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## Epilogue: The Citizenship Argument – Why Are We in This Together?

‘Who is in and who is out? – these are the first questions that any political community must answer about itself’ (Walzer 1993: 55). We can agree with Michael Walzer on this point, but there is one important question that precedes asking who is in and who is out and that is, why are we in *this* together in the first place? How did a concrete political community come into being, and why does it still exist? How does a person find himself or herself in a particular community whose members are then recognized as co-citizens? And, are we all satisfied with the existing legal, political and social arrangements within the shared polity? Maybe we want our political community to be organized differently, or we want to belong to an entirely different community, one that exists or the one that is yet to be? In short, every political community is confronted with the *why* of its existence, having to convince its members – or at least a good portion of them – that they do belong together. This is what I call *the citizenship argument* of a political community.

Every polity exists and reproduces itself through a mutually solidifying interplay between the citizenship argument on which a political community is based and its legal codifications, including the laws on citizenship that clearly define who is in and who is out. The mutually reinforcing or opposing tensions between the citizenship argument (a widely shared narrative of the ‘why are we in this together’) and the legal provisions defining and reproducing citizenship and citizenry are the fundamentals on which every modern state citizenship is based. Rarely can we find communities without contestations and struggles over the citizenship argument, i.e. definition of political community, its borders, its nature and the organization of social, economic and political life. In this respect, the definition and internal organization of every political community at any given moment is the outcome of the hegemonic citizenship argument that remains in constant polemic with counterhegemonic (alternative, radically different or even historic) ones. Thus, no community is stable, although some are more so

than others. The collision of different citizenship arguments might lead to a *crisis* that, in turn, can lead to a *change* (redefinition of political communities, both as entities and internally) or to a *reversal* of hegemonic positions. This Gramscian perspective on citizenship allows us, in these final pages, to take another perspective on what was presented in the preceding chapters and to examine how hegemonic struggles (dominant narratives, counternarratives, crises, changes or reversals of positions) over the main citizenship arguments and their counterarguments were played out in Yugoslavia and the post-Yugoslav states over the last century.

Wars usually open up space for the flourishing of political ideas on *what* ought to come 'after the war'. The Yugoslav unification in December 1918 annulled all other political options that might have been thinkable such as a reformed Austria-Hungary, separate South Slavic states or a greater Serbia. It confronted two main visions of how the unified country should be organized internally. Two citizenship arguments clashed: the unitary and the federal vision of the new state. This conflict came to dominate the twenty-two years of the existence of the first Yugoslavia and to determine the political alignments of the main political forces, with Serbian parties generally favouring unitarism, Croat and Slovene nationalists as well as communists mostly advocating federalization of Yugoslavia, and some also calling for its disintegration (e.g. radical Croat and Macedonian nationalists but also, for different reasons, the communists during the period 1924–1934). The end of the Second World War and the victory of the communist-led resistance movement brought the triumph of federalism over both the unitarist vision of Yugoslavia and nationalist (and mostly fascist) ideas about ethnonational and ethnically cleansed national states (the Ustashes' Independent State of Croatia and visions of a Greater Serbia, within or without Yugoslavia, promoted by the Chetnik leaders).

Socialist Yugoslavia (1945–1990) introduced the two-tier citizenship, comprising the federal supranational citizenship and the republic-level citizenship that had a civic nature. This meant that one would claim his/her republican citizenship based on place of birth, residence or parents' republican citizenship and not on his or her ethnonational belonging. However, the federal citizenship regime went through important transformations that were themselves a product of the conflict between centralist and decentralist visions of the Yugoslav socialist state. We can say that the federal centralizing citizenship argument dominated between 1945 and 1967 and that it was, with the constitutional changes between 1967 and the last Yugoslav constitution

in 1974, replaced by the confederal argument that politically empowered the units over the federal centre. The federal and confederal citizenship regimes had two main enemies: unitarism, usually coupled with Serb nationalism, and separatism, usually associated with nationalism of smaller nations.

The return of multi-party electoral competition (at the level of the republics) in 1990 was coupled with almost complete delegitimization of the main arguments on which socialist Yugoslavia existed: federal/confederal arrangements that in the view of Yugoslav communists solved the national question and socialist self-management as political and social ideology of the entire community of citizens. The delegitimization process resulted in the reversal of positions: ethnic nationalism became hegemonic ideology. The nationalist reversal basically opened the doors for the argument claiming that true political communities, in which liberal democracy can be practiced, were neither to be found in the republics nor at the level of the Yugoslav federation but in the existing ethnonational communities. In other words, the ethnonational argument started to undermine the idea of civically constituted political communities at the republican level and eventually invalidated the idea that there was a political community at the Yugoslav supranational level.

