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TEMPORAL CHANGES IN THE EVALUATION OF POLITICAL PARTIES:
DOES EVALUATION OF POLITICAL PARTIES REFLECT ATTITUDINAL IDEOLOGIES?[2]

Previous research has shown that since the beginning of the 1990s, differentiation in the ideological orientations of political parties in Serbia has been increased. Comparing three samples, we explored the temporal stability of relations between evaluations of Serbian political parties (DSS, DS, SRS, SPS, SNS, and LDP) and lexically derived ideological dimensions: Traditional and Religious Sources of Authority, Unmitigated Self-Interest, Communal Rationalism, and Subjective Spirituality. We hypothesize that: 1) political parties should be divided into conservative and socio-liberal parties, and this structure should become stable over time; 2) the evaluation of political parties should consistently reflect their political ideology orientation : conservative parties should be related to an indicator of conservative ideology, Traditional Religiosity, while socio-liberal parties should be related to a humanistic ideological orientation, Communal Rationalism. Data was collected in three time-points: 2010 (*N* = 102), 2014/15 (*N* = 358) and 2016 (*N* = 117) from university students in Serbia. In all three studies principal component analyses of evaluations of political parties showed that two components were extracted and interpreted as evaluations of the National-Conservative Parties and Socio-Liberal Parties (in 2010 and 2014), i.e. Democratic parties (in 2016). However, while the structure of evaluations of the National-Conservative Parties remained stable, the congruence of evaluations of the Socio-Liberal Parties decreased over time. Additionally, the results of regression analyses showed that evaluations of the National-Conservative Parties were rooted in Traditional and Religious Sources of Authority and Unmitigated

Self-interest, but the percentage of explained variance decreased over time. The evaluations of the Socio-Liberal Parties had much weaker relations with ideological orientations throughout all three time-points. The findings suggested that there was some kind of ''ideological crisis'' in Serbia, primarily regarding the Socio-Liberal Parties and their supporters.

Keywords: political parties, political ideology, lexical approach, temporal changes

Although the multiparty political system in Serbia was established in 1990 (Bieber, 2003), a wider democratic process started since the year 2000, ten years after the beginning of democratization in other post-communist countries in Europe, including some of the former Yugoslav countries (Bochsler, 2010). During this relatively short period, political parties in Serbia, as Pantić (2006) wrote, "were unusually multiplied, divided, merged and disappeared" and often changed their ideologies (however, this trend was not that different in comparison to the majority of other East European countries). Within this context, Serbian citizens, even active voters of political parties in Serbia, were faced with difficulties regarding the establishment of a relatively stable ideological profile as voters of some of the political parties, or, at least, with the establishment of clear associations between their own ideological orientation and the ideology of the political party which they supported. However, there were research which showed that, , the differentiation in ideological orientations of political parties and their supporters in Serbia increased from the beginning of the 1990s to the middle years of the previous decade (Pantić & Pavlović, 2006; Todosijević, 2006), and political parties dominantly reflected two opposing ideological dimensions: national-conservative and socio-liberal or democratic (e.g., Mihajlović, 2006; Međedović & Petrović, 2013; Todosijević, 2016). In this paper, we were focused on the analysis of the common ideological space of six political parties: Serbian Progressive Party (Srpska Napredna Stranka – SNS), Serbian Radical Party (Srpska Radikalna Stranka – SRS), Serbian Democratic Party (Demokratska Stranka Srbije – DSS), Serbian Socialist Party (Socijalistička Partija Srbije – SPS), Liberal-Democratic Party (Liberalno Demokratska Partija – LDP) and Democratic Party (Demokratska Stranka – DS). Our goal was to explore changes in their structure. and their relations with broad, lexically derived ideological dimensions over the last seven years.

Political parties in Serbia: Current situation

When this research was started in 2010, the political parties that constituted the majority in Serbian Parliament were SRS, DSS, LDP, DS, SPS, SNS. All political parties except LDP and SNS were formed during the 1990s. Most of them dated back to the beginning of the multiparty political system in Serbia during the first years of the 1990s (it is important to note that the leaders of LDP and SNS are also familiar faces from the 1990s). These political parties have been the most influential up until and including the present-day Serbian political scene.

The common issues addressed in the programs of all the parties were social and economical issues, attitudes towards Kosovo, accession to the European Union, etc. These issues were also the central topics for all political parties during the last national elections in Serbia (Spasojević, 2017). The explicitly postulated political goals of SRS (the right-wing nationalist party; Stojiljković, 2011), DSS and NS (the right-wing conservative parties) were related primarily to the preserva-

tion of the territorial integrity of Serbia and its cultural identity, including retaining Kosovo as a part of Serbia. Also, they advocated against the accsession to the European Union. DS (with socio-liberal ideology), G17 Plus (the liberal party), SPS (the left authoritarian party) and SNS (the populist conservative party formed by separation from the conservative nationalistic SRS in 2008) advocated a middle ground option that consolidated both the accession to the EU and the preservation of the territorial integrity of Serbia. The LDP is the only party that explicitly advocates the acceptance of Kosovo independence, prompts accession of Serbia to the EU, and is generally more open to liberal values.

