Српски национални идентитет: Поглед изван парадигме о модернизацији

Serbian National Identity: Looking Beyond the Modernization Paradigm

Едислав А. Манетовић, доцент

Универзитет SUNY Old Westbury, Одељење за политику, економију и право, САД

edislavm@yahoo.com

Edislav A. Manetović, Assistant Professor

SUNY Old Westbury, PEL Department 223 Store Hill Road, Old Westbury, NY 11568, USA

edislavm@yahoo.com

Abstract

The article challenges the conventional distinction between civic and ethnic nationalism and national identities, as well as its focus on domestic-level explanatory variables. A qualitative analysis of quantitative data indicates that contemporary Serbian national identity is dual and that with increased insecurity ethno-national values increase. This duality and variance cannot be explained by domestic-level structural variables that change at a much slower pace than the identified change in popular values. Explaining variance requires taking into account exogenous variables such as insecurity. The Serbian case shows that domestic-level structural socio-economic variables might be a necessary but not a sufficient condition for the development of a civic national identity; a peaceful international framework seems to be a necessary condition too.

Сажетак

Кључне речи:
национални идентитет, колективизам, индивидуализам, етничка дистанца, модернизација, Србија

Овај рад пропитује конвенционалну поделу на грађанске и етничке нације и национализме као и објашњење тог бинарног приступа који се ослања само на варијабле на државном и друштвеном нивоу. Квалитативна анализа квантитативних података указује на то да је савремени српски национални идентитет дуалног карактера и да етнонационалне вредности постају доминантније са већом несигурношћу. Домаће структурне варијабле знатно се спорије мењају и зато не могу послужити као објашњење за уочене вредносне промене. Објашњење релативно брзих вредносних промена на друштвеном нивоу захтева ослонац на системске варијабле као што је несигурност. Случај српског националног идентитета указује на то да структурне социоекономске варијабле можда јесу неопходан али нису довољан услов за развој грађанског националног идентитета. Стабилан међународни оквир такође је неопходан услов.

Introduction

This article joins the growing body of scholarship that challenges the conventional distinction between ethnic and civic forms of nationalism and national identities [1; 2; 3; 4; 5; 6, 32–35; 7; 8; 9; 10]. It also questions the assertion that the two types of nations and nationalisms can be explained solely by domestic-level variables. National movements and nations do not exist in a vacuum. Once forged by nationalism, a nation becomes an international actor because nationalism introduces two core principles; popular sovereignty [11, 30–8] and national sovereignty, the "principle which holds that the political and the national unit should be congruent" [12, 1]. Since this second nationalist principle makes a nation an actor in international politics, one must supplement domestic-level with systemic-level variables to explain it.

In this article I test the conventional civic/ethnic dichotomy against the Serbian case. By examining relevant public opinion polls I identify a dual character of contemporary Serbian national identity as well as variations in popular values that correlate with increased insecurity of the 1990s. Polls indicate that the salience of civic and ethnic nationalism varies across time. With increased insecurity (war), ethno-national values increased. This duality and variance cannot be fully explained by using either the structural or the cultural variant of the conventional ethnic/civic nation dichotomy. Hence, I suggest that the nation's civicness is related to the influence of uncertainty embedded in the anarchic international system which constitutes national sentiments and identities.

This article is divided into three sections. The first section reviews the relevant theoretical and empirical literature on nations and nationalism. The second section examines the individualism vs. collectivism dimension of the dichotomy. The third section explores the exclusion vs. inclusion aspect of the dichotomy.

Framing the argument

Ever since Hans Kohn popularized the ethnic/civic dichotomy, ethnic national identities are explained by a backward state of social and political development, the absence of the middle class and secular learning [13, 329–332]. The distinction between ethnic and civic national identities is directly related to a given nation's conception of human rights. Civic nations are presented as associations of free and equal individuals that conceive of human rights in individualistic terms. In contrast, ethnic nations are group oriented because the nation is conceived as a collective entity in which the interests of the collective supersede individual interests. Thus, the ethnic/civic dichotomy suggests that ethnic nations are organic and exclusive while civic nations are individualistic and inclusive [14, 21–25].

