

NATIONALISMS, GLOBALIZATION AND CIVIL SOCIETY IN CROATIA AND SLOVENIA

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ABSTRACT

This paper is an initial attempt to examine critically dominant understandings of civil society in two post-Yugoslav countries: Slovenia and Croatia. Through an examination of the role of 'new social movements' in Slovenian society in the 1980's, and the role of non-governmental organisations in contemporary Croatia, certain problems are examined. In particular, the paper looks at the ways in which, in a globalized context, an over-emphasis on civil society can fail to challenge adequately nationalist frameworks and meanings. The paper ends with a tentative attempt to develop a relational understanding of civil society, the state, and globalization.

INTRODUCTION

Few phrases have been seen as more resonant with meaning in the post-socialist or post-communist societies of Central and Eastern Europe than that of 'civil society'. Any application for funding; any explanation of the nature of democratization; any plan for future development; all seem obliged to include it as a central concept. Yet, it is almost always under theorised, insufficiently concretised in terms of specific practices, and rarely subjected to critical scrutiny. This paper is an initial attempt to raise some questions about the concept of civil society in the context of ongoing research on social reconstruction and social development in two post-Yugoslav countries, Croatia and Slovenia (1). In particular, the development of civil society at two moments is scrutinised.

The first looks at the ways in which civil society and social movements in Slovenia in the 1980's, despite their profoundly democratic and spontaneous character, began to be expressed in and through specific national, even nationalist, frameworks. The paper seeks to address the Slovenian experience as pivotal for civil society theory, not least because many of the key protagonists - philosophers, political scientists and sociologists - have written extensively about this moment. The second looks at non-governmental organisations in Croatia, often appealing through 'civil society' for their legitimacy, which have grown up in response to the humanitarian crisis caused by large numbers of refugees and displaced persons and, in particular, at the narrowness of focus of these NGOs. With some notable exceptions, these appear to reflect, rather more, the concerns of a 'new globalised professional middle class', than of oppressed groups and progressive social movements.

It is impossible to address either of these moments without paying attention to 'Yugoslavhood' as a central mediating space. Civil society movements in Slovenia in the 1980's had to pay attention to the really existing Yugoslav federation, and NGO's in Croatia face the continued interpolation of 'former Yugoslavia' as a territorial, and geo-political configuration, and the not-yet-finished territorial reconfigurations between former constituent republics. This paper, however, is not, primarily an attempt to add to the millions of words which have been written about the 'destruction' [MAGAS (1993)], the 'breakdown' [YUGOFAX (1992)], the 'tragic death' [DENITCH (1994a)], the 'disintegration' [COHEN (1993)], 'the fall' [GLENNY (1992)], the 'ending' [THOMPSON (1992)] or the 'unmaking' [WHEELER (1993)] of Yugoslavia. Nevertheless, some connections can be made as Tonci Kuzmanic has recently argued:

"Of course, there is no direct connection between civil society projects in Slovenia at the end of the eighties with the war in Bosnia and Croatia. And yet, there is a significant connection between those activities and the 'war in Slovenia'. Moreover, there is also a quite strong connection between the war in Slovenia and war in Croatia and Bosnia. If nothing else, the aggressor was (is) rather similar." [KUZMANIĆ (1994b); 13]

In a sense, then, the Serbian space, in terms of the development of ideas of a Greater Serbia, underpinned by the rise to power of Slobodan Milošević, and the military-ideological hegemonic support for Serbian separatist movements in Croatia and Bosnia, is an absent centre of this paper. It is the contradictions between 'two Yugoslavia's', one an (imperfect) attempt to create a socialist federation, the other an aggressive ethnicised Serbian nationalism, which underpins many ambiguities in explanations of the wars of the Yugoslav succession; choosing 'moments' is an unhelpful way of dealing with these complex processes. However, it is clear from even a cursory examination of the 'Yugoslav case' that explanations in terms of a 'Balkan mentality' of 'excited peoples' [KENNAN (1993);14] or of centuries old ethnic hatreds re-appearing in the aftermath of the ending of totalitarianism amount to crass, racist, stereotypes which must be challenged.

A more useful starting point may be provided by the concept of 'uneven development'. The economic facts of this, the increasing economic inequalities between the republics [DUFFIELD (1994)], re-peripheralisation in terms of rural-urban linkages [SCHIERUP (1992)] and the development of internal markets and, indeed, protectionism and embargoes [ZIZMOND (1992)], have echoes at the political and ideological levels as the structural crisis of the 1970's and 1980's deepened. These echoes sometimes appear as whispers, sometimes as screams, but they always tended to fragment, rather than hold together, an increasingly tenuous federal structure. What is important in terms of this paper is that this uneven development was also expressed and heard unevenly in the different republics.

The processes through which economic, political and ideological questions became ethnicised in a Federation in which "all nationalities felt discriminated against" [CVIIC (1991)] are complex, contested, and beyond the scope of this paper. The active creation of 'xenophobia' [OKLOBZIJA (1993)], and, in particular, the use of ethnicised nationalism as a resource for political elites, should not allow us to

understate the extent of what Bogdan Denitch (1995) has termed 'grassroots nationalism'. Attempting to analyse 'anti-rational' hatred and genocide has even led some theorists to emphasise its underpinnings through the categories of Lacanian psychoanalysis [BOWMAN (1995)]. All attempts at 'meta-narratives', in my view, seem doomed to partiality in the context of so many whispers, screams, silences, and the multi-layered relations of ethnicised nationalism, identity formation, and power.

