

SABRINA P. RAMET

Democratic Values and Ethnic Polarization in the Western Balkans: An Introduction

Abstract. The following article presents an introductory overview of the contributions to the present issue, focusing on the significance of values in political culture, as well as on patterns of ethnic polarization in Croatia, Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Macedonia, Kosovo, and Albania. The persistent ethnic polarization inherent in most of these societies, as well as the consequences of both the wars of Yugoslav succession and the effects of post-socialist transformation have produced deficiencies and delays in the development of a civic culture and in the consolidation of democratic values. Although some positive and surprising results were brought forth by the sociological analyses presented within the single case studies in this issue, the combination of the above-mentioned aspects continues to represent a potential threat to the overall stability of the region.

Sabrina P. Ramet is a Professor of Political Science at the Norwegian University of Science and Technology, Trondheim, and a Senior Researcher with the Centre for the Study of Civil War (PRIO), Oslo.

Half a century ago, Gabriel Almond and Sidney Verba published a pioneering book in which they identified certain modal political values as pivotal for the success of democracy.¹ The idea that values were important in politics was not new; Plato had understood this more than 2,000 years ago and particularly emphasized the inculcation of appropriate values through the educational system in his classic, *Republic*. Jean-Jacques Rousseau, the eighteenth-century philosopher and novelist, likewise believed that education was a critical instrument to instill in citizens the values that would assure that a given society could maintain its political system, its stability, and its traditions. What was new in the Almond/Verba collaboration was a systematic study of what they called the civic culture in five nations, in the course of which they endeavored to identify what was functional for liberal democracy and what was dysfunctional. In order

¹ Gabriel A. ALMOND / Sidney VERBA, *The Civic Culture: Political Attitudes and Democracy in Five Nations*. Princeton/NJ 1963.

to sustain a liberal democracy, Almond and Verba concluded, a society needed to develop and maintain a civic culture.

The present collection of original essays proceeds from the supposition, shared with the aforementioned writers, that values matter in politics, and it focuses on the centrality of values in the political life of six states in the Western Balkans, as well as the way in which values influence and are reflected in voting behavior. Except for Albania, which dates its independent statehood to November 1912, the remaining countries discussed herein acquired or regained their independence as a result of the breakup of the Socialist Federated Republic of Yugoslavia at the beginning of the 1990s and, in the case of Kosovo, as a result of a long struggle for self-determination on the part of Kosovo Albanians which culminated in an armed uprising in 1998, NATO intervention in 1999, and the proclamation of an independent Kosovo in February 2008.

The first two articles in the collection examine the cases of Serbia and Kosovo, identifying rival political currents in each country and assessing the prospects for the development of a working liberal democracy. Both states face formidable obstacles. In the case of Serbia, such obstacles include the economic impact of the Yugoslav War, which, in turn, facilitated the criminalization of the economy and political life,² the presence of nearly 300,000 refugees (as of June 2009),³ high levels of corruption in both the public and private sectors (in turn reflected in high levels of distrust on the part of Serbian citizens),⁴ the continued strength of ultra-nationalist parties, and a refusal in textbooks⁵ and some media,⁶ in spite of growing evidence, to accept that the Serbian ruling elite bore considerable responsibility for the war that broke out in 1991.⁷ The Serbian political culture itself includes features that are dysfunctional for the development and stabilization of a liberal democracy; as noted in the first article in this collection, these features include a persistent tendency, among a certain sector of the population,

² See Maja MILJKOVIĆ / Marko Attila HOARE, *Crime and the Economy Under Milošević and His Successors*, in: Sabrina P. RAMET / Vjeran PAVLAKOVIĆ (eds.), *Serbia since 1989. Politics and Society Under Milošević and After*. Seattle, London 2005.

³ Nearly 300,000 Refugees, IDPs in Serbia, *B-92*, 16 June 2009, available at <http://www.b92.net/eng/news/society-article.php?yyyy=2009&mm=06&dd=16&nav_id=59875>, 17 June 2009.

⁴ Tamara SPAIĆ, *Corruption Flourishing in Political Parties*, *Blic*, 4 June 2009, available at <<http://www.blic.rs/news.php?id=4573>>, 9 June 2009.

⁵ See Dubravka STOJANOVIĆ, *Value Changes in the Interpretations of History in Serbia*, in: Ola LISTHAUG / Sabrina P. RAMET / Dragana DULIĆ (eds.), *Civic and Uncivic Values in Serbia: The Post-Milošević Era*. Budapest, New York (Central European University Press, forthcoming).

⁶ See Izabela KISIĆ / Slavija STANOJLOVIĆ, *The Post-2000 Media Situation in Serbia*, in LISTHAUG / RAMET / DULIĆ (eds.), *Civic and Uncivic Values in Serbia* (above fn. 5).