More recently Liah Greenfeld offered a somewhat novel interpretation of the conventional civic/ethnic dichotomy. She identifies the fundamental anomaly of the conventional structural explanations of nationalism that interpret nationalism as "a product or reflection of major components of modernization". Conversely, Greenfeld [14, 18] contends that nationalism is not an outcome of modernity, but is rather the cause of modernity. Greenfeld [14, 16] suggests that the formation of the two types of nationalism was structured by one of the following three factors – structural, cultural, or psychological. In England, the first of all nations, structural conditions were crucial. There, nationalism was inspired by the change in structural context. Englishmen were already acting "in some way as a political elite" and already exercising sovereignty when nationalism developed. Hence, in England, and later in America which is a special case given its unique relationship with England, "nationalism developed *as* democracy" in the sense that both nationalism and democracy located sovereignty within the people and presupposed "fundamental equality" between various social strata [14, 10]. In other countries, the sequence of events was reversed: "the importation of the idea of popular sovereignty – as part and parcel of the idea of the nation – initiated the transformation in the social and political structures". As nationalism spread around the world and encountered different social conditions, "the emphasis in the idea of the nation moved from the sovereign character [of the people] to the uniqueness of the people". Hence, the original equivalence between nationalism and democratic principles was lost and collectivistic types of nationalism emerged [14, 10].

In addition to being distinguishable according to their collectivistic or individualistic character, ethnic and civic nations have different criteria of membership. Membership in civic nations is based on individual choice, while membership in ethnic nations is inherent and depends on whether one possesses certain ascriptive characteristics. Thus, Greenfeld [11] notes that while civic nations can be either individualistic-libertarian (e.g., English and American) or collectivistic-authoritarian (e.g., French), nations that are conceived in ethnic terms are necessarily collectivistic-authoritarian (e.g., German and Russian).

The three implications of ethnic/civic nation divide are deep and wide-ranging. First, since democracy presupposes fundamental equality of citizens, ethnic nations may not have the predisposition to either adopt or develop democracy [14, 10]. Second, an international system composed of both civic and ethnic nations is bound to be conflict-prone because the norms that they uphold are incompatible [15]. Finally, only civic nationalism is conducive to sustained economic growth because only individualism of civic nations is compatible with the spirit of capitalism [16].

Only recently has the scholarship on nationalism begun critically assessing the ethnic/civic nation dichotomy. Two critics of the conventional civic/ethnic dichotomy are particularly useful because they introduce two variables largely absent from the conventional approach – the state and the anarchic international system. Anthony Marx [4] contends that intolerance and exclusion based on religious affiliation (in France and England) and race (in the United States) predated the formation of contemporary civic nationalisms in those countries. The function of exclusion and of the subsequent processes of forgetting was a consolidation of state power and authority. Hence, Marx suggests, civic identities were founded on the basis of highly illiberal origins. In this formulation, the major force explaining nationalism is neither economic development, literacy, nor urbanization, but rather state-builders attempting to consolidate central power and authority. Nationalism, Marx proposes, is above all "a political project" [4, 11].

It is the influence of exogenous factors that comprises the core of another study questioning the civic/ethnic nation dichotomy. Erica Benner [3, 161–162] proposes that all nationalisms have a constitutive and a geopolitical national doctrine that "has deep roots in the security concerns specific to the modern, pluralistic system of sovereign states. […] The identity-shaping activities of nationalism rarely take place on the politically quiet ground; and the more violent

the politics, the more closed, illiberal and ethnocentric the forms of culture usually become". Nationalism, Benner notes, is primarily a geopolitical doctrine that "prescribes in general terms the *form* that any community should take in order to survive or distinguish itself in that system". Hence, the core values each nation adopts are constitutive rather than constitutional or cultural [3, 163]. Therefore, constitutive questions of boundaries and membership are logically and practically prior to the questions of constitutional justice [3, 172].

The reason why the proponents of the conventional civic/ethnic nation dichotomy do not consider how insecurity emanating from the international system influences nationalism is because the approach is rooted in the modernization paradigm [4, 17; 2, 5–6]. Like the literature on development in the 1950s and 1960s which was strongly informed by the modernization paradigm, the literature on nations and nationalism that relies on the binary civic/ethnic framework continues to be informed exclusively by the modernization perspective. This scholarship, however, relies on a simplified reading of Max Weber's multilayered thought. In his analysis of nationalism Weber, the founding father of the modernization paradigm, notes that economic and social structures may or may not play a role, but "Time and again we find that the concept 'nation' directs us to political power" [17, 65]. To that conclusion, Weber arrived after recognizing that German-speaking Alsatians considered themselves as part of the French nation. "This sense of community came into being by virtue of common political and, indirectly, social experiences…", Weber [17, 63] concludes. Weber gave to identities not only much more plasticity than contemporary scholarship does, but he also considered many more explanatory variables than do his contemporary proponents.