Bearing in mind the political goals of the parties, their postulated ideological orientations, and shifted d the political power of the parties, it could be interesting to consider the relations of the political parties, especially in the context of their ideologies. In the period before 2010, Mihajlović (2006) found that the common space of preferences of the political parties could be described by two components. The first component was interpreted as the liberal-democratic block, and this component was saturated with the preferences of DS, LDP, G17 lPus, Serbian Renewal Movement (Srpski pokret obnove, SPO), and Socio-Democratic Union. SPS, SRS, NS, and "Power of Serbia" Movement ("Pokret Snaga Srbije") loaded on the second principal component, interpreted as the socio-nationalistic block. DSS saturated both principal components. Mihajlović (2006) also noted that the traditionalistic value patterns were characteristic for supporters of the socio-nationalistic parties, while voters of the liberal-democratic parties were characterized dominantly by modernistic value orientations.

Similarly, Međedović and Petrović (2013) analyzed the preferences of political parties which were in Serbian Parliament in 2010: DSS, DS, SRS, SPS, SNS, NS, LDP and G17 Plus. They also found that the two-component solution best described their common space: SRS, DSS, NS, and SNS saturated the component named preferences of the National-Conservative parties, but LDP, DS and G17 Plus constituted the component interpreted as preferences of the Socio-Liberal parties. Differing from the Mihajlović's (2006) results, SPS loaded both principal components.

Both research results practically supported and extended the findings of the study conducted by Todosijević (2006), where he compared the preferences of the main political parties in Serbia from the beginning of the 1990s to 2002. He also concluded that political parties (and their voters) could be divided between the authoritarian (SPS and SRS) and democratic (other political parties, with DS and DSS as leaders) blocks. The first block was characterized by a mixture of socialistic and nationalistic ideology (in 1990, nationalism and socialism were opposed to each other, in 1996 they were unrelated, while since the beginning of the 2000s nationalism and socialism have been positively related). Political parties from the democratic block were on the opposite side of the social-nationalistic ideology orientation.

Relations of political parties' preferences and ideological dimensions

Regarding political ideology, some authors make a distinction between two types of ideology: the ideology of party supporters and the ideology of political parties (e.g., Mihajlović, 2006). These two types of ideology are often complementary, and political parties tend to reflect the ideology of party supporters through the party ideology (Dalton & McAllister, 2015). These authors also argue that the first type of ideology is relatively stable, while the second one is flexible, more often in the sense that political parties change and adapt their ideologies in order to gain a broader range of supporters, generalizing their ideology to fit all of the particular ideologies of their potential voters (Adams, Clark, Ezrow, & Glasgow, 2004). Jost (2006) pointed out that early political parties, before the 1950s, were focused on ideology, which was followed by ''the end of ideology'' – de-ideologization of the political parties and convergence of their points of view. The hypothesis about ''the end of ideology'' is also supported by Converse's (1964) findings that the social attitudes of ordinary citizens are characterized by a lack of logical consistency and internal coherence, and that they are not organized in a systematic form that could be called ideology. However, more recently, Jost (2006) argued, based on the comprehensive analysis of the empirical findings primarily in psychology, that dispositional variables like personality traits and social attitudes have influence on an individual's political behavior, and that, in this context, ideology should be studied as a relatively stable socio-psychological phenomenon. Social attitudes, i.e. ideological dimensions (Krauss, 2006) have the greatest effects in predicting political behavior: party preference, voting behavior, etc. (Jost, Federico, & Napier,2009). For example, the right-wing authoritarianism, social dominance orientation and nationalism are good predictors of specific forms of political behavior, such as providing support to the right-wing parties, voting for the right-wing parties in the past, and the intention of voting in future elections (Duckitt & Sibley, 2016; Wilson & Sibley, 2013).

For the purpose of this study, the research on the relationship between social attitudes and political behavior in Serbia is especially interesting. Probably the most informative overview of the relationship between social attitudes and voting preferences was given by Pantić and Pavlović (2006), analyzing the relationship between a party affiliation and the system of values, and social attitudes during the period between 1990 and 2005. Their main conclusion was that at the beginning of the multiparty political period in Serbia, voters of different parties, especially those from the parties which were dominant, were relatively poorly differentiated when it came to their attitudinal orientation. However, already during the next elections (in 1992) there was an ideological differentiation. Supporters of DS, DSS and SPO showed a mixture of nationalistic and liberal-democratic attitudes, while the main feature of the voters of SPS and SRS was traditionalism.

