

### Politics, the Economy and their Moralities (Editorial)

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**Editorial:**

## **Politics, the Economy and their Moralities**

Year 2014 has been good for STSS. In addition to acquiring a book review editor, who is currently securing reviews for the next issues quite in advance, we have also been 'promoted' by the Estonian Ministry of Education. The recent decision to include journals indexed in SCOPUS into the 1.1 category has made STSS a first-class journal in Estonia, with all the (hopefully good) consequences one can imagine. We are now targeted more often and have substantially increased the amount of submitted articles we receive.

In addition, according to SCOPUS rankings (retrieved from scimagojr.com on 6 June 2015), STSS is currently ranked no 1 in Estonia for the social sciences, which is quite an achievement if we consider how young the journal is. At this stage we feel the need to thank all those who contributed to the creation of the journal and in particular Prof. Raivo Vetik who, acting as first editor-in-chief, significantly contributed to make STSS what it is now.

The current issue is intended to partly give continuity to the topic that we approached in 2014, morality and moralities in the frame of a state, a community or various groups whose intentions and goals do not necessarily overlap. After a first exploration by Scott (1976), debates in the social science have engaged with a number of variations of this approach and paid increased attention to the issue of multiple moralities (Polese and Morris, 2015; Polese, 2015, 2014; van Schendel and Abrahams, 2005; Wanner, 2005; Williams, 2014), a discussion that this STSS issue is intended to contribute to. The first article, by Sieben and Halman (2015), investigates morality in relation to the public good in post-socialist Europe. Defining public good morality 'as the (non)acceptance of behaviour that contravenes the law and harms society and the greater good of the collective', the article uses data from the European Values Study in 2008 on more than 30,000 respondents in 23 post-socialist states, to point out at that, whilst the level of public good morality is 8.4 on a ten-point scale, a series of differences between individuals and between countries can be identified. They thus attempt to explain these variations by looking at the legacy of communist rule, processes of democratization and compliance attitudes by measuring them against a series of geographical (Soviet and non Soviet socialism), historical (length of time lived under communist rule), political (democracy) and social (interpersonal trust and confidence in governments) variables.

Although approaching the issue from a different theoretical and methodological angle, morality is also a main theme in the second article (Karjanen, 2015). Thanks to an exploration of debates over local economic development policies and practices, the author in particular explores the issue of property and land development in Slovakia. Karjanen contends that the debates about economic development that often occur in relation to economic outcomes, based on quantitative data and empirical assessments provided by the city officials or consultants, are likely to be driven by normative concerns, including moral outcomes. In order to challenge this approach, the article develops theoretical framework to understand why policy debates seems to be subjective to normative and moral frameworks.

The third article shifts the focus from policies to politics and examines a largely understudied issue. Stefanczak and Connolly (2015) point out that the former communist states have a comparatively poor record when it comes to women's parliamentary representation. Even more, the article's focus is on countries that have remained largely unexplored (Georgia and the de facto state of Abkhazia, that exists within the internationally recognised borders of Georgia). By comparing parliamentary contests of 2012, the authors notice that the level of women's representation shifted significantly in both

countries in opposite directions. Starting from this, they set out to explain why in Georgia, women's representation increased from 6% in 2008 to 12% in 2012, while in Abkhazia women's representation dropped from 11.5% to 3%.

In the fourth article Isaacs (2015) employs Weber's concept of charismatic routinisation to analyse the dilemmas related to political succession and post-charismatic order in Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan. While the presidents of these three countries have drawn their authority from a combination of charismatic, legal-rational and traditional authority, they have relied most heavily on charisma, in particular to sustain their rule. To do so, Isaacs draws on three of Weber's mechanisms for charismatic routinisation: designation, hereditary charisma, and charisma in office. The analysis demonstrates that in these three cases, despite charisma only having two routes available to it, traditional and legal-rational, the mixture of legal-rational, traditional and charismatic domination undermines the process of charismatic routinisation.

The last article (Gutorov, 2015) proposes an analysis of the politics of identity and citizenship as a way to affect the formation of both civic and national self-consciousness. The author considers citizenship as a dynamic construct that should be viewed as a 'process' through which specific rights and obligations are exercised, to argue that the conception of identity as well, as the criteria for its definition, have become crucial in the discussion of problems of citizenship and political education. By doing this, the article is intended to prove the idea that a new conception of citizenship and political education could, in conditions of a deepening crisis, become the most important link binding civil society and the new content of the politics making its way through corporative interests.

The issue ends with two book reviews. In the first one, Paturyan (2015) critically assesses *The Politics of Transition in Central Asia and the Caucasus: Enduring Legacies and Emerging Challenges* by Amanda E. Wooden and Christoph H. Stefes. Adopting an overarching paradigm of institutionalism, with an emphasis on making academic knowledge relevant for policy decision-making, the book examines the politics and policies of post-communist countries of Central Asia (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan) and the Caucasus (Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia), covering a wide array of topics ranging from economic factors to gender stereotypes, and from ethnic conflicts to educational reforms.

The second book review on *Strategies of Symbolic Nation-Building in South Eastern Europe* edited by Pål Kolstø, 2014 is, according to Bliznakovski (2015) a useful reading for anyone interested in the region and especially for scholars studying nation-building in the post-1991 context. The force of the volume is the fact that it engages with two influential schools of thought on nationalism and nation-building – the 'ethno-symbolic' approach of Antony Smith and Michael Billig's 'banal nationalism'. The two main aims of the book are seen as: map the variations of nation-building among seven postcommunist Balkan states and measure the results of (nation-building) strategies (p. 14), a thing the author critically engages with in his review.

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