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*Book Reviews*


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 Book Review
 

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Mirjana Kasapović (ed.)

*Izlazak iz množine? Stanje hrvatske političke znanosti (Leaving the Plural? The State of Croatian Political Science)*

Fakultet političkih znanosti, Zagreb, 2007, 420 pages

In 2008 Faculty of Political Science will celebrate 45 years of its existence, the oldest institution of its kind in this part of Europe. It should come as no surprise that some of the leading Croatian political scientists have decided to address the subject of their discipline's past, current state and future. There have been several articles published in last few years on the topic, but this is the first time the subject is being addressed in such a comprehensive way and narrated in a less self-glorifying and more critical mode.

The first article by Mirjana Kasapović sets the tone for the majority of articles published in this book. The main goal of the author is to illustrate the conflict that has, in large part, characterized the understanding of political science in Croatia in the past 45 years. This conflict can be best described as one between political sciences (in plural, as an umbrella term covering the more established disciplines' – such as economics, history, philosophy or sociology – interest in the subject of politics) vs. political science (in singular, as science in its own right).

Kasapović, a leading Croatian expert on comparative politics, uses the tools of her trade in assessing the development of political science in Croatia in comparison

to its development in five other countries: France, the US, the UK, Germany and Italy. We are offered a short but insightful history of the discipline in these five countries, covering topics such as the fate of the discipline during the Nazi and fascist regimes, the post-WWII American influence in Germany and Italy, the crisis in German political science in the 90's, and the American vs. European political science debate. The main reoccurring theme is interdisciplinary vs. singular approach to political science, that leads the author to conclude that those countries that failed in "emancipating" political science and "establishing its institutional independence... from other social sciences and humanities" – such as France or Italy – have paid the price of lacking in academic achievements in comparison to those – the US, Germany and the UK – who have chosen the alternative path (44). Kasapović's comparative overview puts the most emphasis on the schools of political science, and while journals and professional associations receive some attention, she has little or nothing to say about research projects, major publications or schools of thought. The reason for this is that the above mentioned conflict – the main subject of the essay – has almost exclusively been formulated by debates held and courses taught by the teaching staff at the Faculty of Political Science, University of Zagreb.

In mid 60's, a few years after the Faculty of Political Science in Zagreb was established, the debate on how political science should define itself resulted in two main positions. First one argued that there is no, nor can there be, political science as such, for it is nothing more than a heading under which established humanities and social sciences – history, economics, philosophy, sociology, psychology and law – deal with the subject of politics. The second one advocated the interdisciplinary approach, in

which political science would exist as a legitimate discipline on a more or less equal footing with other disciplines.

Kasapović notes the paradoxical character of both of these positions: the proponents of the first one, many of them deans of the Faculty in the following decade, had to justify the existence of the institution that was named after a discipline they argued does not exist; while the second group, consistent with the Marxist teachings, supported the thesis that, although political science is an existing discipline, its ultimate suicidal goal is to help bring about a classless society in which a need for politics ceases to exist, and consequently, so does the science that makes politics subject of its research. The first position held an upper hand till about the end of the 70's, but, as Kasapović argues, little has changed afterwards because both of these positions supported the "colonisation of political science by non-political sciences" (59) resulting in jack-of-all-trades-master-of-none type of political scientist that had no clear professional identity and was rarely taken seriously or acknowledged by members of other professions or society as a whole.

At the end of the 70's and the beginning of 80's the still live 'political sciences vs. political science' debate was given another element: Marxist vs. civic (Western) political science. A general consensus on the superiority of the former, rather than any kind of meaningful debate, quickly ensued among the participant. This consensus was based mainly on, Kasapović argues, the outdated and distorted picture of the development of political science in the West, the dubious argument that vocabulary and methodology of civic political science are unable to describe political processes in socialist Yugoslavia at the time, and the assertion that the valid subject of political research should be an 'epochal new reality' (meaning, the Yugoslavian political project) that eventually "turned out to be a short-lived and

failed local political experiment" (57). All this meant that the development of political science in Croatia was "not following world trends, but going, in many points, against them" (63) by being reduced to "Marxist philosophy and theory of self-governance" (a political and economic project endemic to socialist Yugoslavia).

It was after 1990 that Croatian political science finally started asserting itself as a legitimate discipline and started catching up with the newest scientific tendencies in the Western world. There were two main reasons for this: the breakdown of the communist regime which brought the Marxist paradigm down and the appearance of a new generation of researchers and teachers at the Faculty (of which, it is worth noting, Kasapović was one of the prominent members). The change certainly did not come overnight, but it was a relevant period for all sub-disciplines: political theory, history of political ideas and international relations re-established themselves, European politics and public policy left their toddler years behind, while Croatian politics and comparative politics took the lead. Most importantly, political science has redefined itself in singular and became a scientific discipline in its own right, bringing the debate on the desired character of Croatian political science to a close.

Given this fact, Kasapović's annoyance with, what she perceives as an atavism of the interdisciplinary approach to political science, is a bit surprising. Here she refers to two courses in political philosophy, a course in sociology and two courses in world history. As far as courses in political philosophy go, leading political science schools such as Harvard, Yale, Cambridge or Freie Universität Berlin offer courses with the same titles, with syllabuses very similar to those offered at the Faculty of Political Science in Zagreb. Sociology and world history courses are usually not part of the curricula at political science departments

abroad, but this is not necessarily a bad thing in the case of political science in Zagreb. Unlike most universities abroad, Zagreb University has never really functioned as a unified university: its students could not study courses of their own choosing from other departments such as history, sociology, economics, philosophy, etc. With the introduction of the Bologna process to Croatian universities this has formally changed, but students are rarely encouraged and they almost never take courses offered by other faculties. Until this changes the idea of getting rid of all courses that can not be defined as pure political science would put Croatian students on an unequal footing with their foreign counterparts, a fact they would quickly realize upon their first academic visit abroad. Additionally, if we take into account that all these courses are introductory, optional and not a part of core studies, Kasapović's 'purist' argument does somewhat resemble a boxing match with a straw man.

