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Université de Montréal

The Origins of the South Slav Conflict

par

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Département d'anthropologie
Faculté des arts et des sciences

Mémoire présenté à la Faculté des études supérieures
en vue de l'obtention du grade de
Maître ès sciences (M.Sc.)
en anthropologie

Mars, 1999

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The Origins of the South Slav Conflict

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SOMMAIRE / RESUMÉ EN FRANÇAIS

La dernière décennie de ce millénaire a été témoin de l'avènement d'un nouvel ordre mondial et des désordres qui l'accompagnent. La fin du statu quo qui a marqué la fin de la guerre froide a incité plusieurs jeunes nations à vouloir s'affirmer afin de réussir à occuper une place dans ce nouvel ordre. Cette volonté a entraîné le développement de plusieurs formes de nationalisme. Ce phénomène n'est pas inédit, puisque, au XIXe et au début du XXe siècles, plusieurs grandes et petites nations ont développé des formes exacerbées de nationalisme afin d'unifier des populations sur un territoire donné et de s'étendre sur des territoires voisins. La quête du contrôle de territoires, fondamentale dans le nationalisme d'il y a un siècle, est réapparue dans le nationalisme récent.

Un des épisodes les plus sanglants de ce nationalisme des années 1990 est certainement celui des hostilités entre Croates et Serbes au sein de la défunte Yougoslavie. Bien que la montée récente du nationalisme fût la principale cause de la guerre, plusieurs antécédents historiques nous permettent d'expliquer le déclenchement du conflit. Cette thèse vise à clarifier les principales causes historiques et contemporaines du nationalisme serbe et croate et du conflit armé qui s'ensuivit.

Dans ce mémoire, les événements historiques qui ont trait au conflit serbo-croate seront interprétés dans le contexte de certaines théories anthropologiques du changement social et culturel et du nationalisme. Cela signifie, premièrement, que l'analyse, d'une part, tiendra compte des facteurs de divers ordres (économiques, politiques, sociaux et culturels) pour tenter de comprendre les nationalismes serbes et croates; autrement dit, nous utiliserons une approche holistique, mais modifiée, qui tient compte de tous les aspects de la réalité humaine; l'analyse, d'autre part, ne se fondera pas sur le postulat, présent dans la démarche holistique classique, de la cohérence ou de l'harmonie des différents aspects de la réalité sociale, au contraire, elle sera fondée sur la prise en compte des divisions et conflits, suivant en cela l'exemple de plusieurs études récentes en anthropologie et en sociologie.

Deuxièmement, cela signifie que nous partons de la constatation qu'il est impossible de comprendre les événements des années 1990 en Yougoslavie si on ne tient pas compte du nationalisme. Les théories du nationalisme qui nous ont guidé dans notre analyse sont celles de Hobsbawm, Gellner et Anderson, qui tous font partie du courant qui s'oppose au primordialisme. Ce courant soutient que les transformations sociales font partie d'un processus historique dynamique et ne peuvent s'expliquer par des principes mécaniques et statiques. Ce sont là des principes qui sont intégrés à l'analyse, la langue et la religion seront les plus importants. Dans ce cas, c'est moins la langue et la religion en elles-mêmes qui nous intéressent, mais bien leur utilisation en tant que symboles nationaux. C'est donc la mise en place d'un discours nationaliste exacerbé qui est au coeur de notre étude.

L'analyse des affrontements entre Serbes et Croates dans les années 1990 sera faite en trois sections. La première met en lumière l'histoire distincte des Croates, des Serbes et de leurs oppresseurs. On insistera en particulier sur l'expérience différente des Croates sous les Habsbourg, qui toléraient l'affirmation des particularités ethniques, et des Serbes sous les Ottomans, qui tenaient les chrétiens sous un joug très strict. Nous allons tenter ensuite de montrer comment Serbes et Croates ont été amenés à s'unir après 1918 pour former la Yougoslavie, un pays immédiatement divisés selon les ethnies ou groupes nationaux qui y cohabitait. Nous analyseront aussi les conséquences néfastes pendant la Seconde Guerre mondiale du type particulier d'union qui a marqué la Yougoslavie de l'entre-deux-guerres. Cet examen sert de toile de fond à la prise du pouvoir de Tito et à la mise en place de la Yougoslavie Communiste après 1945.

La deuxième section porte sur la Yougoslavie de Tito. Nous y examinerons le schisme avec l'Union Soviétique de Staline en 1948, un schisme qui a permis à Tito d'obtenir l'aide militaire et économique des pays occidentaux. Cette aide a permis un certain temps de cacher les problèmes économiques et politiques fondamentaux qui existaient en Yougoslavie. Mais les problèmes ont surgi dès les années 1960 et ont mené à la décentralisation administrative du pays. Seuls la personnalité forte de Tito et son prestige ont permis de retarder une crise économique et politique qui allait diviser profondément

le pays. La mort de Tito en 1981 allait faire éclater ces problèmes au grand jour.

La section finale tente de montrer comment les difficultés économiques et l'instabilité politique ont mené à la montée du régionalisme et du nationalisme, aux conflits armés entre groupes nationaux et au démantèlement de la Yougoslavie. Nous y analyserons comment les conflits ont été exacerbés par des leaders ultra-nationalistes, dont Milosevic et Tudjman, afin de capitaliser sur l'insécurité des gens. Ce qui nous permettra d'expliquer comment les conflits qui se sont envenimés ont abouti à une guerre civile meurtrière.