The very insightful historical studies by Latinka Perović [18; 19, 11–28] provide an example of what is problematic with society-centered modernization approaches to Serbian nationalism. In one of her studies on the role of the political elites in nineteenth-century Serbia, Perović [18] identifies two broad tendencies in the development of Serbian society – the populist and the liberal. The populists, she argues, saw the "false western culture" as a threat to the "Serbian spirit" and sought refuge in collectivist values. Liberals pioneered individualism and had high regard for "European nations whose civilization they deeply respect". One of the conflicts between the two groups, Perović writes, that illustrate their different worldviews, was initiated by the construction of the first Serbian railroad in 1883. Since the railroad was part of the package that gave Serbia independence at the 1878 Berlin Congress, the liberals argued its construction was the price of independence and overall modernization of the state. The populists, on the other hand, argued that the railroad was a "cold serpent which would pass through the heart of the Serbian people, be warmed by it, thus feeding the dragon that would finally swallow it" [quoted in 18, 53–4].

Perović, a proponent of the conventional ethnic/civic nation dichotomy, argues that the serpent the populists were so afraid of was modernization. However, the evidence she offers indicates that the populists perhaps as much feared foreign intrusion into the recently independent state. She notices that the only thing upon which the two factions agreed was a sense of having to decide on something of crucial importance, "namely, who would Serbia turn to: the East with Russia at its center, or the West, of which Austria-Hungary was considered the paradigm". In an attempt to find deep historical roots of late twentieth-century Serbian ethno-nationalism, Perović in a single sentence dismisses the international dimension of the conflict between the modernists and the traditionalists as something that "has already been sufficiently analyzed by historians" [18, 53]. Perović is perhaps correct, but the real challenge is to integrate the endogenous and the exogenous dimensions and not exclude either.

Dubravka Stojanović's [20] recent study illustrates the same point. Also working within a modernization paradigm, in explaining the absence of democracy in the 19th and the 20th century Serbia, she devotes two pages to

endogenous circumstances in a 34-page essay. Within those two pages, she concludes that the "international framework was not conducive to solving social and political problems. [...] Inability to solve the national question impacted domestic politics in various ways". They include, "increased national frustration and nationalism" which, with the passing of time, became the main and the only political question. This, in turn, pushed other important social and economic challenges to the backburner. Moreover, frequent threats from abroad were often used as an argument against the further development of democracy and individual liberties. And, finally, the unresolved national question gave the military specific weight in an underdeveloped society. All this, Stojanović writes, "contributed to the preservation of the warrior mentality and of the heroic model of socialization in an otherwise patriarchal society" [20, 136–37]. She ends these few very insightful paragraphs by giving precedence to endogenous variables: "However, the basic problem in the process of Serbia's state development is, in my opinion, the previously described relationship between the three spheres – the state, civil society, and society" [20, 137]. She justifies this ordering by noting that the state did occasionally and briefly introduce democratizing and modernizing policies but it had no "social basis" to sustain them for longer. Civil society faced the same problem: "...civil society institutions never had a strong social backing that would make their demands to the state productive" [20, 137]. Hence, the title of her essay: "Oil on water: politics and society in modern Serbian history". Oil symbolizing weak periodic attempts by modernizers within the state and the civil society to liberalize the traditional society.

What Stojanovic's analysis actually points to is that the Hobbesian "international framework" was far more conducive to the interests and policies of the traditionalist, illiberal, part of the elite. If so, then her analysis indicates that liberal policies, a strong civil society, and a modern society are a *necessary* but not a *sufficient* condition of society's modernization and development of a civic national identity. And, that the exogenous variable, a non-threatening "international framework", is a *necessary* condition too.

Anthony Smith [21, 2] notes that the paucity of studies on nations, as opposed to nationalisms, is due to the fact that "it is easier to 'grasp' nationalism, the ideological movement, than nations, the organizational cultures". This is particularly true for societies like the Serbian that developed a sense of national consciousness during the period when the vast majority of the population was illiterate and left few written sources from which one could assemble a coherent picture of people's national sentiments. Early 19th-century Serbian society was almost fully illiterate, including most leaders of the 1804 uprising against the Ottomans. A century later, in 1900, there were only 166,580 literate citizens or about 6% of the total population [22, 51].

Understandably then, there are very few social histories on Serbia [23, 570], and none offers a direct insight into the topic at hand. Most historical studies that address the related issue of Serbian political culture focus on social and political elites, not the public [see 24, 243–347]. Nonetheless, historical sources do confirm that there were no economic and social conditions for a widespread development of civic values prior to the 20th century [see 25, 11–12; 26; 22; 20]. When in 1817 Serbia acquired an autonomous status within the Ottoman Empire, it was among the least developed regions in Europe. It had no infrastructure, the economy was based on livestock ranching, there was no educational or a "rational" legal system. "Social and economic modernization had to literally begin *ex nihilo*" [26, 28]. Drastic change in structural conditions came only with the establishment of socialist Yugoslavia in 1945 [22, 38, 45, 47–48, 53-54].

