Marie-Janine Calic / Dietmar Neutatz / Julia Obertreis (Hg.)

The Crisis of Socialist Modernity

The Soviet Union and Yugoslavia in the 1970s

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Table of Contents

Marie-Janine Calic, Dietmar Neutatz and Julia Obertreis: The Crisis of Socialist Modernity – The Soviet Union and Yugoslavia in the 1970s. Introduction 7

Stephan Merl: The Soviet Economy in the 1970s – Reflections on the Relationship Between Socialist Modernity, Crisis and the Administrative Command Economy 28

Marie-Janine Calic: The Beginning of the End – The 1970s as a Historical Turning Point in Yugoslavia 66

Sergei I. Zhuk: The 'Closed' Soviet Society and the West – The Consumption of the Western Cultural Products, Youth and Identity in Soviet Ukraine During the 1970s 87

Predrag Marković: Where Have All the Flowers Gone? – Yugoslav Culture in the 1970s Between Liberalisation/Westernisation and Dogmatisation 118

Aleksandar Jakir: The Economy Trigger – The Status of 'Nationality' in a 'Self-Managed' Economy During the 1960s and 1970s in Socialist Yugoslavia 134

Jörn Happel: In the Streets of Kazan – Nationality Problems in the Soviet Union During the 1970s 156

Ragna Boden: Soviet World Policy in the 1970s – A Three-Level Game 184

Bibliography 205

List of Authors 231

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Marie-Janine Calic, Dietmar Neutatz and Julia Obertreis

The Crisis of Socialist Modernity – The Soviet Union and Yugoslavia in the 1970s

Introduction

'What a sharp contrast between the confident advance of the socialist countries and their historical optimism on the one hand and the present state of the capitalist world on the other! The noose of the general crisis of the capitalist system is tightening with an ever-increasing force. The grave crisis of imperialist policies, the constant economic convulsions, anxieties about the future, the profound crisis of morality – these are the key features of contemporary capitalism. And no reformer, no doctor, can heal these organic infirmities and maladies.' With these dramatic words Leonid Brezhnev evoked the 'crisis of the capitalist system' in his speech to the Eighth Party Conference of the German Socialist Unity Party (SED) on 16 June 1971.[1] His self-assured comparison of the optimistic and prosperous socialist countries and their doomed capitalist counterparts of course seems absurd from a contemporary perspective. Yet Brezhnev's diagnosis of the industrialised West was in part fairly accurate at that time: Two years after his speech, the West did in fact experience a crisis in the shape of an oil price shock precipitating other economic problems. But were the socialist states not also in a state of crisis – without, perhaps, being aware of it? After all, 20 years later they collapsed (in Europe), while the Western economies and societies proved flexible and better able to adapt. The present volume approaches this question by looking at the cases of the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia.

1. The 1970s as a 'Threshold of Change'

From the perspective of the industrialised Western countries, the 1970s are generally associated with a series of developments marking the end of the post-war period and the beginning of a new era. The world economy under-

1 Brezhnev's speech at the Eighth Party Conference of the SED, 16. 6. 1971. See Breschnew, *Auf dem Wege Lenins*, 430.

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went dramatic changes in the early 1970s, with the 'third industrial revolution' ushering in the transition from classical industrial modernity to a high-tech communication society. 'After the boom,' doubts were expressed about the prevailing unquestioned paradigm of progress, while new social movements rejected the grand narratives of the predicted future of industrialism. There was a growing awareness of the costs of unchecked growth, such as energy dependence and mounting ecological problems.[2] The oil crisis of 1973 was one of several events that brought home to the Western world, particularly the US government, that the world was now an increasingly interdependent place, prompting recent claims that the 1970s were marked by the 'shock of the global.'[3] Overall, the 1970s are seen today as a 'threshold of change' (Lutz Niethammer).[4]

If we now ascribe epoch-making significance to the 1970s, we are faced with the question of the spatial reach of this idea. Do the observations on which such interpretations are based apply only to the industrialised Western countries or to the Communist countries as well? Was the Eastern bloc also affected by changes that may be understood as part – or at least as the outcome – of major transnational processes? One common interpretation works on this assumption. According to this view, the postwar process of 'catching up' with the West began to falter in the 1970s. Planning crises and economic blockades, the oil price shock and debt trap, mounting social problems and new nationalisms heralded a profound systemic crisis in the Communist world. The transition to postindustrial society put the socialist systems under tremendous pressure. Important sectors such as mining and heavy industry, the mainstays of the planned economies, lost their pre-eminent position in world markets. Aside from the consequences of global upheavals, the socialist systems also suffered from inherent problems such as bad planning, mismanagement, lack of investment and technological backwardness, which made it difficult to shift focus to new industries. The Communist countries' terms of trade worsened, while their trade deficit and dependence on foreign borrowing grew. At the same time, individualisation and changing values brought about a shift towards consumerism and Western mass culture. There were also signs of social and political fatigue: Campaigns of mass mobilisation no longer worked as they had in previous decades and were no longer staged on any large scale; the party leadership was