The situation became even clearer since the mid-nineties. Xenophobia, nationalism, radicalism, authoritarianism, statism, and traditionalism became dis-

tinctive attitudinal characteristics of the voters of SPS and SRS, while the voters of DS, DSS, and SPO were characterized by modernism, non-authoritarianism, and rejection of radicalism, nationalism and statism. This division of the electorate survived even after the democratic changes in 2000, leading to the so-called ''socio-nationalistic'' block, consisting of voters of SPS and SRS, and the ''democratic'' block, consisting of voters of DS, DSS, and SPO, and later joined by the newly formed parties, like G17 Plus, LDP, and so on. It was very interesting that, despite clear polarization in the ideological orientation between the two blocks, religiosity was practically a constant characteristic of voters of all the parties, and its influence and importance progressively increased. There were also other studies that supported the hypothesis about the ideological polarization of voters of political parties from two blocks, conservative and democratic, i.e. socio-liberal, with very similar findings (e.g., Mihić, 2005; Todosijević, 2006, 2016). The study conducted by Todosijević (2016) showed that only the affiliation of SPS was weakly negatively related to the political left-right self-placement. The affiliation of SNS, SRS and DSS, as parties that were known for their social conservatism and nationalist orientation, were weakly positively related to the political left-right self-placement. However, the affiliation of DS and LDP was also weakly positively related to the political left-right self-identification. Compared with his previous studies, Todosijević (2016) concluded that the impact of the left-right ideological dimension on understanding the affiliation of political parties in Serbia decreased over time.

Political parties' preferences and lexically derived ideological dimensions

Starting from the lexical paradigm as a reference framework which should ensure comprehensiveness and representativeness of the sample of social attitudes, Saucier (2000, 2013) has formulated a structural model of basic ideological dimensions, based on dictionary terms that have the suffix –*ism,* and refer to social phenomena (for more detailed information about the lexical ideological dimensions see Petrović, 2016). Primarily, Saucier (2000) found four broad ideological dimensions: α-isms or Tradition-Oriented Religiosity, which represented confidence in the traditional and religious sources of authority; β-isms or Unmitigated Self-Interest appeared as materialistic, egoistical and selfish motives, as well as the rejection of political correctness, and the existing political system; γ-isms or Communal Rationalism represented positive attitudes towards common institutions which guaranteed individual freedom and respect of democratic values; δ-isms or Subjective Spirituality were spiritual attitudes based on individualism and beliefs in "paranormal" phenomena. In his second study, Saucier (2013) replicated these four ideological dimensions and found an additional fifth one, interpreted as ε-isms, Inequality-Aversion or simply Egalitarianism.

There were only few studies which explored relationships among the lexical ideological dimensions. However, these studies suggested that lexically derived ideological dimensions could be important for the understanding of political behavior and political preferences. Saucier (2013) reported that, in the USA, Tradition-Oriented Religiosity was positively associated with the preferences of the Republican Party, while democrats were characterized by higher Communal Rationalism, Subjective Spirituality and Egalitarianism. It was important to note that Saucier also found that ideological dimensions did not contribute to the prediction of change in the party preference, except Tradition-Oriented Religiosity, which suggested that people high on this ideological dimension did tend to become more republican over time. Especially interesting were the results of the research conducted in Serbia, in which the relationship of lexical ideological dimensions and preferences of Serbian political parties was examined (Međedović & Petrović, 2013). This research showed that Tradition Oriented Religiosity was associated with the preferences of national-conservative political parties (SRS, DSS, SNS and NS), and that Hedonism (redefined Unmitigated Self-Interest) was associated with the preferences of both national-conservative and socio-liberal (LDP, DS, G17 plus) political parties. Interestingly, the expected correlation between the preferences of socio-liberal parties and Communal Rationalism was not detected.

The current study

The complexity of the political situation in Serbia is reflected in the insufficiently differentiated political options, in terms of noncompliance of programs and practical functioning of the political parties, as well as in the ambiguity of the ideological positions of the parties and their supporters. However, some research suggested that, from the beginning of the 1990s, political parties and their voters became ideologically more differentiated. These findings imply that political parties and their supporters may have clearer ideological positions today than in the previous period. Following these findings, we explored the stability of relations between evaluations of Serbian political parties and lexically derived ideological dimensions over time. We tested two hypotheses: 1) political parties should be divided into conservative and democratic, socio-liberal parties, and the latent structure of the evaluations of political parties should be stable over time; 2) the evaluation of the political parties should consistently reflect the orientation of their political ideology: evaluations of the conservative parties should be associated with indicators of conservative ideology, primarily traditional religiosity, and the self-interest as well, while democratic, socio-liberal parties should be related to a humanistic ideological orientation (Communal Rationalism and possibly Subjective Spirituality).

Method

Sample

Data was collected in three time-points, from three different convenience samples of university students in Serbia: 2010 (N = 102; 65% were female, mean age was 23.14, SD = 3.85), 2014/15 (N = 358; 72% were female, mean age was 23.01, SD = 5.97) and 2016 (N = 117; 82% were female, mean age was 2.95, SD = 3.70). The samples were selected on a voluntary basis. The students were motivated to participate by additional points they acquired on a psychology course they attended.

Measures

Evaluation of the political parties. In order to measure the evaluation of the political parties in all three time-points, we asked the respondents the following question: "How do you assess the general work of the following political parties?" They submitted their responses on a five point scale, where 1 was marked as *very poor* and 5 as *very good*. Previous research showed that this single question, which measures a performance of the parties, rather than feelings towards parties, is a valid measure of party evaluation (Kuzmanović & Petrović, 2010; Međedović & Petrović, 2013). The six major political parties in Serbia were evaluated: SNS, SRS, DSS, SPS, LDP and DS. The descriptive characteristics and bivariate correlations of evaluations of the political parties can be seen in the Table 1.