Given that the history of Serbian political culture, conventionally defined as basic values, beliefs, ideas, attitudes, and orientations that citizens share [27, 62], remains largely unexplored, only the more recent data derived from public opinion surveys offer an insight into the values shared by the population. I use this data to evaluate the core claims of the conventional civic/ethnic nation dichotomy according to which civic nations are individualistic and

inclusive while ethnic nations are collectivistic and exclusive.

One of the most extensive studies of Serbia's political culture was done in 1993 by a group of social scientists led by Zagorka Golubović [28]. They surveyed the opinion of the citizens of Serbia, including the province of Vojvodina but excluding Kosovo. Golubović and her team also compared their findings with relevant surveys held in previous decades. The study's conclusion supports the idea that the Serbian nation did not fall into either a civic or an ethnic type; the population shared both civic and ethnic values [28, 350]: "The overall conclusion of the analysis is that there is a significant presence of an authoritarian-traditional syndrome in Serbia today. In contrast, we have also concluded that what we call 'non-authoritarian' type has crystallized. This latter type has a modern and a liberal orientation and belief and it is not characterized by national exclusiveness. […] The category of undecided cannot be neglected either. They can probably be classified as mixed types (weakly in favor or weakly opposed to the authoritarian-traditional syndrome)."

The survey also assessed the role of situational factors on political culture. It suggested that situational factors of the 1990s whose common denominator was war-related insecurity were correlated with the rise in ethno-nationalism (28, 11). In contrast to the pre-1990 period, the post-1990 period marked a rise in ethno-national values [28, 153].

A more recent study by V.P. Gagnon [29] confirms the main conclusion of Golubovic *et al.* Gagnon draws on Yugoslav sociological and political science surveys to show the state of Bosnian, Croatian, and Serbian societies at the end of the 1980s. While he does not analyze the individualism vs. collectivism dimension of the dichotomy his analysis is relevant to my study because the wars of the 1990s are taken as evidence that the Bosniac, Croat, and Serbian population has "deeply ingrained and easily manipulated sentiments of hatred and desire for ethnic purity" [29, 33]. Gagnon refutes that widespread view about these three nations and concludes: "What becomes clear

from this data is that the image of ethnic hatreds seething below the surface is an inaccurate one. […] The main priority for the vast majority of the population throughout the country was not issues related to ethnicity, but rather the desire for changes in the political and economic system that would bring about increases in the standard of living and in basic economic security in everyday life [29, 33]."

Gagnon [29, xv] also notes that while "many people in the former Yugoslavia did identify as Serbs, Croats, or Muslims […], the meaning of that identity was contextual: it was not homogenous nor was it unchanging".

These quantitative studies and other more recent public opinion surveys analyzed below confirm the duality of Serbian national identity, they also point to significant temporal variations in values. This duality and variation questions the validity of the conventional binary typology of nations and the explanation that the difference between civic and ethnic nations is due to underdeveloped social structures. Variance in national values cannot be explained by social structures, a variable that changes at a much slower pace than the identified variations in Serbian national identity. Hence, structural endogenous variables are not the only variables that influence popular values, as proponents of the modernization paradigm believe. Contingencies, situational factors, have a substantial impact as well. A close reading of the polls conducted since the 1960s indicates that variations in values and beliefs cannot be explained without taking into consideration the relationship between nationalism and insecurity.

SERBIA: INDIVIDUALISM VS. COLLECTIVISM

In 1993, the Serbian population was almost evenly divided between ethnic and civic nationalists. Asked to choose between liberty and equality, responses were 50.6% : 49.4% (Table 1). Given that there was a high correlation between equality, authoritarianism and statism, one can infer that those opting for equality may be categorized as ethnic nationalists while the

others had a more civic national identity. Namely, highly authoritarian individuals opted over three times more for equality (62%) than did highly non-authoritarian individuals (16.8%). Those who leaned more towards statism also valued equality more than liberty (83.5% : 36.8%). Moreover, the fact that the percentage of those who favored equality increased with the increase in the level of their nationalism also supports this conclusion [28, 280–281].

Table 1. Liberty and equality according to profession (in %)

Profession	Liberty	Equality
Students	82.6	17.4
Unqualified Workers	44.3	55.7
Qualified Workers	40.7	59.3
Peasants	42.3	57.7
Homemakers	39.8	60.2
Civil Servants	54.9	45.1
Professionals	64.9	35.1
Retirees	33.3	66.7
Total	50.6	49.4

Source: 28, 279.