It is instructive, however, to re-read Branka Magas' essays from 1980 onwards, collected together in 'The Destruction of Yugoslavia' [MAGAS (1993)]. In particular, Magas' emphases make it very clear how important it is to pay attention to events in Kosovo/a (2) in the 1980's, and their echoes in the different republics. It was, of course, in and through a construction of Kosovo that Serbian intellectuals, many of whom had been active in left oppositional circles, began to develop a nationalist project, joined later by Slobodan Milošević, which reached its peak with the six hundredth anniversary of the 1389 Battle of Kosovo. Recognising the complexities of Yugoslavhood, class and nation, Magas writes about a visit to Yugoslavia in May 1988 in ways which now seem prophetic:

"Travelling through the northern part of the country, one is struck by an awareness that Yugoslavia as such exists only at the level of the federal bureaucracy and the army. In reality, the country has been divided into separate units, each living its own life, each burdened with its own specific problems. In the most pessimistic scenario, it is only a matter of time before a major explosion occurs and the only question is whether this will be on a national or a class basis. Will the first blood be spilt as a result of a pogrom against a local national minority, or will it occur as a result of suppression of a mass workers' protest. If the former, then the country will become even more split. If the latter, it may provoke a sobering up in the country as a whole." [MAGAS (1993); 136].

Rather than producing a 'meta-narrative', then, this paper chooses two moments, in two spaces, and interrogates them in terms of these discourses of Yugoslavhood, nation, and class. The first part of the paper can be read as an exploration of civil society and social movements in Slovenia in the 1980's as a case study of the 'uneven development' of civil society in Yugoslavia, although it is far more an internal treatise on a particular movement and its protagonists' attempts, then and now, to make sense of it. The second part of the paper is an examination of some contemporary realities in Croatia in response to the refugee emergency there, in which a new absent centre, that of the so-called 'international community', emerges.

The paper is not primarily concerned with the various ways in which the crisis of 'former Yugoslavia' has been constructed by official agencies such as the United Nations [MINNEAR et al (1994)], much less of the 'failure of the West' [RIEFF (1995)] to respond to ethnicised nationalism and genocide other than through 'holding the ring' and redefining the problem as 'humanitarian'. Rather, my concern is with the problems of mobilising support, in a simple, untheorised way, for 'civil society' as offering the way forward.

80's SLOVENIA: CIVIL SOCIETY AND THE NATIONAL

"Politics is the highest form of popular culture and we, who create the contemporary European pop culture, consider ourselves politicians."

[LAIBACH quoted in THOMPSON 1992); 44].

In much of the writing concerning developments in Slovenia in the 1980's, the terms 'civil society' and 'new social movements' are used interchangeably. In a sense, this reflects the assimilation, into the Slovenian experience, of the work of writers such as John Keane (1988), Alberto Melucci (1985), and Alain Touraine (1986). Indeed, in some ways, the theoretical underpinnings of the movements represent a bricolage [HEBDIDGE (1980)], parallel to the diversity within the movements. Whilst the terminology may be opaque and borrowed, the reality to which it referred was clear and, as Mastnak argues, unique:

"The hegemony of new social movements in initiating and directing the democratic transformation was a unique Slovenian phenomenon; and it was only in Slovenia that the alternative to the existing system was explicitly articulated in terms of civil society." [MASTNAK (1994); 97]

In the light of this, then, a key question becomes how new social movements articulated their challenge to the existing symbolic order. Listing the various dimensions of the movement, and addressing their emphases chronologically, is unlikely to provide an answer. The whole was greater than the sum of its parts, although the parts seem, at various times, to have included: the women's movement, gay and lesbian groups, alternative trade unions, an ecological movement, 'new age' spirituality, peace activists, squatters, and an alternative mental health movement. What is important is that the movements emphasised cultural and ideological production and gained support from independent radio and, in particular, the official youth magazine *Mladina* which, in the 1980's became, very much, the voice of the movements. In addition, and crucially, the sphere of music and culture, from the first punks of the late 1970's (including the band *Pankrti* ('The Bastards') [cf TOMC (1989)] to the much feted *Laibach* (the German name for Ljubljana) and *NSK* (*Neue Slovenische Kunst* or New Slovenian Art), was a key site of new social meanings which interrogated previously taken-for-granted, or indeed taboo, themes of the existing social order and, in the process, 'disrupted the balance of public discourse' [SLAPŠAK (1992)] in Slovenia and, more widely, in Yugoslavia as a whole.

The complexity of reading these new social meanings rests, in part at least, on understanding the critique of the relationship between 'ruler' and 'ruled' which involved a re-interpretation of the personal and political spheres close to that of Gyorgy Konrad's 'antipolitics' (1986) (3). As sociologist of popular culture and founder member of *Pankrti* Gregor Tomc (1994) states, the Communist Party tried to abolish the spontaneity of 'everyday modern life', preferring instead cultural production to be developed through 'official young people'. As Mark Thompson has suggested, the political impact of spontaneous movements developed precisely because the state had erased the boundary between state or public life and private life; the social movement argument was, in essence: "Citizens have the right not to be politicised - the right to be punks" [THOMPSON (1992); 42]. In opposition to 'simple' meanings produced by 'socialist realism', then, more complex meanings were being

offered. *Pankrti's* second album, entitled '*Rdeci Album*' (the Red Album) contained a punk version of the Communist anthem *Bandiera Rossa*, the opening bars to which were an exact copy of the Sex Pistols' 'Anarchy in the UK', and which ended in loud, anarchic, repetition of the refrain '*Viva Comunismo e la Liberta*'. This was one of the first, clearest, and longest lasting critiques of the 'ambiguous heritage' [THOMPSON (1992); 44] of Slovenian and Yugoslav socialism (4).

