

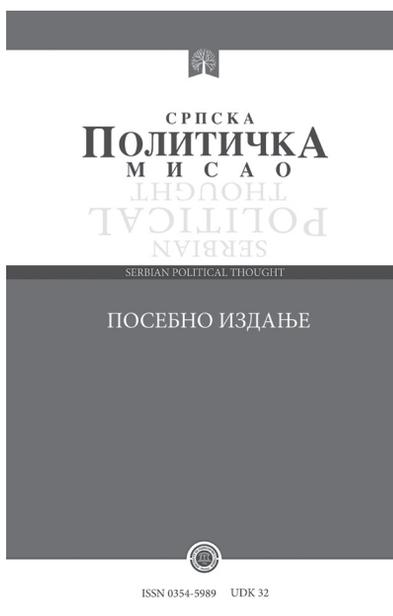
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Srpska politička misao: Posebno izdanje [special issue] (Edited by Đorđe Stojanović and Dušan Pavlović);

Institute for Political Studies, Belgrade, 2014.



Institute for Political Studies from Belgrade has embarked upon an important endeavor: to both present and re-position Ser-

bian political science as a distinct area of social sciences. A means to that end is the publishing of special issues of the scientific journal *Srpska politička misao* (Serbian-language counterpart of *Serbian Political Thought*).

The first of such issues is dedicated to rational choice theory, and, specifically, its application in political science. The possibility of scientific prediction, provided by this theory and enabled by the utilization of such patterns as the famous “prisoner’s dilemma”, has made it an ever-attractive tool of social research for several decades since its development in the 1950s.

Still, as said before, the purpose of this special issue of *Srpska politička misao* goes beyond the mere presentation of rational

choice theory and its application in political science: the basic idea, according to the editors (Đorđe Stojanović, Institute for Political Studies and Dušan Pavlović, Faculty of Political Sciences, University of Belgrade) is “to provide a more complete scientific view of political problems, using various scientific paradigms”. Two purposes should be served this way: firstly, it would be a way of eliminating potential “rivalries” among various, theories, approaches and paradigms; secondly, it would signify the reaffirmation of political science in Serbia to the overcoming of the current crisis situation by strengthening the position of science vis-à-vis the political elite and ruling structures. The journal editorial also stresses that emphasizing various theoretical paradigms through special issues such as this one is a way to differentiate and position political science in Serbia more clearly in regard to other social sciences.

The aforementioned crisis of political science in Serbia is seen by the editors as the very incentive for such an enterprise. By publishing theory-oriented special issues of *Srpska politička misao*, the editors actually intend to offer a threefold solution to the crisis of Serbian political science. The first element of the proposed solution should be the “re-scientization” of Serbian political science, which

means the rejection and overcoming of the existing methodological confusion, vagueness and inconsequence. The second element should be the “social re-anagnorisis” of political science in Serbia, as the editors put it in Aristotelian terms, given that it is insufficiently socially recognized and thus subject to various external influences and (mis)uses, mostly from the sphere of politics. The third element concerns the need for political scientists to self-identify through and by their affiliation to a theory or a paradigm, allowing, at the same time, the possibility of other paradigms’ validity; this element is presented through the need for “re-triangulation” of political science in Serbia. Publication of more special issues such as this one might prove to be a suitable way to engage in the proposed anti-crisis measures in the field of political science in Serbia.

An important quality of the volume, the one that has to be mentioned, is the fact that while all the contributors have a solid academic background in political science, they come from diverse research environments: a public university (Faculty of Political Sciences, University of Belgrade), a public research institution (Institute for Political Studies, Belgrade) and a private think-tank (Libertarian Club – Libek). Also, the theory in question is

approached and employed in a number of different ways and various topics: Dušan Pavlović (Faculty of Political Sciences) writes about the application of rational choice theory in political science; Marko Pejković and Petar Matić (Institute for Political Studies) are exploring the theory's potential to explain the issues of fiscal decentralization, through the example of Serbian autonomous province of Vojvodina; Milovan Dekić (Faculty of Political Sciences) applies behavioral game theory in seeking to answer the question whether humans are rationally prosocial; Dušan Vučićević and Milan Jovanović (Faculty of Political Sciences) write about electoral system reform in Serbia; the paper by Nikola Mladenović (Faculty of Political Sciences) is concerned with the positioning of political parties in Serbia in regard to spatial approach to politics; Ivan Stanojević (Faculty of Political Sciences) approaches the Eurozone crisis as a chicken game; Đorđe Trikoš (Libertarian Circle) analyzes the possibilities for the change of politics in a multi-party system.

This 200-page volume is published in Serbian and, as such, it is mainly intended for Serbian academic audience. Still, its attractiveness, along the expected future issues that would cover different theories from the field of political

science, might induce the publisher to make the most significant pieces available to international audience by publishing them in English, thus sparking a wider, and also much needed, theoretical and methodological debate.