

Original scientific paper

UDK: 351.74/.76:340.134(497.11)

DOI: 10.5937/jrs0-29333

Received: 19 November 2020 / Accepted: 13 January 2021

State Capture and Security Intelligence Agencies in Serbia*

PREDRAG PETROVIĆ**

Belgrade Centre for Security Policy, Serbia

Abstract: Security intelligence agencies play a central role in state capture. Due to the very nature of how they are organised and operate, security intelligence agencies first become targets of these processes, before becoming their principal agents. Indeed, political elites and security intelligence agencies become natural partners in this endeavour, with the very process of state capture coming to resemble a complex intelligence operation. Even though the experiences of many countries bear this out, attempts to research the role of security intelligence agencies in a systematic and theoretically grounded manner remain rare. By using recent theoretical approaches defining state capture as a deliberate political undertaking, the main goal of which is the acquisition of unrestricted state power that in turn enables the unhindered and unsanctioned pursuit of the narrow interests of political elites to the detriment of the public good, this study aims to determine the factors, conditions and mechanisms that facilitate the rapid capture of security services and their further use in capturing the state. This will be explored through the example of Serbia – a country that, two decades on from the start of its democratic transformation, is now a captured state sliding towards autocracy.

Keywords: security intelligence agencies, state capture, clientelism, informality, democratic backsliding

* I would like to thank the anonymous reviewer for providing valuable inputs on an earlier version of the paper.

** *predrag.petrovic@bezbednost.org, pedjape@gmail.com*

Introduction: The Role of Security Intelligence Agencies in State Capture

Security services derive their power from secret and exclusive access to information, the ability to conduct covert operations, the capability to exert secret influence and to develop, maintain and broaden networks of collaborators. Indeed, these mechanisms also include various forms of corruption.³ It is precisely these elements – secrecy, informality, the exclusivity of access and networked structure – that are important determinants of a captured state, hence the role of security services in state capture is significant. Moreover, in some countries, a great deal of power – exemplified in police-like competencies and a monopoly on the covert interception of communications – is concentrated in the security services and their capture expedites and accelerates the capture of the state itself. The security services and the (political) actors engaging in state capture are, therefore, natural partners in this process, with the capture of the state taking on aspects of an elaborate intelligence operation.

Despite the significance of their role in the capture of the state, the literature on security services has primarily focused on their democratisation or improvements to their effectiveness and, therefore, naturally explores issues arising in the pursuit of these goals.⁴ Rare early works have, indirectly, shed light only on some aspects of the role security services and their (often former) employees have played in state capture. Thus, research on Fujimori's rule over Peru describes mechanisms used by Vladimiro Montesinos, the then national security advisor and *de facto* head of the National Intelligence Service, to protect Fujimori's reign and personal enrichment.⁵ Maria Los researched the role of (former) security service operatives in Poland's transition from communism to democracy and how they influenced the shaping of the country's post-communist elite and the privatisation of its economy.⁶ This created a vast and varied private intelligence sector that uses its know-how and network of contacts to influence political and economic processes.⁷ To more systematically explain the formal and informal permeation and interconnectedness of private and state security intelligence sectors and their influence on public policy, Peter Gill devised the concept of "securitism".⁸ Although it describes some elements of state capture, this concept sits at the intersection of ideas such as corporatism, the para-state and the deep state.

Even though there are numerous notable works on security service reform focusing on South Africa's transition from apartheid to democracy,⁹ research on the actual process

3 Burkett 2013, 9–11.

4 See: Bruneau and Boraz 2007; Bruneau and Steven 2007; Andregg and Gill 2014; Gill 2016.

5 Feinstein 2002; Bowen and Holligan 2003; McMillan and Zoido 2004.

6 Los 2005.

7 *Ibid.*, 5–11.

8 Gill 2013.

9 Nathan 2004; Dombroski 2006; Hutton 2009; Nathan 2010.

of state capture sheds light only on some aspects of the role played by the intelligence services.¹⁰ What is more, these works are op-eds and articles by investigative journalists.¹¹ Some of the key findings of these works pertain to the concentration of power in one agency that combines intelligence and counterintelligence functions; the monopoly on the covert interception of communications; staffing according to clientelist principles; the refocus of security services from national to state security; the protection of illegal activities; and, hence, how (un)intentional loopholes in the normative regulation of the intelligence have led to accelerated state capture.¹²

Research systematically investigating security services and state capture is rare even in North Macedonia, despite it being a clear example of a Balkan country where security services have been used in state capture. In most cases, these studies come in the form of practical policy recommendations or monitoring reports¹³ that expand on the findings and track the implementation of recommendations from what has come to be known as the Priebe Report.¹⁴ Though written in a journalistic style, Mančo Mitevski's book, "Captured State: Understanding the Macedonian Case", is a significant work since it explains why state capture in the country is a political project and because it examines, to some extent, the role played by the Ministry of Internal Affairs and the counterintelligence service in this process.¹⁵ However, even in this book, security services are not the main focus.

In Serbia, there are also op-ed reports and investigative journalism that shed some light on the relationship between the security services and political actors involved in state capture.¹⁶ Still, comprehensive studies of the subject continue to be rare. Among those that fit this description is research conducted by the Belgrade Centre for Security Policy,

10 See: Chipkin and Swilling 2018; Meirotti and Masterson 2018.

11 A good source of content in these formats is the online platform, Daily Maverick, accessed June 8, 2020, <https://www.dailymaverick.co.za/>.

12 Duncan 2017.

13 See: Bogdanovski and Lembovska 2015; EPI 2017; Kolozova and Georgiev 2018; Lembovska 2019.

14 The Priebe Report was prepared by a group of independent experts led by Reinhard Priebe, retired Director of the European Commission with the aim of exploring systemic failures in the rule of law and security sector in North Macedonia that allowed for illegal wiretappings. The official title of the report is *The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia: Recommendations of the Senior Experts' Group on Systemic Rule of Law Issues Relating to the Communications Interception Revealed in Spring 2015*, https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/sites/near/files/news_corner/news/news-files/20150619_recommendations_of_the_senior_experts_group.pdf, accessed June 10, 2020.

15 Mitevski 2019.

16 In this, it is worth highlighting the work of journalists from the following platforms: *KRIK*, <https://www.krik.rs/>, *BIRN*, <https://birnsrbija.rs/> and *CINS*, <https://www.cins.rs/>, accessed June 10, 2020.

but this focuses primarily on policy and is theoretically founded on the concept of security sector reform,¹⁷ even on those occasions when state capture is mentioned.¹⁸

The purpose of this paper is to offer a more in-depth study of the role security services play in state capture by analysing this process in Serbia. The report will first explore the origins of the theoretical concept of state capture and its development into how it is understood today, as an intentionally undertaken political project that seeks unrestricted control of the levers of state power. It will explain the conditions, factors, actors and mechanisms that form the most significant determinants of this understanding of state capture. Using Serbia as an example, the paper will then analyse the role played by the security services in this political undertaking. It will explore which elements of Serbia's unreformed security services form the so-called grey areas and veto points that facilitate and accelerate the capture of the security services and the state itself. It will also show which mechanisms (in terms of legislation and staffing) political actors use to gain control of the security services. Finally, the report will illustrate how the security services themselves actively contribute to the achievement of these goals, ultimately resulting in the complete capture of the state.

Conceptualising State Capture: From Grand Corruption to a Political Project

The phenomenon of state capture has long been present in the social sciences.¹⁹ When researching states in developing countries, Evans asked two important questions: "What do states that prey on their societies look like organizationally?" and "[should] we think of them as 'autonomous' or 'captured'?"²⁰ However, it was Hellman's research of post-communist social transformation that influenced the conceptualisation of state capture and encouraged its wider use. Hellman determined that the threat to reform consolidation came not from the so-called losers of transition, as was widely thought at the time, but from the winners, whose accumulated power enabled them to become veto actors – i.e. to control critical economic and political processes.²¹ Taking these findings further,²² Hellman concluded that a captured state is, therefore, a particular form of grand corruption inherent to transitional societies that exists when "firms shape the rules of the game (e.g. laws, rules, decrees and regulations) through private payments to public

17 See: Petrović and Đokić 2017.

18 See: Petrović 2020.

19 The concept of state capture rests on a broad spectrum of political ideas seeking to investigate the undermining of good governance in the interest of powerful minorities. For example, Marxists see the state as being in a state of perpetual capture since it is always controlled by dominant groups and classes, continually serving their interests. Dassah 2018, 3.

20 Evans 1989, 563.

21 Hellman 1998, 232–234.

22 Hellman, Jones, and Kaufmann 2000.

officials”.²³ Firms are then able to incorporate their preferences into the main rules of the market economy by creating a broad range of institutional and political distortions that generate great benefits concentrated in narrow groups, to the detriment of the public good. This form of corruption should be distinguished from administrative corruption as the latter refers to illegal influence on how the rules of the game are applied, rather than their alteration.²⁴

This understanding of state capture focuses on firms and the “purchase” of the rules of the game. At the same time, the reality of many transition countries has been far more complex and has also seen the involvement of other actors at various levels of the state. They created numerous interrelations, resulting in multiple mechanisms of state capture. This is why later research placed greater emphasis on the role of political parties in state capture, mainly due to the clientelistic nature of their leadership and organisation.²⁵

Later research further deepened the finding that state capture is a “group phenomenon” and that an important determinant is its “networked structure”.²⁶ Contemporary states are complex organisations, pervaded by numerous institutions performing various functions, so actors seeking to realise their interests must take control of multiple institutions. Capturing parliament is important to shape laws, but for unrestricted extraction of public resources, it is also important to control the implementation of the rules – a function performed by the police and the judiciary. This is why actors, both within and out of state institutions, cultivate a complex network of relations for coordinated action, enabling them to realise their interests without hindrance and to the detriment of the public good.²⁷ The creation and operation of the network are informal and secret, with people appointed to important offices of the state through co-option, patronage or clientelism (and only in exceptional cases, through intimidation and coercion) to work in secret agreement in the interests of the group engaged in state capture.²⁸

Even though the establishment and operation of the network are informal, secret and often illegal, it mutates into the formal and legal. For example, an agreement to change the rules of the game plays out in secret, but the change happens publicly in parliament. Alternatively, people are appointed to key functions in state institutions based on clientelist relationships, but the formal rules for the appointment are respected.²⁹ As

23 Hellman *et al.* 2000, 4.

24 Hellman 2000, 2.

25 For example, Vesna Pešić has determined that oligarchic political parties are the main actors of state capture, since they inhabit a strategic position in the state that enables them to use party loyalists to decisively influence the formation and implementation of the rules of the game and the allocation of lucrative contracts to the companies of tycoons. Pešić, 2007, 1–10.