The trope of Fascism and Nazism was, also, immensely important, challenging fundamentally the ambiguities of an official anti-Fascist scream, and the reality of silence and taboo concerning the relationship between Yugoslavhood and Fascism at the time of the Second World War. The official reaction to punks, labelling them as Fascist, reached its most absurd point in the prosecution, and jailing, of *Pankrti's* manager Igor Vidmar for wearing two lapel badges, one of which was the Dead Kennedy's 'Nazi Punks Fuck Off', and the other a Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (CND) 'Crazy Governments' badge which depicted a swastika crossed out. The ambiguities of the Fascist trope were explored more explicitly by *Laibach* and *NSK*, so much so that, for a time, *Laibach* was refused permission to play in Slovenia unless it changed its name. Throughout their career in which, it has to be said, their reputation far exceeded the quality of their musical output, *Laibach* has explored the relationship between art and totalitarianism, seeking to present themselves as an anti-individualist authoritarian movement. The parallels between socialist realist and Nazi art has been a constant theme, culminating in *NSK's* graphic art group 'New Collectivism' entering, and winning, a competition throughout Yugoslavia to design a poster for the annual 'Day of Youth' celebration in 1987 which, it was later discovered, was a copy of a poster by 1930's Nazi artist Richard Klein (5).

The political impact of new social movements in Slovenia expressed itself in two ways. Firstly, through the participation in, and recording of, the movement by theorists influenced by Western social movement theory and by Eastern European constructions of 'antipolitics' and of 'parallel society' [cf MASTNAK (ed) (1986) and MASTNAK (1992) neither of which have, sadly, been translated into English]. Secondly, and more remarkably, elements of the ruling party, initially its youth wing but, later, powerful elements within the Slovenian party as a whole, began to offer some kind of support (or perhaps more 'repressive tolerance' as Tomc (1994) has argued) for the movements and, increasingly, incorporated certain 'civil society' ideas into their programmes. The 1987 Relay of Youth, mentioned above, was opposed by the LSY (League of Socialist Youth), becoming just one more example of the ways that developments in Slovenia were vilified in the press throughout Yugoslavia and, more significantly, produced strong reaction in Belgrade from a military and political apparatus increasingly bent on recentralisation as one answer to crises.

The reaction was, of course, greatest when ideas of anti-militarism, from an embryonic peace movement which exerted influence throughout the Slovenian social movements, confronted the militaristic nature of the Yugoslav state and the power of the Yugoslav National Army (JNA). One origin of this was, in fact, a successful campaign against women being subject to compulsory military service [cf JALUŠIĆ (1991) and (1994)]. The culmination was the arrest in the summer of 1988, and subsequent trial and imprisonment, of Janez Jansa, a *Mladina* journalist who specialised in writing about the Army, together with two other journalists and a junior officer of the JNA. These

developments, ostensibly a response to the possession and leaking of military secrets, which were, in fact, much more about corruption and immorality in arms sales to the Third World, served to reveal the blatant nature of the army's power. A hastily convened Committee to Defend Janez Jansa, which became, later, The Committee for the Protection of Human Rights, resulted in some kind of mass movement protesting against a military trial in peacetime and the refusal to allow the defendants to be tried in their own language (Serbo-Croat and not Slovenian was used). The movement can be seen as the precursor of political pluralism in Slovenia but, as Vlasta Jalusic has pointed out, the developments cannot be judged only from the perspective of democratic change:

"The trial of the four allowed all questions on the public agenda before 1989 to be subsumed under the national question. All questions that did not fit well enough into this shape became unimportant. If in the mid-eighties issues such as conscientious objection, obligatory military training for women, and the rights of homosexuals had equal or greater importance than other issues, after the military trial everything changed. Everything and everybody was mobilized for 'our boys' and against the Yugoslav military." [JALUŠIĆ (1994); 148].

Perhaps even more significantly, these developments overturned one of the key characteristics of the Slovenian movements, the refusal to have leaders, and the rejection of the category of 'dissident' found elsewhere in Eastern Europe. Hence, pacifist journalist Jansa launched a political career which led him to be the first Defence Minister in the independent state of Slovenia, in charge of the Slovenian army which he now saw as a vital necessity and, later, forced to resign following allegations of incitement to violence, corruption and arms dealing. Currently Jansa heads the misnamed, right wing, nationalist, Social Democratic Party.

Another development was the support of the Slovenian social movements for democracy and human rights in Kosova, and, in particular, solidarity with Albanian miners who began a hunger strike in February 1989 to reverse Serbia's abolition of the province's autonomous status. Tonci Kuzmanic and Vlasta Jalusic regularly visited Kosova and had written a number of articles chronicling Serbian repression. However, the organising of a public meeting in support of the Kosovan miners, attended by the opposition and by official political organisations, became less of an expression of solidarity than a drawing of parallels between Serbia's treatment of Kosova, and likely future treatment of Slovenia; pro-Kosovan miners became anti-Serbian centralism.

In a sense, the Kosovan moment reveals many of the problems faced by Slovenian new social movements, not least in terms of the vexed questions of 'class' and 'nation'. As Kuzmanic has argued persuasively, the 'new' social movements were defined, perhaps almost unthinkingly, against 'older' movements, including those organised, as trade unions surely were, around class antagonisms [cf KUZMANIĆ (1988)]. When Branka Magas visited Ljubljana in May 1988, her conversations with her friend 'Tomaz M.', clearly Mastnak, concern the lack of interest in working-class issues by the critical intelligentsia throughout Yugoslavia. Mastnak replies that disillusionment with socialism carries with it a rejection of the working-class as a vanguard class and that most of the evidence points to the workers clinging, conservatively, to the Party

and the memory of Tito [MAGAS (1993); 133]. The irony is that, through this framework, a 'young' independent labour movement, with the potential to become a key part of opposition and change, was dismissed through being labelled 'old' [KUZMANIĆ (1994) and (1995)].