On a more important note, considering that in the past 10 or so years publishing (both of books and journal articles) thrives, political science experts are much more present in shaping political institutions and policies, more relevant research projects are undertaken and the teaching at the Faculty of Political Science is, more than less, modelled on teaching at established institutions in developed liberal democracies. Both the present and the future of Croatian political science seem much rosier than its past was. However, Kasapović rightly notes that the production of textbooks, encyclopaedias or dictionaries by Croatian scholars from different fields of political science is still lacking, as well as the fact that the monopoly Faculty of Political Science in Zagreb has (currently as a sole school for political science in Croatia), is not favourable for the further development of the discipline in the national context.

The second article "Revolution and/or political science?" written by Tonči

Kursar is a direct response to Kasapović's essay. Kursar argues that Kasapović's negative assessment of political science in Croatia in its formative years rests on presentism: it evaluates the 60's and 70's debates on the nature of political science with a benefit of hindsight and outside its historical and ideological context. He agrees with Kasapović's thesis that the main culprit for crippling the development of political science in Croatia in its first 28 years of existence was Marxist ideology, but tries to show, by following Pocock's concept of paradigm, that if we want to understand it correctly, the relationship between Marxism and political science has to be contextualized. He offers two lines of arguments: first, if Marxist doctrine is taken seriously – and most of the teaching staff at Faculty of Political Science at the time were proud advocates of Marxist orthodoxy – the choice is, as Kursar puts it, 'either/or': either Marxism or political science (116). The consistent application of Marxist paradigm could not allow the development of political science in singular. Considering that this was the only paradigm available to the participants of the 'political sciences vs. political science' debate, its result was inevitable. Second, Kursar tries to contextualize this debate by putting it in the larger picture of the crisis of the political and economic system in Yugoslavia at the beginning of the 60's and, more importantly, the discussions on the true social role of philosophy and politics that appeared with the Praxis group's emergence at the intellectual scene. These discussions will also prove "relevant for the Marxist philosophers at the Faculty of Political Science in Zagreb" (109). To limit the analysis of the debate on the relationship between Marxism and political science solely to what was discussed and published by the teaching staff of the Faculty of Political Science distorts the complete picture, argues Kursar.

Kursar's article ends somewhat abruptly, without really reconnecting the arguments he made back to Kasapović's

narrative. The important argument that is missing from Kursar's article, but follows from his contextual approach, goes at the heart of Kasapović's claim that until the 90's, political science in Croatia developed against the mainstream current of political science in the US, the UK and Germany. One could hardly expect, given the highly politicized circumstances in which political science studies were both founded and defined in communist Croatia, that the founders of Croatian political science would be willing to take what they perceived as their ideological enemy as their academic role model.

The article "The Development of Political Science and Democratic Transition in Croatia" by Ivan Grdešić is a revised and updated version of his article published in *European Journal of Political Research*, in 1996. Grdešić's approach to the history of political science in Croatia is wide-ranging, giving a brief overview of Croatian political thinkers in the renaissance and humanist era, the nature of political science research during socialism and emphasising its development during the transitional and democratic periods. Some of the main arguments from Kasapović's article are repeated here: Marxist doctrine was a wedge in the wheel of the development of political science in Croatia; political science established itself as a science in its own right only in the past 10 or so years and it was the new generation of scholars that proved to be instrumental in achieving this.

However, Grdešić's account does not suggest such a radical break between the understanding of political science during the final years of socialism and the new democratic paradigm. It is true that in its early days at the University of Zagreb, political science was understood only in plural form: either as a heading under which existing social sciences talk about politics or as a minor field of theoretical analysis falling into a larger interdisciplinary framework. One reason for this was,

as both Kasapović and Kursar noted, a "dominant Marxist paradigm of social sciences" (124). However, Grdešić points out another simple and important reason: none of the teaching staff at that time were, nor perceived themselves as, political scientists, but rather as sociologists, philosophers, economists, historians, psychologists and legal scholars with scientific interest in politics. Supporting both of these claims is the fact that as Marxist orthodoxy started losing its grip on social sciences during the 80's and the new generation of teachers and researchers that began defining themselves as political scientists emerged, the discipline started changing its character from plural to singular.

The specific international status of Yugoslavia at the time meant that academic influences from the East were (luckily) unacceptable and from the West (unfortunately) limited. The subject of political studies was, therefore, in large part endemic to the Yugoslavian political project: the "doctrine of self-governance, the policy of nonalignment, the delegate system, the withering of the state and the political formula of Yugoslav 'third way'" (127). However, all of these topics allowed, Grdešić argues, "autochthonic political science work and scientific relevance" (127). The best example of this is the study of the delegate elections in the late 80's. Although these were not democratic elections they allowed the researchers involved to develop the methodology and procedures that would later prove indispensable in the analysis of democratic elections that soon followed. The author quotes professor Ivan Šiber, a pioneer of research in political psychology in Croatia, arguing at the beginning of the 80's that there are three dominant methodological trends in political science in Croatia: legal-descriptive, theoretical-critical and empirical-positivist. Grdešić claims that if this argument is taken as valid it means that "Croatian political science to a large extent was similar to that in the rest of the world" (126). The remainder of the article gives a brief and

instructive account of political science's progress during the war years and the post-war transition up to and including the democratic consolidation. Grdešić notes new courses that were introduced and research that was conducted during this period and the important role the Croatian Political Science Association played in strengthening political science both home and abroad, especially after the mid 90's.