26 Grzymala-Busse 2007; Grzymala-Busse 2008.

27 Fazekas and Tóth 2016, 320.

28 Godinho and Hermanus 2018, 8.

29 Dassah 2018, 3.

Chipkin puts it, this is how the “shadow state” emerges and functions within the confines of the constitutional state – that is, according to Janine Wedel, the state becomes a “flexible organisation” in which the boundaries between what is formal and informal, secret and public, legal and illegal, private interests and the public good become blurred.³⁰

It is clear that Chipkin uses the term “shadow state” as a synonym for state capture in his work, which is also accepted and applied further in this paper. However, it should not be neglected the fact that many authors use a variety of similar terms to describe the deep state, such as “shadow government”,³¹ “double government”,³² and “dark state”.³³ More importantly, state capture and deep state have crucial components in common. To avoid confusion among readers, a brief distinction between these two concepts should be made here. A deep state exists when a group of influential individuals from the security apparatus colludes with bureaucrats and often criminal groups to run a parallel state that serves their interests. In this respect, the deep state is very similar to state capture. However, the distinction between the two concepts is the purpose for which the collusion takes place. Deep state operatives are primarily motivated by the protection of national security and national interests.³⁴ They are not necessarily as mercenary as the rent-seeking impulses of the state capturer for control over the state.³⁵ Consequently, in a deep state, fundamental policy continuity exists regardless of which party controls the levers of government.³⁶ Even though this concept usually pertains to transitional democracies and authoritarian regimes,³⁷ recent research suggest that almost all democracies have some form of the deep state.³⁸

Recent examples of state capture in some European countries (e.g. Hungary and North Macedonia) – and especially in South Africa – have stimulated new research of the phenomenon, the findings of which emphasise the political dimension of this process. Thus Hermanus points out that state capture is an intentionally undertaken, “political-economic project whereby public and private actors collude in establishing clandestine networks that cluster around state institutions in order to accumulate unchecked power.”³⁹ The collaborators do not use this accumulated power only to redirect state resources to private gain but also to alter the balance of power between various social groups, to

30 As cited in: Hoffmann *et al.* 2017, 14.

31 Lofgren 2016.

32 Glennon 2016.

33 Lindsey 2013.

34 There is a consensus among scholars that those involved in a deep state believe they protect national security and national interests. See: Nieuwkerk 2018, 49.

35 *Ibid.*, 46.

36 Lofgren 2016, 13.

37 The deep state as an academic concept originated in Turkey where it is known as *derin devlet*. For more on deep state in Turkey, see: Sooyler 2015.

38 Scott 2015, 13.

39 Godinho and Hermanus 2018, 12.

stifle opposition and critics and to erase the (remaining) checks and balances between the different branches of government.⁴⁰ Chipkin also claims that this is a political project as state capture is accompanied by the legitimising narratives of politicians working to conceal the takeover of the state.⁴¹ A completely captured state becomes the polar opposite of a constitutional state since the levers of state power and the resources of the state are used to generate private gain to the detriment of the public good.⁴² Mark Swilling argues that this amounts to a “politics of destruction” and “a silent coup”.⁴³ This is why many authors claim that state capture plays a significant role in weakening democratic states and can be an incubator for autocracy.⁴⁴ Others, such as Mitevski, explicitly affirm that a completely captured state is only possible under an autocratic regime.⁴⁵

By expanding the understanding of state capture in this direction, researchers acquired a broader analytical framework that can better capture the reality of many transforming societies. However, this conceptual expansion has blurred the lines between state capture and other existing concepts, opening space to criticise state capture further. Some authors have already examined the utility and novelty of the state capture concept, claiming that the model of the state being a static organisation and autonomous broker of public and private interests has never existed in practice.⁴⁶ It is complicated now to discern between state capture and other similar (and often older) concepts. In non-democratic and semi-democratic regimes, the state apparatus can hardly preserve its professional autonomy. Therefore, many scholars opt for other conceptual frameworks such as hybrid regimes, illiberal democracy,⁴⁷ electoral authoritarianism,⁴⁸ competitive authoritarianism,⁴⁹ and authoritarian capitalism.⁵⁰ Even in Hungary, where the state capture concept is widely used, many scholars criticise it and opt for other analytical frameworks.⁵¹ As this debate is still ongoing and this is not the primary focus of this paper, this discussion will not be further elaborated.

Changes to how state capture is understood are not a consequence only of progress in the study of the phenomenon but also reflect changes to state capture in practice. Research

40 *Ibid.*, 11.

41 Chipkin and Swilling. 2018, x–xiii.

42 Erasmus 2017.

43 Swilling 2018.

44 Voinea 2015, 4.

45 Mitevski 2019, 47–54.

46 See, for example: Southall 2018, 29–44; Mazzucato 2011.

47 Berman 2017.

48 Magaloni 2006; Schedler 2013.

49 Levitsky and Way 2010; Vladislavljević 2019. However, for Florian Bieber state capture numbers among the five central features of competitive authoritarian systems in the Western Balkans (Bieber 2018, 341).

50 Bloom 2016.

51 Scheiring 2020.

shows that undemocratic regimes learn from one another and perfect methods for the takeover and maintenance of the main levers of state power.⁵² In many cases, they also use state resources to enter into geopolitical partnerships whose purpose is to shore up state capture further.⁵³

In terms of the conditions conducive to the emergence of the captive state, most authors indicate that the context of countries in transition is particularly conducive to this phenomenon because these states have faced the necessity of “wholesale reform,” which implies the rapid transformation of political, legal and economic systems, as well as the power structures of the state and society.⁵⁴ This kind of reform is exceedingly difficult to implement without mistakes being made and without the creation of so-called “grey areas”, which are conducive to state capture.⁵⁵ Another characteristic of these countries is the legacy of an authoritarian order that featured informal and clientelistic relations between the political and economic elites and civil servants, as well as a high degree of centralised government. Centralisation facilitates state capture because it reduces the number of “veto points” to be controlled.⁵⁶ The privatisation of security could also be conducive to state capture. It enables state capturers to use (coercive) instruments beyond state institutions and extract public resources by contracting private security.⁵⁷ The process of state capture is also fostered by the domination of the political sphere by one party,⁵⁸ as is often the case in transition countries.⁵⁹ Abby Innes classifies this situation as a specific mode of state capture – “party state capture”⁶⁰

52 “The problem is that today’s authoritarians are not like the frozen-in-time, ready-to-crack regimes of Burma and North Korea. They are ever-morphing, technologically savvy, and internationally connected, and have replaced more brutal forms of intimidation with subtle coercion” (Dobson 2013, 15).

53 Godinho and Hermanus 2018, 11.

54 Lodge 2018, 20.

55 In some research on state capture, the focus is specifically on those grey areas. See: Voinea 2015.

56 Tania Bagashka has determined that the more (veto) actors are involved, the smaller the chances of state capture (Bagashka 2014).

57 In many postsocialist countries, the private security sector is dominated by private security companies (PSC) run by individuals close to ruling parties. Every significant political change in central government is mirrored with changes in the private security sector. This is a consequence of the high degree of government control over those instruments enabling supervision of private security, which are used to push out PSCs close to the old government from the market. In this way, the centralisation of government functions and the privatisation of security converge (Klopfer and van Amstel 2015; Petrović and Milošević 2015a; Petrović and Milošević 2015b, 83–107).

58 A dominant party system exists when one political party wins several elections in a row and that its defeat at future elections is unlikely. Successive electoral victories are ensured, among other ways, through party patronage – i.e. the appointment of party loyalists to key government institutions. See: Ostheimer 2006.

59 Lodge 2018, 18.

60 Party state capture is a state of affairs in which parties make efforts to re-politicise the state in pursuit of a political monopoly (Innes 2014).

Political processes and the general state of affairs in Serbia almost perfectly reflect the above understanding of state capture as a deliberate political undertaking. The following pages will cover in greater detail the role security intelligence agencies play in this process.

Serbia's Security Intelligence Sector: Grey Areas and Veto Points Old and New

Following the overthrow of the autocratic Milošević regime in the year 2000, contrary to the expectations of the public and promises made by the incoming democratic government, fundamental reform of the security intelligence agencies never took place.⁶¹ One of the reasons for this is that these changes were founded on pact-based transition. More specifically, the leadership of the two most powerful (at the time) opposition parties, the Democratic Party (*Demokratska stranka* – DS) and the Democratic Party of Serbia (*Demokratska stranka Srbije* – DSS), agreed with the civilian and military counterintelligence that they would not prevent Milošević's overthrow.⁶² The problem here was that each party had made a separate agreement, which was not a consequence of a division of labour but an effort on their part to establish partnerships with the security intelligence and to use them to bolster their power.⁶³

Consequently, the dynamics and scope of security intelligence agencies reform were shaped by the struggle for power between the DS and DSS, in which intelligence agencies were actors. This resulted not only in a failure to open the intelligence agencies' records or to engage in the process of lustration, but it also enabled the old state security cadre to destroy, redact and/or amend secret files,⁶⁴ as well as differing levels of reform and normative regulation between the civilian and military security intelligence agencies,⁶⁵ and survival of old and the creation of new grey areas and veto points in the intelligence sector⁶⁶ – which later facilitated the complete capture of the Serbian state.

A highly significant veto point in the Serbian intelligence system is the Security Information Agency (*Bezbednosno-informativna agencija*, hereinafter: the BIA or the Agency). The Agency was created in 2002 when the Law on the BIA renamed the State Security Service (*Resor državne bezbednosti* – RDB) and detached it from the Ministry

61 Petrović 2016, 321–323.

62 The danger that security intelligence agencies, police and army would use force to protect the Milošević regime was very real. Aleksandar Vasiljević, the former head of the Military counterintelligence spoke publically about a list of opposition leaders to be liquidated (Stanković 2008a).

63 According to Timothy Edmunds' assessment, these agreements are a direct continuation of the old Yugoslav traditions of politicisation and nurturing clientelistic relations with the security intelligence agencies (Edmunds 2008, 34).