Ideological dimensions. Four lexically derived ideological dimensions: α-isms or Traditional and Religious Sources of Authority (TRA), β-isms or Unmitigated Self-Interest (USI), γ-isms or Communal Rationalism (CR) and δ-isms or Subjective Spirituality (SS) were measured via Survey on Dictionary-Based Isms (SDI; Saucier, 2008, 2013). Three different measures were used: SDI-24 in 2010, SDI-46 in 2014/15, and SDI-25 in 2016. All three SDI measures had a 5-point Likert's scale for responding, where 1 stands for *completely disagree,* and 5 for *completely agree*. The descriptive characteristics and reliabilities for all three scales and their inter-correlation matrices can be seen in Table 1.

Results

Relationships between evaluations of political parties and lexical ideological dimensions

The simple relationships between all examined variables (the evaluations of political parties and lexical ideological dimensions) in all three time-points were investigated by using the bivariate correlations (Table 1).

Table 1

Bivariate correlations between evaluations of Serbian political parties and ideological dimensions

Year		M	SD	α	Correlations								
					DS	DSS	SRS	SPS	LDP	SNS	TRA	USI	CR
2010 (*N* = 102)	DS	3.03	1.13	/	1								
	DSS	2.85	.96	/	.11	1							
	SRS	2.46	1.14	/	-.03	.46**	1						
	SPS	2.30	1.08	/	.31**	.21*	.24*	1					
	LDP	2.14	1.17	/	.49**	-.07	-.20*	.17†	1				
	SNS	2.90	1.24	/	-.12	.50**	.54**	.19†	-.18†	1			
	TRA	3.41	0.93	.76	-.06	.24*	.36**	.08	-.22*	.15	1		
	USI	2.61	0.68	.72	.22*	.20*	.46**	.41**	-.02	.32**	.19*	1	
	CR	4.03	0.35	.59	-.03	.06	.14	.14	-.09	.15	.06	-.06	1
	SS	3.19	0.57	.63	-.16	-.13	-.05	-.08	.20*	-.06	-.01	-.22*	.07
2014/15 (*N* = 358)	DS	2.28	0.96	/	1								
	DSS	2.23	0.99	/	.44**	1							
	SRS	2.19	1.10	/	.31**	.59**	1						
	SPS	2.30	1.03	/	.48**	.51**	.47**	1					
	LDP	2.40	1.03	/	.58**	.33**	.16**	.38**	1				
	SNS	2.31	1.21	/	.37**	.48**	.35**	.61**	.31**	1			
	TRA	2.70	0.94	.85	.03	.22**	.30**	.23**	-.1	.34**	1		
	USI	2.31	0.63	.74	-.01	.13*	.28**	.16**	-.06	.14**	.44**	1	
	CR	3.36	0.43	.62	.11	.08	-.04	.11	.15**	.15**	-.1	-.15*	1
	SS	2.99	0.69	.70	-.02	.11	.02	-.02	.02	.12	.23**	.04	-.12
2016 (*N* = 117)	DS	1.71	0.87	/	1								
	DSS	1.62	0.8	/	.55**	1							
	SRS	1.59	0.94	/	.36**	.50**	1						
	SPS	2.03	1.07	/	.37**	.47**	.32**	1					
	LDP	1.55	0.82	/	.70**	.46**	.26**	.35**	1				
	SNS	2.19	1.31	/	.16†	.37**	.39**	.56**	.29**	1			
	TRA	2.86	0.66	.73	-.04	.11	.32**	.20**	-.03	.24**	1		
	USI	2.38	0.76	.72	.14	.04	-.02	-.02	.19*	.13	.13*	1	
	CR	3.94	0.60	.66	-.02	-.05	-.01	.01	-.14	.06	-.02	-.02	1
	SS	3.34	0.76	.69	.13	.1	.05	.15	.24*	.00	-.03	.09	.05

Note. DS = Demokratska Stranka (Democratic Party); DSS = Demokratska Stranka Srbije (Serbian Democratic Party); SRS = Srpska Radikalna Stranka (Serbian Radical Party); SPS = Socijalistička Partija Srbije (Serbian Socialist Party); LDP = Liberalno Demokratska Partija (Liberal-Democratic Party); SNS = Srpska Napredna Stranka (Serbian Progressive Party); TRA = Traditional and Religious Sources of Authority; USI = Unmitigated Self-Interest; CR = Communal Rationalism; SS = Subjective Spirituality.
†*p* < .10. **p* < .05. ***p* < .01.

As can be seen, in 2010, the evaluations of political parties from similar ideological positions correlated positively (e.g. DSS, SRS and SNS, as well as DS and LDP), but evaluations of the parties from the opposite side of the ideological spectrum correlated negatively, (e.g. LDP with SRS and SNS), or there were no significant correlations (e.g. DS with SNS, SRS or DSS). However, in 2014 and 2016, the magnitude of correlations between the evaluations of all examined parties was higher, and all of them were positive.

