojislav Koštunica was the DSS President since its establishment until 2014, when he decided to withdraw from political life. Vojislav Šešelj was the SRS President since the establishment of the party until today. Slobodan Milošević was the SPS President until his death, and since then the SPS is led by Ivica Dačić. Many other leaders have been party presidents since their establishment (Vuk Drašković, Velimir Ilić, Dragan Marković, Čedomir Jovanović). On the other hand, although within the DS there were democratic changes of the head of the party, frequently after losing the intraparty elections the former presidents or presidential candidates left the party and established the new party in which they became leaders (Čedomir Jovanović, Boris Tadić, Zoran Živković).

Having in mind the extreme personalisation of the intraparty politics, the majority of the parties is characterized by a strong leader. "Although in the majority of the parties the internal relations are by rules of procedure and other organizational rules at least formally democratically regulated, meaning that membership can participate in definition of the party strategy and tactics and election of the party bodies, there is a trend that for various reasons, such is the logic of efficiency and party discipline, the decision-making power is reduced to the narrowest leading circle, and even the

leader himself” (Stojiljković and Spasojević, 2013b: 11). Leadership parties logically produce leadership campaigns, even when opening topics like economic and social policies, which was the case in the electoral campaign of 2014. Then the programme topics are used only in favour of strengthening the trust in the leader.

## STRATEGIES AND CHANNELS OF COMMUNICATION WITH VOTERS

During campaigns, candidates and political parties spend million amounts of money and use different strategies and tactics of persuasion in order to attract the largest possible number of voters and reduce the electoral chances of the competitors. If we observe the data about incomes and expenditures from the last two electoral campaigns, we see that the largest amounts of money in the campaign is spent by the parties running at the elections from the position of ruling parties (Table 6). In 2014, the absolutely most expensive campaign was the one by the ruling SNS, as much as three times more expensive than the campaign for the 2012 parliamentary elections when it was in opposition. The SPS as well allocated in 2014 more than a double amount for the campaign than in 2012. In 2012, the most expensive campaign was led by the then ruling DS. After becoming opposition in 2012, the income of this party significantly decreased so in 2014 campaign it spent four times less than two years before.

*Table 6. Incomes and expenditures of the parties for parliamentary elections*

Holder of the electoral list	Incomes* 2012	Expenditures** 2012	Incomes* 2014	Expenditures** 2014
SNS	304.85.796,43	310.871.304,78	944.204.005,04	942.147.075,90
DS	488.024.753,22	467.910.196,22	70.997.935,47	100.385.250,98
SPS	187.274.227,00	187.245.292,00	278.582.285,72	341.593.584,00
SDS	/	/	65.627.988,66	174.063.311,86
URS	239.898.767,48	459.897.389,60	100.068.195,00	180.933.197,87
LDP	78.692.495,99	232.141.901,39	21.929.525,00	165.286.518,08
DSS	72.400.981,71	68.111.080,99	53.469.101,40	96.329.386,88
* Incomes include financial assets from public sources, contributions by natural and legal persons, own assets, credits and loans.				
** Expenditures include costs of public events, public advertising and other costs of electoral campaign.				

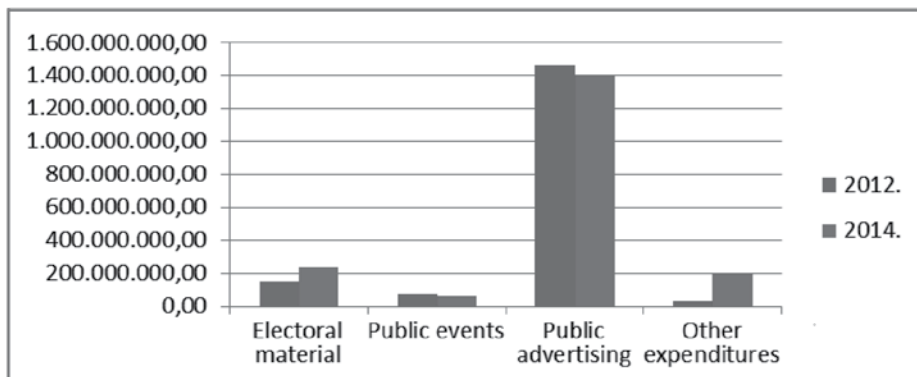
Data source: Anti-Corruption Agency (2012, 2014)