However, the conflict between civic and ethnocentric arguments, the former advocated by the liberal or the left-leaning forces and the latter by the conservative and the nationalist forces, has continued to unfold in all post-Yugoslav political communities until this very day. In addition, in some states, we also witnessed the emergence of the multiethnic argument as the basis for internal organization, promoted by the international community as part of the peace and post-conflict processes. Although the emphasis here is also placed on the ethnic groups, it underlines their plurality and seeks solutions that will manage their relationship. Thus, the history of the last twenty-five years in the post-Yugoslav states can be told based on which one of these arguments was hegemonic at what point and what were its main counterhegemonic competitors. However, the political outcomes of these ideological struggles are never straightforward. Although the ethnocentric argument might dominate the political scene and society, the constitutional arrangements or citizenship laws often combine both ethnocentric and civic elements, mostly due to internal contestations but also international pressures. In other words, a state is often defined as 'belonging' to a majority ethnic group but with minorities also accepted into citizenship; the ethnocentric principle dominates the public life and state symbols but civic loyalty towards the state is expected from all citizens, including minorities; ethnocentric states often claim that they do not

discriminate between majority and minorities and that they fully conform to international human rights norms.

The ethnocentric argument is dominant in Slovenia, Croatia and Macedonia (until the 2001 Ohrid Peace Framework) and in Serbia (even constitutionally after 2006). This prevalence of ethnocentrism in constitutions, citizenship laws and political life (resulting in what we termed, following Sammy Smooha, ethnic democracies; see Chapter 9), and at times formal or informal discrimination of those not belonging to the core ethnic group, is countered by the civic argument demanding legal and formal equality of all citizens. Another counterhegemonic argument to be found in these states is the *multiethnic* argument. Usually advocated by minorities, it can encompass demands ranging from better representation mechanisms (other South Slavic minorities in Slovenia) and even more territorial autonomy (Albanian parties in Macedonia) to open separatism (e.g. the Serb rebellion in Croatia between 1991 and 1995; present as well in the Albanian rebellion in Macedonia in 2001). In this group, Serbia represents a special case. Although ethnocentrism has been dominating Serbia's political life since the late 1980s, it was not enshrined in legislation until the 2004 citizenship law and the new 2006 Constitution. Before that, Serbia was part of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and was nominally a civic state. Serbia abolished Kosovo's autonomy in 1989; a 90 per cent strong Albanian majority in this region opted for secession and independence and countered the Serbian state with the creation of a parallel society, and later with armed rebellion. Today, Serbia is defined in ethnocentric terms. Other citizenship arguments in this country include civic, multiethnic (more autonomy for minorities, for which there is a constitutional basis as well) but also an autonomist one (more autonomy for the region of Vojvodina).

The civic argument seems to dominate only in Montenegro. In the 1990s, the Montenegrin civic principle went hand in hand with political unionism with Serbia, based on the then widely shared belief that Montenegrins are *ethnonationally* Serbs. However, not everyone agreed so the counterarguments asked for the equal position for Montenegrins as a nation (bi-national union) or even advocated independence. The independentist argument won the day at the Montenegrin referendum on independence in 2006. Montenegro today is defined strictly as a civic state with no ethnic majority (ethnic Montenegrins make up 45 per cent of the population), which is opposed by those who either advocate multiethnic redefinition (Serbs, but some other minorities as well) or closer ties with Serbia.

Wartime Bosnia-Herzegovina was also defined as a civic republic of all its citizens, but that was only in legislation; the reality on the ground echoed the military victories of ethnocentrist and separatist forces. However, the country survived the war and avoided partition. The Dayton Peace agreement abolished the civic constitution and introduced multiethnic division at all levels, dominated by three major groups in often-paralysing consociational settlement. This Dayton argument has its opponents; on the one hand, we can hear demands for further ethnofederalism (the Serb Republic and Croat-dominated cantons) or even secession (the Serb Republic) and, on the other, for re-centralization and territorial unification coming mostly from the Bosniak-dominated areas.

The multiethnic argument seems to be on offer as a 'solution' to all post-conflict societies. For example, in Macedonia after the 2001 conflict, the country was redefined from ethnocentric to multiethnic, which resulted in stronger minority representation and political influence, but also in more autonomy at the municipal level. That peace agreement seems to be to no one's liking: the civil society sector calls for a civic solution, Macedonian nationalists for domination of their majority and Albanian nationalists oscillate between ethnofederalist and secessionist options. Finally, internationally supervised Kosovo, after its declaration of independence, is imagined (and managed) as both a civic – residence-based citizenship and formal equality of all citizens – and multiethnic polity (separate communities have special rights to representation, whereas the Serb minority can aspire to a broader municipal autonomy). Opposing visions abound. Many Kosovar Albanians believe that the 90 per cent Albanian majority makes Kosovo in reality the second ethnic Albanian polity, which is a position often coupled with proposals for unity with Albania. As for the Serb minority, apart from re-integration with Serbia, their representatives either ask for multiethnic arrangements similar to those in Bosnia or for the secession of the Serb area in North Kosovo and its reincorporation into Serbia.