2 Doering-Manteuffel, *Nach dem Boom*.

3 Ferguson et al., *The Shock of the Global*.

4 The editors would like to thank Lutz Niethammer for the inspiration he provided at the conference held in March 2009 at the Freiburg Institute for Advanced Studies (FRIAS), which preceded this volume.

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visibly aging and embodied the past rather than a shining future. The regimes increasingly suffered from a loss of trust and legitimacy.[5]

What is indubitable is how things turned out. In the late 1950s Khrushchev could still proclaim that within a decade the Soviet Union would overtake the United States in every field. A generation later there was nothing left of this dream. The communist regimes in the Soviet Union and the other countries of Eastern and Southeastern Europe collapsed between 1989 and 1991. There followed a period of transformation and reorientation that took quite different forms in the various countries and often replaced socialist models with those of the market economy.

With these findings in mind, the present volume applies the above-mentioned concept of the 1970s as a 'threshold of change' to two very differently structured communist countries, the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia, in order to sound out whether they were already in crisis in the 1970s and if so, to determine the nature of this crisis. To what extent was any crisis the result of a world historical phenomenon, namely, the decline of classical industrial modernity? And to what extent was it inherent to the communist system as such? Did the decline of industrialism usher in an irreversible loss of legitimacy for the socialist regimes, a loss that prefigured the later collapse? Did the 1970s thus mark the beginning of the end for communism in Eastern Europe?

2. 'Socialist Modernity'

The contributions in this volume assume the existence of a 'socialist modernity' as a variant of industrial modernity. Here, 'modernity' is understood not as a normative category, but as an analytical framework that helps us describe the profound transformation of traditional agrarian societies into fully developed industrial ones, something that first occurred in the countries of Western and Central Europe and eventually in the 'backward' East as well. No-one proceeding from empirical findings could uphold the automatic equation of 'modernisation' with 'democratisation,' but would have to concede that many countries, particularly those of Eastern Europe, achieved progress and development through dictatorial means.

Ulrich Herbert has described 'high modernity' not as 'an ensemble of fixed principles but rather an open process of transformative dynamism, triggered and driven by all the extensive changes in science, technology, cul-

5 See Berend, *Central and Eastern Europe*; Altrichter, *Kleine Geschichte der Sowjetunion*, 149–158, 172; Hildermeier, *Sowjetunion*, 79–82; Hildermeier, *Geschichte*, 877–899 (on the Soviet economy) and 950–958 (on propaganda and ideology).

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ture and society in the course of the advance of industrialism in the decades around 1900.'[6] High modernity begins at the point where the specific features of modern industrial society, as they had taken shape in the 19th century, are no longer restricted to particular groups, but rather transform the lives of the vast majority of the population and confront society with new challenges requiring new political and social responses. Urbanisation, rural-urban migration, electrification and technological progress, bureaucratic rationalisation, scientific and medical advances, new forms of public life associated with mass movements of a political and ideological character – all of these brought about a transformational momentum of historically unprecedented intensity.[7]

The dynamism of industrial modernity came into conflict with traditional ways of life in both rural and urban areas and transformed them within a generation. This did not occur without great upheaval and ensuing criticism. One of the main results of these changes – and of the mounting pressure to act – was the growth of radical ideologies on both the right and the left, which countered this unchecked momentum with constructs emphasising control, the aim being to direct developments into certain channels and towards a defined goal.[8]

This interpretive model may be applied to the socialist countries, albeit by an indirect rather than direct route. In Russia, the first country to set off on the communist path in 1917, high modernity had not taken hold in any comprehensive way by the end of the nineteenth century. So Soviet communism cannot be seen as a response to problems caused by modern industrial society in Russia. Bolshevik policies were in fact an attempt to catapult a country perceived as backward into industrial modernity. How the Bolsheviks did this and the goals they had in mind were determined by three interconnected factors: Marxist ideology, longstanding conditions in Russia and the Russian perception of the capitalist world. In light of the crises of capitalism, they came to the conclusion that Russia must follow a different path in order to avoid the peaks and troughs of capitalist industrialisation, while at the same time benefiting from its technological blessings. This must be seen against the background of long-standing, pre-Communist reservations about private enterprise widespread within Russian politics and society, and the leading role of the state in the process of industrialisation and against the background of the older idea in Russian history of being able to avoid mistakes Western countries had made in their development.