Vlatko Cvrtila's article titled "Study of defence and protection and Croatian politics" deals with the short history of a program of study called people's defence and social self-protection that was taught at the Faculty of Political Science from 1977 to 1992. What is hidden under this bizarre title is a concept of total defence advocated in Yugoslavia at the time that would, in case of invasion, turn the whole country into one giant guerrilla force. This concept, developed as a response to Yugoslavia's particular status during the Cold War era, also had a specific political agenda behind it. It promoted the idea of military decentralization advocated by federalists in opposition to unitarist tendencies of building a strong army as a sole instrument of defence. However, as the program was imposed on Zagreb and four other universities (Belgrade, Skopje, Ljubljana and Sarajevo) by political and military directive, it never really achieved the academic respect its teaching staff was hoping for.

The author skilfully illustrates the oddities of this program: fostering paranoid slogans, field training involving military manoeuvring on army training grounds, teaching staff made up mostly from retired and serving officers of the Yugoslav army with no academic background. Eventually, by the end of the 80's most of the new teaching staff had academic qualifications and was not army personnel but the program itself was still perceived as one imposed 'from above' and therefore never fully accepted

by the rest of the staff at the Faculty teaching political science and journalism.

Cvrtila argues that shutting down this program in 1992 was not necessarily the best decision, for there was an initiative of transforming it into national security studies. However, given that, as he himself concludes, this program left scientifically speaking a lot to be desired for, was burdened ideologically more than any other social sciences program at University of Zagreb, was never really accepted by the rest of Faculty and most of its teaching staff had a poor academic record, it seems that the alternative idea to save what was worth saving and incorporate it into the political science curriculum under the national security heading, was more prudent.

The following four articles offer us an overview of the advance of specific fields of political science: Croatian political system, public policy, European politics and political education. An interesting fact about the authors of these articles is that not only are they prominent experts in the topics they are writing about, but also each of them played a crucial part in forging these sub-disciplines of political science in the Croatian context.

Nenad Zakošek's is a report on how the analysis of the Croatian political system took a more empirical turn departing from purely theoretical analysis deeply rooted in Marxist philosophy that preceded it. He explicitly argues for 'generational thesis' by explaining this turn in the mid 80's by the emergence of the new groups of scholars (including, among others, Kasapović, Grdešić and himself) and their preoccupation with introducing new methodological tools that a decade later played a decisive part in the studies of voter behaviour, socio-structural cleavages, electoral systems, elections, political parties, election campaigns and usage of political marketing, as well as studies on nationalism. It was exactly this methodological innovation, as other authors is this collection pointed

out, that was instrumental in helping political science in Croatia find its own voice. Zakošek observes that political scientists in the 90's, both those empirically and those normatively minded, were not afraid to draw evaluative conclusions from their studies and in their publications often condemned the emerging populism, nationalism, anti-democratic and authoritarian tendencies in the country's transitional period.

Public policy research in Croatia made its first baby steps in the late 80's and reached maturity only recently. A clear sign of this is Zdravko Petak's approach to the topic in his article "Public policy: development of the discipline in Croatia and the world". First, he discusses the terminological difficulties in translating the term 'public policy' in the Croatian that sometimes still haunt scholars in this field (apparent e.g. in the decision of translators and editors to leave the title of Hal Colebatch's book *Policy* in its original). Secondly, throughout most of the article he uses the textbook method explaining the three basic views of the goals of policy analysis, outlines the short history of main changes that happened in the methodology of public policy research, connects it to the larger political science framework and charts the theoretical approaches that defined the field (phase approach, IAD approach, rational choice theory, policy network approach and postmodern policy analysis). Thirdly, only three out of 23 pages talk about public policy studies in Croatia. However, here Petak makes some interesting observations, such as the connection between public management and public policy research done in Croatia, the dominance of rational choice approach, the first publications in the field, the link between Slovenian and Croatian scholars and the acknowledgment of contributions to social policy studies of researchers outside the Faculty of Political Science in Zagreb. In view of the recent opening of the department of public policy at the Faculty, a growing number of relevant publications in the

field as well, as a number of Ph.D. candidates and young scholars dedicating their work to study of policies, Petak's conclusion that public policy analysis became "an unavoidable branch of Croatian political science, that in its teaching, research and application aspects in the past 20 years gradually caught up with the world trend in the development of this discipline" (210) is more than convincing.

Damir Grubiša's article "European studies and political science in Croatia" begins with addressing the topic by giving an overview of political struggles in the EU that defined the development of European Studies from its cultural studies roots to the interdisciplinary framework (economics, law and politics) it rest on today. Grubiša notes that in this interdisciplinary trinity, political science played a second (actually, third) fiddle to both economics and law until the Maastricht Treaty in 1992 and that, until the 90's, the international relations perspective dominated the politics branch of European Studies. From then on a notable shift took place, putting political science on the same footing with the other two disciplines, while comparative politics replaced international relations as a dominant approach. Grubiša continues by illustrating a clear proliferation of journals, publications, institutes, course programs and professional associations promoting the relationship between political science and European Studies.

The author turns next to the evaluation of European studies in Croatia. He proceeds by analysing five of its aspects: courses and programs taught, research, journals, professional associations and publications. He convincingly shows that all of these aspects still leave a lot to be desired for, but also that important steps have been made promising a more relevant role of country's political scientists in the development of European studies.

Berto Šalaj in "Political Science and Political Education in Croatia" follows

the comparative approach that most of the authors in this collection opted for, by giving us an account of the general relationship between democracy and political education, the importance political science played in promoting this type of education and, finally, a sketch of scientific research in this field and its application in secondary schools in Croatia. He achieves the first task by presenting arguments by leading scholars such as Gutmann, Frazer and Crick. The second topic is addressed through a display of the importance that both APSA and IPSA as leading political science associations have devoted to the importance of political education and its promotion.