Weak to moderate correlations were detected mainly between the national-conservative parties and Traditional and Religious Sources of authority and Unmitigated Self-Interest in all three time-points. SNS and SPS had similar patterns of change in their associations with ideological dimensions: in 2010, these parties correlated moderately with Unmitigated Self-Interest, while later, in 2014, their ideologies were colored by a combination of Traditionalism and Communal Rationalism, especially in the case of SNS. Finally, in 2016, only correlations with Traditional and Religious Sources of Authority were detected. Expected correlations between the positive evaluation of the socio-liberal parties and Communal Rationalism were not detected. In the case of DS, the only correlation with Unmitigated Self-Interest was identified in 2010, with no significant correlations in 2014 and 2016. There was no stable ideological profile of LDP. It shifted from the anti-traditionalistic ideology, across advocating values of the civic state, toward materialistic self-interest followed by subjective spirituality.

Latent structure and temporal stability of political party evaluation

The latent structure of evaluations of the six political parties was analysed by the Principal Component Analysis (PCA), separately for each of the three time-points. The optimal number of components was obtained by parallel analysis. The extracted components were rotated in the promax position. The results of the PCA are presented in Figure 1.

In all three cases, the results of the PCA indicated that the common space of the evaluation of Serbian political parties could be optimally explained by two extracted components. In 2010, two extracted components explained about 64% of variance in total (eigenvalue of the first component was, λ_1 = 2.15, and it explained 36% of the variance; the second component had eigenvalue λ_2 = 1.69, and explained an additional 28% of the variance; random eigenvalues for these components were 1.36 and 1.18). The correlation between these two components was r = -.01. The first component was saturated by the positive evaluation of SRS, SNS and DSS, interpreted as the national-conservative parties (NCP). DS and LDP were loaded on the second component, interpreted as the socio-liberal parties (SLP). SPS had saturation on both components, but primarily the component interpreted it as socio-liberal.
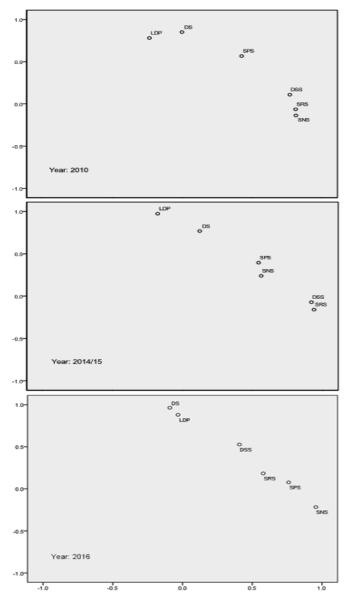
After the elections in 2014, the same six political parties were evaluated again, and two components, practically identical to the ones from 2010, were extracted.

These two explained about 70% of the total variance. The first component ($\lambda_1 = 3.19$, 53% of variance explained; random eigenvalue was 1.18) was saturated by the positive evaluation of SRS, DSS and SNS, and interpreted as the national-conservative parties. The second one ($\lambda_2 = 1.03$, 17% of variance explained; random eigenvalue was 1.01) was interpreted as the socio-liberal block, and saturated by the positive evaluation of DS and LDP. The SPS again loaded both components, but primarily the first, national-conservative component. However, in difference from 2010, these two components correlated more strongly ($r = .47$).

In 2016, two principal components were also extracted, which explained 69% of the common variance of the evaluations of political parties. , However, some changes in the structure of the components were made (the parallel analysis showed that random eigenvalues for the first two components were 1.32 and 1.16). The first principal component ($\lambda_1 = 2.96$, 49% of the variance explained) could be interpreted as national-conservative, and it was saturated dominantly by the positive evaluation of SNS, SRS and SPS, which had no saturation on the second component. DSS also saturated this component, but had a strong saturation on the second component as well, together with DS and LDP. This second component ($\lambda_2 = 1.24$, 21% of variance explained) was interpreted, not as socio-liberal, but rather as the democratic block. These two principal components also correlated strongly ($r = .38$).

The results of the PCA suggested some stability over time in the evaluation of some political parties. DS and LDP on one side, and SRS and SNS on the other side. However, the results also suggested that SPS and DSS could change their position in the common space of the scene of political parties over time. Graphical representations of the extracted components in all time-points are presented on Figure 1.

In order to additionally test the hypothesis about the temporal stability of the structure of evaluation of political parties , i.e. the stability of the two extracted principal components, there were calculated the coefficients of congruence between them. The coefficients of congruence between the national-conservative components were .97, .91 and .90, but among the socio-liberal components they were .93, .87 and .79, for the periods 2010–2014/15, 2010–2016 and 2014–2016, respectively.

Figure 1. Evaluation of political parties in 2010, 2014 and 2016: rotated components in two-dimensional space. DS = Demokratska Stranka (Democratic Party); DSS = Demokratska Stranka Srbije (Serbian Democratic Party); SRS = Srpska Radikalna Stranka (Serbian Radical Party); SPS = Socijalistička Partija Srbije (Serbian Socialist Party); LDP = Liberalno Demokratska Partija (Liberal-Democratic Party); SNS = Srpska Napredna Stranka (Serbian Progressive Party). White dots: Socio-Liberal Parties; Black dots: National-Conservative Parties; Gray dots: parties with loadings > .30 on both components.