A survey conducted ten years later confirms the dual character of the nation (Table 2). Respondents were offered the following statement: "Rights of people as members of a nation are more important than civil rights". This time, the results were not so easy to interpret given the high percentage of "do not know" answers (24.5%). Nevertheless, even if all undecided respondents (24.5%) are added to those who opted for collective rights (15.7%), one still gets a greater number of civically oriented respondents (40.2 : 59.7). Since the survey identified the nationality of respondents one can compare the national orientation of Serbs with the orientation of national minorities. It is noticeable that the Serbs, Croats, and Roma had the biggest percentage of responses agreeing with the statement.

The Serbian Orthodox religion is widely considered a defining attribute of Serbian identity. Polls confirm that opinion. While over ninety percent of respondents saw themselves as Christian Orthodox, the percentage declined to single digits when asked whether they believed in God. This indicates that the Church was seen more as a national symbol than as a religious institution [31]. It is, thus, not surprising that all polls conducted since the 1980s indicate that the population had "high trust" in the Serbian Orthodox Church [32, 15; 33, 27]. However, trust in the Church is not absolute. When asked to grade their level of trust on a scale from 1 to 5 (1 being lowest), the Church received a grade of only 3.35, which is still the highest grade compared to those given to other civil society organizations, state institutions and political actors [33, 33].

Table 2. Preference of collectivist or individualist component of human rights (in %)

Statement: "Rights of people as members of a nation are more important than citizen rights."			
	Yes	No	Do not know
Serbs	15.7	59.7	24.5
Montenegrins	5.5	88.8	5.5
Bosniacs-Muslims	5.5	75.0	19.4
Croats	17.2	68.9	13.7
Yugoslavians	5.7	75.0	19.2
Hungarians	7.3	79.4	13.2
Slovaks	0	90.0	10.0
Roma	15.7	42.1	42.1
Other nationalities	17.8	66.0	16.0
Total	14.5	62.5	22.8

Source: 30, 66.

Opinions regarding religion and the Church do not support the widespread notion in the literature on nations and nationalism that nations which have "objective" attributes, ethnic nations, tend to be exclusionary. In 1993, 27% of respondents held that the society ought to aid religion, 5% held that it ought to limit religious influence, and 68% held that the society must be neutral [28, 289]. This finding is supported by the population's opinions regarding religious education in public schools: 17.5% believed it ought to be a mandatory subject; 64.7% that it ought to be elective; and 17.8% that there should be no religious education in schools [28, 294]. Finally, while 23.4% of respondents agreed with the statement that "the Church has a right and a duty to influence the destiny of the country", a much bigger number (76.6%) supported the alternative statement: "It should not – this should be left to political parties and institutions, [the Church] should deal with spiritual issues" [28, 295–296].

Polls conducted between 1993 and 2014 indicate that there is a relationship between insecurity and dominant group identifiers. As the situation in Serbia stabilized following the wars of the 1990s identification with people of the same faith and nation declined. Only identification with citizens of the same generation was on the rise (Tables 3 and 4). A 2014 poll testing levels of trust confirms this as well. 68% of respondents had trust in "people of the same nation as the respondent" (18% did not have). A roughly same number, 63%, had trust in "citizens of Serbia regardless of their nationality" [33, 25].

Table 3. Primary group identification (in %)

Most important group	%
Generation	19
Profession	20
Nation	49.7
Religion	5.1
Class	6.1

Source: 28, 179.

Table 4. Group identification (in %)

	Year of Survey		
	1996	2000	2003
Generation	17	29	32
Profession	20	14	13
Nation	52	30	30
Religion	41	12	11
Political party	-	2	1
Other	-	-	3

Source: 30, 59.

Note: The total percentage for the 1996 survey is greater than 100% because the respondents could choose more than one answer. The difference for surveys conducted in 2000 and 2003 are "Do not know" answers.

In 2001, one public opinion survey explicitly attempted to find out what were some common aspirations of Serbian citizens (Table 5). Ten options were offered to the respondents. They had to choose three out of those ten options and rank them in order of preference. The results indicated priorities, not whether a certain aspiration was accepted or not. 60% ranked a decent standard of living as the most important goal, peace, and political stability was ranked second (47%), and prevention of crime and corruption was ranked in the third place (41%). Issues that affect individuals directly such as income, peace, crime and corruption were ranked highest while those with a more

collectivist component (solidarity or resolving the national question) were ranked lower.