⁷ See the report in *Jutarnji list*, 10 November 2008, available at <<http://www.jutarnji.hr/mvpei--srbija-jos-negira-odgovornost-za-rat/193521/>>, 28 December 2009.

to glorify indicted war criminals⁸ and, especially during the period that Vojislav Koštunica was prime minister (from March 2004 to July 2008), a tendency to favor the posthumous political rehabilitation of Axis collaborators from World War Two. Koštunica left office in July 2008, but this latter tendency has yet to be reversed. Finally, there is the issue of Kosovo. With the Serbian constitution (adopted in 2006) stipulating that Kosovo is an integral part of Serbia, the only Serbian party leader to advocate recognition of Kosovo's independence is Čedomir Jovanović, head of the small Liberal Democratic Party.

On the other hand, there have also been hopeful signs in Serbia since July 2008, when Mirko Cvetković was sworn in as prime minister and Ivica Dačić as Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Internal Affairs. Both men pledged to uproot corruption and to reform Serbian politics. In addition, Rasim Ljajić, president of the National Office for Cooperation with the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia, pledged that the two remaining war crimes indictees – Ratko Mladić and Goran Hadžić – would be arrested by the end of 2009;⁹ they remained at large as of May 2010, however. Further signs of a more liberal direction in Serbian politics include an investigation launched by Serbia's war crimes prosecutor into the role played by the regime-controlled media in fanning aggressive nationalism in the 1990s¹⁰ and the fact that Serbia has been cooperating with the European Union in the fight against transnational criminal networks and building bridges with the EU in general.¹¹ Yet, in spite of such progress, one in five students at the University of Belgrade would like to leave Serbia after finishing university studies; one quarter of the students questioned cite the low standard of living in Serbia as the main reason to seek emigration.¹² Moreover, according to a recent report, more than 240,000 pensioners in Serbia live "on the edge of poverty".¹³

Serbia faces tough economic challenges, which have only been aggravated by the global economic recession that began in late 2008. In the first six months of 2009, industrial production fell by 18.1 %, the Gross Domestic Product (GDP)

⁸ See Sabrina P. RAMET, *The Denial Syndrome and Its Consequences: Serbian Political Culture since 2000*, *Communist and Post-Communist Studies* 40 (2007), n. 1, 41–58.

⁹ Only Mladić and Hadžić to Be Arrested, *Blic*, 12 May 2009, available at <<http://www.blic.rs/news.php?id=4410>>, 1 June 2009.

¹⁰ *Agence France Presse*, 8 June 2009, from <topic@afp.com>, by subscription.

¹¹ Srbija gradi mostove ka EU, *Danas*, 5 June 2009, available at <http://www.danas.rs/vesti/drustvo/srbija_gradimostove_ka_eu_55.html?news_id=163191>, 28 December 2009.

¹² Svaki peti student planira da ode iz zemlje, *Danas*, 3 May 2009, available at <http://www.danas.rs/vesti/drustvo/terazije/svaki_peti_student_planira_da_ode_iz_zemlje.14.html?news_id=160123>, 28 December 2009.

¹³ Na granici siromaštva 240.000 penzionera, *Politika*, 11 July 2009, available at <http://www.politika.rs/rubrike/vesti-dana/Vishe-od-240_000-penzionera-na-granici-siromashtva.lt.html>, 11 July 2009.

declined by 3.5 %, and unemployment rose by 1.7 %.¹⁴ Standard and Poor's confirmed the bad prognosis at the end of July, giving Serbia a negative credit rating and attributing Serbia's failure to deal effectively with its economic challenges to "overreliance on foreign funding and slow reforms amid the global recession".¹⁵ The International Monetary Fund came to the rescue with a 3 billion euro loan in early 2009; this was followed by the approval of 100 million euros from the European Commission to support Serbia's budget, and by the extension of a loan of 150 million euros from the European Bank of Reconstruction and Development in July to finance the construction of a highway between Niš and Dimitrograd.¹⁶

Kosovo is the subject of the second article in this collection, written by Hilde Haug. Focusing on the period since the declaration of independence, Haug finds that one of the main challenges facing Kosovar society today is ethnic stratification, with Kosovar Albanian and Kosovar Serb communities owing allegiance to different states. This polarization is reflected in various forms of ghettoization among the Serbs of Kosovo, including in the classroom, where Albanian and Serb students have different curricula for history, language, and literature. Thus, while Kosovar Albanians learn in school that they live in an independent country, Kosovar Serbs learn that they live in Kosovo and Metohija, a part of Serbia.¹⁷ In this way, Serbia's refusal to recognize Kosovo's independence contributes to ethnic polarization within Kosovo. The European Union launched its Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo (EULEX) on 15 February 2008 in order to assist the new government in Prishtina in building new governmental and juridical institutions. Although the Serbian government preferred that UNMIK (the United Nations Mission in Kosovo) continue its operations instead, it eventually gave its assent to the EULEX mission in September 2009. In October 2008, the Serbian government succeeded in obtaining the agreement of a majority of states in the UN General Assembly to refer its dispute with Kosovo to the International Court of Justice, which aims to resolve the legality of the declaration of independence by the Kosovar Albanians.