For Kuzmanic, the lacuna is more profound and, in part at least, is a logical consequence of 'antipolitics'. Antipolitics, embraced by Slovenian social movements, paid insufficient attention to socialisms, in the plural, as structural and state forms. In an anti theoretical leap of the severest consequence, new social movements saw socialism, even in its self-management moment, as the effective equivalent of Stalinism and, hence, as 'the worst possible system' [KUZMANIĆ (1993a and b)]. Herein lies part of the explanation for the breach between the opposition in Slovenia and opposition in the rest of Yugoslavia. Attempts to form a whole Yugoslav opposition to the Milošević/JNA centralising hegemony were made in the late 1980's but, in many ways, this was too little too late and there was little common understanding, or even conceptual framework, between new social movement theorists and those who felt self-management could, and should, be reformed. As Jalušić (1994) has suggested, the independent women's network was the only independent new social movement which involved participants from outside Slovenia (6). Hence, without any necessary intentionality, the Slovenian movements came to be regarded, and regarded themselves, as 'Slovenia as such' [KUZMANIĆ (1994b)].

'Antipolitics' as critique, then, served progressive purposes, but 'antipolitics' as programme, in the context of the increasing influence of the new social movements on the political elite in Slovenia, was a disaster. This is at its clearest when we examine its lack of a nuanced, sophisticated, theory of power. For Mastnak, the problems of 'civil society' have arisen because it abandoned its role as critic and *became* power, as a few opportunists joined the state apparatus and claimed that 'civil society is now in power' and, therefore, the state is democratic [MASTNAK (1991)]. This amounts, however, to a 'one bad apple thesis' which fails to pay sufficient attention to the problems which result from defining civil society's relationship to power in a particular way. For Mastnak understands 'civil society' as "... a sphere distinct from, independent of, and opposed to the sphere of state action." [ibid; 402]. This quasi-anarchist notion of civil society as 'the practice of pure antagonism ... the experience of the impossibility of achieving democracy' [ibid; 405] can, therefore, say nothing about different forms of state including, most importantly, the nationalist form, instead seeing nationalism as just one of a list of features associated with the 'totalitarian face' of civil society [ibid; 403].

It is here that Kuzmanic's argument that civil society action and new social movements can be seen as 'a sort of soft Slovene nationalism' [KUZMANIĆ (1995); 39] becomes highly relevant. The neglect of 'socialist civil society' or independent trade unions, which could have been progressive, is paralleled by a failure to take account of 'nationalist civil society', including the church, right-wing proponents of a 'national culture', and other potentially reactionary forces [KUZMANIĆ (1994a)]. By failing to recognise that by criticising a force outside of Slovenia and, indeed, by utilising Western European theories of Eastern Europe which allowed for Slovenia to become the West viewing the East, there was a danger that it would be nationalist currents which would come to dominate in civil society and, subsequently, in the state. Critique

of a particular state form, then, cemented itself into a critique of Yugoslav society as inherently nationalist/Serbian and totalitarianist/Stalinist. The only liberation could, therefore, come from sovereignty and independence [RIZMAN (1995)].

In this sense, of course, the profound anti-nationalists of the Slovenian social movements became spectators (gaining only 3% of the votes in the first free elections of April 1990 but 'having a marvellous party') observing a new moment when: 'The ruling and the ruled are wrapped in the embrace and united in the equality of those who participate in the regeneration of the nation' [MASTNAK (1994);401]. Reform Communist Milan Kucan was elected President, and the DEMOS coalition of Christian Democrats, Farmers' Alliance, Democratic Alliance, Social Democrats, Greens, and Craftsmen's Party formed the Government. According to Cohen [(1993);90], pre-election surveys revealed that most Slovenes favoured autonomy within Yugoslavia although a top DEMOS official is quoted as saying: "Yugoslavia as a concept is exhausted. Slovenia simply wants to join Europe and is not willing to wait for the rest of Yugoslavia to catch up with it" (ibid). The JNA attack on Slovenia, in July 1991, ended any hopes of a reconstituted Federation although, of course, it took much longer for the 'great powers', nostalgic for the Yugoslav power bloc, to bow to the inevitable and recognise Slovenian independence.

The question which remains for theoretical scrutiny, is not whether 'soft nationalism' is comparable to other forms of nationalism, but how this 'soft nationalism' came to dominate Slovenian new social movements. A debate in *Teleks*, following the trial of Jansa, between Miha Kovac, Tomaz Mastnak, and Lev Kraft, is extremely instructive on this point [the debate is discussed in MAGAS (1993);137-55]. In his reply to accusations of nationalism by Kovac, Mastnak argues that 'the homogenization of the Slovene nation differs from the homogenization of the Serb one' [MAGAS (op cit);147] since mass mobilisation in Slovenia was spontaneous, outside the official structures but in dialogue with them and, hence, homogenisation was a part of the struggle for political democracy, human rights, and a legal state. In a key construction, he argues that 'the political nature of nationalism is contingent' [ibid; 148] and that, whilst Slovenian national movements *might* become nationalist and totalitarian, Serbian national movements *must*. In his reply, Kovac warns of the danger of affixing a democratic character to any national movement and argues for 'an all-Yugoslav democratic movement' which, as we have seen was, by this time, virtually impossible. More instructive is Lev Kreft's intervention which warned of 'the dangerous ability of nationalism to co-opt any struggle for a legal state' [ibid; 150], the danger of Slovenian politicians using 'democratic nationalism' to consolidate their own power, and the importance of challenging all stereotypes of the mentality of 'the Serb nation' as, for example 'Asiatic'.

