

**THE COUNCIL FOR RESEARCH IN VALUES AND PHILOSOPHY
CULTURAL HERITAGE AND
THE FOUNDATIONS OF SOCIAL LIFE**

Series IVA. Central and Eastern Europe

- Vol. IVA.1 *The Philosophy of Person: Solidarity and Cultural Creativity: Polish Philosophical Studies, I*,
A. Tischner, J.M. Zycinski,
ISBN 1-56518-048-8 (cloth); ISBN 1-56518-049-6 (paper).
- Vol. IVA.2 *Public and Private Social Inventions in Modern Societies: Polish Philosophical Studies, II*,
L. Dyczewski, P. Peachey, J. Kromkowski,
ISBN 1-56518-050-x (cloth). paper ISBN 1-56518-051-8 (paper).
- Vol. IVA.3 *Traditions and Present Problems of Czech Political Culture: Czechoslovak Philosophical Studies, I*,
M. Bedná, M. Vejraka
ISBN 1-56518-056-9 (cloth); ISBN 1-56518-057-7 (paper).
- Vol. IVA.4 *Czech Philosophy in the XXth Century: Czech Philosophical Studies, II*,
Lubomír Nový and Jiri Gabriel,
ISBN 1-56518-028-3 (cloth); ISBN 1-56518-029-1 (paper).
- Vol. IVA.5 *Language, Values and the Slovak Nation: Slovak Philosophical Studies, I*,
Tibor Pichler and Jana Gašparíková,
ISBN 1-56518-036-4 (cloth); ISBN 1-56518-037-2 (paper).
- Vol. IVA.6 *Morality and Public Life in a Time of Change: Bulgarian Philosophical Studies, I*,
V. Prodanov, M. Stoyanova,
ISBN 1-56518-054-2 (cloth); ISBN 1-56518-055-0 (paper).
- Vol. IVA.9 *National, Cultural and Ethnic Identities: Harmony beyond Conflict: Czech Philosophical Studies, IV*
Jaroslav Hroch, David Hollan, George F. McLean
ISBN 1-56518-113-1 (paper).
- Vol. IVA.11 *Interests and Values: The Spirit of Venture in a Time of Change: Slovak Philosophical Studies, II*
Tibor Pichler and Jana Gasparikova
ISBN 1-56518-125-5 (paper).

RVP
IVA. 10

Models of Identities in Postcommunist Societies
-- Zagorka Golubović and George F. McLean --



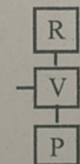
CULTURAL HERITAGE AND CONTEMPORARY CHANGE
SERIES IVA. CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE, VOLUME 10

MODELS OF IDENTITIES IN POSTCOMMUNIST SOCIETIES

Yugoslav Philosophical Studies, I

Edited by

Zagorka Golubović
George F. McLean



THE COUNCIL FOR RESEARCH IN VALUES & PHILOSOPHY

Copyright © 1999 by
The Council for Research in Values and Philosophy

Box 261
Cardinal Station
Washington, D.C. 20064

All rights reserved

Printed in the United States of America

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication

Models of identities in postcommunist societies: Yugoslav philosophical studies, I / edited by Zagorka Golubović and George F. McLean.

p. cm. — (Cultural heritage and contemporary change. Series IVA, Central and Eastern Europe; vol. 10)

Includes bibliographical references and index.

1. group identity--Political aspects--Yugoslavia. 2. Political culture--Yugoslavia. 3. Nationalism--Yugoslavia. 4. Post-communism--Yugoslavia. 5. Yugoslavia--Politics and government--1992- I. Golubović Zagorka. II. McLean, George F. III. Series: Cultural heritage and contemporary change. Series IVA, Central and Eastern Europe; vol. 10.

DR1317 .M63 1999
302.4'09497—ddc21

99-37507
CIP

ISBN 1-56518-127-1 (paper).

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This is a difficult acknowledgement to compose, for it is being written by someone from a NATO country for the work of a valiant team of Serbs. They suffered under Communism – Zagorka Golubović was a member of the “Belgrade Seven” – and worked hard for peace. Yet, as a result, they once again found their University context dominated and repressed. Their account of the process of disintegration of their country is truly “The Cry” of Edvard Munch. Yet, no one could suspect the bombardment which was to follow.

The conference on which this volume is based was proposed by Professor Golubović in 1997, prepared by a meeting in Brno that year, and held in Belgrade in 1998 supported by the Soros Foundation. Its authors are themselves the hope that sound minds and good hearts can be found to build a new identity for the coming millennium.

The participation of others in this conference from the surrounding countries, Africa and America who brought their own experience, insight and suggestions bear witness to this hope.

Hu Yeping from China who prepared this manuscript witnessed to the willingness of the global community to work toward a renewal of humanity in our days.

To all is owed a deep debt of poignant gratitude.