6 Herbert, "Europe in High Modernity," 11.
7 Ibid., 10.
8 Ibid., 10–11.

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The communists of Eastern and Southeastern Europe, who took power just under half a century later, were equally intent on transforming their backward agrarian societies into modern, enlightened, industrial ones while avoiding the social upheavals of capitalism. The Soviet Union served here as role model and stimulus.

From the time of the First World War at the latest, other hallmarks of modernity, namely, mass politics and mass mobilisation, had taken hold in Europe, including Russia and the rest of Eastern and Southeastern Europe, albeit in a variety of different forms. After the October Revolution, the Bolsheviks vigorously asserted their transformational values, deploying very modern, innovative propaganda techniques, especially posters and films.[9] After 1945, communists in other countries emulated them.

In what follows we refer to this approach, which involved creating or forcing through industrial modernity within the framework of a developmental project, as 'socialist modernity.' This approach did not remain limited to the Soviet Union; after the Second World War other countries adopted it too – or did so on Stalin's orders. But somewhat different paths were followed in different places, as the social, economic and cultural conditions all varied from one place to another. Nonetheless, it seems to make sense to subsume these projects of transformation and visions of the future under the generic term 'socialist modernity.'

Specific to socialist modernity was a high degree of correspondence with certain general principles of Western modernity such as secularisation, the claim for universal validity of ideas and the conviction of the transformability of society, people and nature, combined with an emphasis on both the sciences and the communist worldview.[10] The origins of these things lay in the ideas of the Enlightenment and the social reformers of the nineteenth century; here, as in other European countries, these reformers pushed for increased social interventionism from state and rulers, an interventionism that deployed new techniques such as censuses and medical examinations, and advocated values such as hygiene, efficiency and sobriety. The idea of linear progress, which moulded the historical ideas found in Marxism-Leninism, was also significant. The notions of history, time and the future held by the Communists of Eastern and Southeastern Europe, particularly the Bolsheviks, were absolutely linear, goal-directed and anchored entirely in Marx-

9 See Hoffmann, *Stalinist Values*, 7–10 and passim. See on film the example of Sergei Eisenstein's films: Antoine-Dunne/Quigley, *The Montage Principle*. On posters see the seminal study: Kämpfer, *Der rote Keil* (including a long chapter on the early Soviet poster, 161–312); see also: White, *The Bolshevik Poster*.

10 For the principles of Western modernity see Welsch, *Unsere postmoderne Moderne*, 66–72. See also: Toulmin, *Cosmopolis*.

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ism-Leninism.[11] The Communists emphasised a scientific approach as a means of legitimising political action (though what they espoused was in fact pseudoscience). The cult of technology and a mania for remaking the world were other key characteristics of modern state power that came to fruition, unchecked, in the socialist countries.

Western research has taken a highly sceptical view of what these attempts to implement 'socialist modernity' actually achieved. Stefan Plaggenborg takes the view that Stalinism merely created an imitation of industrialisation that was tacked on to Russia's agrarian structures with brute force. According to this view, Stalin copied the West's path through a form of imported modernisation, in order to inject the material civilisation of capitalism into socialism.[12] Plaggenborg was the first to attempt to examine the whole of Soviet history as an 'experiment in modernity.' The distinguishing feature, he concludes, was an 'integralist modernity' organised along centralist lines, in which processes of differentiation were obstructed and different spheres of power and politics were linked together by force. He also characterises Lenin as the personification of 'conservative modernity': Before the October Revolution, he was out of touch with the latest developments in science and theory in Europe, something later reflected in the marginalisation of certain scientific fields in the Soviet Union.[13]

Rather than reducing 'socialist modernity' to a failed attempt to copy the material achievements of capitalism and to the main political and ideological project of socialism, the present volume understands it as a complex entity and thus as a comprehensive countermodel to capitalist modernity – a version of modernity in its own right. With its vision of the communist way of life, socialist modernity had a special dynamism; it was a powerful source of identification and had great appeal, and – for a time – these aspects had an impact far beyond their country of origin, the Soviet Union. This is not to claim that the mass of the population in the relevant countries was united in an enthusiastic support of this socialist project. Yet we also miss something if we view communism solely as a coercive system decreed 'from above' and enforced only with repressive means. Even individuals who rejected the Soviet regime and its terrorist methods eventually internalised the 'socialist project,' at least to some extent.[14]