The majority of the article, however, deals with a third topic. The author poses a crucial question about the possibility of conducting political science in authoritarian regimes as such communist Yugoslavia. He provides feasible arguments for both a negative and a positive answer, however, Šalaj unequivocally denies the possibility of civic education in non-democratic regimes. Following Herber's understanding of political indoctrination, he argues that "political education... could not exist in communist system, but only political indoctrination" (260) and therefore, even if political science existed it could have played only a negative role in this field. This is the main reason why, after the collapse of communist regime, political education developed much slower than other sub-disciplines of political science. Šalaj maintains that, scientific work by political scientists on political education in the 90's was characterised by "its small number and qualitative imbalance" (262). He also addresses the topic of civic education classes in primary (there is none) and secondary schools (less than half a percent of the total time pupils spend in the classroom) in Croatia since the country's turn towards democracy. Šalaj convincingly argues that civic education is an essential element in equipping future citizens for their political participation and therefore its neglect by educational authorities in

Croatia was damaging for the process of democratic consolidation. However, given the rampant nationalism, autocratic and even undemocratic tendencies among the ruling elite in the first decade of Croatian independence, one could argue, it was for the better that political education was not taken seriously enough for it would have, very likely, turned into just another wave of political indoctrination.

Tihomir Cipek's article "Cultural turn and Political Science" differs from the rest of the articles in this book in that it deals with a specific methodological approach – the cultural approach – rather than the history of the discipline or one of its sub-fields. Also, it discusses the topic mainly in the context of the Anglo-American social sciences tradition and has very little to say about political science in Croatia. Nonetheless, the article offers an interesting overview of the origins of the 'cultural turn' in ethnology and anthropology, its emergence as a reaction to the limits of positivism in political science, its establishment in mainstream and, finally, its importance in the wider context of contemporary social sciences. He gives a detailed account of how cultural approach was applied in political theory and comparative politics.

Cipek argues that the 'cultural turn' had no influence in Croatian political science. Given some of the publications in political theory and gender studies in the past decade, this argument can be debated. However, the author is right that the dialogue between political science and other social sciences is often lacking. The reason for this, the author maintains, is that the relationship between political and other sciences has been one-sided in which political science was heavily influenced by other disciplines but not vice versa. The defensive reaction of political scientists was to close ranks and avoid interdisciplinary methodological approaches such as the cultural approach. Rather than a plea for return to its interdisciplinary roots, Cipek's article can be

read as a warning against taking the study of political science in Croatia to its other extreme and, under the pretext of methodological purity and preservation of its own identity, shutting it off from the influences and arguments from other sister disciplines.

The last article, written by the young scholars Ana Petek and Krešimir Petković, rather ambitiously wants to depict the “last ‘moment’ in the development of political science” as it is presented in the “structure of contemporary university education in the world” (296). However, their method – comparing the lists of courses offered at undergraduate level at 13 world-known universities – is much more modest than their goal. The comparison focuses on the titles of courses taught and not, as one might expect, methodologies and schools of thought used, and textbooks or texts read in those courses. Interestingly enough, even this kind of basic overview questions, possibly unintentionally, some of the arguments advocated in Kasapović’s article. First, those schools that have a strong political science core such as Harvard, Columbia or Berkeley, require from their students to take number a of courses from other social sciences and humanities. Secondly, three leading UK schools in the field – LSE, Oxford and Cambridge – take a more interdisciplinary approach to educating their political science students (especially in the freshman year). This suggests that at top American and British schools, where political science is defined in singular, students are still expected to acquire a much broader knowledge in social sciences and humanities than their counterparts at the University of Zagreb. In the conclusion, the authors add the Faculty of Political Science in Zagreb into their comparative scheme. Although, based on Hix’s scale, a well-positioned school in the regional context, in the global context it is not a leading institution and, therefore, the authors’ questions ‘who is our role model?’ is a legitimate one. Unfortunately, their answer is misleading be-

cause it is derived from their comparison of curricula taught at the Faculty of Political Science in Zagreb with the 13 schools mentioned earlier. Taking only the list of courses as their criteria they conclude that “Croatian political science is about halfway between the French and the American” role model (394). As the history of the institution shows, until the 90’s, the Faculty of Political Science in Zagreb was not, at least consciously, modelled on any western European model. Today, political science in Croatia is in large part defined by the American and the German tradition. Rather than pointing out the similarities in the lists of courses offered at the University of Zagreb and schools abroad, we can base this conclusion on two facts: first, that most of the teaching staff have either earned their Ph.D.s, did their postdoctoral research or spent the time as visiting lecturers in one of these two countries. Second, that textbooks, literature and methodology used in teaching are very often similar to those used in the US and Germany.

The need to retell the history of a discipline and evaluate its current position can be motivated, as Kursar notes in his article, either by a crisis of the discipline or a sense of achieving its maturity. This book, the first of its kind, convincingly shows that the latter is the case. It, however, suffers from several weaknesses: it does not give a fully comprehensive account of the development of political science in Croatia, for it lacks articles (not due, it is worth noting, to an editorial decision) on two subfields of the discipline – political theory and international relations – that have a long tradition in both courses taught at the Faculty and relevant publication by its staff. Unfortunately, this results in a somewhat simplified and distorted account of the pre-90’s period in those articles that too easily dismiss (under the heading of Marxist orthodoxy) works published during this period. For example, important studies on the political thought of Dante, John Dewey or Carl Schmitt, as well as the influence of

phenomenology, hermeneutics, Heidegger or the Frankfurt school are not addressed. Furthermore, it is not mentioned that some of the first important influences of Anglo-American political science in Croatia are to be found in international relations publications. It is also worth noting that the development of political science in Croatia is depicted solely in the context of the Faculty of Political Science in Zagreb. Although this institution played a major role in defining the discipline it would be unfair to argue that there were no noteworthy contributions to political science outside the Faculty.