**COUNCIL FOR RESEARCH IN
VALUES AND PHILOSOPHY
MEMBERS**

<i>S. Avineri</i> , Jerusalem	<i>P. Laleye</i> , Dakar
<i>R. Balasubramaniam</i> , Madras	<i>A. Lopez Quintas</i> , Madrid
<i>M. Bednář</i> , Prague	<i>H. Nasr</i> , Teheran/Wash.
<i>P. Bodunrin</i> , Ibadan	<i>C. Ngwey</i> , Kinshasa
<i>K. Bunchua</i> , Bangkok	<i>J. Nyasani</i> , Nairobi
<i>V. Cauchy</i> , Montreal	<i>Paulus Gregorios</i> , Cochín
<i>C. Pan</i> , Singapore	<i>O. Pegoraro</i> , Rio de Jan.
<i>M. Chatterjee</i> , Delhi	<i>T. Pichler</i> , Bratislava
<i>Chen Junquan</i> , Beijing	<i>C. Ramirez</i> , San José
<i>M. Dy</i> , Manila	<i>P. Ricoeur</i> , Paris
<i>I.T. Frolov</i> , Moscow	<i>M. Sastrapatedja</i> , Jakarta
<i>H.G. Gadamer</i> , Heidelb	<i>J. Scannone</i> , Buenos Aires
<i>A. Gallo</i> , Guatemala.	<i>V. Shen</i> , Taipei
<i>K. Gyekye</i> , Legon	<i>W. Strozewski</i> , Krakow
<i>T. Imamichi</i> , Tokyo	<i>Tang Yijie</i> , Beijing
<i>A. Irala Burgos</i> , Asunción	<i>J. Teran-Dutari</i> , Quito
<i>J. Kellerman</i> , Budapest	<i>G. Tlaba</i> , Maseru
<i>M. Kente</i> , Dar es Salaam	<i>Wang Miaoyang</i> , Shanghai
<i>J. Kromkowski</i> , Washington	<i>M. Zakzouk</i> , Cairo
<i>J. Ladrière</i> , Louvain	

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Kenneth L. Schmitz, University of Toronto
Richard Knowles, Duquesne University
Richard T. De George, University of Kansas

SECRETARY-TREASURER

George F. McLean

ASSISTANT SECRETARIES FOR:

Research Design and Synthesis: Richard A. Graham
Moral Education: Henry Johnson
Research and Programming: Nancy Graham
Publication: Hu Yeping

CONTENTS

<i>CONTENTS</i>	v
<i>INTRODUCTION</i>	1
 <i>PART I. THE COLLAPSE OF A NATIONAL IDENTITY</i>	
Chapter I. Models of Identity in Postcommunist Societies <i>Zagorka Golubović</i>	25
Chapter II. Shifting Identity in Postcommunism <i>Mirjana Vasović</i>	41
Chapter III. Prospects for Democracy in Serbia: An Analysis of the Collective Identities of State, Society and Nation <i>Vesna Pešić</i>	55
Chapter IV. Public Political Dialogue and Myth: Some Aspects of the Current Situation in Yugoslavia <i>Michal Sládeček</i>	69
Chapter V. Preconditions and Obstacles to the Modernization of Serbian/Yugoslav Society <i>Stjepan Gredelj</i>	79
Chapter VI. Identity Void: Structural Confusion and Everyday Life in Present-day Serbia <i>Ivana Spasic</i>	109
 <i>PART II. ELEMENTS FOR A POSTCOMMUNIST IDENTITY</i>	
Chapter VII. Democracy and Stability: the Case of Former Yugoslavia <i>Djordje Pavićević</i>	125
Chapter VIII. The Principle of Citizenship and Pluralism in Identity <i>Milan Podunavac</i>	149

Chapter IX. National Identity, Tradition and the Czech Question in the Contemporary World Context -- The Problem of Democracy and the Czech Question <i>Jaroslav Hroch and Jan Zouhar</i>	169
Chapter X. The Ethnic and Religious Identification of the Youth in Vojvodina at the End of the 90's <i>Smiljana Jovović, Ljubiša Despotović and Suzana Stamatović</i>	175
Chapter XI. The Problem of Human Identity in the Face of the Global "Free Market" Economy <i>Oliva Blanchette</i>	185
<i>PART III. THE BUILDING OF A POSTCOMMUNIST IDENTITY</i>	
Chapter XII. Beyond the Liberal Paradigm <i>Martin Palouš</i>	199
Chapter XIII. The Czech and Czechoslovak Idea of State Identity as Central-European and Europeanism <i>Miloslav Bednář</i>	215
Chapter XIV. The Concept of Models of Identity -- Existence without Identity <i>Jelena Djuric</i>	225
Chapter XV. Social Identity and Conflict: A Positive Approach <i>Byaruhanga Rukooko Archangel</i>	239
Chapter XVI. Human Identity in Postcommunism and High Modernity <i>Paul Peachey</i>	259
Chapter XVII. Identity as Openness to Others <i>George F. McLean</i>	275
<i>INDEX</i>	297

INTRODUCTION

The present study on "Models of Identities in Postcommunist Societies" began with the following statement of the issue and related questions by Professor Zagorka Golubović.

In the process of transition in postcommunist societies one crucial point is the ways and modes of collective and personal identities as a result of the discontinuity with traditional and authoritarian forms of identities, due to the collapse of so-called real socialism. The process of identification is particularly in need of analysis when one system disappears and another has not been clearly defined and outlined. The aim here is to discover how old models and forms of identities change, to what extent and in which direction. That is, what is the impact of the legacy of the old models and are they strong enough to negate any far-reaching transformation of the former system and of the behavior of the members of society. The breakdown of the state in Yugoslavia can illustrate the difficulties in a democratic transition and in searching for adequate models of identification.