The difficulty of avoiding such stereotypes - indeed Mark Thompson records Mastnak as thinking that the Serbian town of Subotica *must* be south of Ljubljana [THOMPSON (1992);26] - were profound in the context of centralisation, Serbian nationalism, and uneven development. However, they point to the danger of a slippage from 'anti-nationalist civil society' to 'non-violent civil society'. In short, the emphasis on anti-militarism, allied with the peace movement in Western Europe, could do little when war came. As Tomc has argued: "Talking nonviolence became as incomprehensible as speaking Chinese" [TOMC (1992);71]. The failure of the

Western peace movement to identify, as Mastnak did, the true aggressor in the wars of the Yugoslav secession, further marginalised social movements in Slovenia and, as we shall see, in Croatia. The implications of 'the Slovenian case' are best expressed by Mastnak himself:

"The idea of a sovereign Slovenia in Yugoslavia was not insincere but unrealizable. It could not be blamed for the failure to democratize the Yugoslav center yet it certainly did not contribute to democratic developments there. Because sovereignty is, strictly speaking, indivisible, its politics are bound to be exclusionary; the fact that democratic society as it was formed in Slovenia needed national sovereignty in order to be able to survive was detrimental to its communications across internal Yugoslav borders. To a degree, Slovene politics became the mirror image of Serbian exclusivism." [MASTNAK (1994); 107].

90's CROATIA: GLOBALIZATION, HUMANITARIANISM AND PROFESSIONALISM

"The idiocy of Western diplomacy has possibly been surpassed only by that of Western non-governmental organisations."
[MASTNAK (1994); 110].

The situation in Croatia in the 1990's is, in some ways, more complex than that of 1980's Slovenia, not least because the response to the refugee crisis produced by the wars in Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina involves 'humanitarianism' which, whilst presenting itself as neutral, in reality, "embodies the political interests and forces which underlie the interaction between various international actors" [HARRELL-BOND (1995);2]. The specificities of a conjunction between post-socialist transition, territorial disputes, war, and large scale forced migration in a post-Yugoslav context, must be addressed as a specific example of the globalization of social welfare, in terms of the role of supranational agencies in regulation, distribution, and provision [DEACON and HULSE (1994)]. As in the 'Third World' context, global, supranational, and regional agencies have orchestrated their aid for Croatia through a commitment to the development of NGO's. The nature of this relationship is, in some ways, masked by an emphasis on NGO's as 'civil society', as if this, *per se*, was progressive. The globalised nature of state-civil society relationships has a number of consequences which are far from progressive and, indeed, cause us, yet again, to question the validity of certain definitions of 'civil society'.

One of the most important manifestations of globalization is the fact that large numbers of foreign NGOs are currently operating in Croatia in the fields of aid, health, and psycho-social provision. Even more importantly, the major sources of funding are foreign donors, including governments (eg USAID), regional bodies (eg European Union), and global bodies (eg UNHCR). Most Croatian NGOs operating in these fields are funded in this way and many obtain this funding through a link with a partner organisation in the donor's country or region of origin (7). The consequences of supranational, regional and foreign support for NGOs rather than government as a provider of social welfare are complex. Elsewhere [DEACON, STUBBS and SOROYA (1994)], we have argued that questions arise about the efficiency of this in

terms of the danger of parallel provision which is distorting in terms of need, salary structures, and so on. Support for NGOs is often seen as 'building civil society'; in fact, it is more likely to build a competitive marketplace in which local NGOs, to survive, are forced to reproduce the categories, assumptions, and practices of their foreign funders. Moreover, it encourages a particular definition of state provision as, of necessity, negative, inflexible, and politically interested and of NGO provision as the opposite of these things. This is, of course, far from the truth and the reality that NGOs have become major political actors in aid and development policies throughout the world has now become obvious in Croatia also [cf DUFFIELD (1995)].

In many ways, the effects of globalization are most pronounced in an assertion that NGO's are 'non political' or 'neutral' and, hence, more progressive than governments which have vested interests and a political 'axe to grind'. Indeed, it is here that 'non-political humanitarianism' finds echoes in 'antipolitical civil society'. This 'myth of neutrality' might, in fact, hide the interests of a 'globalised new professional middle class' eager to assert its hegemony in the aid and social welfare market place. Through asserting the values of political disinterest, uncomplicated humanitarianism, and a thoroughgoing commitment only to improving people's welfare, NGO's tend to do rather well out of crises of war and forced migration.

Funders tend to prefer NGO's who reproduce, in part at least, their own view of the world and who, whilst they may challenge some assumptions, do this within specific limits. It is not simply that NGOs do what funders want; rather, that processes of negotiation and of alliance develop in which certain common emphases are created and certain other possibilities are ruled impossible. The creation of a 'globalised new professional middle class' who, regardless of their country of origin, tend to speak a common language and share common assumptions, seems to be a key product of the 'aid industry'. In some ways, the old relationship between 'professionalism' and 'the state' [cf STUBBS (1988)] has been, at least partially, replaced by a new relationship between 'professionalism' and 'civil society', in which professional power is reproduced through claims to progressive alliance with social movements and civil society.