If comparing costs of campaign with electoral results (see Annexes 5 and 6), we can conclude that the electoral results are not proportional to the invested funds. The Democratic Party of Serbia in 2014 invested much more money in the campaign than

in 2012, but this did not ensure its passing the electoral threshold. The URS and LDP in 2014 invested almost double amount of money in the campaign than the DSS, but also remained below the line. On the other hand, although the investment of high amounts of money in the campaign does not guarantee a good electoral result, it nevertheless stimulates the mobilisation of the electorate. Thus the SNS, for example, invested huge funds in the 2014 campaign in order to ensure and additionally enhance the already expected landslide victory. Although the parties in Serbia during electoral campaigns mostly rely on public sources of funding, the SNS before these elections got into debt much more than any other party before, by taking a loan of as many as 400,000,000.00 RSD (Anti-Corruption Agency, 2014). Stojiljković reminds us that the elections in 2014 were the third elections after a choice had already been made: “Previously, these were the first elections in 1990 with predomination of Milošević and the SPS, then there were parliamentary elections of December 2000 when after the changes of October 5<sup>th</sup> it was to “finish what was begun” and when the representatives of the former government were, legally and illegally, pushed to the margins and their voters largely scared by the DOS winning euphoria. All three cases are examples of elections for which the ultimate winner and the result were known in advance; the question was in what percentage and with what turnout the victory of the undisputable favourite would be expressed” (Stojiljković, 2014b: 11).

Regardless of the difference in the invested funds, all political parties in Serbia invested the largest portion of funds into the media campaign. This is confirmed by the structure of expenditures of electoral lists at the parliamentary elections of 2012 and 2014 (Figure 4). In media campaign, the focus is primarily on television campaign, and a bit less on newspapers and radio. The Internet has started to be more significantly used in campaigns since 2012, however it is still only an additional source of information.

**FIGURE 4.** Structure of expenditures of six political actors with the highest expenditures in electoral campaigns for parliamentary elections of 2012 and 2014 (in RSD)



Data source: Anti-Corruption Agency (2012, 2014)

## How to make intra-party democracy possible?

Besides paid public advertising, particularly important for the campaign is advertising in informative programme of national broadcasters. Paid advertisements are expensive, so for candidates and parties it is worthwhile to use such free forms of promotion as much as possible. The most advertised on commercial televisions are the biggest parties, because they have the largest funds, and in spite of that the public service is obliged to present the electoral lists free of charge, that is most often done on the channel two, which has a lower rating. Free advertising became even more important after the RRA (Republic Broadcasting Agency) Instructions of 2012 which limited the duration of leased airtime on television and radio-stations. The parties attempted to supplement the lower presence in leased airtime since 2012 with more frequent participation in TV debates, speaking in shows and frequent press conferences (Slavujević, 2012).

Analyses of media reporting in electoral campaigns since 2000 have shown media bias and their insufficient critical and analytical orientation. This is a consequence of, on the one hand, partocratic system in which political parties have the power of control over media (Gavrilović, 2012: 53), and insufficient personalisation of electoral system on the other hand (Jovanović, 2012).

In all campaigns so far the ruling parties had advantage in media reporting during the campaign. The RRA reports about the oversight of the broadcasters' work during the electoral campaigns for parliamentary elections 2012 and 2014 show that in daily news programme of almost all broadcasters with national frequency the largest portion of time was given to the ruling party (Table 7 and Table 8). Tables 7 and 8 show that in the 2012 campaign the most of the time was given to the then ruling DS, while in the campaign two years later the ruling SNS took a convincing first position in news programme of all broadcasters. The most significant difference in the time devoted to the two biggest parties, DS and SNS, was in 2014 on *TV Pink* which informed about the SNS campaign for a bit more than 5 hours while devoting twice less time to the DS campaign. The *TV Prva* as well allocated twice more time in the 2014 campaign in daily news programme for the SNS than for the DS. Although the broadcasters are obliged to provide for equality in informing to all electoral lists, the other parties received significantly less time. Also during the campaigns of 2012 and 2014, the two largest parties received about 30% of total time, while more than 10 lists shared only about 15% of the total time (Table 7 and Table 8).

Giving an advantage to the ruling party is a consequence of, on the one hand, numerous resources available to the ruling parties that enable their stronger influence on media. On the other hand, it is a consequence of increasingly frequent practice of state electoral marketing, that is, the use of the position in the government for obtaining favourable positions during the campaign through advertising of state activities. In Serbia there are no legal limitations for press conferences of public officials, presentations of ministries or governmental services during electoral campaigns. Such activities nevertheless are the breaches of law, because state resources and promotion of state activities are often used for electoral campaign, thus placing the opposition parties into an unequal position.