This implies the following questions:

- To what extent has the change of global values already occurred, and how does it influence new forms of identification?
- What relations have been established between collective or group identities and personal identities, and whether the former still dominate over the latter?
- How does a new collective national identity influence the development of an open society with a plurality of identities: does it foster or hinder them?
- How far have postcommunist societies transformed themselves from a totalitarian/authoritarian type; are there tendencies towards renewing the mechanisms of authoritarian rule; how does this impact on the models of identities?
- How has the problem of identities and differences been approached in the postcommunist societies?
- How can different needs and interests in postcommunist pluralist societies be reconciled in view of the rise of nationalism?
- How are the constitution of the new state in terms of the

Rusko Evropě (Open Russia to Europe) (Praha: H and H, 1992), p. 19.

CHAPTER XIV

THE CONCEPT OF MODELS OF IDENTITY: EXISTENCE WITHOUT IDENTITY

JELENA DJURIC

IDENTIFICATION OF IDENTITY

Changes in values and the social change taking place in the last decade of the 20th century bring to the fore the complex problems of identity. Discussions on identity are particularly frequent and widespread in the social sciences, but in these debates the rich and diverse philosophical heritage of this issue usually is not accorded adequate attention. Thus it remains unclear what the concept of identity, so much talked about, actually means in our times. Sometimes it seems to be a sort of magic word, a key able to open each and any door: identity and community, the identity of a society, cultural identity, postcommunist identity, identity crisis — these are some expressions announcing the numerous dilemmas which, however, in spite of so much discussion remain without appropriate solutions.

First of all, the concept of identity itself is not particularly clear: this may be the case because the concept, like other fundamental ones, is difficult to catch in an unambiguous and precise categorial web, or because of a multiplicity of various, sometimes parallel, discourses reflecting certain aspects of this intricate problem. Yet, it seems that some higher order ought to be looked for in this mutually exclusive world of theories. The quest could start, for instance, from an attempt to distinguish the concept of identity from the concept of identification, which is related to the former in various ways and contexts. Their confusion and mutual substitution only results in making the knot of misunderstandings increasingly entangled.

There are at least two completely different meanings of the concept of identification. The first is a formal logical one, exact but also deprived of substance, while the other is psychological,

substantial and inexact. When in the first case, for instance, identification means the process of establishing identity, as identifying something, the identity established in this way is completely formal, i.e. bereft of internal content and sense. Such identification of phenomena, objects, or beings, does not tell us much about their real identity. In other words, identity established by formal identification, being devoid of substance and empty, is not an identity in the sense we are interested in here. It functions at an abstract or mathematical plane, as well as in external mechanical observation, but such a meaning of the concept is completely inadequate where the philosophical-anthropological and socio-cultural issue is concerned.

In the second case, when we talk about internal, psychological identification, the matter is completely different. Psychology has shown that during the process of growth, learning and personality development, for example, various identifications take place both with “significant others” and with various characters of the cultural and artistic horizon whose dramas the individual experiences and whose values he/she adopts. These identifications, however, provide no guarantee that the individual will find him/herself, i.e., that one will realize one’s identity. If it were not so, there would not be cases of misplaced identification in the individuals’ personal, intellectual and social lives — identifications that lead to destruction, among other things, even of one’s own identity. In this sense the individual, to reach his/her identity, must liberate the self from the negative influences of other people’s identities, that is, from wrong identifications which constrain one’s own authenticity.

Bearing in mind these two different meanings of “identification” we could conclude that the relation of “identification” to “identity” is either external or opposed. Nevertheless, the conclusion would not be final, since the problem that seems to have ended here resurfaces at another place. Namely, when we deconstruct the word identity, we see that it consists of the words: identical and entity. If entity denotes a being, i.e., the essence of a being, and “to be identical” means “to be the same with this essence” (in the Serbian language, the words for “sameness” — “*istost*” — and “truth” — “*istinitost*” are etymologically related), then we may conclude that the concept of identity involves the meaning of identification (sameness with the

essence). We should be aware, though, that this is a very special case of identification referring to a being’s own essence; in practice this is rather the exception than the rule, as is the convergence of an existence to the essence.

However, this case of coincidence between the concepts of identity and identification evidently does not imply necessarily that the concepts are identical. Identification denotes a state of identity, i.e., a process of substantive establishing of identity, only in special conditions which are not immediately given to the so-called common sense. They are difficult to determine since they refer to the metaphysical identification with one’s own identity. Without going into the metaphysics of the essence of being, we can say that essence is given primarily as a potential (and as an ideal); the dialectic of identity denotes simultaneously something that is unchangeable in changes, and something that changes constantly. Just as the river from which Siddharta in old age is learning about himself is the self-same river he watched in his youth, yet it is never regains the same but is ever-new in its continuous flow.