64 Anastasijević 2003; Stanković 2008b.

65 Milosavljević and Petrović 2009, 222–231.

66 Petrović and Đokić 2017.

of Interior (*Ministarstvo unutrašnjih poslova* – MUP), making it directly answerable to the Government of Serbia. However, everything else remained more or less unchanged. The BIA retained all of its police powers, its authority to gather evidence for criminal proceedings and the right, in exceptional cases relevant for national security, to take over and directly conduct tasks under the jurisdiction of the MUP. The BIA also retained its monopoly over the covert surveillance of communications, forcing the police and the military counterintelligence to use the Agency's monitoring centre to intercept communications – ultimately giving the Agency insight into these operations. The enormous security power concentrated within the BIA was not, however, limited through adequate oversight mechanisms.⁶⁷

Even the 2003 assassination of Serbian Prime Minister, Zoran Đinđić, did nothing to spur the fragmentation of the BIA's power or its more profound reform – as was evident from subsequent court proceedings and the involvement of former RDB or BIA personnel.⁶⁸ No internal investigation into failures by the BIA was conducted because, according to the then deputy prime minister, Žarko Korać, the government had not adopted the recommendation issued by the commission tasked with investigating the prime minister's security (Insajder 2016). Experts agree that important reasons for the aborted internal investigation and failure to reform the BIA reside in the fact that this would reveal existing and emergent networks of relations between the criminal underworld, business interests, government institutions and political parties in power and in opposition, which would result in significant political harm.⁶⁹

Another important veto point is the public prosecution service, as it is highly centralised and hierarchically structured. Public prosecutors are authorised to take a case from a deputy prosecutor and assign it to someone else, to do it themselves or simply issue a mandatory instruction that “forces” the lower ranking prosecutor to act counter to their own professional principles. Additionally, courts deliberate on indictments compiled by prosecutors, so if they “accidentally” leave out important evidence, the whole case could fall apart. Meanwhile, the individual who has been acquitted cannot be tried again for the same crime. Given that the BIA has retained its authority to participate in criminal investigations, control of the public prosecution service is a significant multiplier of BIA power.⁷⁰

67 It should come as no surprise, therefore, that security law professor, Bogoljub Milosavljević, is of the opinion that “this law [...] largely remains on the path of earlier secret police practices.” (Milosavljević 2002, 3).

68 Dojčinović 2009.

69 Pejčić 2011.

70 In transition societies large flows of hard cash emerge and flow through criminal channels, from which they flow into legal channels. Granting police powers to the security services and appointing party loyalists in the prosecution make it easier for politicians to influence these flows (Petrović 2017, 10).

In addition to the BIA, there are two military security intelligence agencies in Serbia: The Military Security Agency (*Vojnobezbednosna agencija* – VBA) and the Military Intelligence Agency (*Vojnoobaveštajna agencija* – VOA). The VBA was also created in 2002 when the new legislation regulated federal-level security intelligence agencies. In contrast to the BIA, however, the power of the VBA was significantly reduced when it was detached from the General Staff of the Army and subordinated to the Government. Moreover, the VBA could employ measures for covert data gathering only in processing certain criminal offences but not for preventative security purposes⁷¹ – a power that was returned to this agency in 2009 with the adoption of new legislation. Unlike the BIA, the VBA has only certain police-like powers, not including the competences to arrest and detain. Also revoked was the so-called dual chain of command, under which the military counterintelligence had security officers at all levels of the armed forces command structure.⁷² There is, however, a significant grey area regarding the VBA in that its personnel provide counterintelligence and close personal protection for high-ranking state officials outside the armed forces and Ministry of Defence (to the President of Serbia, judges and prosecutors), which is not following regulations but is a significant stronghold of VBA power. In practice, the VBA uses this as a basis for expanding its activities to include civilians as practically every activity by political organisations and individuals can fall under the VBA's jurisdiction if there is the slightest indication that it can threaten the security of military installations or personnel under its protection.⁷³ The other military intelligence, the VOA, gathers and analyses intelligence pertaining to the defence sector. Unlike the BIA and VBA, the VOA does not have the power to conduct covert surveillance of communications.⁷⁴

Coordination of the activities of Serbia's security intelligence agencies was not established until 2007, when the Law on the Bases Regulating Security Intelligence was adopted. However, the Law did not reflect the real-world security needs long present in Serbia, but instead, it was decisively shaped by existing personal and party interests. This is evident from the fact that control of the National Security Council (*Savet za nacionalnu bezbednost* – SNB) was retained by the President of the Republic, who convenes sessions and signs decisions brought by the SNB. Additionally, the president's chief of staff served as the secretary of the Council and as a member of the Bureau for Security Intelligence Agencies' Work Coordination. This approach was not in line with the constitutionally-defined powers of the president⁷⁵ and did not correspond to the nature of Serbia's political

71 For more on changes to the military security intelligence agencies, see: Horvat 2007, 121–135.

72 Edmunds 2008, 31.

73 Petrović 2020, 45–50.

74 Petrović 2016, 325.

75 The Constitution of Serbia clearly stipulates that the Government of Serbia has administrative and/or command supremacy over the Armed Forces of Serbia, the police, and the security intelligence agencies. For more on this, see: Hadžić 2019, 31–35.

system.⁷⁶ It resulted, instead, from the efforts of Serbia's then-president, Boris Tadić (DS), to translate the power acquired through electoral victory into security power and to gain control over the security intelligence through the Council and the Bureau – particularly as regards the BIA, controlled at the time by the DSS.⁷⁷

However, this unconstitutional approach did not result in only informal and legislative consequences but also enabled the continuation of informal institutions and practices. The Law on the Bases Regulating Security Intelligence does not prescribe ahead for the Coordination Bureau, instead stipulating that the secretary of the SNB is, along with the directors of the security intelligence agencies, an equal member of the Bureau. However, the secretary of the SNB – the president's chief of staff – quickly became the *de facto* head of the Bureau. As a result, the office of the SNB secretary became the informal centre of security power, to which all necessary information from the security services and the police flowed, but also where the important political and security decisions were made.⁷⁸ This explains why the then secretary of the SNB, Miodrag Rakić, was seen as the backbone of the entire DS-led government.⁷⁹

SNS Rise to Power: Cementing and Legalising the Shadow State

Following the 2012 electoral victory by Tomislav Nikolić of the Serbian Progressive Party (*Srpska napredna stranka* – SNS), the Socialist Party of Serbia broke off its cooperation with the DS and formed a government with the SNS. The first law amended by the new coalition was the Law on the Bases Regulating Security Services. Officially justified as a step towards greater democratic control of the services, the legal amendment empowered the President of the Republic to appoint the Secretary of the SNB and the head of the Bureau. Behind this amendment, however, lay the ambition of Aleksandar Vučić, then acting president of the SNS, to concentrate security power in his own hands while occupying several important offices of state simultaneously.⁸⁰ After the law was amended, Vučić soon became: First Deputy Prime Minister in charge of defence, security and the fight against organised crime and corruption; Minister of Defence; the Secretary of the SNB; and the head of the Bureau. At the same time, Vučić also became president of the

76 In neighbouring Croatia, which has a similar political system, the president and the prime minister jointly convene sessions and co-sign decisions and this balance of power also applies to the body tasked with operational coordination of the intelligence agencies (Pejić 2016, 6–13).

77 According to Saša Janković, who coordinated the working group that drafted the law, the initial legislative approaches proposed that the council secretary be a non-political appointment conducted through a competitive call for candidates, but these provisions were rejected by the executive authorities of the day as they would leave an important lever of power over the security intelligence beyond their control (Marković 2018).

78 Petrović 2016, 326.

79 Lalić 2017.

80 Petrović 2012.

SNS, as Nikolić resigned from his party functions to fulfil his promise of becoming a “president of all”.

The extent to which the ruling party captured legislative processes is best seen from examples where the SNS used legitimate initiatives to change security legislation, aimed at improving the rule of law, as a smokescreen for their complete takeover of the security services. In 2013 the Constitutional Court ruled⁸¹ that provisions of the Law on the BIA regulating communications interception are not constitutional. In June 2014, the National Assembly adopted amendments to the Law on the BIA that harmonised these provisions with the Constitution. However, provisions of the law that were not problematic were also amended. It was stipulated that measures for covert surveillance for national security protection would no longer be approved by the Supreme Court of Cassation but by the president of the Higher Court in Belgrade. When the Law on the VBA and VOA was amended earlier for the same reasons, the Supreme Court of Cassation was retained as the court approving measures implemented by the VBA. The reason for revoking the jurisdiction of the Supreme Court of Cassation only for the BIA could lie in the fact that Aleksandar Stepanović, a university friend of Aleksandar Vučić and Aleksandar Đorđević (the then director of the BIA), had been appointed as president of the Higher Court not long before these amendments.⁸²

A similar example can be found in regulations governing staffing at the BIA. Due to the harmonisation of Serbian legislation with EU legal norms, there emerged a need to rectify the fact that the Law on the BIA did not contain provisions regulating staffing at the Agency, referring instead to the Law on the Police.⁸³ However, the ruling party also turned this amendment to its advantage by granting the director of the BIA power over human resources management. The director can: decide on internal workplace regulation and systematisation at the Agency; decide who will be recruited; determine the procedure, measures and manner in which Agency personnel will be evaluated; determine the coefficient that dictates salaries; determine the procedure, programme and attendance of training, professional development and exams; and determine the content of questionnaires used to conduct security checks.⁸⁴ Furthermore, amendments to the Law did not regulate a series of issues about the director and deputy director, which is common in democratic societies and also is present in the Law on the VBA and VOA.

81 Ustavni sud Republike Srbije 2013.

82 Petrović 2020, 18. According to some lawyers, Stepanović had progressed from being a District Court judge to a Supreme Court of Cassation judge in just seven years precisely due to his friendship with the President of Serbia (Petrović 2019a).

83 “Rights, duties and responsibilities resulting from the employment status of the members of the Agency, shall subject to regulations that apply to members of the Ministry competent for internal affairs.” (Law on the BIA, Article 20, Paragraph 1).

84 Law on the BIA, Articles 7 and 20.

These amendments also place the director of the Agency above the law. It is stipulated that security checks are necessary not only for recruitment to the Agency but also for returning to work at the BIA based on a final ruling by a relevant authority. It is important to recall here that the director of the BIA determines the security checks. It is reasonable to assume that this approach seeks to prevent the return to work of personnel against whom the Agency has lost labour disputes, which provides an opportunity to deal with politically disobedient BIA employees.⁸⁵ This latest round of amendments to the Law on the BIA practically gives the director free rein to regulate personnel affairs at the Agency. Here it should be taken into account that the amended Law on the Police came into force in early 2016 and that amendment of the Law on the BIA was initiated only after the 2017 appointment of Bratislav Gašić, a founder and financial backer of the SNS, whom Aleksandar Vučić has identified as a most loyal friend, as director of the Agency.⁸⁶ In a speech on the occasion of BIA Day, Gašić claimed that these legal changes would accelerate the recruitment of younger, better-educated personnel.⁸⁷

Party Patronage: Staffing the Shadow State

An important step in the process of state capture is the establishment of control over the veto points in the state. This is achieved by appointing those loyal to the party leadership to head key state institutions. They can then make further personnel changes along with the same principles at all levels of the institution. Thus, Aleksandar Đorđević, a lawyer and Vučić's university friend, was appointed as director of the BIA.⁸⁸ Prior to Đorđević becoming director of the BIA, there had been no director for almost three months and, by his own admission, Vučić personally stalled the recruitment process because he was not satisfied with the proposed candidates.⁸⁹ It is important to clarify here that the Government appoints the director of the BIA and that Vučić was then still just a deputy prime minister.