Kosovo's government, in which the Democratic Party of Kosovo headed by Hashim Thaçi has the largest share of deputies in the Assembly, has been said to fall short of international standards for liberal democratic governance. Among the problems cited are allegedly strong governmental interference in the work of the civil service sector and widespread corruption. Haug concludes that,

¹⁴ Anica NIKOLIĆ, *Ista muka Srba i Hrvata*, *Politika*, 20 July 2009, available at <<http://www.politika.rs/rubrike/Ekonomija/Ista-muka-Srba-i-Hrvata.lt.html>>, 20 July 2009.

¹⁵ *Agence France Presse*, 31 July 2009, from <topic@afp.com>, by subscription.

¹⁶ *Agence France Presse*, 2 July 2009, from <topic@afp.com>, by subscription; EU odobrila Srbiji 250 miliona evra, *Politika*, 1 August 2009, available at <<http://www.politika.rs/rubrike/Politika/EU-odobrila-Srbiji-250-miliona-evra.lt.html>>, 1 August 2009.

¹⁷ *Agence France Presse*, 1 June 2009, from <topic@afp.com>, by subscription.

since the assembly remains weak and the judiciary is nearly non-functioning, there are few checks and balances to counter the tendency of the government's top-down approach.

By May 2010, Kosovo had been recognized by 68 states, and in November 2009 it gained admission to the IMF and the World Bank. Kosovo, like Serbia and Bosnia-Herzegovina, is faced with the criminalization of the economy and high levels of corruption in both the public and private sectors.¹⁸ Nonetheless, Javier Solana, the EU's High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy, commended the Kosovar government in July 2009 for having made progress in various areas.¹⁹ Furthermore, by the end of June 2009, 307 Serb police officers who had left the Kosovo Police Force to protest Kosovo's declaration of independence had returned to service, leaving only 18 Serb police officers still on strike.²⁰ Whatever their motivation, the officers' return to the force may contribute to gradual ethnic reconciliation in the young state.

The remaining four articles in this issue make use of data collected in the Southeast European Social Survey Project (SEESSP), headed by Albert Simkus. The project was funded by the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and consisted of face-to-face interviews with more than 23,000 respondents in Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, Kosovo, Macedonia, Montenegro, and Serbia. The interviews lasted approximately 75 minutes each and focused on political, economic, and social issues, touching also on questions of tolerance, social inequality, family and gender roles, and religiosity.²¹ The aim of this survey project was to study attitudes in a group of countries that had been omitted from most of the main international survey projects and to provide data that followed the guidelines for data collected in such surveys as the International Social Survey Project and the European and World Values Surveys.

Preliminary results of the survey were published in a special issue of the *International Journal of Sociology*.²² That issue contained articles examining Serbia, Croatia, and Macedonia, but did not include discussions of Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, or Kosovo, as covered in this issue. Moreover, the IJS article about

¹⁸ Kosovo: Korupcija poprima zabrinjavajuće razmjere, *Javno*, 6 November 2008, available at <http://www.dalje.com/hr-svijet/kosovo--korupcija-poprima-zabrinj-vajuce-razmjere_200806>, 17 May 2010; High Level of Corruption in Kosovo, *B-92*, 9 July 2009, available at <http://www.b92.net/eng/news/politics-article.php?yyyy=2009&mm=07&dd=09&nav_id=60369>, 19 July 2009. Regarding Serbia, see for example Korupcija odbija strani kapital, *Danas*, 24 May 2009, available at <http://www.danas.rs/dodaci/biznis/korupcija_odbija_strani_kapital.27.html?news_id=162019>, 28 December 2009. Regarding Bosnia-Herzegovina, see Boris Divjak / Michael PUGH, The Political Economy of Corruption in Bosnia and Herzegovina, *International Peacekeeping* 15 (June 2008), n. 3, 373-386.

¹⁹ Agence France Presse, 14 July 2009, from <topic@afp.com>, by subscription.

²⁰ Agence France Presse, 30 June 2009, from <topic@afp.com>, by subscription.

²¹ For further discussion of the SEESSP, see Albert Simkus, Guest Editor's Introduction: The SEESSP Project, *International Journal of Sociology* 37 (2007), n. 3, 3-14, 3-5.

²² *International Journal of Sociology* 37 (2007).

Croatia focused on gender relations in Croatia, whereas the article focusing on Croatia in this issue probes the subject of ethnic intolerance. Finally, the Macedonia article in the IJS only utilized data gathered in 2003 whereas, as will be noted below, the article included in this issue also makes use of data gathered in 2005.