CRISIS OF IDENTITIES AND VALUES

Thus we have broached the ancient philosophical problem of identity in differences. Since the unifying force disappeared from human life — says Hegel¹ — the need has emerged for a philosophy in which the deeply experienced sense of the crisis manifested in the divisions in all spheres of culture will be healed by reason. The dialectic of identity reconciles differences, oppositions, ruptures, conflicts and contradictions in a dynamic process of self-identical and self-differentiating totality. In the all-embracing self-differentiating totality Hegel promises a reconciliation of oppositions — the finite and the infinite. In the realm of Objective Spirit as a concrete realization of freedom — this is *telos* and achievement of History; in the realm of Absolute Spirit as self-knowledge of the spirit as true existence this is the mediated identity of identity and difference, the identity of knowledge and being. This is a promised return of the spirit to itself, having moved from the abstract to the concrete, from partial truths (that is, untruths) to the whole Truth. Thus Hegel’s philosophy is, as Richard J. Bernstein² remarks, an erotic directedness of love of wisdom

towards the complete System of Absolute Knowledge. The problem, however, is that this “love” has remained unrealized in our practice, and history — in spite of the renewed Hegelian interpretations by Francis Fukuyama — has not yet reached its end, at least not in the sense of the realization of freedom. In everyday reality the problem of identity and difference emerges constantly, at both the individual and the collective level.

The problem of personal identity is solved in psychology through attempts to integrate various aspects of personality. Etymologically, a person denotes a mask (*persona*), the face of unity above various intertwined forms. As individual identity becomes the meeting-point between the particular and the universal, or a concrete individual and its universal essence, so the problems of collective identity could be solved analogously through an integration into a higher-order unity which allows for, and encompasses, a plurality of different worlds. What principally unites different individuals is their identification with common values. Values give a meaning to the collective, through the mediation of which individual existence is made more complete. The feeling of belonging to, and trust in, the collective as a whole motivates individuals voluntarily to work on asserting collective identity. But this commitment presupposes that the value order be the genuine reality of everyday life experience, since mere ideological proclamation of values sooner or later leads to a loss of trust, with the meaning of the collective and its identity being also lost along the way. An illusory identity corresponds to illusory values.

The best example of this effect may be found in the history of Yugoslav society whose disintegration ensued after a protracted crisis of identity. The fact that the society did not have a clearly defined identity, being “ordered” as a conglomerate of incompatible elements and systems, has been cited³ as a prime cause of this chain of events. This fact may, however, be accounted for primarily as a consequence of permanent discordance between ideology and reality. The production of illusions, whose permanence resulted in the crisis of the society and its identity, was accepted over time as a “natural state of affairs”.⁴ When we look at the history of the SFR Yugoslav society from this vantage point we may get the impression that this permanent crisis was a symptom of its half-century disintegration, which finally manifested itself in the so-

essence). We should be aware, though, that this is a very special case of identification referring to a being’s own essence; in practice this is rather the exception than the rule, as is the convergence of an existence to the essence.

However, this case of coincidence between the concepts of identity and identification evidently does not imply necessarily that the concepts are identical. Identification denotes a state of identity, i.e., a process of substantive establishing of identity, only in special conditions which are not immediately given to the so-called common sense. They are difficult to determine since they refer to the metaphysical identification with one’s own identity. Without going into the metaphysics of the essence of being, we can say that essence is given primarily as a potential (and as an ideal); the dialectic of identity denotes simultaneously something that is unchangeable in changes, and something that changes constantly. Just as the river from which Siddharta in old age is learning about himself is the self-same river he watched in his youth, yet it is never regains the same but is ever-new in its continuous flow.

CRISIS OF IDENTITIES AND VALUES

Thus we have broached the ancient philosophical problem of identity in differences. Since the unifying force disappeared from human life — says Hegel¹ — the need has emerged for a philosophy in which the deeply experienced sense of the crisis manifested in the divisions in all spheres of culture will be healed by reason. The dialectic of identity reconciles differences, oppositions, ruptures, conflicts and contradictions in a dynamic process of self-identical and self-differentiating totality. In the all-embracing self-differentiating totality Hegel promises a reconciliation of oppositions — the finite and the infinite. In the realm of Objective Spirit as a concrete realization of freedom — this is *telos* and achievement of History; in the realm of Absolute Spirit as self-knowledge of the spirit as true existence this is the mediated identity of identity and difference, the identity of knowledge and being. This is a promised return of the spirit to itself, having moved from the abstract to the concrete, from partial truths (that is, untruths) to the whole Truth. Thus Hegel’s philosophy is, as Richard J. Bernstein² remarks, an erotic directedness of love of wisdom

towards the complete System of Absolute Knowledge. The problem, however, is that this "love" has remained unrealized in our practice, and history — in spite of the renewed Hegelian interpretations by Francis Fukuyama — has not yet reached its end, at least not in the sense of the realization of freedom. In everyday reality the problem of identity and difference emerges constantly, at both the individual and the collective level.

The problem of personal identity is solved in psychology through attempts to integrate various aspects of personality. Etymologically, a person denotes a mask (*persona*), the face of unity above various intertwined forms. As individual identity becomes the meeting-point between the particular and the universal, or a concrete individual and its universal essence, so the problems of collective identity could be solved analogously through an integration into a higher-order unity which allows for, and encompasses, a plurality of different worlds. What principally unites different individuals is their identification with common values. Values give a meaning to the collective, through the mediation of which individual existence is made more complete. The feeling of belonging to, and trust in, the collective as a whole motivates individuals voluntarily to work on asserting collective identity. But this commitment presupposes that the value order be the genuine reality of everyday life experience, since mere ideological proclamation of values sooner or later leads to a loss of trust, with the meaning of the collective and its identity being also lost along the way. An illusory identity corresponds to illusory values.