Out of this brief tour, we can distil four major arguments about the limits and forms of political community present in Yugoslavia and the post-Yugoslav states between 1914 and 2014. The *civic* argument implies equality and unity of all citizens. It neglects ethnonational identities, the primary identity markers in this region, thus running a risk of (unintentionally or not) promoting, under the cover of citizens' unity, the domination of one group over the other(s). The *ethnocentric* argument implies a distinction between an ethnic majority and minorities and thus the political, social and cultural domination of the core group. Usually it entails legal guarantees for minority members and sometimes even extensive cultural and political rights, but the 'ownership' of the state is in

the hands of the majority group. This argument often results in conflicts, violent or not, over the relationship between majority and minority (or minorities). Since the state is defined as being owned by an ethnonational group, which often includes even those members not living within the state boundaries, this might lead to inter-state tensions, especially if designated co-ethnics live just across the border. The *multiethnic* argument, on the contrary, is based on the recognition of dominant ethnic groups as primary political communities in a common state. Politics is then posited on consociational rules and often assumes some kind of ethnofederal territorial arrangements. It does not leave much space for non-ethnic and purely civic identities and, moreover, it does not alleviate the risk of conflicts or disintegration. Finally, the fourth argument is *supranational*. We can see it at work in socialist Yugoslavia and to a certain extent in the EU integration process. It means that political communities at the level of subunits are recognized as autonomous and even primary sovereign bodies but a common framework offers a possibility for a higher supranational political identity. Socialist Yugoslavia in this respect was an example of a relatively functional supranational political community. In the EU – which Slovenia and Croatia have joined and into which all other post-Yugoslav states aspire to integrate as well – the role of its institutions, including European citizenship, does not seriously challenge the primacy of national member states.

In this epilogue, I have presented the dominant arguments in the Yugoslav and the post-Yugoslav political entities and how their hegemonic struggles resulted in various constitutional arrangements and political practices. The three states named *Yugoslavia* clearly testify to the sometimes productive and sometimes conflicting co-existence of various citizenship arguments. The Kingdom of Yugoslavia was a unitary state, with a civic citizenship regime, that at the same time insisted on national unity but progressively recognized various independent group identities. The second socialist Yugoslavia was *supranational* at the federal level and *civic* at the level of republics, whilst its *multiethnic* composition was promoted, recognized and respected. Finally, the third *rump* Yugoslavia in the 1990s, with the exclusion and self-exclusion of Kosovo Albanians, was dominated by Serb ethnocentrism that not only reduced the official supranational element of its federal citizenship but also corroded the civic definition of the republican citizenships of Serbia and Montenegro.

Finally, one has to add to the arguments about the definition, organization and limits of a political community the ideological conflict over its social composition and economic functioning, i.e. in this case, between socialist and capitalist visions. Socialist Yugoslavia designated working class and working

people as equal bearers of sovereignty alongside with the republics, their citizens and the Yugoslav nations. Its socialist character supported the supranational citizenship argument and, in addition, an internationalist worldview. Since 1990 homogenous ethnonational communities have been held to be the main sites of liberal democratic politics coupled with the neoliberal engineering of a socially hierarchical society.

The liberal vision of legal equality and the respect for human rights sees the completion of the post-socialist 'transition' of the post-Yugoslav states in their integration into the EU. In this respect, this liberal argument insists on civic values, preferably within a supranational EU framework. However, we can detect today an emerging argument that is not only putting in question the predominant ethnonational character of the new states (as discriminatory), and liberal democracy (as not sufficiently democratic and inclusive), but also, increasingly, the neoliberal capitalist restructuring of these societies (due to social injustices and widening inequalities). This new citizenship argument, brought about by growing progressive and left-wing social and political movements (see Horvat and Štikš 2015), accepts the given boundaries of the political communities (while looking beyond them in a wider regional and internationalist perspective), but insists that every political community must be a community of self-governing and politically and socially equal citizens.

Future studies will surely trace the continuing transformations of political communities inhabiting the post-Yugoslav space, where the rich and contested heritage of the last one hundred years of citizenship will continue to resonate.