When Bratislav Gašić was appointed director of the BIA – shortly after Vučić became President of Serbia – it was the first time since the communist regime that a high-ranking party official headed a security service. Just like his predecessor, Gašić was appointed head of the BIA according to the wishes of the leader of his party, Aleksandar Vučić, who

85 According to the legal expert, Božo Prelević, these amendments to the Law on the BIA were adopted at a time when a number of disputes with former Agency employees were under way (Nikolić 2017).

86 Istinomer 2019.

87 Gašić 2018.

88 Biševac 2013.

89 Petrović 2014, 112.

as President of the Republic has no formal powers to appoint the director of the Agency.⁹⁰ Clearly, the Government merely legalised this decision.⁹¹

Changes to the leadership of the BIA were accompanied by changes throughout the Agency. Based on publicly available information, it is estimated that around 250 new personnel were recruited to the BIA between 2012 and 2018.⁹² Just in 2013, three to four times as many new recruits were taken on compared with the previous three years.⁹³ Members and officials of the ruling party numbered among the new recruits.⁹⁴ With the arrival of Gašić as the new director of the Agency and the 2018 amendments of the Law on the BIA, organisational changes within the Agency became characterised by centralisation, the transfer of existing personnel to less important, non-operative roles and the recruitment of new employees.⁹⁵ Moreover, the newly formed Situation Centre at the BIA, which pools all-important intelligence on the basis of which the security situation in Serbia is monitored 24 hours a day and which also tracks social media and press reports, was staffed by personnel loyal to the party.⁹⁶

Two posts in the judiciary also have great significance for complete capture of the BIA and the functions it performs. The first of these is the president of the Higher Court in Belgrade who, as has been mentioned, approves the implementation of covert surveillance measures. In 2014, Aleksandar Stepanović, a university friend of Aleksandar Vučić and Aleksandar Đorđević (the then director of the BIA), was appointed to this office. In practice, this means that wiretaps are proposed and approved by Vučić's friends, which makes it possible for surveillance to be carried out against those critical of the ruling party and its leader and for that to be covered by formal legal procedure.

Given the fact that the BIA may gather information to process criminal offences before the courts, it is also important who is appointed as a prosecutor for organised crime. In late 2015, Mladen Nenadić,⁹⁷ a hitherto unknown lawyer, was appointed to this office through a highly questionable procedure. The other leading candidate was an experienced

90 The only contact the President of the Republic has with the appointment of security intelligence agency directors is as a member of the SNB, since the Law on the Bases Regulating Security Intelligence stipulates that the SNB provides the Government with an opinion on appointments (Article 5, Paragraph 3) (Anastasijević 2017).

91 Press reports indicate that one of the main tasks of the new director would be to "tighten up" the BIA (B92 2017).

92 According to the most recent publicly available data, some 2,000 people work at the BIA (Cvijić 2018).

93 Petrović 2014, 117.

94 The cases most familiar to the public include: Mićo Rogović, a deputy of the National Assembly, Dijana Hrkalović, a councillor of the Belgrade City Assembly, and Simo Čulić, the head of the ruling party's web team (Petrović 2020, 30–33).

95 Lukač 2019.

96 Cvijić 2018.

97 Rakić Vodinelić 2015.

prosecutor for organised crime, Miljko Radisavljević, hence the legal community indicated that Nenadić's appointment had been motivated by his close friendship with the then director of the BIA, Aleksandar Đorđević.⁹⁸ In addition to these personal relationships, the fact that the public prosecution in Serbia is highly centralised and hierarchically structured also contributes to the application of pressure in the realisation of personal interests and goals. According to the Deputy Public Prosecutor, Goran Ilić, "with the press of a single button, the political authorities can influence someone at the top of the hierarchy and control the whole system."⁹⁹

There were also changes to the leadership of the military security intelligence agencies, but they took longer (two years) to unfold than those at the BIA. Part of the reason for this is that these are smaller services with less significant resources, powers and jurisdictions and that the Law on the VBA and VOA stipulates clear criteria for the appointment of their directors.¹⁰⁰ This does not mean, however, that the military security intelligence agencies are shielded from party patronage. For example, Petar Cvetković, director of the military counterintelligence – VBA from 2014 to 2018, proved to be loyal to the Minister of Defence, Bratislav Gašić, by acting according to the will of the minister rather than in accordance with the law. Gašić was thus able to form a command for the protection of the prime minister Aleksandar Vučić under the auspices of the armed forces, staffed by VBA and VOA personnel and receiving intelligence pertaining to Vučić's protection from the BIA and the police. Cvetković was replaced as VBA director in 2018 by Đuro Jovanić, Vučić's aide from when he was Minister of Defence.¹⁰¹ Since the rise to power of the SNS in 2012, Jovanić has received four out-of-sequence promotions contrary to the Law on the Armed Forces.¹⁰² Jovanić's links to the ruling party are indicated by the fact that his father is a member and financial backer of the SNS.¹⁰³

Following the SNS's victory at the 2014 parliamentary elections, this clientelist network spread to other parts of the security sector and other security-relevant state institutions, forming some kind of parallel intelligence structures. This is how Dijana Hrkalović, a member of the ruling party, was able to work at the BIA, then transfer to the cabinet of the Minister of Interior in 2014 and later become a state secretary in the MUP. According to the findings of investigative journalists, she was the leading coordinator of an informal network within the MUP tasked with monitoring those critical of the ruling party.¹⁰⁴ Additionally, two directors of the Tax Administration came from the BIA: Marko

98 Pavlović and Dojčinović 2015.

99 Ilić 2016.

100 The directors of the VBA and VOA and their deputies must have completed General Staff Advanced Training and have at least nine years of experience in security and intelligence matters within the defence system (Law on VBA and VOA, Article 37, Paragraph 6).

101 Zorić 2018.

102 N1 2019.

103 Cvijić 2020a.

104 Jovanović 2019.

Marinković (2014) and Dragana Marković (2015). During their terms, tax audits targeting certain local media outlets that had reported critically on the activities of the ruling party were boosted.¹⁰⁵ In 2016, Željko Radovanović, who had previously worked at the BIA for over a decade, was appointed acting director of the Administration for the Prevention of Money Laundering (informally known as the financial intelligence unit).

The Shadow State at Work

Security Intelligence in the Service of Strengthening Political Power

As has been mentioned in these pages, political actors are predisposed to subjugating the security intelligence sector to increase their political power, the ultimate form of which is the capture of the state. The precipitous rise to power of Aleksandar Vučić – who rose first to the office of deputy prime minister in 2012, became prime minister two years later and was then elected president in 2017 – is a very illustrative example. Vučić managed to fragment the opposition simultaneously and to marginalise the founder of the SNS, Tomislav Nikolić. Several facts indicate that it was necessary for the success of his political endeavours that he first seized the position of secretary of the SNB.¹⁰⁶

First, the information he had access to as secretary of the SNB enabled Vučić to continue his public campaign against crime and corruption, on the back of which the SNS came to power. As secretary of the SNB, he used press briefings to announce arrests that would then be enacted (as was the case of the arrest of “the wealthiest Serb”, Miroslav Mišković). This arrest and others raised the rating of the SNS and Vučić himself from 24 per cent at the time of the elections, to more than 40 per cent, granting the party stable, long-term support.¹⁰⁷ The narrative of “fraudulent privatisation” became a cornerstone of the SNS ideology, accompanied by smear campaigns in pro-government tabloids targeted at the previous administration, particularly the DS, which was identified as the main culprit for corruption and crime in the country – all of which served to weaken the opposition.¹⁰⁸ When snap elections were called in the spring of 2014, the SNS won an overall majority – 158 seats in a parliament of 250 – twice as many as it had won in the previous election. These elections also resulted in almost complete atomisation and parliamentary marginalisation of the opposition.¹⁰⁹

105 See: Lakićević 2014a; Lakićević 2014b.

106 Former inspector, Siniša Janković speaks to this publically: “He [Vučić] called in the agencies and said, ‘let’s see what you’ve got’. And the agencies were servile and for everything they could not do, they said, ‘there, our hands were tied, we couldn’t, here you are... there, we’re airing our dirty laundry, now we can do it all.” (Marković 2019).

107 Spasojević and Stojiljković 2020b.

108 Spasojević and Stojiljković 2020a.

109 *Ibid.*

This significant electoral victory (which initiated the dominant party system¹¹⁰) not only enabled Vučić to additionally staff state institutions with his people and to change the rules of the game to suit his interests but also to strengthen his control over his party by marginalising those loyal to SNS founder, Tomislav Nikolić. Here the example of the former head of the VBA and chair of the Parliamentarian Security Services Control Committee from 2014 to 2016 is illustrative. The party leadership first ignored his initiative for comprehensive reform of Serbia's intelligence sector. Then his party colleagues boycotted sessions of the Committee after his clash with Bratislav Gašić. Stojanović left the SNS and, following a fresh round of 2016 snap elections, was replaced as chair of the Committee by Igor Bečić, a loyal party soldier with no experience in security matters. Bečić completely snuffed out the Committee, rendering its work meaningless, and transformed it into an instrument for public expressions of support for party members.¹¹¹

In 2017, Vučić, as the President of Serbia, used amendments to the Law on the BIA and the appointment of Gašić as director to finally tighten his grip on the BIA. This enabled further use of the services for state capture in two key ways: through showdowns with critics and political dissidents and by ensuring cover for the illegal activities of government officials.

Erasing External Oversight Mechanisms

Given that the goal of state capture is the accumulation of unrestricted power in the state, an important step towards its achievement is the erasure of checks and balances. This is particularly true for institutions that have been active and effective in controlling security sector institutions – in Serbia, these have been the Ombudsman of Serbia¹¹² and the Commissioner for Information of Public Importance and Personal Data Protection (hereinafter the Commissioner).