The book, as the editor herself admits, is controversial: some will find the narratives of the discipline's past lacking, while some will question both the assessments made about the present state and the future of political science in Croatia. It is clear from the fact that the articles published in this book already give different and somewhat conflicting accounts of the history and prospects of the discipline, that neither the editor nor the authors aspired to make this publication the last word on the subject. It, instead, offers a starting point for a debate. Given the Croatian political science community's initial response to the book and an upcoming conference where the topic of the state of political science will be addressed in a wider regional context, we can conclude that this goal was achieved successfully.

*Enes Kulenović*

## Book Review

Berto Šalaj

*Socijalni kapital. Hrvatska u komparativnoj analizi*  
(*Social capital. Croatia in a Comparative Analysis*)

Fakultet političkih znanosti, Zagreb,  
2007, 258 pages

The concept of social capital appeared in 1930's as an auxiliary device in social science explanations of the social problems emerging in the undeveloped and rural, but also in the developed urban areas. Theoretical and empirical problems related to social action, improvement of social relations in certain areas, and explanations of personal success are only few of the phenomena approached with a help of this concept. Despite the great increase in scientific production that uses the concept of social capital – measured in thousands of articles – since the appearance of Robert Putnam's *Making Democracy Work*, in Croatia, the interest for the concept is not generally increased with the exception of some articles by Aleksandar Štulhofer, Gojko Bežovan, and Berto Šalaj, the author of this book. The book by Berto Šalaj, a reader at the Faculty of Political Science in Zagreb, is a first systematic exploration of the concept of social capital as well as a first systematic attempt at its use in Croatian political science. This book is necessary and welcome, since social capital is widely exploited in numerous projects related to democracy research, modernisation processes, and especially transition processes in the former socialist states.

The book contains an introduction, four chapters and a conclusion, as well as a useful appendix with questions that were used in the surveys, an overview of

the operationalisation of variables used in the regression model of social capital determinants as well as the results of regression model determinants of social trust for different countries.

In the introduction, the author points out the aims of his book. According him, the first aim is to introduce the concept of social capital to the social and political science public in Croatia. The second aim is to give an account of the state of social capital in Croatia, based on secondary data, which can serve as a starting point for future more detailed research.

In the first chapter, Berto Šalaj gives us a historical account of the work done related to the concept of social capital. Although the concept appears already in the 1930's as a response to the problems of rural areas and schools as centres of social gatherings and social development, until 1950's there are only a few works on the concept. In the 1950's, the sociologist J. Jacobs notices the importance of social networks and then she proposes to research the influence of everyday relations on the public sphere. The author hasn't omitted the founders of the concept of social capital, Pierre Bourdieu and James. S. Coleman. P. Bourdieu, alongside economic capital, introduces the concept of social and cultural capital into his research on power distribution, as an explanation of individual success. According to Bourdieu, economic and/or material resources are not the only things that could reproduce social inequality. Bourdieu has found that besides the cultural capital that individuals get in their families, social networks are also important for achieving certain social positions. For him social capital is means through which, with a help of strategies of interpersonal recognition and respect, inequalities and exclusions are perpetuated. Networks and associations are means for keeping certain positions. James Coleman introduced the concept of social capital in order to explain the relation between educational achievements and the financial personal and so-

cial capital. The more parents invest in positive interpersonal relations, the higher are the educational achievements of their children, so according to Coleman, the relations in the family are a key source of social capital. Coleman claims that the positive relations in the social networks to which an individual belongs could improve the social position of that individual. According to Coleman, the social structures that grow from individual and collective social action are crucial for the maintenance and development of social capital, so if social capital is not "in use" it deteriorates. Alongside to Bourdieu and Coleman, in the first chapter we are introduced to the most inspiring researcher of social capital – Robert Putnam. Putnam for the first time applies the concept of social capital in the research of larger groups and larger communities. In his analysis of the process of decentralisation in Italy, Putnam used the concept of social capital to give an account of the differences in the working of political institutions in the northern and southern regions of Italy. For Putnam, social capital includes norms of reciprocity and civic networks which, if exist, create trust. He concludes that social institutions are effective in those societies where a high degree of trust in social institutions exists. In such a way Putnam is the first author to empirically operationalise social capital and to prove its usefulness as a theoretical concept that would be later used in research in many countries. The critiques of the concept operationalised in such a way ranged from claims that it was unjustified to use it in research of the functioning of democracy to claims that the use of social capital neglects its negative effects in associations such as Ku Klux Klan.

In the second chapter – *Theories of Social Capital*, Šalaj gives us a comprehensive list of elements that are to be included in the concept of social capital, and covered by a theory of social capital. Systematising different definitions of the concept, Šalaj concludes that all authors

who use social capital, including the ones that are criticising the concept stress the importance of social networks that interconnect actors, be they individual or collective agents. All authors agree that social capital is a resource that helps individuals to achieve a better position in the social structure of society. The social networks as part of the concept of social capital can serve as means to achieve certain resources or as a depository of social norms. In either case, social networks spur many fruitful research projects in various countries. Putnam's political science research of social capital is one of the most fruitful. Still, the cultural approach of Francis Fukuyama, that stresses the importance of social capital as a developmental resource, should not be neglected. In the second part of the chapter the author deals with the dimensions of social capital. A good operationalisation of the concept is a difficult but a crucial part of any empirical research that aims to show the plausibility of the theory of social capital. Aware of the importance of operationalisation, Šalaj points out the ambiguities in Putnam's operationalisation of the concept, primarily in the reciprocity of the relationship between social networks and trust. Thus, the operationalization of social capital through only one of the dimensions leads to a clearer research design. The author presents different concepts of trust, vertical and horizontal trust, general and particular trust, as well as the Sztompkin's culture of trust and distrust. Besides this "cultural" aspect of social capital, Šalaj presents, its structural aspect, i.e. its rootedness in civil society, which gives very useful tools and guidelines for research in the field of civil society. The concept of civil society and civil society itself is still under-researched in Croatia. A part of the second chapter also deals with the functions of social capital, and the impact of social capital on democracy, economic prosperity, educational achievement and health. After pointing out the predominantly positive effects of social capital, the author presents different possible

strategies and state policies for developing or maintaining social capital.