Table 5. Social goals

Social Goals	Scope of Goals (in %)		Index of Goals (min 1, max 3)	
	June	August	June	August
1. Good income, decent standard of living	67	60	1.51	1.35
2. Peace and political stability	50	47	1.11	1.03
3. Prevention of crime and corruption	35	41	0.59	0.73
4. Economic development of the country	46	40	0.87	0.76
5. Social justice and solidarity	18	19	0.30	0.32
6. Integration in Europe	17	18	0.31	0.30
7. Preserving Serbia's borders	13	15	0.25	0.30
8. Development of democracy	13	11	0.27	0.22
9. Privatization and market economy	8	9	0.15	0.20
10. Solving the national question	8	8	0.16	0.17

Source: 32, 26.

The 1993 survey of political ideas is indicative (Table 6). When asked to rank eight political ideas, 31% chose "rule of law and democratic procedure" as their most favored choice. Their second choice (21%) was "uniting all Serbs in a single state", and, with just one percent less were "rights and freedoms of citizens" (20%). When one looks at the total number of "votes" that each idea received it is noticeable that "rights and freedoms of citizens" acquired most (59%). Rule of law and the democratic procedure was in second place with 51.3%, and social security followed with 47.3%. The idea that was most prominently popularized by the state during this period of war, uniting all Serbs in one state, ranked fourth but the ranking should not deceive since the percentage is high (41.1%).

Although individual rights and freedoms were the most favored political idea, and although the rule of law and the democratic procedure was second-ranked, this does not imply predominance of the civic political culture. Namely, people often interpret rights and freedom as belonging only to their co-nationals. Nonetheless, there is little doubt that many people supported the rule of law, democratic

procedures, and civil rights, and this offered a solid foundation for creating a democratic society [28, 274].

Table 6. Preferred political ideas (in %)

Ranking Political Ideas	I	II	III	Total
1. Rule of Law and Democratic Procedure	30.7	14	10.6	51.3
2. Social Equality	7.2	9.6	8.9	25.7
3. Rights and Freedoms of Citizens	19.8	24.6	14.6	59
4. Social Security	10.4	18.3	18.6	47.3
5. Private Entrepreneurship	2.3	5.5	6.4	14.2
6. Free Market	1.4	7	17	25.4
7. Strong National State	3.8	5.9	5	14.7
9. Uniting All Serbs in a Single State	21.1	8.1	11.9	41.1

Source: 28, 273.

This foundation was not taken advantage of during the decade and a half of democratic transition and peace that followed ouster of Milošević in 2000. A 2014 survey entitled "State of Democracy in Serbia" shows widespread disillusionment with democracy (Table 7). The situation is even more pessimistic when one disaggregates data. In 2007, democracy seemed deeply embedded at least among college graduates and younger population (18 to 29 years of age). In 2014, pollsters identified troubling changes. The youngest group (18–29 years) and the oldest group (over 50) of respondents showed a decrease of trust in a democracy [33, 6].

Table 7. Opinions about democracy (in %)

	2007	2014
Democracy is better than any other type of government.	39	30
Sometimes non-democracy can be better than democracy.	18	24
Democratic and non-democratic regimes are the same.	22	25
Do not know	21	21

Source: 33, 5.

What explains this decrease in trust toward a democratic political system is the way people experience democracy, not some abstract notion of democracy [33, 9]. After a very brief period of small economic growth which followed a decade of wars, economic sanctions, and the collapse of Milošević's regime, since 2007 Serbia's economy continued the downward trend. The world financial crisis struck Serbia hard. Moreover, the state remained largely dysfunctional [33, 9], a procedural democracy with characteristics of a predatory state.

After a decade of physical insecurity caused by wars, the transition to capitalism with very little substantive democracy has brought existential fear. In 2014, 40% of citizens felt existential fear, 23% had no existential fear, and 37% were neutral [33, 13]. Fear of losing a job, inability to find a job, and an ongoing economic crisis caused fear among many that they too could fall below the existential level [33, 14]. When one adds to this bleak state of affairs the widespread perception that state policies are not made by those they vote for, it is perhaps surprising that Serbia is still even a procedural democracy. Namely, when asked, "Where are decisions about the future of Serbia and its citizens made?" 38% had a very pessimistic response: 22% responded that they were made in foreign embassies and 16% thought they were made by oligarchs (16%). 14% did not know or did not respond. Less than half (48%) believed decisions were made in state institutions [34, 6].