The emphasis on 'relief models' rather than on 'social development' in projects working with refugees and displaced people in Croatia has been well-documented [HARRELL-BOND 1993]; PECNIK and STUBBS (1994)]. It is clear that 'relief models' are more containable and less likely to lead to a 'politicisation' of aid and the development of particular forms of consciousness and action amongst beneficiary populations. Instead of social development and community work approaches, heavy emphasis has been placed on 'psycho-social programmes' and, in particular, on dealing with war trauma or 'PTSD', said to be present in the refugee population on a massive scale [cf AGGER et al (1995)]. Elsewhere [STUBBS and SOROYA (1995)], we have argued that this emphasis reflects an alliance between foreign psychologists and Croatian psychologists eager to improve their status and professional power. The irony is that much of the concern with 'psycho-social programmes' and with 'war trauma' derive from progressive social movements and from those active in alternative mental health and therapy movements in Slovenia and Croatia in the 1980's. However, there can be little doubt that their emphases, now, on 'empowerment', on 'therapy' and, in particular, on 'traumatised helpers', does little more than increase

their own professional power and disempower those they are meant to be working with.

A small number of Croatian psycho-socially oriented NGOs have attained a level of funding, and a degree of influence, which is far in excess of their level of service, number of beneficiaries, quality of staff, and so on, and places them in marked contrast to those providing services in the governmental sector. One Croatian NGO, linked to a US partner organisation, has, for example, received a grant from USAID for over 2 million US dollars to develop a training programme in trauma work. The organisation, the bulk of whose work - in a small number of collective centres - is undertaken by psychology and social work students, now has prime office space in Zagreb, large numbers of computers and other technical equipment, and is able to pay its staff more than double that which they would obtain in the state sector.

It is possible to understand the development of NGO activity in the aftermath of the crisis of large-scale forced migration less as the flowering of 'civil society' and more as the increase of professional power. This is made more complicated, however, by the fact that many of the key protagonists were influenced by, and keen to use the language of, civil society to press their claims. This has a particular post-communist context in a critique, partly derived from anti-politics, of all forms of 'social intervention' and claims to skills in this sphere as inherently proto-communist and totalitarian, and of the only valid skills being individual, therapeutically based. The 'personal growth', 'encounter groups', 'gestalt therapies', and so on, which flourished in the late 1980's made their members ideally placed to take advantage of the need for psycho-social work in the 1990's. In contrast, those advocating community development approaches were seen as tarnished through its association with dreaded 'social planning'. Such emphases were excluded from consideration in a coalition between local professionals and funders keen to emphasize the non-political nature of their work. In the process, refugees and displaced persons, and particular 'at risk' groups within this population, are targeted for NGO intervention with little or no attempt to develop 'integrative' services with local communities [STUBBS (1995)].

Of course, as Duffield (1994) has argued, 'in complex emergencies humanitarian policy can only develop as part of a political process' and 'policy must be premised upon the centrality of indigenous political relations'. However, in the context of post-Yugoslav countries, continued war and territorial disputes, and of different kinds of ethnicised nationalism, what are 'indigenous political relations' is a contested terrain. The construction of NGO activities, and of 'civil society', as operating on the terrain of 'former Yugoslavia', illustrates this complexity. The construct 'former Yugoslavia' might seem neutral and non-political, but in a context in which there has been recognition of the sovereign states of Slovenia, Croatia, and Bosnia-Herzegovina, this is a nonsense. Of course, some anti-nationalist social movements, and local NGO's, seek to operate across different parts of what was Yugoslavia or, at least, to continue to have links in these countries. The best examples are women's groups, in part at least because of the fact that those links were well developed previously [JALUŠIĆ (1994)], and peace, human rights, and ecology groups who are part of an email network across post-Yugoslav countries [BACHMAN (1995)].

However, an organisational emphasis on 'former Yugoslavia' is more often associated with major foreign NGO's and supranational organisations who are reluctant to recognise the changed political situation and are all too eager to label anyone who questions their framework as 'nationalist'. The clearest example of this is the Geneva-based International Council for Voluntary Agencies (ICVA) and its successor body, which has the mandate of co-ordinating NGO activity in the region. Based in Zagreb, in an office in the same building as UNHCR, ICVA existed, primarily, to provide support for foreign NGOs and was oblivious to the needs of local NGOs - indeed, by holding meetings in Zagreb 'local' NGOs from some other post-Yugoslav countries were de facto excluded from attending. When a small number of Croatian NGO's argued for a Croatian co-ordinating body, they were accused of ethnic nationalism and, of course, of playing politics instead of being humanitarian and non-political. The fact that such a body is vital to represent the interests of Croatian NGOs to a really existing Croatian government seemed irrelevant. The true nature of ICVA was revealed at a meeting called after the shelling of Zagreb in May 1995. The meeting was principally concerned with the danger to foreign staff of continuing to be in Zagreb, prompting a question from a member of a Croatian NGO: "We have heard about your evacuation plans; now, what about your commitment plans?"

There is a relationship between NGOs and 'ethnicised nationalism' but this is far more complex than those involved in ICVA's administration realised. Echoing Denitch's concern with 'grassroots nationalism' [DENITCH (1995)], there are a number of Croatian NGO's which are, in many ways, grassroots movements and indisputably a part of civil society, which combine providing a service only for one ethnic group, Croats, with a strong ideology of Croatian nationalism. The strongest of these are women's organisations formed out of the experience of women displaced from Croatian territory, and by feminists from the Croatian émigré community in countries such as Australia and Canada. The irony is that many of these groups are skilled in gaining financial and other support from abroad, partly through manipulating their identities to suit the audience in question.