In the third chapter Šalaj rightfully asks the question whether the concept of social capital can be used in the countries that underwent democratic transitions, i.e. in the post-communist states. In the beginning of the chapter an attempt is made to clear up the unfortunate and awkward expression *post communism*. It is a welcome attempt because of the long time-period of almost twenty years that has passed since these countries "in transition" changed their regimes from communist to democratic and capitalist. Furthermore, the post communist countries have had different experiences and travelled different paths in the last twenty years. We also learn that in most of the research of social capital in the new democracies, researchers use Putnam's model of social capital. The most comprehensive, most interesting and most cited research is the one conducted by the *European Bank for Reconstruction and Development* which uses data from the *World Value Survey*, and which surveys the changes in the value systems of citizens in 47 countries in order to track, among else, the relationship between social capital and economic development. Even though attempts have been made in the Croatian social science production to apply the concept, Šalaj points out that social capital is undeservedly neglected, especially because we are witnessing transitional changes which include a growing civil society. The author believes that the sociologist Aleksandar Štulhofer as one of the rare authors that has tried to establish the state of social capital in Croatia. Štulhofer has used the same data as the European researchers, modifying the concept from social to a socio-cultural capital, in order to point out the importance of the socio-cultural context.

The fourth chapter is an analysis of the state of social capital in Croatia. After establishing that Croatia is a transitional post communist country, Šalaj pre-

sents his research methodology and sources of data. He analyses secondary data as most of the researchers in the new democracies. He uses data from the *World Values Survey* conducted in Croatia in 1995, the *European Values Survey* 1999-2000, and the surveys conducted as part of the research project *Elections, Parties and Parliament in Croatia* carried out at the Faculty of Political Science in Zagreb. Since the author is comparative political scientist, the first problem he considers is the difference in the levels of social trust between the old established European democracies and the post communist countries. Using primarily the dimension of trust, the author presents us, in tables and in his commentaries, with the results of his research, comparing the results for Croatia with countries in which similar research is conducted. Analysing the levels of social capital in Croatia, and comparing data from 1995, 1999 and 2003 Šalaj has found out that social capital in Croatia is eroding.

This chapter is also devoted to an analysis of the access to social capital and the distribution of social capital. In this way we are presented with a picture of the ways in which groups prevent some of their members from access to the group's social capital, and also with the differences among groups with regard to their "openness" of the access to the social capital of the group. The group member's access is considered with regard to their sex, age, education, employment, income, residence and with this analysis the reader gets a whole picture of the state of social capital in Croatia.

Šalaj also makes an important contribution to the under-researched field of civil society by presenting the membership in civil society associations as part of the society's social capital. He researched the relationship between the levels, types, intensity and scope of association membership and the levels of social trust. Commonly used indicators of the levels of social capital – such as trust

in the judicial system, patriotism (which most often is not a generator of trust), sense of having control over one's own life, etc. – are also considered in the book. At the end of the chapter, the author justifiably considers the possibilities as well as the obstacles to the creation and maintenance of social capital in Croatia. Understandably, Šalaj feels that political actors, especially governments should be interested to improve the levels of social capital and particularly the levels of social trust. The author's analysis shows that, in Croatia, sources of social capital can be found in the multiple membership in associations, and in the positive impact of education on the levels of social trust, which is at present lower than the average for the post communist countries.

In the conclusion, Šalaj summarises his results, admitting all the limitations of secondary analysis and pointing to the urgent need for new research designed to investigate the social capital in Croatia. Useful appendixes are the survey questions used in the book, an overview of the operationalisation of variables used in the regression model of social capital determinants as well as the results of regression model determinants of social trust for different countries. In this way the author gives us a transparent insight in his research methodology. The book also contains numerous tables with survey results, and research results which are welcome since the reader can have a better picture of the secondary data analysis presented. In this way, the author supports his analysis but he can also motivate others, be they political scientists, sociologists, economists or others, for further research in the field of social capital.

In the introduction the author set the aims of the book which are definitely realised. And even though today's researchers and students have access to many on-line data bases and could follow the scientific achievements in field of their interest, there is a systematic defi-

ciency of textbooks and comprehensive views of a field in Croatian language. Berto Šalaj's approach to the concept and the research of social capital makes this book very welcome and appropriate to be used as mandatory reading for students of economy, political science, sociology, cultural studies, and for the interested reader in general.

(Translated from Croatian by  
Ana Matan)

Marta Berčić

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### Book Review

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Ivo Žanić

*Hrvatski na uvjetnoj slobodi.  
Jezik, identitet i politika između  
Jugoslavije i Europe  
(Croatian on Parole. Language,  
Identity and Politics in between  
Yugoslavia and Europe)*

Fakultet političkih znanosti, Zagreb,  
2007, 381 pages

A new book by Ivo Žanić, an associate professor at the Faculty of Political Science in Zagreb, is a fresh contribution to rethinking linguistic reality in Croatia. The book consists of an introduction, two larger and central chapters, and a conclusion.

I could say that when language matters are taken into consideration in Croatia it is usually done on three different levels. The first level covers those language idioms spoken in a small local communities, geographically determined. I would have to be rather careful not to call those local language variants by their right name, because, although those variants are strongly present in local com-

munities, those names have not been accepted locally neither as a language, nor as an identity. This is the reason why we are so shy when it comes to regarding Čakavian and Kajkavian as languages, while drowning them, at the same time, into a larger language designation – Croatian. The second level is the one that takes Croatian into consideration, but also brings further problems. Eternal discussions about similarities and differences between Croatian and Serbian come to surface, and at that point we can clearly see those same elements that mould Čakavian and Kajkavian into a general identity of Croatian. The third level, and also the most contemporary, is a problem of the entire region with the linguistic situation in Europe. Taking all this tradition into consideration, Žanić clearly shows in the book that our linguistic turmoils are completely up to date with the European, since Europe, and its languages, is affected by the same problems, discussions, viewpoints and skirmishing that can be witnessed in our own local community. Since governments and languages work primarily on building up an identity, it is perfectly logical that Žanić puts the strongest impact on the two central chapters of the book.