Relationship between political parties' evaluation and ideological dimensions

The set of the linear regression analysis, separately for the each of the time-points, was performed with the aim to explore the stability of relations between evaluations of Serbian political parties and lexically derived ideological dimensions over time. In all three cases, the two components of the evaluation of the political parties extracted by PCA and saved by the regression method were entered as the criterion variables. The four lexically derived ideological dimensions were entered as the predictor variables, controlled for gender and age. The results are shown in Tables 2 and 3.

As can be seen in Table 2, regression models have shown that lexically derived ideological dimensions were important predictors of the evaluation of the National-Conservative parties . All three regression functions containing demographic variables and lexically derived ideological dimensions were statistically significant. A traditional and religious source of authority was the most important predictor of the positive evaluations of the National-Conservative parties throughout all three time-points. Unmitigated Self-Interest also had a significant role in the prediction of evaluations of the National-Conservative parties in 2010 and 2014. It is very important to note that the percentage of the criterion's variance explained by the set of predictors decreased significantly over time.

Table 2

Results of linear regression analysis: Prediction of the evaluations of National-Conservative parties by lexical ideological dimensions

	2010		2014		2016	
	β	r	β	r	β	r
Gender	-.07	-.04	.07	.01	-.02	-.03
Age	-.11	-.07	-.20**	-.27**	-.10	-.12
TRA	.27**	.34**	.28**	.37**	.31**	.30**
USI	.32**	.42**	.15**	.28**	-.02	.04
CR	.12	.18*	.11	-.02	.05	.02
SS	-.09	-.13*	.04	.13*	.11	.08
R^2	.27**		.20**		.11*	

Note. TRA = Traditional and Religious Sources of Authority; USI = Unmitigated Self-Interest; CR = Communal Rationalism; SS = Subjective Spirituality.
*p < .05. **p < .01.

Table 3

Results of linear regression analysis: Prediction of the evaluations of Socio-Liberal/Democratic parties by lexical ideological dimensions

	2010		2014		2016	
	β	r	β	r	β	r
Gender	.21*	.24**	.13*	.12*	.07	.10
Age	.01	-.12	-.1	-.07	-.01	-.07
TRA	-.17	-.12	.02	.01	.01	.00
USI	.26*	.22**	.03	.01	.12	.14
CR	-.01	-.01	.17*	.13*	-.07	-.08
SS	.08	.01	.02	.01	.17*	.19*
R^2	.13*		.05*		.06	

Note. TRA = Traditional and Religious Sources of Authority; USI = Unmitigated Self-Interest; CR = Communal Rationalism; SS = Subjective Spirituality.
*$p < .05$. **$p < .01$.

When predicting the evaluations of the Socio-liberal/Democratic parties, the percentage of the criterion variance explained by the set of predictors also significantly decreased throughout the three time-points (Table 3). It is also important to note that, in this case, the predictor variables explained a significantly lower percentage of variance of the criterion than in the case of evaluations of the National-Conservative parties (in 2016, ideological dimensions had no significant contribution in the explanation of the criterion). Only in 2014, the positive correlation between Communal Rationalism and evaluation of the Socio-liberal/Democratic parties was detected.

Discussion

Since the establishment of the pluralistic political system in Serbia in the early 1990s, the political parties "were unusually multiplied, divided, merged and disappeared" (Pantić, 2006), with change in their political ideology, or often despite it. This trend with political parties, and with their supporters as well, continued over the last few years. However, the previous research (Međedović & Petrović, 2013; Mihajlović, 2006; Pantić & Pavlović, 2006; Todosijević, 2006) showed that there was a tendency since the beginning of the 1990s for political parties and their supporters in Serbia to be divided within two ideological blocks. The first of them was comprised of political parties with conservative, nationalist and left-wing authoritarian ideological orientations (dominantly SPS and SRS during the 1990s and early 2000s, and DSS after the elections in 2008). The sec-

ond one reflected a democratic and socio-liberal ideological orientation (with DS and DSS during the 1990s, and DS, LDP and G17 Plus since the beginning of the year 2000). In this study, we analyzed the latent structure of evaluations of the six most influential political parties in Serbia, which had continuity over time: SPS, SRS, DS, DSS, LDP and SNS, in the context of their temporal stability. We focused on the period after 2010 for two reasons: firstly, there were already studies which analyzed the structure of the political parties preferences in the previous period (e.g., Mihajlović, 2006; Todosijević, 2006), but not in the recent years. Secondly, after 2010, more precisely after the national elections in 2012, there has been a very important shift in the political power of political parties in Serbia, with democratic parties moving to the opposition, while SNS and SPS formed the Government. Analyses of the latent structure of the evaluation of political parties in the three time-points, 2010, 2014/15 and 2016, by conducting the PCA in this study showed that this cleavage of evaluations of the political parties continued to exist in 2010, and in an interpretative manner in 2014 as well . In both time-points, two principal components were extracted and interpreted as positive evaluations of the national-conservative (SRS, DSS, SNS) and socio-liberal block (DS and LDP), following the terminology proposed in the previous research (Međedović & Petrović, 2013; Stojiljković, 2011), with SPS that loaded both components. However, a shift occurred in 2016: although only two parties (SPS and DSS) changed the components which they previously dominantly loaded, the interpretation of the components was significantly different than in the previous two time-points. Namely, the first component could be interpreted as the national-conservative block (SNS, SPS, SRS, and partly DSS), but the second one could be interpreted as the democratic block (DS, LDP, and partly DSS), following the terminology of Pantić and Pavlović (2006). These two components not only reflected changes in the structure of the evaluation of dominant political parties in the meaning of their ideologies, which implied some kind of the return to the past, but the similar structures of party preferences were detected during the 1990s and early 2000s (Mihajlović, 2006; Todosijević, 2006). They reflected the government-opposition polarization. Although the similar structure was detected in the previous period, when the socio-liberal parties governed (2010), and when they moved to the opposition, the extracted components showed some stability over time. We detected relatively high coefficients of congruence from the period from 2010 to 2014. The structure was less congruent, or even incongruent in comparison to the period from 2014 to 2016 and from 2010 to 2016. It is important to note that the two-component structure was detected in all three time-points despite the fact that, differing from 2010, in 2014 and 2016 all political parties were evaluated *mostly negatively*: we believe that this is the reason for positive zero-order correlations between evaluations of parties from different ideological dimensions. Based on the evaluations of political parties, these results suggested that the party ideology was not the primary reason for their coalitions, but rather their endeavor to govern, similar to the period of the 1990s, when the majority in the Serbian parlia-