SERBIA: ETHNIC DISTANCE

Relatively high support for the idea of uniting all Serbs in a single state (41.1%, Table 6) and a relatively high percentage of those favoring a "civic state" (52%, Table 8) or an ethnic state that respects minority rights (35.9%, Table 8) indicates that in 1993 the population believed that it was very important that all Serbs live in one state, but that they did not believe in discriminating against ethnic minorities. Other surveys support this conclusion. In three polls conducted in 1992, 1993, and 1994 pollsters asked a different but related question ("Was life with other nations possible"). Most people thought that cohabitation was a viable possibility (Table 9). Finally, in 2012 pollsters asked whether "Serbia should be only a state of the Serbian nation because it is a majority nation". 61% disagreed with this statement, 24% agreed and 15% did not know [35, 12].

Comparison of public opinion surveys conducted after the onset of the wars in the 1990s

with public opinion surveys conducted in the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s, indicates a clear difference in the level of ethnic distance. Variations in ethnic distance can be explained by "socio-historical events" associated with the wars of the 1990s [28, 153, 347; 32, 23; 30, 38–39]. Greater insecurity led to greater ethnic distance. Surveys on interethnic marriage are easiest to compare and a clear indication how insecurity affects popular values. In a 1960 survey, 2/3 of respondents held they could marry a person from another nation. In 1989, as the economic and political crisis in Yugoslavia heated up, there were 53.3% positive responses. In 1993, during the wars, the numbers dropped significantly. The question was formulated somewhat differently because of the interethnic wars: "Could you marry a member of a nation with which your nation is currently in conflict?" 33.8% responded positively, 40.8% responded negatively, and 25.4% were not sure [28, 235].

Table 8. Preferred type of a Serbian state (in %)

Type of State	%
Purely ethnic	12.2
Ethnic with minority rights	35.9
Civic	51.9

Source: 28, 284.

Table 9. Viability of living with other nations (in %)

	Year when survey conducted		
	1992	1993	1994
Mono-ethnic state is best	33	26	26
Cohabitation with other nations is possible	55	67	69
Cannot evaluate	12	7	5

Source: 30, 42.

Surveys conducted in the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s show a "somewhat larger" ethnic distance only toward the Albanian minority [32, 22]. Albanian irredentism was perceived as a threat not only to the Serbs of Kosovo but also to the integrity of Yugoslavia. In fact, in 1993, the greatest distrust was not toward nations that Serbs were at war with (Croatians and Bosniacs), but toward Albanians who challenged the territorial integrity of Serbia (Table 10). Three surveys conducted in 2009, 2010 and 2012, after the 1999 Kosovo war and the 2008 unilateral proclamation of Kosovo's independence, show that ethnic distance toward Albanians is the highest when compared to ethnic distance toward Roma, Bosniacs, Hungarians and Croats [35, 27].

In the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s ethnic distance toward other nations was "significantly smaller" than in other countries [32, 22]. Interestingly, surveys conducted in the 1960s and the 1970s show that the inhabitants of Vojvodina (the most diverse region in Serbia comprising of 56.8% Serbs, 16.9% Hungarians, 8.7% Yugoslavs, and 3.7% Croats according to the 1991 census) were more satisfied with interethnic relations than were citizens of the USA, France, Norway, Denmark, Great Britain, West Germany and Switzerland [30, 39].

Like in Bosnia and Croatia, in Serbia also the perception of relations at levels higher than those experienced in everyday life were heavily influenced by media coverage [29, 45]. In 1989, before the wars started but during the time the media already portrayed interethnic relations as bad, 72% of Serbs held that interethnic relations were good *in their place of residence* [28, 153]. However, when a 1990 survey conducted in inner Serbia (Serbia without Vojvodina or Kosovo) asked about interethnic relations *in Serbia as a whole* the perception was far worse. Only 20% of respondents found interethnic relations good, 20% as satisfactory, and 55% as bad or very bad. Asked about relations *at the level of Yugoslavia*, an even higher percentage of respondents, 56%, thought they were "very bad" [29, 44].

If we now turn our attention to a concrete interethnic relationship, say towards members of the Croatian nation, one again identifies variance in ethnic distance pre-1990s and the period of conflict. As already noted above, in 1989, 65.8% of Croats and 72% of Serbs held that relations between the two communities were good *in their place of residence* [28, 153]. In 1993, as the war tarnished interethnic relations, 69.1% of Serbs showed no trust toward Croats (Table 10). After the war, in 2001, the negative view of Croats somewhat declined (55%, see Table 11). Compared to other nations Croats still ranked very low (-0.61, Table 11). Unsurprisingly, the ethnic distance was biggest toward the nation against which Serbia fought the last 1999

war, Albanians, and the nation that spearheaded NATO bombing of Serbia, America (-1.24 and -0.73 respectively, Table 11).

