

miliar with the complex and contested histories of the region would do well to read this and gain the summaries that can pique interest and thereafter lead to further, more specific engagement with literature. People who are specialists in the region will find this volume less suitable and, while I have highlighted some of my largest complaints, I think the book does provoke meaningful thought and could lead to good classroom discussions despite, or rather because of, those weaknesses. In conclusion, I think this book should have been reissued but I would have argued for a serious intent to provide additional surveys of recent scholarship and reflections on how the insights raised originally in the early 1990s have manifested over the last two decades.

Robert Niebuhr (Tempe/AZ)

---

<sup>1</sup> See Robert Niebuhr, *The Search for a Cold War Legitimacy. Tito's Yugoslavia*, Leiden 2018; as well as Tvrtko Jakovina, *Treća strana Hladnog rata*, Zaprešić 2011.

**Jelena N. Pešić, *Promena vrednosnih orijentacija u postsocijalističkim društvima Srbije i Hrvatske. Politički i ekonomski liberalizam (Change in value orientations in the postsocialist societies of Serbia and Croatia. Political and economic liberalism)***, Belgrade: University of Belgrade, Faculty of Philosophy, Institute for Sociological Research, 2017. 299 pp., ISBN 978-86-6427-064-9, open access [http://147.91.75.9/manage/shares/ISI/isi\\_2017\\_JelenaPestic\\_Vrednosne\\_orijentacije.pdf](http://147.91.75.9/manage/shares/ISI/isi_2017_JelenaPestic_Vrednosne_orijentacije.pdf).

The book *Change in value orientations in the postsocialist societies of Serbia and Croatia. Political and economic liberalism*, written in Serbian by the Belgrade-based sociologist

Jelena Pešić, analyses the turbulent transformation of the Serbian and Croatian societies from state socialism to capitalism. At the focus of her analysis are value orientations around the notion of political and economic liberalism, typically associated with the capitalist system of social relations.

The book comprises of an introduction, four chapters, and a conclusion, and covers two fields of inquiry. The first field is dedicated to long-term and medium-term historical processes, while the second field is dedicated to the analysis of data obtained from value orientation surveys conducted in Serbia and Croatia at two points in time—namely 1989, i. e. the time immediately preceding the state socialist system's collapse, and 2003, i. e. the time when the capitalist system started to consolidate after the devastating wars of the 1990s.

The study relies on a complex theoretical framework developed in Chapter Two. The author defines the concept of values as dually entrenched—in a broad cultural and historical tradition on the one hand, and in a normative and institutional system, i. e. in the current system of social reproduction, on the other hand. Drawing on the theory of value-normative dissonance developed by Mladen Lazić and his colleagues, Pešić assumes that change in value orientations occurs more slowly than change in political and economic relations. Thus, in conditions of radical systemic transformation, a dissonance may arise between the old and the new normative and value systems. The distinction between intra-systemic and systemic value-normative dissonance is of crucial importance for Pešić's research approach. Intra-systemic value-normative dissonance is an inherent characteristic of hybrid systems, in which the persistence of different norms precludes an unambiguous value foundation. Systemic value-norma-

tive dissonance, on the other hand, occurs in transitory periods when, due to radical social changes, new normative-institutional patterns are established, while some old ones are still retained, leading to a duality in the sphere of values.

Chapter Three then focuses on the broader cultural and historical tradition, on processes of long *durée*. In this historical portion of her analysis, Pešić maps the similarities and differences between the economic and political development of the Serbian and Croatian societies from the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century to the postsocialist transformation. She emphasises the respective economic and political sub-systems, rather leaving the cultural sub-systems aside. This marginalisation of culture originates in a theoretical orientation in which culture is implicitly reduced to values, which in turn are determined by social structure.

Pešić concludes that, despite the differences in the development of the two societies, a claim can be made that both are characterised by the absence of a comprehensive transformation of the traditional order, due to a 'delayed' modernisation in the first phase of capitalist transformation in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and the early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. Even though Yugoslav state socialism (1945-1990) was characterized by an authoritarian political power regime and an egalitarian principle of economic distribution, no singular value foundation was established. The specific character of the Yugoslav system resulted in contradictory normative-institutional solutions that led to the emergence of liberal values in the economic and political sub-systems, which the author terms intra-systemic dissonance. Pešić points out that the escalation of the economic crisis in the 1980s, followed by an existential crisis of legitimacy, led to the profiling of certain social groups—parts of the *nomenklatura* and the middle classes—

as principal upholders of the new, capitalist system and the corresponding liberal values. Nevertheless, she points out that the consolidation of the capitalist system occurred later in Serbia than in Croatia, due to a 'blocked transformation' in the 1990s. This meant an extended political and economic domination of former *nomenklatura* members; the economic collapse of the country; massive pauperisation of the population; and international isolation.