ment was constituted by SPS and SRS, the parties with conceptually hard-to-join socialistic and nationalistic ideologies.

Previous interpretations have been additionally confirmed when the analysis of relationships between political parties evaluations and ideological dimensions are taken into consideration. Analysis of the relations between the evaluation of political parties and lexically driven ideological dimensions showed that, as expected, people's evaluations of the national-conservative parties were rooted primarily in traditional and religious sources of authority (similarly as Saucier (2013) reported for the Republicans), but were also motivated by the unmitigated, materialistic self-interest. However, the magnitude of the relations between the political parties and lexical ideological dimensions decreased over time. Only traditionalistic attitudinal patterns remained constant. Socio-liberal, i.e. democratic parties had no stable relations with lexical ideological dimensions, in the sense that they were ideologically undefined or, at least, that their ideology was not recognized by the Serbian citizens. These results are in line with the findings of Todosijević (2016). Considering the relations of the political left-right self-placement and sympathies for the Serbian political parties, he found that except SPS, all other political parties, including DS and LDP, were weakly positively associated with the political left-right self-identification. He concluded that the impact of the left-right ideological dimension on understanding sympathies for political parties in Serbia decreased over time. Similarly, we should also conclude that the magnitude of associations between the evaluations of political parties and ideological dimensions decreased over time, with the addition that evaluations of the socio-liberal democratic parties had no roots in the respondents' positions on ideological dimensions. The findings generally suggest that some kind of ''ideological crisis'' is being faced by citizens in Serbia, primarily within the supporters of Socio-Liberal/Democratic parties.

Two more arguments in favor of the hypothesis about the ideological crisis of the political parties in Serbia arise from the findings of this research. The first of them regards the relations of the evaluations of political parties and Unmitigated Self-Interest. Namely, primarily the conservative parties, as well as the socio-liberal ones, in 2010, when this political block governed, were related to the Unmitigated Self-Interest, as dimensions from the lexical ideology corpus. These findings suggested that, beside traditionalistic values, supporters of these political parties were motivated by materialistic, selfish motives to support their parties, and it seemed that the voters believed that the important part of politics was the orientation towards self-interest, without paying attention to the needs and views of others (Međedović & Petrović, 2013). These results became clearer when it was taken into consideration that some authors argued that the organizational structure of political parties in Serbia in the recent years have been expressed in an oligarchic syndrome, corruption and clientelism (Cvejić, 2016; Kovačević, 2015). The results of this study also showed that in 2010, the correlation between two extracted components was close to zero, which suggested the independence

of these two components, but also the dissatisfaction of participants with both socio-liberal and national-conservative parties. However, in 2014/15 and 2016, the two extracted components correlated more highly, about .50. A positive correlation between two factors which we obtained in 2014/15 and 2016 did not mean that the respondents who positively evaluated conservative parties had a positive evaluation of socio-liberal/democratic parties as well. On the contrary, the respondents expressed a deep *dissatisfaction* with both groups of parties (these findings were supported by the descriptive and bivariate correlations between the political parties in all three time-points, see Table 1). Pavlović (2013) showed that the best predictors of the youth electoral absenteeism were a decreased level of party identification, political interests, and the formal activism. As it is shown, we have also found that our respondents generally negatively evaluated all political parties in all time-points, increasingly over time. The undefined ideological positions of the political parties, especially the socio-liberal/democratic parties, and the significant role of materialistic self-interest, could be some of the reasons for it. However, it is an issue that could be investigated in some further research.