Table 10. Scope of trust toward other nations

Groups	Complete trust (in %)	Partial trust (in %)	No trust (in %)	Average level of trust (min 1, max 3)
Serbs	67.5	27.7	4.8	2.62
Montenegrins	41.7	45.8	12.5	2.29
Croats	6.8	24.1	69.1	1.37
Slovenes	8.3	32.1	59.5	1.49
Macedonians	11.8	44.1	44.1	1.67
Albanians	6	16.2	77.8	1.28
Muslims	6.6	20.3	73.1	1.33
Hungarians	9.1	34.2	56.6	1.52
Germans	7.1	24.6	68.3	1.38
Americans	9.7	33.8	56.4	1.53

Source: 28, 206.

Table 11. Opinion towards other nations (in %)

Nations	Positive opinion	Negative opinion	Undecided, do not know	Coefficient of distance[1]
Macedonians	63	7	30	+0.67
Montenegrins	54	18	28	+0.43
Russians	52	13	35	+0.45
Jews	42	12	46	+0.30
Hungarians	41	18	41	+0.22
Roma	40	22	38	+0.14
Americans	19	58	23	-0.73
Muslims	18	51	31	-0.55
Croats	16	55	29	-0.61
Albanians	8	77	15	-1.24

Source: 32, 22.

[1] *Coefficient of distance takes into consideration both negative and positive opinions.*

Table 12. Opinions of other nations

Nations	June 2000 (in %)	August 2001 (in %)	Coefficient of Distance, June 2000	Coefficient of Distance, August 2001
Macedonians	7	7	+0.67	+0.67
Montenegrin	13	18	+0.65	+0.43
Russians	12	13	+0.59	+0.45
Jews	10	12	+0.39	+0.30
Hungarians	18	18	+0.16	+0.22
Roma	21	22	+0.24	+0.14
Americans	57	58	-0.66	-0.73
Muslims	48	51	-0.49	-0.55
Croats	52	55	-0.57	-0.61
Albanians	74	77	-1.14	-1.24

Source: 32, 23.

The same dynamic can be identified when analyzing ethnic distance toward nations outside of the former-Yugoslavia region. Surveys conducted in the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s show a "somewhat larger" ethnic distance only

toward Germans [32, 22], due to World War One and World War Two [28, 209–210]. Since the 1990s, Americans have replaced Germans as the nation toward which the Serbs have the greatest ethnic distance. In a 1986 poll conducted among the Serbian youth, Americans ranked extremely well; only Serbs and Yugoslavs ranked better while the Americans and the Montenegrins shared the third place [28, 208]. In 1993, as the conflict in Yugoslavia erupted, but before direct American intervention in Bosnia, trust toward the Americans declined, 1.53 on a scale of one to three (see Table 10). In 2001, two years after NATO's attack on Serbia, the coefficient of distance toward the Americans was only somewhat smaller than toward the Albanians (see Table 11). It is too early to conclude that the ethnic distance toward the Americans will last as long as it lasted toward the Germans, but negative perceptions persist [36].

Conclusion

Over five decades of public opinion surveys indicate the duality and variance of Serbian national identity. This variance cannot be explained by the conventional ethnic/civic nation dichotomy. Surveys indicate that insecurity is correlated with a rise in ethno-national values. Insecurity negatively affects both the values along the individualism-collectivism and the inclusion-exclusion axis. This may be an unrelated correlation but it should not be neglected without further empirical tests.

My finding is supported by a similar analysis of public opinion surveys in Israel conducted from 1962 to 1994 [37]. It concluded, "The protracted conflict […] seemed to activate mechanisms of group solidarity and ideological consensus…" [37, 21]. In situations of increased insecurity, socio-demographic variables (class, education, and age) had less explanatory power than the People Apart Syndrome [37, 182]. People Apart Syndrome (PAS), a secular nationalist extension of the biblical covenant of the notion of the chosen people, "is the catechism of Israel's religion of security, itself a major element of the country's political culture" [37, 164]. PAS is composed of

two constructs. The first is related to the special, mystical relation perceived by many between God, Israel, and Jewish history. The second aspect is related to the feelings of isolation and to the belief that ultimately Jewish destiny depends on the Jews themselves [37, 21].

In light of the duality of Serbian national identity and insecurity-related variance in

values, it seems that liberal policies, a strong civil society, and a modern society, as the modernization paradigm suggests, are a *necessary* but not a *sufficient* condition for the development of a civic national identity. An exogenous variable, a peaceful international framework, seems to be a *necessary* condition too.

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