The first chapter is about the position of Croatian following the disintegration of Yugoslavia. Žanić shows some of the problems that strongly refer to the speakers of Croatian, and he examples this with the up-to-date Internet discussions, or translation of movies. The chapter also shows the linguistic conflicts that the speakers of Croatian started to have when they moved from their linguistic community to another one due to the war, or migration. These examples also bring a funny side of the conflict, because various situations show the full absurd of the fights between local variants, even when the vocabulary of a local linguistic idiom is quite close to the standard Croatian.

The second chapter paradigmatically shows identity as a cultural difference

constructed on a basis of the cultural capital of a group, which is going to be used to draw a distinction between two, or more, groups in conflict. Again Žanić examples that the European situation is not different from the Croatian in any way, and that also other European local communities have the same conflicts and discussions. This way a speaker of Croatian can recognise a similar frustration in Austrian, whose speakers *do not* exist, but not only at the international level between European states, but also on a local one. All the examples lead to a similar conclusion – that these problems cannot be solved by standardizing European languages, because we are heading more and more towards the larger market, and market values. Metaphorically speaking, of course.

How is Croatian going to manage after we enter the European Union will probably be a matter of another book. But that only shows that this book is quite needed, since it is using many contemporary examples, and even anticipating some. At this point it could be used as a reference book for anybody who wants to learn about today's language policy and politics. After Croatia becomes a European Union member state, we will have many more complicated topics to discuss, and at that point this book will surely be used as a outline or a review book.

*Ante Pavlov*

## Review

Damir Grubiša

*Berluskonizam: talijanski politički dossier 2001.-2006.*  
(*Berlusconism: Italian Political Dossier 2001-2006*)

Novi list-Adamić, Rijeka, 2007, 300 pages

For all those interested in the functioning of Italy during the leadership of Silvio Berlusconi, as well as for all those interested in the functioning of populism in one developed Western European country, the book by Damir Grubiša is an attractive and informative reading.

Damir Grubiša, an associate professor at the Faculty of Political Science in Zagreb, has oriented most of his political science research towards the Apennine peninsula. He has published several books on Machiavelli, the classic of political thought, he has translated books from Italian, and he is a regular commentator of Italian politics for *Novi List* – a Rijeka based daily. The texts about the political regime created by Berlusconi – collected in this book are no scientific treaties but a chronicle of the current Italian politics combined with political science analysis.

The book explains the secrets of Italian political life and decodes a unique phenomenon of post-cold war politics. After the collapse of communism, a steady progress of liberalism was expected – the end of history. Not only that this did not happen in the transitional countries of Eastern Europe, but we are witnessing a fall into an undemocratic past of a country that is one of the most developed in the West. Grubiša calls this Italian phenomenon – berlusconism. He defines it as a bond of politics and media

monopoly accompanied by a reduction of democracy, historical revisionism, and reduction of politics to conflict, as well as political manipulation that blurs the division between private interest and the public sphere and breeds great corruption. Berlusconi is simply a model of political pathology. The paradox of berlusconism is above all in the fact that it appeared in a country with rich cultural and political tradition. Berlusconi, as presented in this book, warns us that unscrupulous corruption and developed forms of political manipulation could be worse than the primitive plunder of social wealth by political and war profiteers on our side of the Adriatic. Compared to the system built by Berlusconi, the transitional tycoons and their political dealings look like real amateurism.

The book informs us how Berlusconi came to power. Italians became tired of the welfare state and started to believe in a myth of efficient entrepreneurship that will save the country. Berlusconi was persuading them with a paper named “A Contract with the Italian People” that was verified at a public registrar’s office and that he dramatically waved in front of TV cameras. That was his “guarantee list”. He amply financed his party as well as his election campaign using sources from his private companies.

The ruling coalition made up of Berlusconi’s party *Forza Italia* (Go Italy!), Umberto Bossi’s separatist *Lega Nord* (Northern League) and Gianfranco Fini’s neo-fascist *Alleanza Nazionale* (National Alliance) shocked European politics. There were no less than 23 representatives in the Italian Parliament sentenced for corruption and further 11 representatives under investigation for corruption. Berlusconi himself went to more than ten trials which most ended without verdict, due to the slowness of the Italian justice system. One could say that populism as a rule couples corruption with the weaknesses of the justice system whose main characteristics becomes slowness which certainly is not in the interest of society.

We remember that Berlusconi’s partners in government did not breed trust among the Croatian public, even though there was no formal expression of discontent from official Zagreb. Exactly the opposite, right-wing parties spoke of “our” friends in the Italian government. The book presents clear profiles of Berlusconi’s political partners. Gianfranco Fini, leader of the post-fascist National Alliance – a party that inherited the neo-fascist Social movement – used to admire Mussolini (“the greatest Italian politician in the 20. century”), later gave up on fascism and visited Israel and Auschwitz. Croatia should remember him for his visit to Belgrade in 1991, the year of Yugoslav dissolution, where he wanted to discuss “the question of Istria and Dalmatia”. Furthermore he required that Italian recognition of Croatia and Slovenia should be conditioned upon Croatia’s recognition of the right of Italy to Istria, Rijeka and Dalmatia and the revision of the Ossim agreements. Umberto Bossi, the leader of Lega Nord, was not only a political eccentric that advocates secession of North Italy (a future state Padania), but also a leader whose associates visited “friendly” Belgrade and Milošević during the war against Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina. On the other hand, they never visited Jasenovac, the concentration camp from WWII. Later, in 1999, Bossi went to Belgrade himself and generously offered Serbia to bomb NATO bases in Italy (as a response to the NATO bombardment of Serbia over Kosovo). Mirko Tremaglia, another Berlusconi’s political associate, became a minister for Italians abroad. Tremaglia is the only fascist from WWII (that actually fought against the antifascists) who has become minister in a government of a European country. In Moscow 1998, in front of Gorbachev, he called the Italian soldiers who died in Russia fighting on the Hitler side – “innocent victims”. He tried to pass a bill in Parliament that would give the fascist soldiers from WWII the same rights given to the anti-fascist ones – but he didn’t succeed. Still, he succeeded to push a bill, similar to the