Table 7: Representation of electoral lists in daily news programme in the campaign for 2012 parliamentary elections

Holder of electoral list	RTS1		RTV1		RTV2		TV Pink		TV Avala		TV B92		TV Pva		Hepi TV		Total	
	duration%	duration%	duration%	duration%	duration%	duration%	duration%	duration%	duration%	duration%	duration%	duration%	duration%	duration%	duration%	duration%	duration	%
DS	1:38:02	16,52	1:55:07	15,63	1:31:22	23,73	2:59:25	19,88	1:39:32	17,50	4:09:27	22,24	1:09:55	21,48	1:59:05	16,40	17:03:07	19,06
SNS	1:30:21	15,22	1:44:14	14,15	0:51:37	13,40	2:52:47	19,14	1:36:47	17,01	3:44:27	20,01	0:58:25	17,95	2:02:58	16,94	15:22:14	17,18
URS	0:59:08	9,96	1:18:23	10,64	0:39:51	10,35	1:34:09	10,43	1:18:39	13,83	2:31:05	13,47	0:42:49	13,15	1:31:00	12,54	10:36:16	11,86
LDP	1:06:51	11,26	1:13:27	9,97	0:26:10	6,80	1:37:28	10,80	1:00:18	10,60	2:06:49	11,30	0:24:20	7,48	0:56:15	7,75	8:52:27	9,92
DSS	1:05:45	11,08	1:16:08	10,34	0:12:44	3,31	1:15:16	8,34	1:00:13	10,59	1:53:25	10,11	0:37:15	11,44	1:18:32	10,82	8:40:01	9,69
SPS	0:51:21	8,65	1:07:29	9,16	0:23:22	6,07	1:13:10	8,11	1:06:43	11,73	1:30:55	8,10	0:36:15	11,14	0:54:46	7,54	7:44:41	8,66
SRS	0:49:44	8,38	1:03:53	8,67	0:18:44	4,86	1:01:35	6,82	0:53:54	9,47	1:48:27	9,67	0:29:00	8,91	1:17:01	10,61	7:42:56	8,63
Other (<5%)	1:52:16	18,93	2:37:48	21,44	2:01:15	31,48	2:28:40	16,48	0:52:46	9,27	0:57:16	5,10	0:27:31	8,45	2:06:19	17,40	13:25:12	15,00
Total	9:53:28	100	12:16:29	100	6:25:05	100	15:02:30	100	9:28:52	100	18:41:51	100	5:25:30	100	12:05:56	100	3:17:26:54	100

Data source: RRA (2012: 23)

Table 8: Representation of electoral lists in daily news programme in the campaign for 2014 parliamentary elections

Holder of electoral list	RTS1		RTV1		RTV2		TV Pink		TV B92		TV Pva		Hepi TV		Total	
	duration%	duration%	duration%	duration%	duration%	duration%	duration%	duration%	duration%	duration%	duration%	duration%	duration%	duration%	duration	%
SNS	1:13:39	16,94	1:31:39	16,26	1:18:56	16,07	5:06:19	27,09	2:52:11	19,40	1:33:11	31,42	0:32:12	14,79	14:09:58	21,11
DS	0:53:07	12,22	1:15:23	13,38	1:17:26	15,77	2:30:56	13,35	1:53:37	12,80	0:38:59	13,14	0:25:29	11,64	8:55:41	13,30
NDS	0:59:18	13,64	1:07:18	11,94	1:11:02	14,46	2:13:24	11,80	1:32:26	10,42	0:25:22	8,55	0:24:26	11,16	7:53:16	11,75
SPS	0:46:54	10,79	0:56:19	9,99	0:38:59	7,94	2:15:27	11,98	1:38:40	11,12	0:36:26	12,28	0:22:02	10,06	7:14:47	10,80
LDP	0:39:27	9,07	0:46:33	8,26	0:38:25	7,82	1:57:39	10,41	1:45:49	11,92	0:18:33	6,25	0:23:24	10,69	6:29:50	9,68
DSS	0:37:53	8,71	0:47:17	8,39	0:34:02	6,93	1:35:07	8,41	1:34:49	10,68	0:25:51	8,72	0:24:13	11,06	5:59:12	8,92
URS	0:31:35	7,26	0:40:28	7,18	0:39:32	8,05	1:30:13	7,98	1:26:17	9,72	0:23:47	8,02	0:19:08	8,74	5:31:00	8,22
Others (<5%)	1:32:52	21,36	2:18:37	24,62	1:54:47	22,97	1:41:35	8,98	2:03:36	13,93	0:34:26	11,6	0:47:53	21,87	10:53:14	16,22
Total	7:14:45	100	9:23:34	100	8:11:09	100	18:50:40	100	14:47:25	100	4:56:35	100	3:38:58	100	2:19:06:58	100

Data source: RRA (2014: 16)

## How to make intra-party democracy possible?

Although unlawful, such practice is possible due to partocratic nature of the political system in Serbia. Political parties in Serbia dominate the society and the state, controlling almost all segments of society from the state and public administration through education, media, sport and culture (Orlović, 2008). Control over media is facilitated by non-transparency of media ownership and budget financing of media<sup>2</sup>.