11 Plaggenborg, *Experiment Moderne*, 81–119. See also: Plaggenborg, *Revolutionskultur*, 21–46.

12 Plaggenborg, "Macht und Ohnmacht," 73–74.

13 Plaggenborg, *Experiment Moderne*, 47–79 (on Lenin) and 323–369 (on integralist modernity).

14 On the ambiguity between Stalinist terror and the Soviet construction of norms and mass enthusiasm, see Schlögel, *Terror*. As one of Jochen Hellbeck's inspiring contributions

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There are many dimensions to the construct of 'socialist modernity.' Industrialisation, linked with the notion of a centrally planned and guided economy, is undoubtedly one of its core elements. But socialist modernity also includes the idea of the 'new man' and of 'cultural refinement,' and of the 'masses' and their 'mobilisation' as a factor in – and object of – all politics.[15] It includes a faith in technology and progress coupled with the idea that humanity can master nature and transform it at will – an extremely important factor with a powerful appeal that can be traced from Lenin's electrification programme through Stalin's 'Great Plan for the Transformation of Nature' of the late 1940s to the euphoria surrounding the space programme in the 1950s and 1960s.[16] In Yugoslavia, a mixture of optimism about progress and planning euphoria catapulted the country after 1945 into an era of epoch-making sociocultural innovation, aided not least by modern social policy, education, the spread of technology and the media, as well as changing aesthetic standards of modern arts. Socialism committed itself explicitly to the attempt to introduce modernity by comprehensive social intervention, assisted by massive 'agitprop' machinery.[17]

The fascination with the human capacity to control and remake the world had its social counterpart in 'social engineering': the attempt to transform society in a conscious and goal-directed way, in line with principles that, rather than being left to the market or other uncontrollable authority, are based on science and defined by ideology as 'true.' This includes efforts to create clear social categories and thus 'order' in society, which sometimes culminated in violence towards population groups that did not fit into this kind of order.[18]

Another element that clearly distinguished socialist modernity from its Western-capitalist counterpart, and that came into play particularly from the 1960s on, was the effort to achieve a specific kind of social justice and welfare (paternalism, to put it in negative terms). This was welcomed by large sections of the population as a source of security and stability. But the state's all-embracing aspiration to provide welfare, coupled with the corre-

on the Stalinist 'self,' see Hellbeck, "Fashioning the Stalinist Soul." See also an earlier report based on the account of Soviet emigrés: Inkeles/Bauer, *The Soviet Citizen*, 291.

15 On 'cultural refinement' in the Soviet Union, see Kelly/Volkov, "Directed Desires," 291–313. See as an overview on these topics Hoffmann, *Stalinist Values*.

16 On faith in technology and mastery of nature, see Gestwa, "Das Besitzergreifen von Natur und Gesellschaft," 105–138; see also his monography on technology cult and environmental perspectives in the postwar period: Gestwa, *Die Stalinschen Großbauten des Kommunismus*; on the cult of space travel, see Gestwa, "Kolumbus des Kosmos"; Scheide/Richers/Rüthers/Maurer, *Cosmic Enthusiasm*.

17 Calic, *Geschichte Jugoslawiens*, 186–188.

18 Baberowski/Doering-Manteuffel, *Ordnung durch Terror*; on ethnic groups in the Soviet Union: Martin, "The Origins of Soviet Ethnic Cleansing," 813–861.

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sponding expectations among the population, placed huge strains on state policies – a problem made all the worse in the communist countries by economies that were unable to meet the growing demands over the long term.

3. The Crisis of Socialist Modernity in the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia

The contributions in the present volume do not focus primarily on those periods during which the socialist project was forcibly advanced – in the Soviet Union the 1928–1933 period, when the Stalinist 'revolution from above' was forced through industrialisation (with an emphasis on heavy industry), and in Yugoslavia the 1944–1948 period, which witnessed the implementation of a similar transformative approach. Instead, they examine the extent to which the last great advances were followed by crisis in the 1970s. By 'crisis of socialist modernity' we mean two things: In a narrower sense, we have in mind a situation in which the political leadership came to realise that they must change course in order to stabilise the country. This applied in the Soviet Union in 1962, as Stephan Merl argues in his contribution. More broadly, 'crisis' also includes latent or concealed structural problems that were not perceived as symptoms of crisis by contemporaries and that therefore did not result in pressure for something to be done, but that may be considered (at least partly) responsible, in the medium-term, for the final crisis of the communist systems in Central, Southeastern and Eastern Europe in the 1980s. Whether contemporaries perceived and discussed these events as a crisis is not the key criterion here, though it is an important question that must be posed with respect to the countries at issue.