The first article benefiting from the SEESSP data included in this issue focuses on Macedonia. Written by Albert Simkus, Kristen Ringdal, and Ola Listhaug, it adds a second set of data collected in Macedonia to the data gathered in 2003. There, in late 2005, 1,881 follow-up interviews were conducted with persons who had also been interviewed in the SEESSP in 2003. Whereas the 2003 Macedonian sample surveyed not only Macedonians and Albanians, but also small numbers of Roma, Serbs, Turks, Bosniaks, and Vlachs, as well as citizens of neighboring countries, only Macedonians (1,212) and Albanians (669) were interviewed for the 2005 follow-up survey. The follow-up survey was sponsored by the Norwegian University of Science and Technology, Trondheim, with additional support from the Centre for the Study of Civil War of the International Peace Research Institute, Oslo. The reason for returning to Macedonia was the brief Albanian insurgency in spring 2001, which brought the country to the brink of civil war; ultimately, further escalation was averted by the signing of the Ohrid Agreement.²³ As Simkus notes, the comparison of data from 2005 with data from 2003 yielded three noteworthy conclusions: first, it turned out that – contrary to expectations – geographic proximity to places where there had been ethnic violence in 2001 seemed to have almost no effect on people's reported attitudes about members of other nationality groups; second, Macedonians and Albanians tended to disagree about the reasons for the 2001 conflict to a degree rarely observed in public opinion surveys (the differences were, in fact, so extreme as to eclipse the possibility for other factors to be important); and, third, while attitudes on security matters improved, attitudes about ethnic intermarriage became increasingly negative between 2003 and 2005.

It is on the basis of these two surveys that Simkus, Ringdal, and Listhaug investigate if there was a decline in ethnic polarization in Macedonia between 2003 and 2005. As they note in the abstract, they found that “there was clear evidence of improvement with regard to attitudes related to insecurity about ethnic violence, especially among ethnic Albanians”. In short, the main groups, and especially ethnic Albanians, began to feel increasingly safe, though not necessarily more friendly toward each other.

In the next article, Zan Strabac and Marko Valenta examine the case of Croatia. Using data from the 2003-04 SEESSP, they find that some supporters of the Croatian Democratic Union (*Hrvatska Demokratska Zajednica*, HDZ), the party founded by Franjo Tuđman, voiced ethnically intolerant views in interviews

²³ For a discussion on this topic see Armend REKA, The Ohrid Agreement: The Travails of Inter-Ethnic Relations in Macedonia, *Human Rights Review* 9 (2008), n. 1, 55-69.

at that time. Their finding confirms earlier work by Ivan Grdešić.²⁴ The death of President Tuđman was immediately followed by the electoral success of the opposition Social Democratic Party of Croatia; Ivica Račan, head of that party, then assumed the office of prime minister, retaining that post until December 2003 when a reformed HDZ took power, installing the moderate Ivo Sanader as prime minister. Based on their examination of data from the first year of Sanader's term of office, Strabac and Valenta conclude that, at the time of the survey, HDZ voters were "among the most intolerant sections of Croatia's population". They also note that levels of intolerance had been significantly lower prior to the outbreak of the war in 1991, and that the war itself undoubtedly stimulated resentment and xenophobia in the Croatian society. Strabac and Valenta implicitly confirm the findings about the minimal impact of geographic proximity on ethnic intolerance in Macedonia, as they find that there is almost no evidence that persons who had lost loved ones or who had experienced traumata harbored more negative attitudes about other nationality groups than the average for the sample. An additional factor which may influence attitudes on other nationalities – in the Croatian case, especially about Serbs – is textbooks. In the Tuđman era, history textbooks promoted nationalistic views and, when discussing Serbian political figures, tended to describe them in negative terms.²⁵ Extensive revision of the history textbooks after Tuđman's death, with professional criteria replacing political criteria, offers the prospect that future generations, schooled through less nationalistic books, will prove more tolerant.

On 24 June 2009, the EU suspended accession talks with Croatia, stating as a reason the still-unresolved border dispute with Slovenia. A week later, Sanader resigned as prime minister. His erstwhile deputy, Jadranka Kosor, took the reigns as his successor, confirming that she would continue to give priority to addressing the economic crisis and to securing Croatia's admission into the European Union. By November, however, the two countries had reached an agreement, which was ratified by the Croatian Sabor on 20 November 2009.²⁶

The Bosnian case is the subject of the contribution by Maria Elena Sandovici and Ola Listhaug. They provide a short summary of the organization of the government of Bosnia-Herzegovina, a country in which each of the constituent national groups (i. e. Bosniaks, Croats, and Serbs) is inclined to self-righteousness

²⁴ Ivan GRDEŠIĆ, The Radical Right in Croatia and its Constituency, in: Sabrina P. RAMET (ed.), *The Radical Right in Central and Eastern Europe since 1989*. University Park/Pa. 1999, 176-177.

²⁵ Magdalena NAJBAR-AGIČIĆ / Damir AGIČIĆ, The Use and Misuse of History Teaching in 1990s Croatia, in: Sabrina P. RAMET / Davorka MATIĆ (eds.), *Democratic Transition in Croatia: Value Transformation, Education and Media*. College Station/Tx. 2007, 207.