A consequence of partocratic system and financial dependence of media on the state and parties is also the absence of critical and analytical function of media during campaigns (Gavrilović, 2012; Matić, 2012; Milivojević, Klačar and Nikolić, 2008). Instead of analytic programmes, media mostly leased advertising airtime or transmitted the party statements which enabled parties to use media for self-promotion. “There was no clear confrontation of programme priorities nor an analysis of expected social consequences of the proposed politics, so the audience could not determine whether the electoral rivals are holders of different projects of future social life. Instead of being an instrument of a rational public debate between antagonised political subjects in order to facilitate the audience’s recognition of the main differences in programme solutions, televisions placed themselves in service of needs of participants in the elections. They were enabled to use news programmes – which are the most important source of information about the campaign – for self-promotion and direct placement of electoral messages to voters” (Matić, 2012: 119).

Additionally, the instructions of the Republic Broadcasting Agency about the candidates’ behaviour during the electoral campaign were also breached. First, broadcasters cannot change their programme concept in order to provide additional time for broadcasting the paid electoral airtime. In spite of clear rules, media changed their programme scheme often during the campaign, in order to give more space and more popular times to the electoral candidates. This behaviour of media was not sanctioned in most of the cases. Second, since 2003, the broadcasters’ obligation has been to exclude from the programme the documentary, acting and entertaining shows featuring some of the electoral candidates and to avoid other forms of indirect political propaganda in regular programme. Due to high prices of advertising space candidates use every opportunity for self-promotion, including the increasingly improper appearances in shows of entertaining character to which the principle of time limitation is not applied. In recent years political parties also resort to other improper campaign strategies, like humanitarian activities or rendering services such as medical examinations and offering of free courses.

Besides media campaign, political parties in campaigns since 2012 increasingly rely on field campaign, conventions, rallies and public speeches. The majority of candidates during the campaign travel across the entire country, holding speeches on public places and organising meetings with citizens. Activists have a special role in entering direct communication with voters, so they as well are a significant channel of communication.

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2 More information about the problems of non-transparent media ownership, media financing, media privatisation, censorship and tabloidisation are available in the reports of the Anti-Corruption Council (2011, 2015).



When it is about news reporting, balanced and objective reporting is a rarity in electoral campaigns in Serbia (Milivojević, Klačar and Nikolić, 2008). The sympathies of media to the largest extent depend on editorial policy, and the parties themselves most often advertise in the friendly newspapers. Also visible is the increasing tabloidisation of newspapers, with publication of affairs and negative campaign.

Since 2012, political parties have increased the use of the Internet and social networks for communication with voters (Slavujević, 2012). In Serbia, the Internet is mostly used as a means of entertainment, while informing is still of secondary importance (Spasojević, 2012). Parties so far used the Internet primarily for one-way communication with voters, i.e. giving information about the party, whereas the voters might have had the opportunity to leave a comment on the news. The largest portion of this information was in parallel published on television or in newspapers (Nedeljković, 2012). The Internet pages of political parties in Serbia are still old-fashioned, with insufficient information and possibilities for communication with voters. In spite of that the social networks offer strong potential for direct contact with voters and can facilitate the public debate about important political and social issues, they are mostly used for one-way communication, attraction of attention of traditional media or for negative campaign (Pavlović, 2012, Spasojević, 2012).

The lack of public deliberation and two-way communication of candidates with voters are related to the hierarchical structure of political parties. Due to insufficiently democratic character of political parties in Serbia and the system of proportional representation with closed, blocked lists, candidates at elections are primarily the delegates of their parties and not the representatives of citizens (Jovanović, 2012). Considering that candidates for MPs are themselves dependant on party leadership and can seldom independently influence the decisions, personal campaigns and two-way communication seem unnecessary. Besides that, lack of differentiation among political parties in Serbia influences the parties to avoid situations that require clear attitudes about actual issues of public policies and to concentrate on the means and forms of communication which enable them to stick to general messages (Spasojević, 2012).

## CONCLUSION

The above analysis shows that the key milestone for understanding the electoral campaigns in Serbia is the year 2008 which brought profound changes of dynamics and direction of electoral and political competition. This change was caused by the dissolution of the SRS, that is, the emergence of the SNS, economic crisis and declaration of Kosovo independence. Due to all these events, the year 2012 saw the additional dis-ideologisation of campaigns and complete turn towards social-economic and populist issues. The similar change of direction of competition was brought by the dissolution of the DOS and elections of 2003. Besides that, we can conclude that the electoral campaigns in Serbia have at least six key characteristics.

### How to make intra-party democracy possible?

The first characteristic of electoral campaigns in Serbia is their leadership character. The emphasis in all campaigns for the parliamentary elections after 2000 was on the personality of the party leader, creation of assurance in leader's competence to resolve the key problems and strengthening of emotional attitudes of voters towards the party leader. The distinction of honest leaders from thieves, patriots from betrayers, was more important than public policies and programme offers.