The best example of this effect may be found in the history of Yugoslav society whose disintegration ensued after a protracted crisis of identity. The fact that the society did not have a clearly defined identity, being "ordered" as a conglomerate of incompatible elements and systems, has been cited³ as a prime cause of this chain of events. This fact may, however, be accounted for primarily as a consequence of permanent discordance between ideology and reality. The production of illusions, whose permanence resulted in the crisis of the society and its identity, was accepted over time as a "natural state of affairs".⁴ When we look at the history of the SFR Yugoslav society from this vantage point we may get the impression that this permanent crisis was a symptom of its half-century disintegration, which finally manifested itself in the so-

called "implosion" of ideology, i.e., in the unmasking of the "false values" which for long and insistently had been imposed as a "cover" for the absence of a real identity of the society.

The assumption that the identity of the Yugoslav society was not completely as spurious as a sort of "king's new suit" is justified particularly in the domain of culture. Unfortunately, this area of social life lacked the real economic and political power, which — enabling and determining a society's survival — usually comprise the axis of its identity. In the former Yugoslav society the political and economic aspects of identity were a communist farce, even though the points reached by the Yugoslav culture, marked by essential features of interculturality, testify beyond doubt to the great potential of that society. Because of Yugoslavia's role as a buffer-state between opposed global blocs, and because of its leading role in the Nonaligned movement, for the external world the identity of the Yugoslav society seemed authentic and convincing. But actually, it coincided with President Tito's "image and deed", which pushed into the shadow the entire internal stage of the society. Tito was the symbol of the Yugoslav society's identity. The communist myth enabled the absolutist vision of Louis XIVth, expressed in the statement "The state — it is I," to reassert itself, though this time in a hidden manner, adjusted to the changed circumstances of several elapsed centuries. With Tito's death, the simulacrum of the Yugoslav society's identity was lost, and its implosion, which finished in the destruction of war, was actually a consequence of the previously accepted premises on which the whole system had been built.

Within the projected reality of a monopoly by the communist ideology, the authoritarian will to power had broad license to subject social actors. The destruction of all potential opponents within society was supported by its miserable tradition of national and religious conflicts. The communist ideological strategy of "intensifying class struggle", having completely erased the structure of civil society, was subsequently turned into an "intensification of interethnic oppositions" and, finally, into the idea of "national liberation" of particular SFRY republics. Hence the flair-up of ethnic anarchisms may be understood as a lack of political will, but primarily as the personal will of the mighty President to implement the universalistic principle of creating a modern political

nation-state on the model of most European countries at all structural levels of Yugoslav society.

On the one hand, the ideology of the “brotherhood, unity and equality of all Yugoslav peoples” precluded the possibility for any one ethnic group imposing itself and assimilating the others after the principle of nineteenth-century conquering nationalism. Also, none of the ethnic groups was sufficiently superior for such an undertaking. On the other hand, the process of the neutral political creation of a nation of Yugoslavs was never initiated, although there were good reasons for such an identity. SFRY was thus transformed into an unreal, ideological creation within which the interests of preserving ethnic particularisms apparently have proven to be the only existent reality. If the potential of the community had not been systematically undermined from within, Yugoslavia would perhaps have become the unique historical example of forming a state on a different basis from the usual modern principles of political domination of one nation over others.

True, another hypothesis⁵ questions the ethnic heterogeneity of most Yugoslav peoples, because of their extremely close ethnic origins. However, even if we concede that this had originally been one and the same people, the cultural and historical differences formed within it over the centuries, as its parts belonged to different spheres of interest, produced different identifications and in this way acquired a function of different ethnic identities. This fact would support the view that identities and nations are constructible and changeable, rather than unchangeably given. Nevertheless, during the socialist period the crisis of these (historically accepted) ethnicities was latently sustained. As a result, after the death of the leader his multiple embodiments retained the privileges of power within their local tribes. When the political and economic crisis shook their positions to the utmost, they resorted to what had already been prepared – they made explicit the age-old Machiavellian principle: *Divide et impera*.

THE QUEST FOR NEW IDENTITIES

From the aspect of shaping new identities, in the newly formed states emerging from the destroyed Yugoslavia the only acceptable stance has become to view the former state as an imposed burden.

On the other hand, those who have wished to voice a complementary interpretation of the problem have been left with only one argument: that the bloodiness of the war points to the fact that the Yugoslav society was an “organic whole” — i.e., that it did have an identity. It is as if the “murder” of the Yugoslav state were symbolically necessary in order for its lost identity to become evident to all, and above all to the considerable number of people who felt themselves wrongly Yugoslav. Their forsaken trust in Yugoslavia as a state and a community turned out to be fatal: about 2 million people, who declared themselves Yugoslav — even though this self-affiliation did not ensure them anything within their own country — were left after the collapse not only without their country, but also without a part of their identity. While it was an a historical precedent to create the nation of Muslims,⁶ the Yugoslav state at the same time contained those who believed in the possibility of political integration at the level of the whole, who wanted to be Yugoslavs in Yugoslavia.⁷ “Rights and liberties” were taken to mean that everybody might declare themselves as they wished; but in reality, to be a Yugoslav had no more weight than to be, say, an inhabitant of the planet Earth (and during the culmination of interethnic conflicts it became even more dangerous).