Any examination of crisis symptoms in communist countries must surely focus on the economic realm, as the proper functioning and efficiency of national economies was the precondition for the system's long-term survival and its international competitiveness in the context of the East-West conflict. But other important dimensions of crisis must also be taken into account: the legitimisation and appeal of the socialist project and its integrative force – and ultimately the overall dynamics of society. In view of the multiform nature of the crisis, the contributions in this volume present case studies to enhance our understanding of the communist societies.

These can be divided into three broad categories. The first group investigates the field of political economy to determine whether there was a fundamental economic crisis as well as the extent to which contemporaries – both the leadership and the population – were aware of such a crisis. The second group examines the culture of everyday life, consumption and entertain-

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ment in order to establish whether, or to what extent, 'the socialist way of life' came under pressure from Western influences and came to be perceived as unoriginal, unattractive and unconvincing. The third group scrutinises the state's capacity to integrate and unite the country in light of the nationalities question. Since developments within a society do not occur in isolation from what is happening in other countries and the international situation, it makes sense to take the global context into account in order to investigate interactions between various countries and the interplay of internal and external conditions. Spatially, the contributions focus solely on the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia. In view of the quite different state of research, we had to give up our original plan to include China as a contrasting case of a communist country that did not collapse in 1989/91 but whose political system has remained stable up to the present day. Reference is made to China, however, in the study of international politics by Ragna Boden.

We selected the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia because they embody two different types of socialist state while also exhibiting a number of common features and parallels. Both were multinational and predominantly agricultural countries when the communists took power and were faced with similar challenges. In both countries, the communists came to power by their own efforts and with fairly strong support among the population – as opposed to Poland or Hungary. Furthermore, both states occupied a special position within the international community, the postwar Soviet Union as a superpower and Tito's Yugoslavia as a socialist state that maintained special relations with the West and played a leading role in the nonaligned movement, a role that earned it much renown. But alongside this common ground there are enough differences to make a comparison seem worthwhile. In contrast to its Soviet counterpart, the Yugoslavian model of society also integrated liberal bourgeois values, principles and practices into its modernisation strategy, including – within limits – a market economy and private property, consumerism as a fetish and freedom of movement. In addition to 'fraternity and unity,' this system even tolerated a portion of its citizens submitting to the laws of capitalist wage labour as migrants to foreign countries. Yugoslav modernity after 1945 consisted of a specific combination of different norms, values and practices that gave this multinational state its own unique response to the challenges of the new age, a response quite different from the Soviet one.[19]

There have been very few comparative studies of the two countries so far. The small number of available studies concentrate on the relations between the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia, and on the nationalities problem against

19 Calic, *Geschichte Jugoslawiens*, 335–336.

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the background of the collapse of these two multinational states.[20] The literature on Yugoslavia and on the Soviet Union has tended to exist in two quite separate worlds as a result of the 1948 break.[21] However, there are many reasons to believe that we can regard both cases as part of a common transnational, transsocialist development.[22] The contributions in this volume clarify the extent to which the 1970s can be understood as a period of epoch-making change in the communist countries, in which transsystemic phenomena came to fruition and the course was set for subsequent system change. The authors examine whether and to what degree processes of transformation found in the Western world, such as liberalisation, individualisation, pluralism, technological change and the emergence of a modern consumer and service-oriented society, extended to the socialist countries as well and how the communist regimes reacted to the new challenges. Finally, the question arises as to just how much appeal and legitimacy the project of 'socialist modernity' (still) possessed in the 1970s, and when and by whom it was questioned as a result not only of Western influence but also of developments within the socialist societies.

Political Economy

The 1970s brought new economic challenges for both countries, and their respective leaderships attempted to respond with reforms. The basic conditions, however, were different, particularly with respect to their economic and social structure as well as dependency on world markets. There was, moreover, a difference in the degree to which the two political systems allowed their own public spheres and nonstate actors to advance the debate on reform and contribute to it.

Stephan Merl extends our view to include the 1960s. He points to the importance of the late Khrushchev era (1959–1962), when it became clear that the Soviet Union would fail to achieve its goal of catching up with the United States economically and politically. For the author, this failure entails a fundamental crisis causally related to the excessive demands placed on the econ-

20 See Pelikán, "Po Chruščovově návštěvě Bělehradu"; Pelikán, "Jugoslávsko-sovětske vztahy." See Allworth, *Muslim Communities Reemerge*; Kappeler/Simon/Brunner, *Die Muslime in der Sowjetunion und in Jugoslawien*; Lukic, *Europe from the Balkans to the Urals*.