Other NGO's, perhaps in part because of the refusal of foreign donors to support government services, are little more than quasi-government organisations, sharing some staff, facilities and, above all, an ideology, with the ruling party in Croatia. In reality, ethnicised discrimination in terms of access is easier to achieve, and to justify, in an NGO than in a government department: NGO's can always argue that they are small-scale, only able to serve a fraction of the population, and so on. In a way, then, unconditional support for NGOs as civil society is more likely to be discriminatory than support for government tied to monitoring of service provision and priorities.

The ways in which most NGOs are either 'ethnically blind' - failing to see ethnicity as significant because of their 'non political' stand - or 'ethnically absolutist' - seeing ethnicity, often in crude terms, as the only significant categorisation, is a case in point [SOROYA and STUBBS (1994)]. Many religiously-based organisations are involved in work in Croatia and often, explicitly or implicitly, their services are discriminatory yet, of course, they are often seen as 'civil society' and, therefore, positive. Other religious organisations, particularly local Muslim organisations, interpret their work in much wider terms, and face criticism from an NGO orthodoxy which, when it is not Western-religious, is Western-secular. In reality, much of the bad practice is

perpetrated by foreign NGO's, schooled in the political correctness of the West, who arrive with preconceived ideas about the role of ethnicity and make clear judgements, in a particular situation, about who the 'real victims' are which are gross caricatures of reality. Again, the point of this discussion is simply to argue that these distinctions, in terms of the relationship of different welfare organisations to ethnicised nationalism, are masked by an uncritical support for NGOs as 'civil society'.

Genuine grassroots social welfare organisations, based on broader social movements, have developed in Croatia. Many of these derive from independent women's initiatives which were founded in the late 1980s or from a network of peace, human rights, and anti-war groups which grew up in 1991 in response to the aggression against Slovenia and Croatia. The attempt to maintain a 'peace culture' has been fraught with difficulties in the context of globalization and, indeed, of a misplaced faith in 'civil society' as the panacea. The achievements of the Anti-War Campaign Croatia (or ARK), which derive from its flexibility, sensitivity to local concerns, and refusal to bureaucratize, should not be understated. However, there is an underlying ideology to the approach of ARK which reflects a general anti-political stance and, further, an emphasis on what is in danger of becoming a new orthodoxy, namely 'non violent conflict resolution'. As the ARK statutes testify:

"The overall goal of the Anti-War Campaign ... is the development, propagation and application of non-violent methods of conflict resolution. ... ARK operates first and foremost in civil society, aiming to eliminate tensions and intolerance in inter-personal (and especially in inter-ethnic) relations. ... All ARK's actions are strictly neutral in a party political sense. ARK does not promote any particular political program, but rather the principles of peace-loving, democratic and just resolution of conflicts, tensions and social problems in general." [ARK (1994);3]

This is a very narrow interpretation of the nature of 'political action' and seems attuned to the demands of Western donors for a non-political stance. As Bogdan Denitch (1994b) has argued persuasively, such a stance seems destined to result in a failure to engage with the (party) political sphere, to build left-oriented social democratic alternatives to President Tudjman's party, HDZ, and to consign Croatia to a nationalist government for generations, alongside, he might have added, a 'parallel society' of non-violent, self-actualised, and financially secure, individuals working in NGOs and wanting nothing to do with formal politics of any kind. There can be no denying the importance of acknowledging that politics goes beyond the party political and is also personal and interpersonal. Yet, non-violent conflict resolution, which is in danger of becoming a pseudo-scientific orthodoxy, offers little in terms of fundamental change. A micro-sociological, inter-personal approach, useful in, for example, small group work, schools, and local communities, is being developed as if it could change broader power relations [cf VOUTIRA and BROWN (1995)].

The reduction of social movements to an emphasis on 'non-violence' is a peculiar consequence of the impact of Western models of humanitarian action and of the demands of the Western peace movements who claim to know better than their local contemporaries what are the causes and solutions of the conflicts in post-Yugoslav countries. A simple stance of 'stop the war' cannot be maintained over a longer period

of time given the conflicting interests involved [DVORNIK (1992)]. Moreover, as an overarching framework, 'nonviolence' is a particularly narrow one when it comes to progressive social interventions. 'Peace-building' needs to be contained within all such interventions, but should be only a part of them. A wider range of approaches, which genuinely connect personal and political change, and which build, for example, on traditions of 'community mobilisation' associated with the work of Brazilian educator Paulo Freire [cf McLAREN and LEONARD (eds) (1993)] offer a different way forward. This globalization, reflecting a continued concern with class oppression, is absent in Croatia, in part at least, because of the adherence to particular models of 'civil society'. It is not at all the case that individual civil society actors, who can, of course, assert their wish to 'do their own thing' and who can make a plausible argument for the vital need for what they have chosen to devote their energies to, are the major problem. Rather, foreign donors, in directing the majority of their funding to particular kinds of activities, justified through the concept of 'civil society', reproduce a particular distortion of priorities and approaches which are politicized (whilst pretending to be non-political) and unrelated to real social need [cf VAN DER SPECK (1994) for a similar argument concerning oppositional media].

It may be that the crisis of humanitarianism which has been expressed in the recent development studies literature [cf HARRISS (ed) (1995)], will lead to clearer guidelines regarding funding of NGO's, the development of minimum standards and codes of ethics, and some greater degree of monitoring. The relationship between humanitarianism and broader regional and global political objectives; specific peace-plans; general dominance of free-market principles, and so on, make this unlikely, however. Even more unlikely is the idea, in the context of the sub-contracting of relief and development to large NGOs, that small-scale, grassroots movements, underpinned by democratic, libertarian, social movement principles, will play any more than a token role in the re-orientation of priorities.