²⁶ Croatian Parliament Ratifies Slovenia Border Deal, *Javno*, 20 November 2009, available at <http://www.dalje.com/en-croatia/croatian-parliament-ratifies-slovenia-border-deal_282580>, 3 December 2009.

in connection with the War of Yugoslav Succession. The authors note that there is a strong tendency for citizens of Bosnia to vote for candidates of their own nationality, which in fact is largely due to the constitutional design of the country. Drawing upon data collected in the 2003 SEESSP, in which about 6,800 residents of Bosnia-Herzegovina were interviewed, Sandovici and Listhaug find that Bosnian men vote in greater numbers than Bosnian women, and that younger citizens are less likely to vote than those who already have an economic stake in the system. On the other hand, neither marital status nor education affects voting participation to any tangible degree. They also speculate that negative experiences during the war may serve as an impetus to vote – a finding which would run counter to the findings for Macedonia and Croatia.

Bosnia-Herzegovina has faced problems of corruption and, like Croatia and Serbia, was negatively impacted economically by the War of Yugoslav Succession. According to the 2009 Index of Economic Freedom, jointly published by *The Wall Street Journal* and the Heritage Foundation, Bosnia-Herzegovina has the worst score for corruption in all of Europe,²⁷ while 43 % of working-age Bosnians were officially unemployed as of March 2009.²⁸ In 2004, Bosnia's GDP still stood at only 60 % of its pre-war level, although by 2006 it had risen to 85 %.²⁹ Other problems facing Bosnia include the difficulty experienced by would-be returnees in reclaiming their homes and returning to their native country (almost half of the 2 million people who fled their homes in 1992 still had not returned by 2004);³⁰ economic hardships worsened by the global economic crisis that began to unfold in late 2008, leading to protest actions by workers and disabled persons;³¹ and the involvement of the leading nationalist political parties in black market operations.³² Members of all three nationalities feel that they are victims of discrimination – attitudes reinforced by their respective history

²⁷ Natasha SRDOC / Joel Anand SAMY, Corruption in Croatia, *Wall Street Journal*, 19 May 2009, available at <<http://online.wsj.com/article/SB124267799642331663.html>>, 20 June 2009.

²⁸ William J. KOLE, Bosnia's Jobless Rate at 43 % and Rising, *San Francisco Chronicle*, 28 March 2009, available at <<http://www.sfgate.com/cgi-bin/article.cgi?f=/n/a/2009/03/28/international/i104614D73.DTL&type=printable>>, 22 October 2009.

²⁹ Florian BIEBER, Bosnia-Herzegovina: Slow Progress Towards a Functional State, *Southeast European and Black Sea Studies* 6 (2006), n. 1, 43-64, 43; and Bosnia Herzegovina Country Profile, *EUbusiness*, 27 August 2006, last modified on 3 January 2008, available at <www.eubusiness.com/Bosnia/bosnia-country-profile>, 20 June 2009.

³⁰ Lejla HADŽIĆ, As Dayton Undergoes Proposals for Reform, the Status of Freedom of Movement, Refugee Returns, and War Crimes in Bosnia and Herzegovina, *Human Rights Review* 9 (2008), n. 1, 137-151, 143.

³¹ Daria SITO-SUCIC, Bosnia Faces Social Unrest, Political Crisis Looms, *Reuters*, 26 February 2009, available at <<http://www.reuters.com/article/latestCrisis/idUSLQ817740>>, 1 March 2009.

³² Amra FESTIĆ / Adrian RAUSCHE, War by Other Means: How Bosnia's Clandestine Political Economies Obstruct Peace and State Building, *Problems of Post-Communism* 51 (2004), n. 3, 27-34.

textbooks³³ – and, as a 2003 survey revealed, 37 % of Bosnians rarely or never had contact with members of other nationalities.³⁴ In addition, radical Muslim Wahhabis have been active in the country.³⁵ It is not surprising that, in 2008, some 57 % of young people taking part in a survey stated that they would like to move out of Bosnia-Herzegovina.³⁶ Interconfessional cooperation has also been difficult and, for example, Bosnia's Interreligious Council, representing the Islamic, Catholic, Orthodox, and Jewish communities, has rarely been able to agree on any concrete cooperation. In June 2009, however, the members of the Council agreed to protest a draft law intended to combat discrimination against homosexuals by legalizing gay/lesbian marriages.³⁷

However, perhaps the greatest threat to Bosnian stability and to the republic's aspirations to join the European Union comes from the Bosnian Serbs, whose leading politician, Milorad Dodik, prime minister of the Republika Srpska (RS) and honorary president of Belgrade's basketball club "Partizan", has insisted that any new constitution for Bosnia-Herzegovina should give the RS the right to secede.³⁸ Indeed, Dodik has repeatedly and explicitly called for the partition of Bosnia-Herzegovina into two states, citing the Czechoslovak "velvet divorce" as a model.³⁹ An opinion poll taken among 850 residents of the RS in June 2006

³³ For documentation, see Branislava BARANOVIĆ, *History Textbooks in Post-War Bosnia and Herzegovina*, *Intercultural Education* 12 (2001), n. 1, 13-26; and Pilvi TORSTI, *How to Deal With a Difficult Past? History Textbooks Supporting Enemy Images in Post-War Bosnia and Herzegovina*, *Journal of Curriculum Studies* 39 (February 2007), n. 1, 77-96. See also Puljić: Hrvati u BiH trebaju istinsku ravnopravnost, *Vjesnik*, 27 August 2007, available at <<http://www.vjesnik.hr/html/2007/08/27/Clanak.asp?r=van&c=5>>, 28 December 2009.