21 For recent studies on the history of the Soviet Union during the period under discussion here, see, for example, Bacon/Sandle, *Brezhnev*; Boden, *Grenzen*; Brudny, *Reinventing Russia*; Clark, *Crime and Punishment*; Kotkin, *Armageddon Averted*; Millar, "Little Deal"; Millar, *Politics, Work and Daily Life*; Yurchak, *Everything Was Forever*.

22 Berend, *From the Soviet Block*.

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omy by Khrushchev's attempt to accelerate socialist modernity. The leadership responded to this crisis with various attempts to reform the planned economy and make it more efficient. After these too had failed, in 1971, under Brezhnev, the focus shifted to ensuring the country's survival. The Soviet system had now shelved its vision of the future, at least its spectacular version, but could offer its citizens stability, social security and – in comparison to earlier times – relative prosperity. Brezhnev's policy, known as the 'little deal,' ensured a high degree of contentment with the status quo. Neither the leadership nor the people perceived the 1970s as a period of crisis. But what Merl tells us about how the economy was structured and how it worked may certainly be understood as a latent, concealed economic crisis. Structural weaknesses in the planned economy, inefficiency, corruption, lack of innovation, and a concomitant and growing technological backwardness were concealed by an economic growth based in large part on the export of raw materials. As an oil and gas exporter, the Soviet Union actually profited from the 1973 oil crisis – in sharp contrast to its satellite states, which became highly indebted.

On the other hand, as the contribution by *Marie-Janine Calic* shows, even the kind of far-reaching free-market reforms implemented in Yugoslavia in the 1960s failed to provide an effective antidote to the emerging economic problems. As a consequence of the policy of accelerated industrialisation after 1945, within a single generation the Yugoslavs underwent momentous economic and sociocultural changes in the world of work and social strata, in everyday life, in gender and generational roles, and in their attitudes and values, which transformed the formerly agrarian country into an industrial society. Unintentionally, socialist modernisation acted as a catalyst to new conflicts, as the economy went into decline and ceased to grow. The 'socialist market economy' made more space for private initiative and private property, but the new competition regulations also produced many net gainers and net losers, making the gap between rich and poor grow ever wider. Regional disparities deepened, resulting in growing conflicts of interest that infected the political system. In Yugoslavia as elsewhere, the causes of eventual political and economic decline extend back further than the 1970s, but the global crisis led to the cumulative worsening of all those weaknesses that had long been a structural burden on the socialist social and economic model. The crisis also limited the financial scope for compromise and compensation, without which the complex Yugoslav system of checks and balances was doomed to failure.

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Everyday Culture and Western Influences

Socialist modernity defined itself in large part as an alternative to the individualistic capitalist way of life through cultural values and attitudes to life. Since the 1930s, the culture of the Bolsheviks, originally highly 'proletarian' in character, had in fact succumbed to a process of fusion that reflected the tastes of a new upwardly mobile generation and that might be described as a kind of *embourgeoisement*. Nonetheless, the socialist way of life was consciously distinguished from what was disparaged as Western decadence. This concerned personal behaviour and lifestyles as well as the cultural sphere as a whole. Personal conduct was to be judged in light of the ideal of the 'new man,' whose aim was not individual self-fulfilment, but integration into the group. Culture was subject to a far-reaching process of standardisation and selection, especially entertainment and popular culture, which were considered important because of their mass impact. At the same time, alternative youth cultures were emerging after the war, influenced by Western music and images of Western lifestyles and fashion.[23]

The communist regimes of the two countries dealt with in this volume remained fundamentally committed to the notion of the superiority of the socialist way of life and the denigration of Western consumer culture. From the 1960s on, however, and especially in the 1970s, changes occurred that raise important questions. In his contribution, *Sergei Zhuk* shows that large numbers of Soviet youths eagerly absorbed several waves of cultural influence from the West, from 'Beatlemania' through 'Deep Purple mania' and 'disco madness' to 'fascist punk and heavy metal hysteria.' Western music, films and certain symbolically loaded products (such as jeans) not only enjoyed increasing appeal, but were idealised. KGB officials observed this development with horror and saw it as a case of anti-Soviet mental poisoning of the Soviet youth that put the future of the entire Soviet Union at risk.[24]

On the basis of such assessments, changes in everyday life and consumer culture could be interpreted as a symptom of crisis in the sense that the socialist lifestyle was becoming less and less attractive and people were turning to models they perceived as more up-to-date. In this view, the socialist countermodel had lost its appeal and sustainability, the vision of the 'new man' had grown increasingly threadbare. 'Young people throughout the So-

23 On the phenomenon of the 'stiliagi' in the Soviet Union and the interpretation of such youth cultures see Edele, "Strange Young Men"; Fürst, "The Importance of Being Stylish."