The ultimate showdown between the government and Saša Janković, the then Ombudsman, occurred in the aftermath of an incident at the September 2014 Pride Parade. The incident involved a physical encounter between police and the military close personal protection team of Andrej Vučić and Predrag Mali, the brothers of Aleksandar Vučić and Siniša Mali, currently Serbia's president and finance minister, respectively.¹¹³ The Ombudsman initiated an inquiry to determine the responsibility of all actors involved in the incident but also the system flaws that made it possible – as well as subsequent unlawful conduct by the VBA. However, Aleksandar Vučić saw the Ombudsman's inquiry as an attack

110 Orlović 2014, 37.

111 Pejić Nikić 2020, 34.

112 The work of the Ombudsman in controlling the security services had become an example of best practice, not only in the Western Balkans but even for some developed European democracies (Glušac 2018, 66).

113 In spite of warnings to stop and identify themselves, Vučić and Mali's close protection team tried to cross the police line securing the event.

against his brother and his whole family, which is why the parallel intelligence network was spurred into action to oppose Janković. First, Bratislav Gašić, then the Minister of Defence and now the director of the BIA, prevented the Ombudsman from carrying out his inquiry into the Ministry of Defence and the VBA.¹¹⁴ Then information about a 30-year old case in which Janković's friend committed suicide in his apartment was dragged up from the archives, and official documents about the case were made public. This was used by the pro-government media to insinuate that Janković was responsible for the death of his friend.¹¹⁵ Prosecutor Saša Drecun, presiding over proceedings against the police in this incident, played an important role in dragging up the case. He is now leading the investigation into the Jovanjica drug affair. Janković resigned in 2017, and the new Ombudsman has completely hamstrung this institution, particularly in terms of its oversight of the security intelligence agencies. Those who have built up extensive experience in overseeing security sector actors have since quit the institution.¹¹⁶

The then Commissioner, Rodoljub Šabić, was also caught in the sights of the ruling party in a number of ways. First, as in the case of Saša Janković, the ruling party and pro-government media ran a smear campaign against Šabić.¹¹⁷ Secondly, in 2018 the BIA delayed Šabić's security clearance¹¹⁸ with no justification, which prevented him from accessing classified information. Thirdly, after the expiration of Šabić's term of office in December 2018, the institution was left leaderless for more than six months.¹¹⁹ Fourthly, the new Law on Personal Data Protection from November 2018 imposes a large number of responsibilities on the Commissioner, for which this institution lacks appropriate capacities.

Once the SNS had completely consolidated its power, the remaining external oversight mechanisms were also made redundant, primarily by the appointment of those loyal to the party to the Security Intelligence Control Committee, the judiciary and the State Audit Institution.¹²⁰ By making external oversight redundant, the ruling party has ensured the smooth operation of the security intelligence for the purposes of personal and party interests.

The Security Intelligence Agencies at War Against an Internal Enemy

With the growing political power of the SNS and its leader and the establishment of profound personal and party control over the security intelligence agencies and other

114 Petrović 2020, 49–50.

115 Nikolić 2015.

116 Petrović 2020, 65–67.

117 Živanović 2018.

118 Insajder 2018.

119 Đurković 2019, 21.

120 Petrović 2020, 69–72.

government institutions, critics of the government became exposed to increasingly frequent and rigorous pressure and surveillance proven to be (or reasonably suspected of being) conducted by the security intelligence agencies. Most commonly targeted were journalists who investigated or publicly exposed the corrupt associations of state officials but also those who criticised the government or publicly expressed alternative views of the state of affairs in Serbia. This is because the SNS is predisposed to controlling the flow of information about the state of society, both in Serbia but also externally – toward the West but also Russia. Analyses have indicated that the ruling party maintains its high rating by announcing duplicitous and vague policies, as well as through reliance on several official “truths” targeted at specific audiences.¹²¹ Meanwhile, all those who express dissenting opinions are seen as “enemies of the state”.

It is in these conditions that “internal enemies” once again became a leading priority for the BIA, as was publicly declared by the head of the Agency’s Security Protection Department, Marko Parezanović. In October 2018, he singled out the covert activities of foreign agents through opposition parties, media, NGOs and unions as the highest threat to the constitutional order and security of Serbia. This narrative represents a palpable deviation from previous announcements by BIA officials who spoke of security threats in more general terms, citing organised crime, corruption, terrorism, extremism and illegal migration as threats.¹²²

The mechanisms the BIA has at its disposal for responding to enemies of the state can be grouped into three interconnected clusters: covert surveillance, leaking information to pro-government tabloids and arrests. Covert surveillance enables the Agency to gather information on the activities of critics of the government, to uncover what information they seek or already have access to prevent or mitigate the harm they could do to government officials involved in illegal activities. Covert information gathering can also be used for leaks to pro-government tabloids, to stigmatise individuals the government perceives as a threat. By leaking information and disinformation to the pro-government press, the security intelligence agencies fabricate grounds for suspicion that can be a legal justification for covert surveillance. Representatives of the pro-government tabloid *Informer* even admitted in court that they received photographs of the meeting of a *Krik* journalist and a criminal from the BIA and that they subsequently published them on the front page.¹²³ The BIA uses arrests in order to intimidate critics but also to persuade them to become informants. When this is not possible, this method is used to disrupt the work of critics. This was the case with one of the prominent members of the Anarcho-Syndicalist Initiative who had been frequently picked up by BIA which has caused him to withdraw from the movement.¹²⁴

121 Čongradin 2018.

122 Petrović 2019b, 1–2.

123 Petrović 2019b, 3–6.

124 Tufegdžić 2019.

Beyond the BIA, other institutions involved in the war on internal enemies include the VBA, the MUP, the Tax Administration and the Administration for the Prevention of Money Laundering. For example, the Ombudsman received a document from the VBA detailing how in 2015, this agency gathered intelligence on an opposition party, the Serbia Radical Party.¹²⁵ In early 2020, Minister of Defence, Aleksandar Vulin, publicly criticised an opinion piece by a former defence minister in the *Nedeljnik* weekly, which had been withdrawn prior to publication. This indicates that the content of the unpublished article had been obtained through covert access to the email of *Nedeljnik*'s editor in chief – i.e. through abuse of VBA powers.¹²⁶ That police resources are misused to monitor critics of the government has been pointed out by journalists and police officers themselves, who have made public a slew of facts that have led to criminal charges being filed. From these reports, it is evident that misuse of the police was conducted using informal channels that connect those with party connections.¹²⁷ Since the appointment of former BIA personnel to the leadership of the Tax Authority, this institution has embarked upon an intensive campaign of audits targeting critical media outlets and private companies not loyal to the regime. Some of these audits have been so thorough and long-lasting that they paralysed the entities they were targeted against,¹²⁸ forcing some to close.¹²⁹

An extreme example of the misuse of state resources to settle scores with critical voices is a recent case in which the Administration for the Prevention of Money Laundering required banks to hand over information on all transactions for 20 individuals and 37 non-governmental and media organisations covering a period of around 18 months, on suspicion of money laundering and terrorist financing. Given that the Administration employs around 30 people, it is unlikely that they could independently process the volume of information that would provide clear grounds for suspicion that each of the 57 entities was involved in two criminal offences: money laundering and terrorist financing.¹³⁰ It is worth reiterating here that since the SNS came to power, a BIA operative has been appointed as acting director of the Administration.

Security Intelligence Agencies in the Service of Protecting Illegal Activities

In a captured state, an important role for the security services is to enable the unsanctioned extraction of money from state coffers and to provide cover for illegal activities. One of the more significant examples of this is the case of the Krušik munitions factory. As was revealed to journalists in the autumn of 2019 by a whistleblower, Aleksandar Obradović,

125 Protector of Citizens 2015, 16.

126 Radojević 2020.

127 Petrović 2020, 41–45.

128 As was the case for Južne Vesti (Kostić 2019).

129 Among these local media outlets are *Novine Vranjske* and *Kikindske*. For more on the misuse of the Tax Administration, see: Lakićević 2014b.

130 Stevanović 2020.

even though crippled by debts, this concern sold mortar rounds at almost cost price to a private company, GIM. This company had been represented on several occasions by the father of Minister of Interior and high-ranking SNS official, Nebojša Stefanović. Krušik's activities were harmful to its own business and benefited a private company with links to ruling party officials. However, instead of investigating possible corruption and irregularities, government institutions turned on the whistleblower.¹³¹ Obradović was arrested by BIA operatives in an evident show of force, about which he said: "There were ten BIA operatives. They were in suits, but they were all armed... They were aggressive. With raised voices, they immediately asked, 'who are you working for?', 'how much are they paying you?' and 'which politicians recruited you?'"¹³² The manner of Obradović's arrest, as well as the fact that the arrest was only made public one month later, suggests that this was an attempt to intimidate the rest of the Krušik workforce to prevent them from also becoming whistleblowers.¹³³

For this paper, it is important to shed light on several important facts connected to this case, which indicate how the clientelist network maintains the captured state and ensures the impunity of its members. Firstly, due to significant public interest in this affair, in November 2019, the Prosecutor's Office for Organised Crime¹³⁴ requested that the VBA and BIA gather all relevant information on the public claims of suspicious business dealings. However, seven months later, the BIA and VBA had still not submitted the requested reports. This should come as no surprise since the head of the VBA is Đuro Jovanić, a former aide to Aleksandar Vučić, who was also on the board of Srpska Banka, which approved loans to Krušik while private arms dealers owed money to the concern. Jovanić himself was tasked with supporting activities linked to the trade in arms and military equipment. At the BIA, this investigation is led by Petar Ciganović, one of the closest associates of the Agency's director, Gašić.¹³⁵ Finally, it is illustrative that Krušik, allegedly the injured party in this affair, is being represented by a law firm founded by Aleksandar Đorđević, a former director of the BIA and university friend of Aleksandar Vučić.¹³⁶

In another significant case, in late 2019, it was discovered that the organic produce company, Jovanjica, whose owner has links to ruling party functionaries, has been producing large volumes of narcotics. The farm had quickly become the largest producer of organic food in Serbia, thanks, among other things, to the fact that it had secured large loans at favourable rates through the Serbian Export Credit and Insurance Agency.¹³⁷ High-

131 Cvijić 2019.

132 *Ibid.*

133 Miletić 2019.

134 The Prosecutor's Office is headed by Mladen Nenadić, a friend of the former BIA director, Aleksandar Đorđević, in turn, a close friend of Aleksandar Vučić.