The second characteristic of campaigns is that they are often negative, sometimes even dirty, with rare examples of positive and affirmative campaigns. Negative campaigns were the dominant strategy of opposition; the electoral "challengers" more often resorted to negative and a bit less to dirty campaigns. Negative campaign refers to drawing attention to weaknesses and flaws of the rival candidate, and in that context it is easiest for opposition to emphasize wrong decisions and weaknesses of candidates who run in the elections from the position of power and in that manner attempt to discredit them before the voters.

The third key characteristic of campaigns is easy giving of big promises. Here all parties resembled one another, not only by ease of giving grand promises but by giving similar promises. Social demagogy is particularly present in the sphere of economy and social issues.

The fourth characteristic is the thematic reliance on economic issues. Having in mind the abundance of social and economic problems due to isolation of the country during the 1990s as well as challenges of the first transitional steps, electoral campaigns after 2000 brought an increase of existential contents in messages sent in the campaigns. Having in mind the social circumstances, the 2008 campaign opened identity topics and was entirely different from all campaigns before and after. After that, due to the changes in political competition with the emergence of the SNS, campaigns were mostly led around socio-economic (and corruption) issues (Stojiljković and Pilipović, 2012; Stojiljković et. al, 2014).

The fifth characteristic is waiving from accountability. In electoral campaigns parties attempt to position themselves in relation to power by blaming the former government and above else the main party of the ruling coalition for the poor situation in the society. The paradox in the case of Serbia is that almost all electoral campaigns were permeated by mutual accusations and critiques of the former ruling coalition partners. Parties offer themselves to voters not by good electoral programme but as a less evil, that is, through critique of the opponent.

Sixth, objective reporting and presentation of candidates during electoral campaigns have most frequently been missing. Media are biased in favour of the ruling parties, and programmes and news devoted to the elections rather serve for the self-promotion of parties than to critical and analytical reporting on the campaign and the candidates. Particularly visible is the absence of critical and analytical function of media, as well as the lack of two-way communication with voters.

From the above presented analysis we can conclude that the characteristics of electoral campaigns in Serbia point to a still low level of intraparty democracy and political culture in the country, even 25 years after the establishment of the multiparty system.

## ANNEXES

### *Annex 1.* Results of the 2000 Serbian parliamentary elections

Electoral list	Number of votes	%
Democratic Opposition of Serbia – Dr Vojislav Koštunica	2.402.387	64.09
Socialist Party of Serbia – Slobodan Milošević	515.845	13.76
Serbian Radical Party – Dr Vojislav Šešelj	322.333	8.60
Party of Serbian Unity – Dr Borislav Pelević	199.847	5.33
Serbian Renewal Movement – Vuk Drašković	114.296	3.05
Democratic Socialist Party – Milorad Vučelić	31.758	0.85
Serbian Social Democratic Party – Zoran Lilić	29.383	0.78
Yugoslav left	14.324	0.38

Source: Republic Electoral Commission

### *Annex 2.* Results of the 2003 Serbian parliamentary elections

Electoral list	Number of votes	%
Serbian Radical Party – Dr Vojislav Šešelj	1.056.256	27.61
Democratic Party of Serbia – Dr Vojislav Koštunica	678.031	17.72
Democratic Party – Boris Tadić	481.249	12.58
G17 Plus – Miroljub Labus	438.422	11.46
Serbian Renewal Movement – New Serbia – Vuk Drašković – Velimir Ilić	293.082	7.66
Socialist Party of Serbia – Slobodan Milošević	291.341	7.61
Together for Tolerance – Čanak, Kasza, Ljaljić	161.765	4.22
Democratic Alternative – Nebojša Čović	84.463	2.2
For National Unity – Prof. Borislav Pelević and Marijan Rističević	68.537	1.79
Otpor! (Resistance)	62.545	1.63
Independent Serbia – Dr Vladan Batić	45.211	1.18
Socialist People's Party – National bloc – general Nebojša Pavković	27.596	0.72
Liberals of Serbia – Dušan Mihajlović	22.852	0.59
Reformists – Miodrag Mile Isakov	19.464	0.5
Defence and Justice – Vuk Obradović and Borivoje Borović	18.423	0.48

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Economic Power of Serbia and Disapora – Branko Dragaš	14.113	0.36
Labour Party of Serbia – Dragan Milovanović	4.666	0.12
Yugoslav Left – JUL	3.771	0.09
Alliance of Serbs in Vojvodina – Dušan Salatić	3.015	0.07