Numerous delusions brought about by socialism made all this seem to be not so strange. The hypocrisy of the totality of political life veiled what was actually going on behind the scene, preventing the creation of a “critical mass” of people aware of potential dangers and capable of countering them. After all, nowadays — when the causes of the problems are so much talked about — the feeling that as a society we are much worse off is difficult to avoid. The “critical mass”, so significant for quantum leaps, may even have diminished. On the social plane, this refers to people, individuals who are aware that to have lost one’s illusions does not mean necessarily to know the way to establish social identity, or to be ready to look for these ways and implement them.

While in most other societies state, politico-economic and cultural identities are being reshaped and perfected more or less successfully and persistently, a positive identity for our society is still lost somewhere far away. If it were not so, would people continue to work “against themselves”, and go on destroying mercilessly all potential sources of social renewal, both material

and those that are more subtler? Would not space open for action by those who do not take the "common good" as an empty platitude for shielding personal greed. Would they not be allowed to restore trust in human and community values, either through personal example or social engagement? Would those enthusiastic — albeit, unfortunately, poorly channeled — energies shown during the winter demonstrations of 1996 and 1997 against electoral fraud be so abruptly covered with fear and apathy stemming from powerlessness? Among various options for responding to the power controlled by negative forces, a large number of our co-citizens chooses to ally with it; others choose to distance themselves from it; but there are very few who have the vision and courage to struggle for the establishment of values which would restore trust and a sense of the collective.

Relations of trust in a society are crucial for the ability to associate all of its groups. Between the smallest social group — family — and the largest — nation — in every developed society there extends the wide space of civil society, whose destruction was probably the most devastating consequence of socialism. Having destroyed everything that was in the way of the power of state rulers (be it in the economy, entrepreneurship, labor unions, the Church, the press, voluntary associations, and the family itself), socialism prevented the development of vital elements of culture: market economy and stable democracy.

THE LESSON TO BE LEARNED

In his book *Trust: Social Virtues and the Creation of Prosperity*,⁸ Francis Fukuyama argues persuasively for the importance of trust in building social capital as the fundamental resource that a nation has at its disposal. Social capital is decisive for the global division of labor. The specificity of social capital is that, unlike other sorts of human capital, it is created and transferred through culture and its mechanisms such as religion, tradition, and historically sedimented lore. Fukuyama shows how values within a culture, primarily social values, contribute to economic efficiency. "There is no gap between community and efficiency", on the contrary, "those who pay attention to the community may become the most efficient" (*ibid.*, p. 42). Hence, the pillar of economic

efficiency — social capital, which is crucial for interpersonal trust and important for a healthy economy — is rooted in culture.

However, cultures built on a communist ideology have a low level of cultural capital, reflected in lack of social trust. According to Fukuyama, the fierce irony of communist ideology is its failure to eliminate human selfishness. In the situation of scarcity and continuous pressure of being deprived of something, people have generally become more selfish, more materialistically oriented, and less permeated by the spirit of community, while their relation towards public affairs has become cynical. Besides, communism engendered bad habits, such as passivity and dependence on the state, while it constrained entrepreneurial energies. The ideological imposition of collectivism made people shrink from the collective. In Yugoslav society, instead of real development, ideologically proclaimed "self-management" values were perverted, and the spirit of agreement, together with the culture of voluntary cooperation within such groups as business companies and political parties was destroyed. Misused values have taken roots in the cultures of former communist societies whence they continue to block the process of the consolidation of democracy and market economy. Since habits built into culture are slow in changing, this lack of social habits prevents intellectual consent to democracy and capitalism, which is evident in most postcommunist societies, and keeps popular support for the reforms from functioning smoothly (*ibid.*, p. 50).

On the basis of the cultural changes which are taking place all around us, we can see that cultures do change, after all, and that it is possible to influence them by political means. However, here is a danger, such as the one brought by communist ideology, that the traditionally rooted identity of a society be eradicated. But at the same time, here is the hope, perhaps, that in Yugoslav society some positive change may also take place, leading to the establishment of a social identity. To work on these changes means to work on the creation of a moral community that will provide its members with a certain level of trust. The level of a culture varies in proportion with ethical codes emphasizing the imperatives of honesty, charity and well-meaning to the community, and determining the degree of social trust. In some societies, traditional religious or ethical systems comprise the chief institutional sources of culturally determined behavior. For other, less successful societies, the lesson

to be learned is to establish such systems.