A brief methodological explanation outlined in Chapter Four is followed in Chapter Five by the analysis of the survey findings of the two countries. Pešić pays considerable attention to class variations associated with the degree of acceptance of given value orientations, without neglecting how other sociodemographic features impact these variations. She presents a dual comparison that includes synchronic and diachronic comparative dimensions. Her starting premise is that a systemic value-normative dissonance occurred during the postsocialist transformation, and that with the consolidation of the capitalist system, norms and values have become more integrated.

Investigating political liberalism, Pešić confirms her initial hypothesis by establishing that the change in value orientation became more integrated in 2003 than it had been in 1989. She notes the absence of a widespread acceptance of individualism; in fact in both societies this simultaneously is the only dimension of political liberalism that does not have a strong foundation. In the author's opinion, the survival of collectivist values from the previous system and the retention of certain of its normative elements have caused this deflection from individualism. In her synchronous comparison, Pešić sees political liberalism as more developed in Croatia than in Serbia for both periods, which is not surpris-

ing considering the fact that the process of institutional-normative transformation in Croatia began earlier and was quicker.

However, when it comes to economic liberalism, the results of the analysis deviate from the original hypothesis. The consolidation of the capitalist system brought a lower degree of acceptance of values of economic liberalism in 2003 than in 1989. Faced with survey findings that prove inconsistent with her theory, Pešić provides an ad hoc explanation: the reduced acceptance of the values of economic liberalism might be the result of the capitalist system's crisis of legitimacy, as a consequence of the fact that it has proven unable to meet the needs of a significant part of the population. The data indicate that in 2003, economic liberal values were more prevalent in Serbia than in Croatia. The explanation Pešić offers deviates from her initial theoretical framework: market reform expectations have remained higher in Serbia than in Croatia, because the latter already had faced the negative consequences of the reforms, due to its faster transition.

Jelena Pešić's book is well-written and readable. In contrast to the often simplified theoretical models that can be found in the framework of discourses on post-socialist transition, Pešić presents a complex historical and context-sensitive analysis of the transformational processes. Her study offers a plethora of data and insights, making it both useful and interesting not only for sociologists, but also for anthropologists, historians, and political scientists. The author's theoretical reflections shed light on the course of the transformation process, and compel readers to re-examine a core question related to the future—if the legitimacy crisis of the capitalist system deepens, and there is no articulation of ideological alternatives, is it plausible to expect a rise in value inconsistency and

dissonance? And in the case of mounting value inconsistency and dissonance, can we expect the formation of alternative value systems, and by which social groups?

Milica Resanović (Belgrade)

**Jasmin Mujanović, *Hunger and Fury. The Crisis of Democracy in the Balkans*, London: Hurst, 2018, 229 pp., ISBN 978-1-84904-892-7, £ 20.00**

Enough studies have been written on democracy, or democratisation, and discontent to fill libraries. Typically, these studies highlight the valuable, or even essential contribution by the European Union to the consolidation of democracy if they deal with the newly independent successor states of Yugoslavia. A core argument has thus been a negative assessment of these societies' capacities to democratise from within. With regard to Serbia, for example, democratisation began in earnest only with the ouster from office and then extradition to the International Criminal Tribunal for Former Yugoslavia (ICTY) of Slobodan Milošević in 2000 and 2001 respectively, and this is usually claimed despite setbacks such as the stand-off of several oppositional parties, or the return of nationalist parties to power in recent years. In reality the optimistic claim has never been substantiated that Serbia's democratisation is a chequered but irreversible process thanks to the EU membership perspective and the support from Brussels. Only a sizable minority of the literature on democracy in Southeastern Europe takes a more critical stance, for example by applying a post-colonial framework. In this perspective, Brussels and its imposed conditionalities rather wreck genuine democratisation and effective parliamentary participation in de-