Source: Republic Electoral Commission

## *Annex 3.* Results of the 2007 Serbian parliamentary elections

Electoral list	Number of votes	%
Serbian Radical Party - Dr Vojislav Šešelj	1.153.453	28.60
Democratic Party – Boris Tadić	915.854	22.71
Democratic Party of Serbia – New Serbia – Dr Vojislav Koštunica	667.615	16.55
G17 Plus – Mlađan Dinkić	667.615	6.82
Socialist Party of Serbi	227.580	5.64
Liberal Democratic Party – Civic Alliance of Serbia – Social Democratic Union – League of Social Democrats of Vojvodina – Čedomir Jovanović	214.262	5.31
Serbian Renewal Movement – Vuk Drašković	134.147	3.33
Party of United Pensioners of Serbia (PUPS) – Dr Jovan Krkobabić and Social Democratic Party (SDP) – Dr Nebojša Čović	125.342	3.11
Strength of Serbia Movement – Bogoljub Karić	70.727	1.75
Alliance of Vojvodina Hungarians – Jožef Kasa	52.510	1.30
List for Sandzak – Dr Sulejman Ugljanin	33.823	0.84
Roma Union of Serbia – Dr Rajko Đurić	17.128	0.42
Albanian Coalition from Preševo Valley	16.973	0.42
Branko Pavlović – „Because it has to be better“	15.722	0.39
Roma Party – Šajin Srđan	14.631	0.36
Hungarian Union –András Agoston– Dr Pál Sándor	12.940	0.32
Coalition „Vojvodina Parties“ –Igor Kurjački, MA	7.359	0.18
Democratic Community of Serbia – Dr Obren Joksimović	5.438	0.13
Social Democracy – Nenad Vukasović	4.909	0.12
Reformist Party – Dr Aleksandar Višnjić	1.881	0.05

Source: Republic Electoral Commission

*Annex 4. Results of the 2008 Serbian parliamentary elections*

Electoral list	Number of votes	%
For a European Serbia – Boris Tadić	1.590.200	38.40
Serbian Radical Party – Dr Vojislav Šešelj	1.219.436	29.45
Democratic Party of Serbia – New Serbia – Vojislav Koštunica	480.987	11.61
Socialist Party of Serbia – Party of the United Pensioners of Serbia – United Serbia	313.896	7.58
Liberal Democratic Party – Čedomir Jovanović	216.902	5.24
Hungarian Coalition – István Pásztor	74.874	1.81
Bosnian List for a European Sanzак – Dr Sulejman Ugljanin	38.148	0.92
Albanian Coalition from Preševo Valley	16.801	0.41
Strength of Serbia Movement – Bogoljub Karić	22.250	0.54
If it were up to the village – Populist Peasant Party – Marijan Rističević	12.001	0.29
Reformist Party – Dr Aleksandar Višnjić	10.563	0.26
Roma Party – Srđan Šajn	9.103	0.22
My Serbia Movement – Branislav Lečić	8.879	0.21
United Vlachs of Serbia – Dr Predrag Balašević	6.956	0.17
Civic Initiative of Goranis – GIG	5.453	0.13
Roma for Roma – Miloš Paunković	5.115	0.12
Roma Union of Serbia – Dr Rajko Đurić	4.732	0.11
Vojvodina Party – Igor Kurjački, MA	4.208	0.10
People's Movement for Serbia – Milan Paroški	3.795	0.09
Montenegrin Party – Nenad Stevović	2.923	0.07
League of the Bačka Bunjevci – Mirko Bajić	2.023	0.05
Patriotic Party of the Diaspora – Zoran Milinković	1.991	0.05

Source: Republic Electoral Commission

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### *Annex 5. Results of the 2012 Serbian parliamentary elections*

Electoral list	Number of votes	%
Let's Get Serbia Moving – Tomislav Nikolić	940.659	24.04
Choice for a Better Life – Boris Tadić	863.294	22.06
Socialist Party of Serbia (SPS), Party of United Pensioners of Serbia (PUPS), United Serbia (JS) – Ivica Dačić	567.689	14.51
Democratic Party of Serbia – Vojislav Koštunica	273.532	6.99
Turnover – Čedomir Jovanović	255.546	6.53
United Regions of Serbia – Mladen Dinkić	215.666	5.51
Serbian Radical Party – Dr Vojislav Šešelj	180.558	4.61
Dveri for the Life of Serbia	169.590	4.33
Alliance of Vojvodina Hungarians - István Pásztor	68.323	1.75
Movement of Workers and Peasants	57.199	1.46
Communist Party – Josip Broz	28.977	0.74
Party of Democratic Action of Sandžak – Dr Sulejman Ugljanin	27.708	0.71
All Together: BDZ, GSM, DZH, DZVM, Slovak Party– Emir Elfić	24.993	0.64
None of the above	22.905	0.59
Social Democratic Alliance – Nebojša Leković	16.572	0.42
Albanian Coalition from Preševo Valley	13.384	0.34
Reformist Party – Prof. dr Milan Višnjić	8.867	0.23
Montenegrin Party – Nenad Stevočić	3.855	0.10