Reviving Weber's idea that social trust — although historically stemming from religious custom rather than rational calculation — conditions the economic dispositions of a society and its overall well-being, Fukuyama refers to a text by Weber⁹ whose significance for our times is immense. In it Weber stresses that, apart from entrepreneurial, individual virtues, such as diligence, saving, rationality, innovation, and risk-taking, there is a set of other virtues, such as: honesty, reliability, cooperativity and responsibility, which are social in nature. A significant effect of Protestantism is thus not only in creating a work ethic, but also in developing social virtues. Members of Protestant sects were not constrained externally to hold on to the values of their non-established church. They internalized these values voluntarily, and thereby deeply. This strengthened their cohesion, which served well also in the world of business, since business transactions are largely based on trust. Unlike individual virtues important for entrepreneurship, social values encouraging sociability and organizing social change, and their impact on economic life, have not been widely discussed in the literature. This makes Fukuyama's work all the more valuable, with its abundance of examples and arguments supporting the view that "social virtues are a presupposition for individual virtues, such as a work ethic, since the latter is best cultivated in the context of existence of tight groups developing in societies with a high level of social solidarity" (*ibid.*, p. 58).

FROM A "POSTCOMMUNIST" PERSPECTIVE

When we (as citizens of one of the postcommunist society) ask ourselves: where are we in all that? our answer will probably be to shrug our shoulders, scratch our heads, or wave our hand. For only through such kinds of gestures can we express how far away we see ourselves, as a society, from establishing these social values. Bad conditions, unfavorable circumstances, difficult situation, and the like, may be cited as an excuse. Because when such recognizable social values as the presuppositions of a collective identity are lost from the institutions of a society, it is hard to expect individuals to internalize the values of the collective and to be oriented towards

the common good. When trust in institutions is lost, the feeling is also lost that the common good is, actually, the unifying presupposition for realizing the totality of multiple particular interests and the principle of harmonizing individual roles within a collective. Instead of that, nowadays, just like before in the former state, the imposition of collectivism continues to erase the values of the collective. Authority is still abused, and power-seeking dominates where the acknowledgment of a necessary and justified social hierarchy should emerge. Social values continue to be proclaimed, but not implemented, because their propagation through the media enables the government to avoid brutal violence — it manipulates the identification of society's members encouraging them to internalize the proclaimed illusions in a schizophrenic manner. The methods have already been tested in the "communist experience", while social psychology has confirmed them experimentally. The manipulation of the collective unconscious is undoubtedly efficient — but unfortunately, still most frequently has fatal outcomes. The majority are not even aware of being trapped, while those who do possess a clearer awareness have lost any trust in various constructions of "collective identities". Thus, the absence of collective identity is filled in by simulacra of collectivism — in previous times, of a class sort, and nowadays by national identification. There are differences between the two, but the similarities are also striking.

With the disintegration of Yugoslavia the so-called "national identity" has been promoted in the rhetoric of media propaganda as the most important form of collective identification. No wonder, after all, when we now see that nationalism is an all-present global principle. Modern societies have hypostatized the nation as an incontestable value. The modern ideal of the unitary nation-state, exported into the less developed societies, has contributed to the process whereby nationalism has become immensely popular all over the world, demonstrating its explosive power. Although "national revivals" and numerous ethnic protests have their roots back in the long tradition of ethnic values — much older than the modern world — with the emergence of modern bureaucratized state systems of the secular era, national identification has gained monstrous impetus, taking so many lives in various wars. In the political order of the world, the nation is the basic principle of

government and the focus of social and economic activity; it is the criterion of culture and “identity”. Ever since Durkheim identified society with the nation, and nation with the ideals of the collective, all aspects of social life have been integrated as collective participation in the shared destiny of the nation. This explains the fear that the disintegration of the myth of society-as-nation would result in the disintegration of society itself, because it would leave it with no national identity.

After all that has happened at the end of the century, in SFR Yugoslavia it remains unclear how to establish a collective identity? How to restore trust in the possibility of creating a community — national or civic — that would allow for individual differences to find their place within the collective? Postcommunist construction of national identity has produced a number of counter-effects: The state has been destroyed, the society weakened. Little has remained on which to build collective identity. The people has had enough of empty words, and there are so many empty stomachs who are shortsighted in making decisions. A collective way out of this vicious circle is not in sight, among other reasons because there are not enough individuals in Serbian society standing firmly on their own identities who would make the necessary effort to stir changes for the better. External circumstances, and dissatisfaction with these, are obviously not sufficient triggers. Those who have enough personal strength, together with social power, to care for the common good are extremely rare. There are also very few ordinary people whom the general misery has not blinded to the fact that the hope for each one is that things should start getting better for all together. The failure to see this “trivial fact” is, unfortunately, the reality of present-day Yugoslav society — the reality of the lost collective identity.

Since social virtues and sociability do not emerge spontaneously, but rather depend on former habits transferred by the tradition of social values and norms, the postcommunist Yugoslav society needs above all else to start establishing these habits. In this way, they may perhaps turn into a tradition, and contribute to a recognition of the *telos* of history reflected, according to Fukuyama, in the success of a market-based and democratic politics. The prerequisite for success is social capital, i.e. trust as the basis of organization, cooperation and everything else that

comprises the healthy economy of a society. This is the real necessary foundation of its identity.