In this context, the sample structure as the crucial limitation of this study, must be emphasized. Namely, in all three time-points, the samples dominantly consisted of young, educated, primarily female respondents. It could be doubly implicative for understanding the main findings of this research – the associations between evaluations of the national-conservative parties and traditional and religious sources of authority as ideological dimension, as well as the lack of the expected associations between Communal Rationalism and evaluations of the Socio-Liberal/Democratic parties. Concretely, some recent research of the gender gap in voting preferences (e.g., Abendschön & Steinmetz, 2014) has shown that women, in comparison to men, prefer the left-wing political parties in most of the European countries, except in the former-communist transitional countries where women's preferences for the right-wing parties have been detected. Our findings could be in line with the Abendschön and Steinmetz (2014) findings, and thus the findings should be treated carefully in the meaning of their generalizability. Hence, these findings could be replicated on more gender-balanced samples.

The results of this study have generally shown that it could be assumed that there is an ideological crisis, or, even better, a crisis of the political parties (Kovačević, 2015) that reflects on the way citizens see them. Avoidance of the "catch-all" (Mihajlović, 2006) approach and clearer ideological positioning, not only through their political programs, but also through their political activities which reflected their ideological orientations, could be a strategy which could reduce the negative evaluation of all political parties, regardless of their ideological orientations, but primarily socio-liberal/democratic ones.

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TEMPORALNE PROMENE U EVALUACIJI POLITIČKIH STRANAKA: DA LI EVALUACIJA POLITIČKIH STRANAKA ODRAŽAVA IDEOLOŠKE STAVOVE?

Kompleksnost političke situacije u Srbiji ogleda se u nedovoljno izdiferenciranim političkim opcijama, u smislu neusklađenosti programa i praktičnog funkcionisanja političkih partija, kao i u dvosmislenosti njihovih ideoloških pozicija. Međutim, neka istraživanja sugerišu da su od početka 1990-ih političke partijepostajale ideološki sve više izdiferencirane. Ova istraživanja su ukazivala na to da političke partije i njihove pristalice mogu imati jasnije ideološke stavove u odnosu na prethodni period. Oslanjajući se na rezultate ovih istraživanja, ispitali smo stabilnost odnosa između evaluacija političkih stranaka u Srbiji i leksički deriviranih ideoloških dimenzija tokom perioda 2010-2016. Testirali smo dve hipoteze: 1) političke stranke mogu se podeliti na konzervativne i demokratske partije, a latentna struktura evaluacije političkih stranaka trebalo bi da bude stabilna tokom vremena; 2) evaluacija političkih stranaka će dosledno odražavati političku ideologiju – konzervativne partije će korelirati sa indikatorima konzervativne ideologije kao što suTradicionalni i religiozni izvori autoriteta, dok će partije iz demokratskog bloka biti povezane sa humanističkom ideološkom orijentacijom. Podaci o evaluaciji političkih partija prikupljeni su u tri vremenske tačke na tri različita uzorka: 2010 (*N* = 102), 2014/15 (*N* = 358) i 2016 (*N* = 117) u Srbiji. Ispitanici su bili studenti različitih univerziteta u Srbiji. U sve tri vremenske tačke, ispitali smo odnose između evaluacija najuticajnijih političkih partija u Srbiji (DSS, DS, SRS, SPS, SNS i LDP) i leksički deriviranih ideoloških dimenzija: Tradicionalnih i religioznih izvora autoriteta, Sebičnih interesa, Komunalnog racionalizma (humanizma) i Subjektivne spiritualnosti.

U sve tri vremenske tačke, analiza glavnih komponenata evaluacije političkih stranaka pokazala je da se mogu ekstrahovati dve komponente, koje su interpretirane kao nacionalno-konzervativnii socio-liberalni blok (u 2010 i 2014 godini), odnosno, nacionalno-konzervativni i demokratski blok (2016. godine). Koeficijenti kongruence između nacionalno-konzervativnih faktora bili su .97, .91 i .90, a među socio-liberalnim faktorima .93, .87 i .79, redom za periode 2010–2014/15, 2010–2016 i 2014–2016. Linearna regresiona analiza pokazala je da ideološke dimenzije objašnjavaju 27%, 20% i 11% varijanse evaluacije nacionalno-konzervativnih

i 13% i 5% varijanse evaluacije socioliberalnih političkih partija redom za 2010, 2014 i 2016 godinu, s tim da poslednji (2016) model pedikcije evaluacije demokratskih stranaka ideološkim dimenzijama nije statistički značajan. Nacionalno-konzervativne partije praktično su ukorenjene u tradicionalnim i religioznim izvorima autoriteta i sebičnim interesima u sve tri vremenske tačke, dok socijalno-liberalne tj., demokratske stranke ne odražavaju jasnu ideološku orijentaciju.

Rezultati ovog istraživanja sugerišu da je evaluacija političkih stranaka ideološki sve manje izdiferenciranatokom vremena – u 2016. godini njihova struktura odražava pre vlast-opozicija polarizaciju nego ideološku konzervativno-liberalnu polarizaciju. Takođe, samo nacionalno-konzervativne stranke imaju jasniju ideološku pozadinu, dok su socijalno-liberalne (demokratske) stranke ideološki prektično nedefinisane. Nalazi sugerišu da postoji neka vrsta „ideološke krize" u Srbiji, pre svega u kada su u pitanju socijalno-liberalne, tj. demokratske stranke i njihove pristalice.

Ključne reči: političke partije, politička ideologija, leksički pristup, promene tokom vremena