Source: Republic Electoral Commission

**Annex 6. Results of the 2014 Serbian parliamentary elections**

Electoral list	Number of votes	%
Aleksandar Vučić – Future we Believe In	1.736.920	48.35
Ivica Dačić – Socialist Party of Serbia (SPS), Party of United Pensioners of Serbia (PUPS), United Serbia (JS)	484.607	13.49
With the Democratic Party for a Democratic Serbia	216.634	6.03
Boris Tadić – New Democratic Party – Greens, LSV – Nenad Čanak, Together for Serbia, VMDK, Together for Vojvodina, Democratic Left of Roma	204.767	5.70
Vajdasági Magyar Szövetség-Pásztor István – Alliance of Vojvodina Hungarians – István Pásztor	75.294	2.10
Party of Democratic Action of Sandžak – Dr Sulejman Ugljanin	35.157	0.98
Party for Democratic Action – Riza Halimi Partia për veprim demokratik – Riza Halimi	24.301	0.68
Democratic Party of Serbia – Vojislav Koštunica	152.436	4.24
Dveri – Boško Obradović	128.458	3.58
Čedomir Jovanović – LDP, BDZS, SDU	120.879	3.36
United Regions of Serbia – Mlađan Dinkić	109.167	3.04
It's Enough – Saša Radulović	74.973	2.09
Serbian Radical Party – Dr Vojislav Šešelj	72.303	2.01
Third Serbia – For All the Hard-Working People	16.206	0.45
Russian Party – Slobodan Nikolić	6.547	0.18
Montenegrin Party – Josip Broz	6.388	0.18
Civic group Patriotic Front – Dr Borislav Pelević	4.514	0.13
All Together–BDZ–MPSZ–DZH–MRM–MEP – Emir Elfić	3.983	
Coalition of Citizens of All Nations and National Communities (RDS–SDS)	3.182	

Source: Republic Electoral Commission

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# LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AE	Energy Agency
BDZS	Bosniak Democratic Union of Sandzak (Bošnjačka demokratska zajednica Sandžaka)
CKSKS	Central Committee of the League of Communists of Serbia (Centralni komitet Saveza komunista Srbije)
DEPOS	Democratic Movement of Serbia (Demokratski pokret Srbije)
DOS	Democratic Opposition of Serbia (Demokratska opozicija Srbije)
DRI	State Audit Institution (Državna revizorska institucija)
DS	Democratic Party (Demokratska stranka)
DSS	Democratic Party of Serbia (Demokratska stranka Srbije)
GSS	Civic Alliance of Serbia (Građanski savez Srbije)
JS	United Serbia (Jedinstvena Srbija)
JUL	The Yugoslav Left (Jugoslovenska levica)
LDP	Liberal-Democratic Party (Liberalno-demokratska partija)
LSV	League of Social Democrats of Vojvodina (Liga socijaldemokrata Vojvodine)
NDS	New Democratic Party (Nova Demokratska stranka)
OSCE	Organisation of Security and Cooperation in Europe
PUPS	Party of United Pensioners of Serbia (Partija ujedinjenih penzionera Srbije)
RATEL	Regulatory Agency for Electronic Communications and Postal Services (Republička agencija za telekomunikacije)
RRA	Republic Broadcasting Agency (Republička radiodifuzna agencija)
SCG	Serbia and Montenegro (Srbija i Crna Gora)
SDA Sandžaka	Party of Democratic Action of Sandzak (Stranka demokratske akcije Sandžaka)
SDP	Sandzak Democratic Party (Sandžačka demokratska partija)
SDPS	Social Democratic Party of Serbia (Socijaldemokratska partija Srbije)
SDS	Social Democratic Party (Socijaldemokratska stranka)
SDU	Social Democratic Union (Socijaldemokratska unija)
SFRJ	Socialist Federative Republic of Yugoslavia (Socijalistička Federativna Republika Jugoslavija)
SKS	League of Communists of Serbia (Savez komunista Srbije)
SNS	Serbian Progressive Party (Srpska napredna stranka)
SPO	Serbian Renewal Movement (Srpski pokret obnove)
SPS	Socialist Party of Serbia (Socijalistička partija Srbije)
SRJ	Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Savezna Republika Jugoslavija)
SRS	Serbian Radical Party (Srpska radikalna stranka)
SVM	Alliance of Vojvodina Hungarians (Savez vojvodanskih Mađara)
UN	United Nations
URS	United Regions of Serbia (Ujedinjeni regioni Srbije)

# CONTRIBUTORS

**Boban Stojanović** is a doctoral student and a teaching associate at the Faculty of Political Science, University of Belgrade. He teaches courses Contemporary State, Parties and Party Systems and Political Sociology of Contemporary Society. He graduated at the same faculty, where he enrolled in doctoral studies in Political Science in 2013. He published one monograph and ten academic papers. He is a founder of professional political science association Group for Analysis and Policy-Making.