³⁴ Zoltán DUJISIN, *Apart From Sporadic Civil Society Initiatives, Bosnia Has Attempted Little by Way of Inter-Ethnic Reconciliation*, *Inter Press Service News Agency*, 16 July 2009, available at <<http://www.ipsnews.net/print.asp?idnews=47682>>, 21 July 2009.

³⁵ See, for example, *Bosnian Wahhabis Taken Into Custody*, *ISN International Relations and Security Network*, 26 June 2007, available at <www.isn.ethz.ch/isn/Current-Affairs/Security-Watch/Detail?id=53443&lng=en>, 20 June 2009.

³⁶ Zbog posla 57 posto mladih bi napustilo BiH, *sarajevo-x.com*, 22 May 2008, available at <<http://www.sarajevo-x.com/biznis/posao/clanak/080522025>>, 28 December 2009.

³⁷ Srećko LATAL, *Bosnia's Religions Unite Against Gay Marriages*, *BalkanInsight*, 3 June 2009, available at <<http://www.balkaninsight.com/en/main/news/19805/>>, 4 June 2009.

³⁸ Dodik ne odustaje od prava na odcjepljenje, *Vjesnik*, 23 February 2009, available at <<http://www.vjesnik.hr/html/2009/02/23/Clanak.asp?r=van&c=8>>, 28 December 2009; Tihić: Dodik djeluje antidejtonski, *Nezavisne novine*, 14 June 2009, available at <<http://www.nezavisne.com/dogadjaji/vijesti/42241/Tihic-Dodik-djeluje-antidejtonski.html>>, 28 December 2009; Dan BILEFSKY, *International Envoy to Bosnia to Seek Legal Control*, *New York Times*, 20 June 2009, available at <<http://query.nytimes.com/gst/fullpage.html?res=9F06E6DA123FF933A15755C0A96F9C8B63&scp=3&sq=dodik&st=nyt>>, 20 June 2009. But see also Budućnost BiH vraćanje Dejtonu, *Nezavisne novine*, 11 December 2009, available at <<http://www.nezavisne.com/dogadjaji/vijesti/50233/Buducnost-BiH-vracanje-Dejtonu.html>>, 28 December 2009.

³⁹ Political Tensions Threaten Bosnia's Fragile Peace, *Deutsche Welle*, 1 March 2009, available at <http://www.dw-world.de/popups/popup_printcontent/0,,4064691,00.html/>, 3 December 2009.

found that 62 % of respondents said that, should Kosovo declare independence, they would favor the secession of the RS from Bosnia.⁴⁰ James Lyon, formerly affiliated with the International Crisis Group, speculated in an op/ed piece for the *International Herald Tribune* published in February 2009, that

*... the breakup of Bosnia would be violent and probably result in the destruction of Republika Srpska. Bosnian officials have stated that they will not permit the Serbs to take them by surprise again, as happened in 1992.*⁴¹

Meanwhile, even as Dodik continues to quarrel with the Office of the High Representative and to demand its abolition,⁴² the international community has pressed for constitutional reform that would reduce the autonomy of the RS.⁴³

This set of articles concludes with a study of party choice and electoral behavior in Albania, by Kristen Ringdal and Teuta Starova. After a brief overview of the emergence of the post-communist party system in Albania, they point to literature that documents the decline of class as a predictor of political preference. Following Freedom House, they characterize Albania's political system as a "semi-consolidated democracy" and, citing Dorian Jano, note that the programs of the political parties "are very general and lack clear political positioning on issues", with the result that Albanians have been voting on the basis of personal beliefs, rather than economic interests. This results in a lack of ideological identity among the political parties. When it comes to lustration, the practice of "the mass disqualification of those associated with the abuses under the prior regime",⁴⁴ which they characterize as an authoritarian legacy of the era of Enver Hoxha, their findings confirm a conclusion advanced by Jano. His conclusion was that, in Albania at least,

it is not so much the (democratic) institutions wh[ich] have framed political elites' behaviour [but] rather the opposite.

The consequence, in Jano's view, is that "the authoritarian political cultures of the Albanian political elites" have distorted Albania's political institu-

⁴⁰ Serb Bosnians Support Independence, *Angus Reid Global Monitor*, 10 July 2006, available at <http://www.angus-reid.com/polls/view/12489/serb_bosnians_support_independence>, 21 March 2009.

⁴¹ James LYON, Halting the Downward Spiral, *International Herald Tribune*, 24 February 2009, available at <<http://www.nytimes.com/2009/02/24/opinion/24iht-edlyon.1.20395827.html>>, 11 March 2009.