135 Cvijić 2020a.

136 Cvijić 2019.

137 Insajder 2019.

ranking police and security intelligence operatives provided security for Jovanjica's illegal activities, but the owner of the company also had an unregistered police ID. Even though they have been arrested, it remains to be seen whether they will be convicted in a manner commensurate with the gravity of the crimes with which they are charged and whether all of the details of the case will emerge in court. All the more so since the proceedings are being led by Saša Drecun, who is known to have, in previous instances, acted in the interests of Aleksandar Vučić and his brother, Andrej, rather than in accordance with the laws of Serbia.¹³⁸ Additionally, the suspects are being represented by a member of the SNS presidency, Vladimir Đukanović, who is one of the party's leading "hawks". Finally, the indictment does not contain any government officials, which is not entirely logical since it is impossible that the company owner established what is thought to be the largest marihuana plantation in this part of Europe without the knowledge of the authorities.¹³⁹

Older cases also indicate that the security intelligence agencies provide cover for the suspicious dealings of members of the ruling party and business persons with links to them. When investigating commercial crimes in 2014 and 2015, police inspector, Nebojša Blagoić, discovered that information from his case had been leaked to a company director under investigation via the BIA and ruling party officials. Included in this information were the identities of individuals helping the police with their investigation. Blagoić claims that the information was leaked through an informal network established between party loyalists in the police and the BIA: "On one hand we have a group of people who work on operational criminal investigations and, on the other, individual members of the BIA, police and influential members of the SNS who work together".¹⁴⁰ The BIA was not officially involved in this investigation, and it can be concluded that its personnel monitored the case to protect the director of a company close to the ruling party. However, not only have those responsible for the leak and for obstructing the investigation not been charged with crimes, they have been promoted to management positions in the BIA and police. The business person under investigation was later spotted as part of a delegation Aleksandar Vučić led to Turkey. Moreover, Blagoić came across information on the illegal business dealings of a company whose director has close personal ties to the Vučić family and which also involved the heads of two pro-government tabloids. After presenting this information to the director of the police, Blagoić was unlawfully forced into early retirement.¹⁴¹

138 Cvijić 2020b; Georgijev 2020.

139 Cvijić 2020b.

140 Radojević 2017.

141 *Ibid.*

Conclusion

The findings contained in this paper confirm the initial theoretical position that state capture is a deliberate political undertaking whose main goal is the acquisition of unrestricted power in the state, further enabling the unhindered and unsanctioned realisation of narrow interests to the detriment of the public good. The article has also confirmed that the security intelligence agencies play a central role in this project –first as a target and subsequently a driving force in the complete capture of the state. Consequently, political elites and security intelligence agencies become natural partners in the process of state capture, which then takes on the attributes of a complex intelligence operation.

The analysis of Serbia's incomplete security sector reform confirms that rapid and complete capture of the state and security intelligence facilitates the existence of grey areas and veto points in the intelligence sector. Particularly the BIA, which, even after the overthrow of the autocratic Milošević regime, retained its police powers, jurisdiction to participate in criminal investigations and the authority to, in exceptional circumstances, take over and directly conduct tasks under the purview of the MUP. The BIA also retained its monopoly on covert surveillance. Another highly significant veto point is the office of the SNB secretary and head of the Coordination Bureau, as this has become an informal centre of power to which all intelligence from the security intelligence agencies and the police flows. The practice of the VBA and military police providing counterintelligence and close personal protection to high-ranking state officials outside the Ministry of Defence and the army has become a grey area. The emergence of this and other informal practices have benefited from the fact that clientelist relations between the security intelligence agencies and political elites were not severed following the overthrow of Milošević.

These grey areas and veto points became the basis for the project, undertaken by the SNS following its rise to power in 2012, to capture the state completely. The first law the SNS changed after forming a government in 2012 was the Law on the Bases Regulating Security Intelligence Agencies. This enabled Aleksandar Vučić to accumulate security power by becoming the secretary of the SNB and the head of the Coordination Bureau. Manipulation of security power soon doubled the political popularity of Vučić and the SNS, resulting in their winning an absolute majority in parliament and completely fragmenting the opposition as early as 2014. Control of parliament meant that the SNS could change the “rules of the game” in comfort. Through party patronage at the BIA and the military security intelligence agency but also in other institutions related to the security sector (such as the public prosecution, judiciary, the Tax Administration and the Administration for the Prevention of Money Laundering), the SNS created a parallel intelligence network or, as Chipkin called it, a “shadow state”. This network uses the resources of the state to erase the separation of powers, suppress critics and provide cover for the (illegal) activities of its members.

The findings of this article show that security intelligence plays a central role in state capture in Serbia. It is, therefore, important to conduct similar studies in other countries

afflicted by this phenomenon. This would enable comparative analysis and identification of common elements that would, in turn, advance the very concept of state capture towards it also being understood as an intelligence operation. Moreover, such studies could also be useful for the formulation of practical policy recommendations. Establishing the key factors and conditions that facilitate the security intelligence agencies playing a key role in state capture would make it possible to more precisely formulate measures that could prevent this process or initiate its reversal.

The findings of this paper may be of significance for literature on security sector reform and security intelligence agency reform, as well as on democratisation more broadly. Of particular importance here is the finding that incomplete reform of the security intelligence, characterised by numerous grey zones and veto points, can accelerate democratic decline and can, ultimately, facilitate a return to the “old way of doing things”. Therefore, researchers should pay closer attention to legal and institutional loopholes, new and old approaches in the security intelligence sector and how these can impact the shaping and re-shaping of political and security power in society. And, in the final analysis, how all of this affects democratisation. The findings of this paper may also be of use to those studying the security intelligence through similar concepts, both as the basis for comparative analysis and as a means to evaluate applied analytical frameworks. Given that the study of intelligence agencies has, over the past decade, moved beyond technocratic and craft-orientated approaches to this topic – where the emphasis was on, for example, matters such as the intelligence cycle – and that important elements of intelligence studies have come to focus on the relationship between politics and security intelligence agencies – i.e. democratic civilian control and its various mechanisms – the findings of this paper will contribute to the further enrichment of the intelligence studies literature.

References

- Anastasijević, Dejan. 2003. "Večni plamen." *Vreme*, no. 666. October 9. Accessed June 15, 2020. <https://www.vreme.com/cms/view.php?id=354426>.
- Anastasijević, Dejan. 2017. "Vučić zatvara krug." *Vreme*, no. 1377. May 25. Accessed June 15, 2020. <https://www.vreme.com/cms/view.php?id=1502006>.
- Andregg, Michael, and Peter Gill. 2014. "Comparing the Democratization of Intelligence." *Intelligence and National Security* 29 (4): 487–497.
- B92. 2017. "Gašić u utorak ide na čelo BIA." *B92 info*. May 22. Accessed July 12, 2020. https://www.b92.net/info/komentari.php?nav_id=1263030.
- Bagashka, Tanya. 2014. "Unpacking corruption: The effect of veto players on state capture and bureaucratic corruption." *Political Research Quarterly* 67 (1): 165–180.
- Berman, Sheri. 2017. "The Pipe Dream of Undemocratic Liberalism." *Journal of Democracy* 28 (3): 29–38.
- Bieber, Florian. 2018. "Patterns of Competitive Authoritarianism in the Western Balkans." *East European Politics* 34 (3): 337–54.
- Biševac, Safeta. 2013. "Vučićev kolega." *Danas*. October 27. Accessed June 15, 2020. <https://www.danas.rs/ljudi/vucicev-kolega/>.
- Bloom, Peter. 2016. *Authoritarian Capitalism in the Age of Globalization*. Cheltenham: Edward Elgar Publishing.
- Bogdanovski, Andreja, and Magdalena Lembovska. 2015. *Communication Interception Oversight in Macedonia. Making the Impossible Possible*. Skopje: Analytica.
- Bowen, Sally, and Jane Holligan. 2003. *The Imperfect Spy: The Many Lives of Vladimiro Montesinos*. PEISA.
- Bruneau, Thomas C., and Steven C. Boraz. 2007. "Intelligence Reform: Balancing Democracy and Effectiveness." In *Reforming Intelligence: Obstacles to Democratic Control and Effectiveness*, edited by Thomas C. Bruneau and Boraz Steven, 1–24. Austin: University of Texas Press.
- Bruneau, Thomas C., and Steven C. Boraz. 2007. *Reforming Intelligence: Obstacles to Democratic Control and Effectiveness*. Austin: University of Texas Press.
- Burkett, Randy. 2013. "An Alternative Framework for Agent Recruitment: From MICE to RASCLS." *Studies in Intelligence* 57 (1): 7–17.
- Chipkin, Ivor, and Mark Swilling. 2018. *Shadow State: The Politics of State Capture*. Johannesburg: Wits University Press.
- Čongradin, Snežana. 2018. "Nacionalističko i proevropsko rušenje Vučića." *Demostat*. July 21. Accessed June 22, 2020. <https://demostat.rs/sr/vesti/analize/nacionalisticko-i-proevrpsko-rusenje-vucica/458>.
- Cvijić, Vuk. 2018. "Situacioni centar za unutrašnjeg neprijatelja." *NIN*, no. 3538, October 18. Accessed June 15, 2020. <http://www.nin.co.rs/pages/article.php?id=116611>.
- Cvijić, Vuk. 2019. "Uhapsili su me, a imam dokaze za sve sumnjive poslove – Ispovest Aleksandra Obradovića, radnika Krušika, uhapšenog jer je ukazao na trgovinu oružjem u koju je umešan i otac ministra policije." *NIN*, no. 3590. October 17. Accessed June 22, 2020. <http://nin.co.rs/pages/article.php?id=102350385>.