CONCLUSION: CIVIL SOCIETY, OPPRESSION AND ANTI-NATIONALISM

The two case studies discussed in this paper have posed certain problems in terms of the way in which 'civil society' tends to be conceptualized. Most importantly, there is a danger of seeing 'civil society' in reified terms, as a commodity, which is present in some places in a greater amount than in others. This is reflected in Benderley and Kraft's argument (1994) that one of the strengths of Slovenia, boding well for the future, is its well-developed civil society. The opposite argument about Croatia, that its civil society is weak (albeit under strong development) is made by the Croatian Anti-War Campaign [ARK (1994)]. These arguments suggest that civil society can be measured in some way, by counting the number of citizens' initiatives, NGO's, and so on. As we have argued, such an approach is unsatisfactory since it fails to address the relational nature of civil society: to the state, to globalization, and to nationalism. It is now commonplace to assert that 'the state is a set of social relations', so that it does not seem too ambitious, since civil society seems to be defined as 'not the state' in many formulations, to see civil society in this way, also. This relational definition means that we must always ask the question 'civil society for what?'. Not to pose this question locates 'civil society theory' firmly in the camp of positivist liberal democratic social science.

As we quoted Mastnak as arguing that 'the political nature of nationalism is contingent' [in MAGAS (1993);148], we would argue, analogously, that the political nature of civil society is contingent. Indeed, the relationship between civil society and nationalism is far from straightforward and there are many examples of civil society forms being nationalist. The fact that Radovan Karadzic was a founder member of the Bosnian Green movement [RIEFF (1995);99] should, at least, start some alarm bells ringing. There is no necessary relationship between particular kinds of civil society forms and nationalism or antinationalism. Of course, what is to count as nationalism is complex and contested although part of the development of ethnicised nationalism, which takes (and reconstructs) forms of ethnic and national belonging and merges them into an exclusive and exclusionary political project, is likely, in post-communist transition, to involve civil society forms centrally. It is for this reason that antinationalism, a rigorous, ever vigilant, construction of different forms of common sense, must be central to progressive social movements.

Whilst Rossiaud (1995) is historically accurate in arguing that there is nothing inherently Eurocentric about the concept of 'civil society', in the context of post-socialist transition, and a Western-dominated 'new world order', it certainly performs some useful 'ideological work'. Most importantly, the concept tends to focus on individual, human rights (or, partially, on 'ethnic rights'), at the expense of other forms of rights, notably social and collective rights [RIZMAN (1995)]. In this way, the concept of oppression, referring to class, gender, ethnicity, and other forms of social relations, is also conveniently by-passed. Democracy is found, by definition almost, wherever USAID supports 'civil society'. Questions of poverty, of the rights of workers, young people, and so on, belong to the 'old regime' and are passé at best, and subversive at worst.

'Civil society' as a set of social relations is no more inherently progressive than other forms of social relations, notably those derived from the state and formal political processes, in terms of challenging oppression. To see it, often, as class based, reflecting the concerns of a 'new globalised professional middle-class' is not, of course, to seek a return to traditional, Marxist, class-based social analysis. Rather, it is to pose some questions about the inter-connectedness of oppressions which neither 'civil society' theory nor traditional Marxism can grasp. For all of its values, 'civil society theory' may remain a 'colonial' rather than a 'post colonial' discourse, insofar as it allows "specific forms of privilege to remain unacknowledged in the language of Western educators and cultural workers" [GIROUX (1993);185].

In terms of its relationship to social space, most new social movement developments, and by extension the concept of civil society, operate at a national level which is both too large and too small. It is, of course, too small because it fails to confront the capacity of any national discourse to become nationalistic rather than anti-nationalist, and because of the increasing power of globalized social relations. The criticism that it is too large is, however, more pertinent in terms of social practice. It may be that in focusing, more, on the local context, be it a town divided by war and a cease-fire line, as in the Pakrac Social Reconstruction Project in Croatia, or in resuscitating ideas of the city as a primary source of collective, multi-cultural social meanings, as the Helsinki Citizens Assembly has tried to do in Tuzla in Bosnia-Herzegovina, there is

potential for new social meanings to be developed which confront nationalism, oppression, and globalization in ways which offer a genuine 'post colonial' possibility.

But this is another story and an avenue for future research.

NOTES

1. The research, funded by the British Overseas Development Administration (ODA), is a collaboration between Leeds Metropolitan University, UK and the University of Zagreb, Croatia.
2. *Kosovo* is the accepted Serbian spelling; *Kosova* the Albanian.
3. "Antipolitics is the political activity of those who don't want to be politicians and who refuse to share in power. Antipolitics is the emergence of independent forums that can be appealed to against political power; it is a counterpower that cannot take power and does not wish to. Power it already has, here and now, by virtue of its moral and cultural weight..." [KONRAD (1986); 230-31]
4. In an irony not lost on Tomc, young people continue to ask his group to play the song in concert, as part of their nostalgia for the loss of the old system [cf PILIC (1995)].
5. The 1987 celebration was the last of its kind. The massacre of young people in the Bosnian town of Tuzla, for so long the symbol of multi-culturalism, was perpetrated on what would have been 1995's 'Day of Youth'.
6. Members of the opposition in Croatia were, for example, aware of the developments in Slovenia but point out that most of the democratizing forces in the Croatian party apparatus had been purged in 1972, that adherents of new social movements in Croatia were more marginal and, that, in any case 'what might be tolerated in Slovenia would never have been tolerated in Croatia'.
7. This is, for example, a condition of EC Task Force funding for psycho-social programmes in Croatia and Bosnia [cf AGGER et al (1995)].

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