Even if along these lines we draw the consequences of Fukuyama’s interpretations of Weber and Hegel, and if we call the time of established identities the “end of history”, this nevertheless would not be the end of the “story”. For, though every identity should rest on the integration of universal values, each one of them must remain a particular and distinct essence. As such, each identity is a unique expression of the diverse forms of the spirit manifesting itself in the world. This is the reason why it is not plausible to use the concept of the models of identities. What is more appropriate from this perspective are models of identifications implemented as values we tend to accept and incorporate in our identities. This is achieved with more or less success — and unfortunately often merely apparently — because adverse powers exert their influence on losing identity at both the individual and the collective levels. What can help to transform these powers is a continuous awareness of identity and the values it presupposes. We should bear in mind, however, that identity is not a property acquired once and for all. On the contrary, as soon as we start to take it for granted it is likely to disappear. That is why it, like trust itself, must be perpetually reaffirmed.

Institute for Philosophy and Social Theory
Belgrade

NOTES

1. G. V. F. Hegel, 1979. *Fenomenologija duha* (Belgrade: BIGZ).
2. Richard J. Bernstein, 1992. *The New Constellation* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press), p. 295.
3. Zagorka Golubović, 1988. *Kriza identiteta savremenog jugoslovenskog društva* (Belgrade: Filip Višnjić).
4. Slobodan Samardžić, 1994. *Prinudna zajednica i demokratija* (Belgrade: Institut za evropske studije).
5. Svetozar Stojanović, 1995. *Propast komunizma i razbijanje Jugoslavije* (Belgrade: Filip Višnjić i IFDT).
6. Immediately after the disintegration of the state, this

“Muslim nation” was renamed “Bosniak”, probably because the religious criterion for promoting a national identity seemed misplaced, even “grotesque”, in both the metaphorical and original meanings of the word, conjuring the strange pictures from the ruins of the palace of Titus in Rome. See Milan Vujaklija, 1966. *Leksikon stranih reci i izraza* (Belgrade: Prosveta).

7. In an earlier paper, I commented that “in former Yugoslavia . . . it was precisely those who felt Yugoslav, and only them among all its peoples, who did not have their representatives in the federal assembly”. See the collection of papers *Interculturality*, ed. by Bozidar Jaksic (Belgrade, 1995), p. 423.

8. Serbian translation of Francis Fukuyama, 1997. *Sudar kultura (Poverenje. Drustvene vrlin i stvaranje prosperiteta)* (Belgrade: Zavod za udzbenike i nastavna sredstva), p. 41.

9. “Protestant sects and the spirit of capitalism”, in: Max Weber, 1946, *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology* (New York: Oxford University Press). See Fukuyama, 1997: 55.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Bernstein, Richard J. 1992. *The New Constellation*. MIT Press, Cambridge, Mass.
- Fukuyama, Francis. 1997. *Sudar kultura (Poverenje. Drustvene vrlin i stvaranje prosperiteta)*. Zavod za udzbenike i nastavna sredstva, Belgrade.
- Djuric, Jelena. 1995. *Univerzum kulture*, in Bozidar Jaksic, ed. *Interculturality/Interkulturalnost*. Belgrade.
- Golubovij, Zagorka. 1988. *Kriza identiteta savremenog jugoslovenskog drustva*. Filip Višnjić, Belgrade.
- Hegel, G. V. F. 1979. *Fenomenologija duha*. BIGZ, Belgrade.
- Samardzic, Slobodan. 1994. *Prinudna zajednica i demokratija*. Institut za evropske studije, Belgrade.
- Stojanovic, Svetozar. 1995. *Propast komunizma i razbijanje Jugoslavije*. Filip Višnjić i IFDT, Belgrade.
- Weber, Max. 1946. *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology*. Oxford University Press, New York.

CHAPTER XV

SOCIAL IDENTITY AND CONFLICT: A POSITIVE APPROACH

BYARUHANGA RUKOOKO ARCHANGEL

INTRODUCTION

On the world scene today, we have experienced dramatic social changes and events, most of which have been explained in terms of social identities. Perhaps the most remarkable event in recent years is that of the Rwandan genocide in which over one million ethnic Tutsis and moderate Hutus were savagely massacred by the so-called extremist Hutus in 1994. The Banyamulenge (extension of the Tutsi-Hutu conflict) episode flowed into Eastern Zaire.¹ Indeed, it would be more adequate to include the whole of central, if not the whole of Africa, as facing the dehumanizing problem of social identities. Moreover, beyond Africa in the period after the changes of 1989, no single social problem has been as elusive or tragic as that of social identity (ethnicity) in Central and Eastern Europe. Many other parts of the world have not escaped this problem.

In spite of this being a deadly social problem, various commentators on the subject of “identity” have expressed it in nominalist terms. It has been referred to as a “narrative” (Martin, 1993 and Rex: 1995, 21-33). In ordinary terms, a narrative is a story or account and implicitly therefore a social creation. Put differently, social identities are not necessary;² they might or might not be. This, in effect, declares the term “identity” ineffective in describing social reality or, simply as being fictitious or imaginary.

But this is precisely the source of the problem, because the consequence of such a theory is that the so-called social identities are superficial and could or should be dispensed with. This interpretation has not lacked practical implementation. For example, in the period after independence, most African states faced with the problem of pluralist societies or social identities, decided to suppress pluralist social paradigms of development in favor of