- Cvijić, Vuk. 2020a. "Prikrivanje umesto istine." *NIN*, no. 3627. July 2. Accessed July 12, 2020. <http://nin.co.rs/pages/article.php?id=102353648>.
- Cvijić, Vuk. 2020b. "Strogo kontrolisana istraga." *NIN*, no. 3628. July 9. Accessed July 12, 2020. <http://nin.co.rs/pages/article.php?id=102353737>.
- Dassah, Maurice O. 2018. "Theoretical Analysis of State Capture and its Manifestation as a Governance Problem in South Africa." *The Journal for Transdisciplinary Research in Southern Africa* 14 (1): 1–10.
- Dobson, William J. 2013. *The Dictator's Learning Curve: Inside the Global Battle for Democracy*. New York: Random House.
- Dombroski, Kenneth. 2006. "Reforming Intelligence: South Africa After Apartheid." *Journal of Democracy* 17 (3): 43–57.
- Duncan, Jane. 2017. "Op-Ed: How State Spying Enables State Capture." *Daily Maverick*. August 17. Accessed July 12, 2020. <https://www.dailymaverick.co.za/article/2017-08-17-op-ed-how-state-spying-enables-state-capture/#gsc.tab=0>.
- Edmunds, Timothy. 2008. "Intelligence Agencies and Democratisation: Continuity and Change in Serbia after Milošević." *Europe-Asia Studies* 60 (1): 25–48.
- Engelhardt, Tom. 2014. *Shadow Government: Surveillance, Secret Wars, and a Global Security State in a Single-Superpower World*. Chicago: Haymarket Books.
- EPI. 2017. *The Priebe Report Two Years Later: New Government and New Opportunities for Resolving Old Problems*. Skopje: European Policy Institute.
- Erasmus, Gerhard. 2017. *When Corruption Becomes State Capture*. Western Cape: Tralac.
- European Commission. 2015. *The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia: Recommendations of the Senior Experts' Group on Systemic Rule of Law Issues Relating to the Communications Interception Revealed in Spring 2015*. Brussels: European Commission 2015.
- Evans, Peter B. 1989. "Predatory, Developmental, and Other Apparatuses: A Comparative Political Economy Perspective on the Third World State." *Sociological Forum* 4 (4): 561–87. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/684425>.
- Fazekas, Mihály, and István János Tóth. 2016. "From Corruption to State Capture: A New Analytical Framework with Empirical Applications from Hungary." *Political Research Quarterly* 69 (2): 320–334.
- Feinstein, Tamara. 2002. "Montesinos: Blind Ambition." National Security Archive Electronic Briefing Book No. 72. Washington: The George Washington University.
- Gašić, Bratislav. 2018. "Obraćanje direktora Bezbednosno-informativne agencije gospodina Bratislava Gašića." *Bezbednosno-informativna agencija*. October 17. Accessed July 27, 2020. https://bia.gov.rs/sites/default/files/2018-11/govordirektora-17102018_0_0.pdf.
- Georgijev, Slobodan. 2020. "Slučaj Jovanjica: Politička pozadina prljavih znački." *Vreme*, no. 1540. July 9. Accessed August 5, 2020. <https://www.vreme.com/cms/view.php?id=1800674>.
- Gill, Peter. 2013. "The Implications of Intelligence Practice Within and Beyond the State: An Analytical Model." *Journal of Regional Security* 8 (2): 93–114.

- Gill, Peter. 2016. *Intelligence Governance and Democratisation: A Comparative Analysis of the Limits of Reform*. Abingdon & New York: Routledge.
- Gingeras, Ryan. 2010. "Last Rites for a 'Pure Bandit': Clandestine Service, Historiography and the Origins of the Turkish 'Deep State.'" *Past and Present* 206 (1): 151–74.
- Glennon, Michael J. 2016. *National Security and Double Government*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Godinho, Catrina, and Lauren Hermanus. 2018. "(Re)conceptualising State Capture – With a Case Study of South African Power Company Eskom." Conference Paper prepared for the Public Affairs Research Institute's State Capture and Its Aftermath: Building Responsiveness Through State Reform, October 22–24, Johannesburg.
- Grzymala-Busse, Anna. 2007. *Rebuilding Leviathan: Party Competition and State Exploitation in Post-Communist Democracies*. Edited by Scott E. Page. London: Cambridge University Press.
- Grzymala-Busse, Anna. 2008. "Beyond Clientelism: Incumbent State Capture and State Formation." *Comparative Political Studies* 41 (4–5): 638–673.
- Hadžić, Miroslav. 2019. *Ustavna zamisao kontrole i nadzora poslenika bezbednosti Srbije*. Beograd: Beogradski centar za bezbednosnu politiku.
- Hellman, Joel S, Geraint Jones, and Daniel Kaufmann. 2000. *Seize the State, Seize the Day: State Capture, Corruption, and Influence in Transition*. Washington: The World Bank.
- Hellman, Joel S, Geraint Jones, Mark Schankerman, and Daniel Kaufmann. 2000. "Measuring Governance, Corruption, and State Capture: How Firms and Bureaucrats Shape the Business Environment in Transition Economies." World Bank Policy Research Working Paper 2312. Washington: The World Bank.
- Hellman, Joel S. 1998. "Winners Take All: The Politics of Partial Reform in Post-Communist Transitions." *World Politics* 50 (2): 203–234.
- Hellman, Joel S. 2000. "Strategies to Combat State Capture and Administrative Corruption in Transition Economies." Background paper prepared for the World Bank's conference Economic Reform and Good Governance: Fighting Corruption in Transition Countries, April 11–12, Beijing.
- Hoffmann, Dražen, Nives Miošić-Lisjak, Duje Prkut, Dragan Zelić, Paul Stubbs, Berto Šalaj, and Siniša Zrinščak. 2017. *Croatia's Captured Places*. Zagreb: GONG.
- Horvat, Zvonimir. 2007. "Reforma vojnih službi bezbednosti." In *Zbornik predavanja sa IX Škole reforme sektora bezbednosti*, edited by Pavle Janković, 121–135. Beograd: ISAC Fund.
- Hutton, Lauren, ed. 2009. *To Spy or Not to Spy? Intelligence and Democracy in South Africa*. Pretoria: Institute for Security Studies.
- Ilić, Goran. 2016. "Samo podobni ljudi se biraju za ključne funkcije u Tužilaštvu." *Udruženje javnih tužilaca i zamenika javnih tužilaca Srbije*. Accessed August 12, 2020. <https://www.uts.org.rs/osvrti/1240-intervju-goran-ilic-samo-podobni-ljudi-se-biraju-za-kljucne-funkcije-u-tuzilastvu>.
- Innes, Abby. 2014. "The Political Economy of State Capture in Central Europe." *Journal of Common Market Studies* 52 (1): 88–104.

- Insajder, 2016. "Ubistvo premijera: Nikada sprovedene preporuke "Koraćeve komisije." *Insajder*. June 2. Accessed July 20, 2020. <https://insajder.net/sr/sajt/tema/1030/>
- Insajder, 2018. "Šabić dobio sertifikat za pristup državnim tajnama." *Insajder*. June 18. Accessed July 15, 2020. <https://insajder.net/sr/sajt/vazno/11585/>.
- Insajder, 2019. "Jovanjici za tri godine Agencija za finansiranje izvoza odobrila više miliona evra kredita." *Insajder*. December 6. Accessed June 22, 2020. <https://insajder.net/sr/sajt/vazno/16314/jovanjici-za-tri-godine-agencija-za-finansiranje-izvoza-odobrila-vi-e-miliona-evra-kredita.htm>.
- Istinomer, 2019. "Bratislav Gašić." *Istinomer*. Accessed August 6, 2020. <https://www.istinomer.rs/akter/bratislav-gasic/>.
- Jovanović, Bojana. 2019. "Period Dijane Hrkalović u MUP-u: mafijaška ubistva, veze kriminala i policije i prijave protiv nje." *Krikk*. May 29. Accessed July 20, 2020. <https://www.krik.rs/rad-dijane-hrkalovic-u-mup-u-mafijaska-ubistva-veze-kriminala-i-policije-i-prijave-protiv-nje/>.
- Klopfer, Franziska, and Nelleke Van Amstel, eds. 2015. *A Force for Good? Mapping the Private Security Landscape in Southeast Europe*. Geneva: DCAF.
- Kolozova, Katerina, and Gordan Georgiev. 2018. "Deliberation: The Path of Dismantling the #Statecapture in Macedonia." *Policy Reflections on Macedonia 2016 – 2018*. Skopje: Institute of Social Sciences and Humanities.
- Kostić, Vladimir. 2019. "Poreska kontrolisala Južne vesti, ali ne i televizije povezane sa Gašićem." *CINS*. March 14. Accessed July 12, 2020. <https://www.cins.rs/poreska-kontrolisala-juzne-vesti-ali-ne-i-televizije-povezane-sa-gasicem/>.
- Lakićević, Mijat. 2014a. "Čvorovići u besnom galopu." *Peščanik*. November 16. Accessed July 15, 2020. <https://pescanik.net/cvorovici-u-besnom-galopu/>.
- Lakićević, Mijat. 2014b. "Poreznik Marko Marinković protiv građanina Željka Bodrožića." *Peščanik*, December 13. Accessed July 15, 2020. <https://pescanik.net/poreznik-marko-marinkovic-protiv-gradjanina-zeljka-bodrozica/>.
- Lalić, Veljko. 2017. "Tri godine od odlaska Mikija Rakića: Najveće tajne najvažnijeg čoveka u državi." *Nedeljnik* no. 148. November 3. Accessed July 15, 2020. <https://arhiva.nedeljnik.rs/nedeljnik/portalnews/tri-godine-od-odlaska-mikija-rakica-najvece-tajne-najvaznijeg-coveka-u-drzavi/>.
- Lembovska, Magdalena. 2019. *How to Professionalise the Security Services?*. Skopje: EuroThink.
- Levitsky, Steven, and Lucan A. Way. 2010. *Competitive Authoritarianism: Hybrid Regimes after the Cold War*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Lindsey, Jason Royce. 2013. *The Concealment of the State*. London: Bloomsbury Publishing.
- Lodge, Tom. 2018. "State Capture: Conceptual Considerations." In *State Capture in Africa: Old Threats, New Packaging*, edited by Melanie Meirotti and Grant Masterson. Johannesburg: EISA.
- Lofgren, Mike. 2016. *The Deep State: The Fall of the Constitution and the Rise of a Shadow Government*. London: Penguin.
- Los, Maria. 2005. "Reshaping of Elites and the Privatization of Security: The Case of Poland." *The Journal of Power Institutions in Post-Soviet Societies* 2015 (2).