24 For an indepth discussion, see Zhuk, "'Westernization' and Youth"; Zhuk, *Rock and Roll.*

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viet Union were orienting themselves more toward capitalist rather than socialist goals,' according to a recent study of the Baikal-Amur Magistral,[25] the last great example of mobilisation in the Soviet Union, over the course of which between 1974 and 1984 more than half a million young people from all over the country helped construct the Far Eastern Rail network.

But things are not quite as clear as they might seem at first sight. The consumption of rock music and American films cannot simply be equated with an anti-Soviet, let alone with a 'democratic' mindset. First, there were processes of appropriation and adaptation. Zhuk describes vividly how the Komsomol in the 1970s made discotheques part of its youth work and attempted to harness them as an instrument of communist propaganda. Attempts were made to satisfy the demand for discos, films and records. Second, it is far from clear what kind of meanings the consumers of American music and Western products associated with them, or whether they attached any deeper meaning to them at all. One older study underlines the great discrepancy between the political perception of the West and the preference for culture and consumer goods from the West. Individuals who preferred rock music and jeans to Soviet products often had no real idea of life in the West; they invented their own 'West' and considered Bulgaria rather than the USA as 'democratic.'[26]

Things were even more ambiguous in Yugoslavia. Unlike the inhabitants of other communist countries, the population was not cut off from the West and enjoyed freedom of travel, while also coming into contact with many Western tourists. Hundreds of thousands of Yugoslavs worked in Western countries, and it was not just money and consumer goods that they sent back home but also cultural influences. So the orientation towards Western products and culture was far greater than in the Soviet Union. As *Predrag Marković* argues, the Yugoslav regime was more tolerant of these phenomena than that in other communist countries. Within the cultural scene, meanwhile, communist ideology continued to be upheld. This went so far that even rock musicians served the interests of ideology in the 1970s. Marković refers to this period in Yugoslavia's cultural life as a 'decade of silence,' devoid of substantial debates, in which the producers of culture avoided conflicts.

25 Ward, *Brezhnev's Folly*, 42.
26 See Shlapentokh, *Public and Private Life*, 140.

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The Nationality Problem and Transethnic National Integration

If we wish to examine the crisis in socialist identities and values in the 1970s, we must also consider the 'national' threat to the supranational identity of the 'Yugoslav' or 'Soviet' citizen. Both countries had multiethnic and multireligious populations to govern, which raises the question of how socialist states dealt with ethnic, cultural and religious differences. Though the multinational state of Yugoslavia cannot be straightforwardly compared with the vast Soviet empire, it did struggle with the tension between a superordinate communist citizenship and 'national' aspirations. In communist theory, the nation was not – or ought not to be – a meaningful category. So in a supranational socialist community ethnic affiliation should become increasingly insignificant. Such assumptions raise the question of how ethnic conflicts and the 'national question' were dealt with and to what extent these gathered momentum. In both states, the territorial and administrative division of the country into a hierarchy of (union) republics, autonomous republics and provinces played a role here.[27]

Aleksandar Jakir's chapter focuses on the link between economic reforms and national demands in Yugoslavia. The economic problems and debates, which had begun in the early 1960s and revolved around the question of the form and legitimacy of 'market socialism,' gave rise to a classification of the republics as 'poor' and 'rich,' and it was against this background that the individual republics pushed their interests. Economic problems were often explained with reference to the status of one's own republic and the (supposed) preferential treatment other republics enjoyed. So the economic reforms of the 1960s led to the republics becoming rivals, with regional demands reflecting ethnic divisions.

From the late 1960s, economic arguments were joined by historical, cultural and linguistic ones. The 'Croatian Spring,' which was put down in late 1971, already entailed a veritable national movement. The example of the autonomous province of Kosovo makes the connection between economic development and ethnic tensions particularly clear. Kosovo was the least developed part of Yugoslavia, and the conflict between Serbs and Albanians culminated in demonstrations against the 'Serb oppressors' in 1968. While these demonstrations were forcibly brought to an end, Kosovo subsequently received more aid from the 'rich' republics. The republics not only had evermore independent markets, but also increasingly saw themselves as states. Economic reforms, the process of constitutional reform from 1967 to 1974

27 Basic works on the Soviet Union include: Simon, *Nationalismus und Nationalitätenpolitik*; Halbach, "Nationalitätenfrage und Nationalitätenpolitik." For Yugoslavia, see Ramet, *Nationalism and Federalism*; Pleština, *Regional Development*.