Croatian one, thanks to which Italians that permanently live abroad are allowed to vote. Their votes, unlike in Croatia, can not influence the balance of political forces, but the Diaspora became an important pressure group (presumably in favour of the right). In Berlusconi's political company, as an adviser, one could find Gianni De Michelis, a former Italian foreign minister, who was against the recognition of Croatia and Slovenia in 1991. He was also tried and sentenced in a corruption affair involving illegal transfer of money to his Socialist party.

Berlusconi's main activity was his war with the Italian judiciary. He accused it for being controlled by communists. One of the ways in which he protected himself from the numerous processes opened against him was to pass new laws that would directly assist the prime minister. A typical case was the Law on the conflict of interests proposed by the minister Franco Frattini in 2002. According to that law, a minister who owns a company can not be in a conflict of interests, but the directors and other officials of the company can. For the Croatia's public Frattini is interesting because as an EU Commissioner he was giving Croatia lessons on the need to fight corruption. In addition to that, when president Mesić reacted to the speech of the Italian president Napolitano about the blood thirsty Slavic expansionism, Frattini publicly took the side of the Italian president in the name of the EU, despite the fact that he was in the European Commission responsible for judiciary, despite the fact that foreign policy is not among the competences of the Commission (but of the European Council), and despite his oath that he will not be biased in favour of his country while working in the European Commission..

His boss Silvio Berlusconi managed to come out clean from the legal proceedings brought against him by dragging cases beyond their statute of limitations, by amnesty, by lack of evidence, by shifting responsibility to his associ-

ates, passing laws tailor-made to take responsibility off the prime minister etc... Berlusconi, concludes Grubiša, needed power in order to save himself from the number of charges, investigations, and proceedings brought against him. A typical law in this respect is the one popularly called "salva Berlusconi" (save Berlusconi). By this law, the accused has a right to demand that the whole process led against him be transferred and restarted at another court, if the accused has reasons to believe that the first court might be biased against him/her. In this way, Berlusconi managed to move his cases around until a legal deadline for reaching a verdict has expired. Berlusconi himself has admitted that corruption is not foreign to him. As he said, he became disgusted by Milano's city council because at the beginning of his business career he always had to go there "with a check in his teeth". There, in Milan, he began his career having built his first buildings without legal permission on a ground that was supposed to be a green belt.

Berlusconi has also shown incredible ingeniousness in moulding the Italian political institutions. He managed to pass a law according to which a coalition that wins relative majority at elections gets as many additional seats in Parliament as needed for absolute majority. This obvious manipulation backfired at the Parliamentary elections held in April 2006 when the coalition led by Romano Prodi won 19.061.108 votes (49.8%), and Berlusconi's *Casa delle Libertà* (House of Freedom) won 18.996.832 votes (49.7%). Prodi, thanks to the law passed by Berlusconi, won 348 parliamentary seats, and Berlusconi only 281.

Grubiša, through Berlusconi's profile, pictures a paradigm of a new right-wing populism. It was said for Berlusconi that he was a great communicator. In fact he is a great manipulator. His typical method is tele-politics – politics as a show – a TV show. For Berlusconi this is an easy way since he controls 90%

of all Italian TV stations, 40% of all newspapers and 80% of all publishing houses. Berlusconi's ideology is a state run like a company – "Italia Company". For him politics is business – politics is reduced to marketing. Berlusconi has greatly simplified that approach. He was buying all the media that he could, and he could buy a lot since he was the richest person in Italy. Besides the media empire he is the owner of the football team Milan, since football is also a political show. For Berlusconi money is the highest value there is and he shows it in a public display of his fortune. He owns a watch that costs "only" 414,000 dollars.

The political style of Berlusconi, as the author portrays it, is ruggedness. Claudio Mussolini, Mussolini's relative, comparing Berlusconi to Duce, has said that they were similar since both are vain, aggressive and have an ambition like an ocean. When he is caught in corruption affairs Berlusconi defends himself by accusing others. He says: "All politicians are crooks!" This formula is no more than a cry: "Catch the thief!" A proposition that all politicians are the same is extremely dangerous. It calls for surrendering political power to "good" businessmen (like Berlusconi), and to people who do not have to be legitimised on democratic elections.

Berlusconi stood for historical revisionism. He claimed that Mussolini "never killed anyone". He manipulated with the victims of "the *fojbe* massacres", but was silent on the fascist crimes. His government attempted to limit the freedom of university professors to choose what they will teach and the freedom of the universities to decide whom they are going to employ as a professor. In domestic politics he showed contempt towards democracy. He never competed with the opposition – he was fighting a war. In foreign policy, he supported Bush's war in Iraq and became infamous for the statement that the western civilisation is "superior to Islam". During Berlusconi, Europe and Italy's relations

were not very warm. This great entrepreneur proved to be wrong for the state. The growth of GDP fell to less than 1%.

Summarising the phenomenon of Berlusconiism, Damir Grubiša will define it as fascism in new clothes. Even if we do not want to accept such verdict, it must be admitted that we are faced with a serious reduction of democracy. We can conclude that this book is a document of a phenomenon warning us that a move away from democracy is possible in the developed western countries not only in the last century, but also today.

(Translated from Croatian by  
Ana Matan)

*Branko Caratan*