**Dušan Spasojević** is an assistant professor at the Faculty of Political Science, University of Belgrade, where he teaches the following courses: Political Sociology and Political Sociology of Contemporary Society. His research interests include political parties and party systems, social and political cleavages and transition and consolidation of democracy in post-communist societies. Until now, he edited two volumes, published more than twenty academic papers and participated in many national and international conferences.



**Jelena Lončar** is a teaching assistant at the Faculty of Political Science, University of Belgrade where she teaches Political Sociology, Political Sociology of Contemporary Society and Contemporary State. She enrolled as a doctoral student in Political Science at the same faculty in 2009. She is currently a PhD candidate at the University of York in the UK. She published more than twenty academic papers in the field of civil society, political inclusion, political representation and representation of national minorities.



## How to make intra-party democracy possible?



**Milan N. Jovanović** is a professor at the Faculty of Political Science, University of Belgrade. He published six books and more than fifty academic papers in journals and edited volumes on elections, electoral systems, political parties and parliamentarianism. He sits on editorial boards of the journals *Serb Political Thought* (*Srpska politička misao*), *Political Studies* (*Politička revija*) and *Yearbook of the Faculty of Political Science* (*Godišnjak FPN*).



**Slaviša Orlović** is an associate professor at the Faculty of Political Science, University of Belgrade. He conducts research in the fields of political sociology and political theory (political parties, elections and democracy). He teaches the following courses: *Political Sociology*, *Parties and Party Systems*, *Political Life of Serbia*, *Parliamentarianism and Theories and Models of Democracy*. He published more than thirty papers and articles in national and international journals and edited volumes. He also published the following books: *Političke partije i moć / Political Parties and Power* (2002), *Politički život Srbije – između partokratije i demokratije / Political Life of Serbia – Between Partocracy and Democracy* (2008), *Politikološki ogledi, politička teorija i politička sociologija / Political Essays, Political Theory and Political Sociology* (2010), *Izborni bumerang (Političke posledice izbornih sistema) / Electoral Boomerang (Political Consequences of Electoral Systems)* (2015). He co-edited the volumes: *Dileme i izazovi parlamentarizma / Dilemmas and Challenges of Parliamentarianism* (2007) and *Beograd, demokratska metropola / Belgrade – The Metropolis of Democracy* (2009). He is the editor of the volumes: *Partije i izbori u Srbiji – dvadeset godina / Parties and Elections in Serbia – Twenty Years* (2011), *Demokratske performanse parlamenata Srbije Bosne i Hercegovine i Crne Gore* (2012), *Izbori i formiranje Vlade u Srbiji 2012. / Elections and Formation of the Government in Serbia 2012* (2012), *Comparative Analysis of Democratic Performances of the Parliaments of Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Montenegro* (2013), *Iskušenja parlamentarizma / Challenges of Parliamentarianism* (2013). He is the editor of the journal *Politički život / Political Life*. He is also the editor in the publishing house *Službeni glasnik / Official Gazette for the area Society and Science*. He spent several study periods abroad at: *University of Westminster in London* (2003); *University of Kansas* 2004/2005; *University College London* (2006); *Nuffield College, University of Oxford* (2009).



**Vojislav Mihailović** is a researcher at the IPSOS Strategic Marketing. He enrolled in doctoral studies in Political Science at the Faculty of Political Science, University of Belgrade in 2013. He is a member of the Centre for the Development of Syndicalism, where he has participated in development and implementation of the research projects and writing papers, particularly on the issues related to trade unions.

**Zoran Stojiljković** is an associate professor at the Faculty of Political Science, University of Belgrade, where he teaches Political Sociology of Contemporary Society, Contemporary State, Parties and Party Systems, and Civil Society and Trade Unions. His research interests include political processes and conflicts in transition societies, parties and party systems, oversight of the funding of political parties, trade unions and social dialogue, political participation, and social movements and initiatives. In addition to more than hundred articles and shorter monographs, he published the textbook Political Sociology of Contemporary Society and the following books: *Rečnik demokratije / Dictionary of Democracy* (1998), *Partijski sistem Srbije / Party System of Serbia* (2006, and second and revised edition 2008), *Konflikt i/ili dijalog / Conflict and/or Dialogue* (2008), *Srbija u lavirintima tranzicije / Serbia in the Labyrinth of Transition* (2011), and *Država i korupcija / State and Corruption* (2013). He is the co-author of the book *Političke grupacije u Evropi / Political Groupings in Europe* (2011) and editor of the volumes *Lavirinti tranzicije / Labyrinths of Transition* (2012) and *Zašto glasam, kako glasam, ako uopšte glasam / Why I Vote, How I Vote, if I Vote at All* (2012). In the research area on the state, democracy and civil society, Stojiljković co-edited, together with professor Vukašin Pavlović, the volumes *Savremena država / Contemporary State* and *Savremena država – struktura i socijalne funkcije / Contemporary State – Structure and Social Functions*.



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