- Lukač, Davor. 2019. "Za šta služi služba." *Vreme*, no. 1505. November 7. Accessed July 15, 2020. <https://www.vreme.com/cms/view.php?id=1730212>.
- Magaloni, Beatriz. 2006. *Voting for Autocracy: Hegemonic Party Survival and Its Demise in Mexico*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press Cambridge.
- Marković, Radmilo. 2018. "Intervju Saša Janković: Pucanje režimskog kruga laži i obmana." *Vreme*, no. 1440. August 9. Accessed July 15, 2020. <https://www.vreme.com/cms/view.php?id=1617239>.
- Marković, Radmilo. 2019. "Intervju – Siniša Janković, policijski inspektor u penziji: Sve boje prljavog novca." *Vreme*, no. 1507, November 21. Accessed July 7, 2020. <https://www.vreme.com/cms/view.php?id=1733105>.
- Mazzucato, Mariana. 2011. *The Entrepreneurial State* London: Demos.
- McMillan, John, and Pablo Zoido. 2004. "How to Subvert Democracy: Montesinos in Peru." *Journal of Economic perspectives* 18 (4): 69–92.
- Meirotti, Melanie, and Grant Masterson, eds. 2018. *State Capture in Africa: Old threats, New Packaging*. Johannesburg: EISA.
- Miletić, Minja. 2019. "Hapšenje Obradovića poruka drugim uzbunjivačima, odgovor javnosti – reagovaće se." *NI info*. October 21. Accessed July 8, 2020. <http://rs.n1info.com/Vesti/a535392/Hapsenje-Obradovica-poruka-drugim-uzbunjivacima-odgovor-javnosti-reagovace-se.html>.
- Miloslavjević, Bogoljub, i Predrag Petrović. 2009. "Bezbednosno-obaveštajne službe." In *Godišnjak reforme sektora bezbednosti*, edited by Miroslav Hadžić, 222–252. Beograd: Centar za civilno-vojne odnose.
- Miloslavjević, Bogoljub. 2002. "Novo zakonsko uređenje Službe državne bezbednosti Republike Srbije." *Reč stručnjaka*, July 30. Accessed August 12, 2020. https://web.archive.org/web/20060825222304if_/http://www.ccmr-bg.org:80/analize/rec/rec2.htm.
- Mitevski, Mancho. 2019. *Captured state: Understanding the Macedonian Case*. Skopje: Friedrich Ebert Stiftung – Office Macedonia.
- NI. 2019. "Antić: Za malverzacije u trgovini oružjem odgovorno Ministarstvo odbrane." *NI info*. November 21. Accessed June 22, 2020. <http://rs.n1info.com/Vesti/a545781/Antic-Za-malverzacije-u-trgovini-oružjem-odgovorno-Ministarstvo-odbrane.html>.
- Nathan, Laurie. 2004. "Obstacles to Security sector Reform in New Democracies." *Journal of Security Sector Management* 2 (3): 1–7.
- Nathan, Laurie. 2010. "Intelligence Bound: The South African Constitution and Intelligence Services." *International Affairs* 86 (1): 195–210.
- Nieuwkerk, Anthoni. 2018. "Africa Australis: Imperium in Imperio?" In *State Capture in Africa: Old Threats, New Packaging*, edited by Melanie Meirotti and Grant Masterson, 44–55. Johannesburg: EISA.
- Nikolić, Maja. 2017. "Prelević o BIA: Fokus će biti na unutrašnjem neprijatelju." *NI info*. August 31. Accessed July 15, 2020. <http://rs.n1info.com/Vesti/a314726/Novi-Zakon-o-BIA-jaca-Gasiceva-ovlasenja.html>.
- Orlović, Slaviša. 2014. "Parlamentarni izbori 2014: teme, akteri i ishodi." *Politički život* 2 (11): 37–47.

- Ostheimer, Andrea. 2006. *Challenges to democracy by one-party dominance: A comparative assessment*. Johannesburg: Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung.
- Pavlović, Bojana i Stevan Dojčinović. 2015. "Sve kontroverze izbora specijalnog tužioca." KRIK. December 28. Accessed August 3, 2020. <https://www.krik.rs/sve-kontroverze-izbora-specijalnog-tuzioca/>.
- Pejčić, Ivana. 2011. "Zaboravljeni nalazi Koraćeve komisije." *Danas*. November 27. http://www.danas.rs/danasrs/hronika/zaboravljeni_nalazi_koraceve_komisije.3.html?news_id=224584.
- Pejić Nikić, Jelena, ed. 2020. *Preugovor Alarm: Report of the Progress of Serbia in Chapters 23 and 24*. Belgrade: Preugovor.
- Pejić, Jelena. 2016. *Bezbednosno-obaveštajni sistemi u državama članicama Evropske unije: Primjeri Holandije i Hrvatske*. Beograd: Beogradski centar za bezbednosnu politiku.
- Pešić, Vesna. 2007. *State capture and widespread corruption in Serbia*. CEPS Working document no. 262. Brussels: CEPS.
- Petrović, Jelena. 2019a. "Advokat uzbunjivača Obradovića: Slučaj bizaran, Višim sudom upravlja drug Vučića." *N1*. October 18. Accessed July 25, 2020. <http://rs.n1info.com/Vesti/a535944/Advokat-uzbunjivaca-Obradovica-Slucaj-bizaran-Visim-sudom-upravlja-Vucicev-drug.html>.
- Petrović, Predrag, and Katarina Đokić. 2017. *Slippery Slopes in the Reform of Serbian Security Services*. Belgrade: Belgrade Centre for Security Policy.
- Petrović, Predrag. 2012. "Bezbednosno-obaveštajni sistem Srbije se kroji po diktatu Aleksandra Vučića." *Peščanik*. July 24. Accessed June 12, 2020. <https://pescanik.net/bezbednosno-obaveštajni-sistem-po-diktatu-aleksandra-vucica/>.
- Petrović, Predrag, and Marko Milošević. 2015a. *Novi-Stari Izazovi Privatnog Sektora Bezbednosti U Srbiji*. Beograd: Beogradski centar za bezbednosnu politiku.
- Petrović, Predrag, and Marko Milošević. 2015b. "Serbia." In *A Force for Good-Mapping Private Security Landscape in South East Europe*, edited by Franziska Klopfer and Nelleke van Amstel, 83–107. Geneva: DCAF.
- Petrović, Predrag. 2014. "Security Information Agency." In *Integrity Assessment in Security Sector in Serbia*, edited by Predrag Petrovic. Belgrade: Belgrade Centre for Security Policy.
- Petrović, Predrag. 2016. "Serbia: An Awkward Legacy." In *The Handbook of European Intelligence Cultures*, edited by Bob Graaff and James Nyce, 321–334. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield.
- Petrović, Predrag. 2019b. *The BIA Fighting an Internal Enemy of the State*. Belgrade: Belgrade Centre for Security Policy.
- Petrović, Predrag. 2020. *The Anatomy of Capturing Serbia's Security – Intelligence Sector*. Belgrade: Belgrade Centre for Security Policy.
- Protector of Citizens. 2015. "Regular Annual Report of the Protector of Citizens for 2014." Ref. No. 7919. March 14. Accessed June 18, 2020. https://www.ombudsman.org.rs/attachments/052_Annual%20Report%202014.pdf.
- Radojević, Vesna. 2017. "Polićijski inspektor: dva vlasnika medija izbegla istragu." *KRIK*. December 29. Accessed July 12, 2020. <https://raskrikavanje.krik.rs/video.php?id=37>.

- Radojević, Vesna. 2020. "Lalić: Sada se shvata obim prislušivanja." *KRIK*. Februar 17. Accessed July 12, 2020. <https://www.raskrikavanje.rs/page.php?id=570>.
- Rakić Vodinelić, Vesna. 2015. "Pripreme za izbor javnih tužilaca – institucionalne i vaninstitucionalne." *Peščanik*. December 1. Accessed June 23, 2020. <https://pescanik.net/pripreme-za-izbor-javnih-tuzilaca-institucionalne-i-vaninstitucionalne/>.
- Schedler, Andreas. 2013. *The Politics of Uncertainty: Sustaining and Subverting Electoral Authoritarianism*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Scheiring, Gábor. 2020. "The Retreat of Liberal Democracy: Authoritarian Capitalism and the Accumulative State in Hungary." Berlin: Springer.
- Scott, Peter Dale. 2014. *The American Deep State: Wall Street, Big Oil, and the Attack on Us Democracy*. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield.
- Sooyler, Mehtap. 2015. *The Turkish Deep State: State Consolidation, Civil-Military Relations and Democracy*. Abingdon: Routledge.
- Southall, Roger. 2018. "What's New About 'State Capture'?" In *State Capture in Africa: Old Threats, New Packaging*, edited by Melanie Meirotti and Grant Masterson, 29–44. Johannesburg: EISA.
- Spasojević, Dušan, and Zoran Stojiljković. 2020a. "Druga smena vlasti: Da li je Hantington pogrešio?" February 27. Accessed June 23, 2020. <https://pescanik.net/druga-smena-vlasti-da-li-je-hantington-pogresio/>.
- Spasojević, Dušan, and Zoran Stojiljković. 2020b. *Između uverenja i interesa. Ideologija i organizacija stranaka u Srbiji*. Beograd: Fabrika knjiga.
- Stanković, Brankica. 2008a. "Službena tajna, treća epizoda." *Insajder i TV B92*. October 16. Accessed June 23, 2020. <https://insajder.net/sr/sajt/sluzbenatajna/200/Tre%C4%87a-epizoda.htm>.
- Stanković, Brankica. 2008b. "Službena tajna, četvrta epizoda." *Insajder i TV B92*. October 23. Accessed June 23, 2020. <https://insajder.net/sr/sajt/sluzbenatajna/226/Transkript-%C4%8Detvrte-epizode.htm>.
- Stevanović, Mirjana. 2020. "Da li je država zloupotrebila ovlašćenja?" *Danas*. August 14. Accessed July 2, 2020. <https://www.danas.rs/drustvo/vladavina-prava/da-li-je-drzava-zloupotrebila-ovlascenja/>.
- Swilling, Mark. 2018. "State Capture is a Systemic Process, a Political Project." In *The Aubrey Masango Show*, edited by Karima Brown. Cape Town: EWN.
- Tufegdžić, Vojislav. 2019. "Čime se bave anarhisti u Srbiji?" *Ekspres*. August 2. Accessed June 23, 2020. <https://www.ekspres.net/vesti/batinom-do-solidarnosti-cime-se-bave-anarhisti-u-srbiji>.
- Ustavni sud Republike Srbije. 2013. *Odluka broj: IUz-252/2002*. 39th Session, 26 December 2013.
- Vladislavljević, Nebojša. 2019. *Uspon i pad demokratije posle Petog oktobra*. Beograd: Arhipelag.
- Voinea, Camelia. 2015. "State Capture and Political Clientelism in Central and Eastern Europe." *Annual of IJPSR XXXIX* (4): 9–31.
- Zorić, Jelena. 2018. "Na koju stranu vuku promene u vrhu Vojske Srbije?" *N1*. September 17. Accessed July 17, 2020. <http://rs.n1info.com/Vesti/a420750/Sta-znace-promene-u-vrhu-Vojske-Srbije.html>.