⁴² Thomas FUSTER, Offene Machtprobe in Bosnien-Herzegowina, *Neue Zürcher Zeitung*, 22 June 2009, available at <http://www.nzz.ch/nachrichten/international/offene_machtprobe_in_bosnien-herzegowina_1.2788481.html>, 11 July 2009.

⁴³ Vijeće Europe: Treba promijeniti Ustav u Bosni, *Slobodna Dalmacija*, 23 December 2009, available at <<http://www.slobodnadalmacija.hr/BiH/tabid/68/articleType/ArticleView/articleId/84934/Default.aspx>>, 28 December 2009.

⁴⁴ Eric BRAHM, Lustration, Beyond Intractability, available at <www.beyondintractability.org/essay/lustration/>, 14 January 2007.

tions.⁴⁵ On the other hand, Ringdal and Starova find that age, gender, and education do not seem to affect political preference – a conclusion that challenges Jano’s findings. Religion, on the other hand, seems to be closely correlated with voting behavior; specifically, while Muslims divide their support roughly equally between the two strongest parties – the Socialist Party and the Democratic Party – Albanians of Orthodox faith strongly prefer the Socialist Party, while Albanian Catholics show an equally strong preference for the Democratic Party. Ringdal and Starova also find, rather curiously, that membership in the higher social classes in Albanian society seems to be correlated with support for the Socialist Party, while members of lower classes tend to support the Democratic Party. They explain this counterintuitive finding by noting that the Socialist Party, in its previous incarnation as the Albanian Party of Labor, was the vehicle for ambitious persons to rise to leading positions in the government and in the economy.

Albania’s post-communist path has been a difficult one, weathering economic disaster in 1991 and popular revolt in 1997, when various pyramid schemes failed and citizens raided weapons depots, seizing almost a million Kalashnikov assault rifles.⁴⁶ Moreover, Albania’s first post-communist president, Sali Berisha, who served from 1992 to 1997, possessed an undemocratic style, purged all of the ministries, and “seemed unable to distance himself from an unhealthy political culture”.⁴⁷ Like Berisha, Fatos Nano, who served as prime minister from 1997 to 2005, used his office to settle scores and conducted a

*broad-ranging purge of the security apparatus, the judiciary and the state administration, and almost all ambassadors and generals.*⁴⁸

As Nicholas Pano noted in an article published in 1997,

Albanian political culture, which has been characterized by a low level of popular participation in political activity, has produced a society in which the concept of democratic government, the rule of law, the accountability of public officials, and the expression and toleration of diverse opinions are not firmly rooted or fully understood

by either elites or the population at large.⁴⁹ On the other hand, the proportion of people living below the poverty line declined from 25.4 % in 2002 to 12.4 %

⁴⁵ Dorian JANO, On Parties and Party System in Albania: What Implications for Democracy, in: Gergely KARACSONY / Peter SMUK (eds.), Central European Case Studies, vol. 2. Győr 2008, 85-103, 85.

⁴⁶ Bernd J. FISCHER, Albania since 1989, the Hoxhaist Legacy, in: Sabrina P. RAMET (ed.), Central and Southeast European Politics since 1989. Cambridge 2010, 430-431.

⁴⁷ Ibid., 427.

⁴⁸ Ibid., 433. Cfr. Arolda ELBASANI, Enlargement Instruments and Domestic Constraints: Public Administration Reform in Post-Communist Albania, *Südosteuropa. Zeitschrift für Politik und Gesellschaft* 57 (2009), n. 1, 70-90, confirming these assessments.

⁴⁹ Nicholas PANO, The Process of Democratization in Albania, in: Karen DAWISHA / Bruce PARROTT (eds.), Politics, Power, and the Struggle for Democracy in South-East Europe. Cam-

in 2008, and unemployment stood at 12.6 % in the third quarter of 2008 – which is high, but not catastrophic.⁵⁰ An objective marker of progress was achieved in April 2009, when Albania was admitted to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO).

Croatia was admitted to NATO at the same time as Albania, while Macedonia's admission to the alliance has been held up by Greece, which insists that Macedonians call themselves something else besides Macedonians and find a new name for their country, even though the region has been known as (part of) Macedonia since before the time of Alexander the Great (356–323 B.C.). Serbia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, and Kosovo have no prospects of admission to NATO in the foreseeable future. Concerning the EU, Croatia is already, one might say, in the vestibule, having finally reached a preliminary agreement with Slovenia on how to resolve an 18-year-old maritime and territorial boundary dispute. By 3 December 2009, Croatia had opened 28 of the 35 mandatory policy chapters of the *acquis communautaire* (required for EU accession) and, by 5 May 2010, had provisionally fulfilled the requirements pertaining to 18 of these (among others, those relating to financial services, energy, and consumer and health protection).⁵¹ Croatia's chief negotiator stated that Croatia could close all remaining chapters by mid-2010, making it possible for the country to be admitted to the EU in 2012 or 2013.⁵² However, the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, Finland, Belgium, and Denmark all blocked the opening of the chapters on the judiciary and fundamental rights until such time as Croatia would turn over artillery logs related to the "Operation Storm" (August 1995) to the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia. The Croatian government, however, claimed that it could not locate the logs in the ministry files. Then,

bridge 1997, 285–352, 286.