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and political liberalisation became intertwined. While Tito and some of the central authorities tried to counteract these tendencies, the republics became more and more independent, and policies were increasingly conceived and made through the 'national' categories of the republics and provinces.

While Jakir investigates the decade stretching from the mid-1960s to the mid-1970s and regards it as constitutive of later developments in Yugoslavia, *Jörn Happel's* chapter on the Soviet Union assumes 'the long 1970s,' which he comes close to equating with the Brezhnev era (1964–1982). On the surface, the period from the mid-1960s to 1979, in other words until the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, seemed to be a period of stability, not the least because of Brezhnev's policy of the 'stability of the cadres,' which, among other things, led to some of the First Secretaries in the republics staying in office for a very long time. But with respect to the nationalities question, this period was highly ambiguous. Alongside relative cultural autonomy were renewed attempts at 'Russification,' above all in the form of language policies. Numerous publications on the national question indicated the need for debate, and because of political liberalisation it was for the first time possible to publicly criticise Russification policies. In much the same way as in Yugoslavia, the centre's official take on such policies (which referred to 'fraternity and unity,' or the happy and peaceful family of peoples) conflicted with growing ethnic tensions. In the Soviet Union, the politics of history became a key sticking point. Moscow favoured cultivation of the historical heritage, but this grew into a cultivation of the 'national' heritage. In much the same way as in Yugoslavia, the economic crisis also strengthened the republics' growing sense of their own status, with the titular nations increasingly favoured over the ethnic minorities and smaller peoples. As a result of economic problems, everyone felt disadvantaged, including the Russians, still the largest and hegemonic ethnic group. The long 1970s thus became a 'catalyst' for the ethnic conflicts and national movements that emerged in the Perestroika era under Gorbachev. Much the same can be said of the decade from 1965 in Yugoslavia in relation to the break-up of Yugoslavia and subsequent wars.

Foreign Policy

The important perspective of foreign policy is presented in this volume in a contribution by *Ragna Boden*, a specialist on Soviet foreign policy. There is no equivalent article on Yugoslavia, but Boden draws on developments that were relevant for all socialist countries. As she underlines in her chapter, with respect to foreign policy and global political developments, the 1970s

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were by no means a phase of 'stagnation' for the Soviet Union, as is commonly claimed of its domestic conditions; it was in fact an extremely eventful and turbulent period. The author examines Soviet international policies on three levels – adding the third level of intersocialist relations to the usual pair of domestic and foreign policy.

The socialist 'camp' did not present itself as united, but was in fact characterised by serious internal tensions and rivalries, up to and including open hostility. Boden shows that the Soviet Union, Yugoslavia and China were in competition with one another in several respects: over the best relationship with the West, over influence in the communist world (with above all China calling Moscow's claim to leadership into question), and over influence in the 'Third World' or nonaligned movement, which Tito co-founded.[28]

The tensions between the Soviet Union and China dated back to the 1950s. Their relationship ruptured in the 1960s, reaching a low point with the Damanskii border incident in 1969. Washington used the situation to pursue rapprochement with China, and there then emerged the three-way relationship between China, the USA and the Soviet Union that characterised international power politics in the 1970s. While there was detente between the Soviet Union and the West until the mid-1970s, relations between China and the Soviet Union broke down. From the middle of the decade on, the Soviet Union's relationship with the West entered a state of crisis once again. The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan is generally regarded as an important turning point that resulted in the rapid deterioration of the Soviet Union's international image, and that was to prove a foreign policy mistake of the most far-reaching significance.

Analysis of decision-making in the Soviet Union shows that Moscow's foreign policy was not consistent; particularly with respect to the 'Third World' did it lack a clear approach. Soviet think tanks were unable to play an appreciable role, and ultimately the decisions made by Brezhnev himself, various ministers and the Politburo were often based on inadequate information. The Politburo struggled to fit together the information it received from different sources. But the decision makers' mental horizons proved highly limited, and Moscow failed to maintain a balance between the three levels of foreign policy mentioned above. This systemic weakness is evident not only in the invasion of Afghanistan, but in other earlier mistakes

28 On the history of the non-aligned movement see the ongoing research project of Nataša Mišković: "Tito, Nehru, Nasser, and the Non-Aligned Movement 1948–1965. Connected History of a Politicians' Friendship" (University of Zurich). As one of the first results of this project see Mišković, "Tito, Nehru and The Pre-History of the Non-Aligned Movement."

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