⁵⁰ Manjola HALA, Albania's Poverty Level Declines, *Southeast European Times*, 25 May 2009, available at <http://www.setimes.com/cocoon/setimes/xhtml/en_GB/features/setimes/features/2009/05/25/feature-01>, 20 June 2009; see also Albania's Q3 Unemployment Rate at 12.6 % vs. 13.2 % on *Yr. Reporter.gr*, 19 February 2009, available at <www.reporter.gr/>, by subscription. 20 June 2009.

⁵¹ Croatia to Spend 550 Million Euros for EU Adjustments: PM, *Agence France Press*, 28 November 2009, available at <<http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5iqMX-5uh2IQsqK0Z6bJ-beaOgMKMQ>>, 3 December 2009; Croatia Accession Treaty Drafted Soon, *EurActiv*, 2 December 2009, available at <<http://www.euractiv.com/en/enlargement/croatia-accession-treaty-drafted-soon/article-187788>>, 2 December 2009; Bruxelles: Hrvatska zatvorila još dva poglavlja u pregovorima sa EU, *Slobodna Dalmacija*, 21 December 2009, available at <<http://www.slobodnadalmacija.hr/Hrvatska/tabid/66/articleType/ArticleView/articleId/84515/Default.aspx>>, 28 December 2009; Croatia – EU-Croatia Relations, European Commission Enlargement, available at <http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/candidate-countries/croatia/relation/index_en.htm>, 18 May 2010.

⁵² Croatia Could Join EU in 2012, ÖVP MEP Says, *Austrian Independent*, 27 January 2010, available at <http://austrianindependent.com/news/Politics/2010-01-27/590/Croatia_could_join_EU_in_2012_%D6VP_MEP_says>, 31 January 2010.

on 9 December 2009, Croatian police were sent to search the private flats of some dozen high-ranking officers in the Croatian army. Within a day, after some 20 raids, the police found thousands of missing documents – amounting to more than 10,000 pages – that had been demanded by the ICTY.⁵³ None of these had been authorized for private use, and many of them were classified as state or military secrets. Prime Minister Kosor announced in November that Croatia would allocate 273 million euros in the 2010 budget for projects related to EU membership.⁵⁴ Meanwhile, Serbia hopes to join the European Union in 2014.⁵⁵

Macedonia, like Croatia, has signed a Stabilization and Association Agreement with the EU, but the Greek veto against its admission has greater support within the EU than Slovenia's veto against Croatia. As a result, Macedonia's efforts to gain EU admission face a more serious obstacle. In fact, all of the countries discussed in this special issue have signed Stabilization and Association Agreements with the European Union, but, aside from Croatia, none of them appear to be close to admittance. This probably reflects the fact that Croatia receives a cleaner bill of health from Transparency International than any of the other states at stake here, as well as a higher score for achieved democracy from Freedom House.⁵⁶ What this means is that, according to statistics considered useful by those who generate them, Croatia is currently the best suited for admission to the EU and NATO.

For those states that have joined the EU and/or NATO, admittance signifies international recognition that, in terms of support for democracy, civic morality and respect for human rights and freedom, among other things, the successful candidates measure up to international standards.⁵⁷ Values, thus, lie at the heart of the democratization project, while ethnic polarization still constitutes a prominent challenge. The authors of the articles contained herein devote their attention to these central themes.

⁵³ *Agence France Press*, 9 December 2009, from <topic@afp.com>, by subscription; and *ibid.*, 10 December 2009, from <topic@afp.com>, by subscription.

⁵⁴ Croatia to Earmark Millions of Euros for EU-Related Reforms, *Southeast European Times*, 30 November 2009, available at <http://www.setimes.com/cocoon/setimes/xhtml/en_GB/newsbriefs/setimes/newsbriefs/2009/11/30/nb-09>, 2 December 2009.

⁵⁵ Beograd očekuje skori status kandidata za EU, *Vjesnik*, 27 November 2009, available at <<http://www.vjesnik.hr/pdf/2009%5C11%5C27%5C12A12.PDF>>, 2 December 2009.

⁵⁶ Jeannette GOEHRING (ed.), *Nations in Transit 2008: Democratization from Central Europe to Eurasia*. New York, Washington/D.C., Budapest 2008, 37; and Transparency International, *The 2008 Transparency International Corruption Perceptions Index: Most and Least Corrupt Nations*, *infoplease.com*, available at <<http://www.infoplease.com/world/statistics/2008-transparency-international-corruption-perceptions.html>>, 5 September 2009.

⁵⁷ For Croatia's ranking, see Ola LISTHAUG / Zan STRABAC, Support for Democracy and Strength of Civic Attitudes: Croatia Compared with New and Old Democracies, in: RAMET / MATIĆ (eds.), *Democratic Transition in Croatia* (above fn. 25), 98-106.