L'auteur de ce mémoire est d'origine croate. Il a cependant tenté de se placer d'un point de vue humaniste plutôt qu'ethnique dans la manière de traiter l'histoire de la Yougoslavie. Il a puisé ses informations essentiellement de sources secondaires. Mais il a aussi voyagé à plusieurs occasions en Yougoslavie et y a même travaillé pour une ONG (à Knin et Osijek en Croatie en 1997-1998). La connaissance de la langue a permis à l'auteur de se familiariser rapidement avec la situation sur le terrain. Bien que cette expérience directe ne soit pas explicitement mentionnée dans la thèse, elle a servi entre autres dans le choix plus judicieux des sources utilisées pour la mémoire. Il y a en effet de multiples sources sur la Yougoslavie et sur les origines des conflits récents. Plusieurs de ces sources sont biaisées par le parti pris nationaliste des auteurs. Nous avons tenté de ne pas utiliser ce type de sources. Nous reconnaissons cependant que tout choix procède d'un certain biais, le nôtre comme n'importe quel autre. Mais nous pensons que l'expérience directe sur le terrain a permis néanmoins de minimiser les biais et de tirer des sources une image complexe et nonpartisane des événements. Ce mémoire veut démontrer que l'histoire de la Yougoslavie et des Balkans, divisés depuis des générations entre successions d'empires, bien que complexe, peut être comprise et interprétée.

The final decade of our millennium has ushered in a New World Disorder. With the end of the status quo imposed by the Cold War we have seen many small peoples across the globe jockeying to assert their place within it. The 19th century construct known as nationalism has served to unify people sharing certain cultural traits in their quest to achieve a political voice. Unfortunately, national groups, seeking control over the same or overlapping areas, have tended towards hostility leading in many instances to ethnic conflict.

One of the bloodiest examples of this has been the hostility between Croats and Serbs in the former Yugoslavia. While mounting nationalism was the cause of the war, historical antecedents were responsible for its rise in the first place. As such, this paper strives to make sense of Serb and Croat nationalism and the resulting armed conflict by examining their histories.

Historical events will be interpreted here in the context of anthropological approaches to social and cultural change and nationalism (see among others Bernier, 1983; Bernier, 1997). What this means is that, in the first place, we will take into account economic, political, social and cultural factors and dynamics in understanding the development of Serb and Croat nationalism. We will thus use a modified holistic approach that attempts to take into account all aspects of human reality, but without the assumption of coherence or harmony within or between these two aspects. Moreover, this study is based on the analysis of social divisions and social conflict, in the line of many recent studies in sociology and anthropology (see among others Bourdieu, 1980; Comaroff and Comaroff, 1991). We will trace the development of divisions and conflict between and within “national” groups, including oppositions about the way ideologues within national groups define their “nation” (see Bourdieu, 1984, for the notion “lutttes de représentation”. Let us note that this study is foremost a case analysis, meaning to say that theoretical elements are developed within the analysis of historical material presented. There will thus be no theoretical chapter. Theoretical notions necessary for the comprehension of the analysis are provided within this introduction.

“Nationalism” is a central category of this analysis. Many theorists have written about this phenomenon and, of all of them, this work has been most influenced by the reflections of Eric Hobsbawm (1990), Ernest Gellner (1983), Benedict Anderson (1991). Unlike their primordial counterparts, who claim that national consciousness is a given fundamental identity going as far back as antiquity, their position is that nationalism, as an ideology of popular mobilization, is a relatively modern occurrence. Of course, nationalism has its roots in previous periods (see Bernier, 1983), but the idea that one’s primary group of belonging is the nation or that one’s principle loyalty is to the nation, can be traced back to the end of the 18th century. For these authors, the French Revolution is a clear starting point for nationalism defined in these terms. Naturally, this modern definition of the nation and of belonging was based on historical antecedents, for example on religious affiliation or language. However, these became redefined as characteristics of national groups that separate them from other similar groups.

Nationalism is based on ideological elaborations. That is, it is the invention of ideologues who wrote in the 18th and 19th century. Nationalism is part of a radical change in thinking that includes the development of science and rationalism, the idea of progress, liberalism and later romanticism. Hegel is a prime example of a thinker synthesizing most currents of the period. What characterizes this mode of thinking from what had been advanced earlier is that society was no longer seen as immutable, but as evolving toward a more perfect state. Rejecting Hobbes’ static position that society functioned like a timepiece, or that history was a haphazard set of events, thinkers of the period developed the idea that there was an orderly dynamic by which history was progressing toward superior orders. The agglutination of households had given way to villages, the combination of villages lead to the formation of communities, and the fusion of communities gave rise to nations. Modern nations were seen as the most superior form of human groupings. Paradoxically, however, the Romantic reaction toward rationalism and its disenchanting view of the world gave rise to primordial thinking, which posited nations as natural groupings having their roots in the distant and mythical past. It is this uneasy combination of historical construction and the primordial roots of nations that is

still at the base of most studies of nationalism. Our position is the historical one, but with the admission that history builds itself on previous material.

While it may be difficult to single out the core building blocks of nationalism, religion, language as well as technological innovations certainly played an important role. National groups tend to share these attributes and occupy or occupied a certain territorial unit. Any combination is possible. All nationalist movements look to a time in the past seen as a golden age.

Religion's traditional function served to unify people who normally had very little in common, across potentially great distances. Another contribution was the identification of membership through symbols. In this way, the cross and the flag are similar, the former being used as a design feature of the latter in some instances. Lastly, religion contributed to the cementing of history. Prior to the advent of writing, oral history prevailed making it ephemeral. The further one went back the vaguer the details became. Writing in Europe, learned for the most part by its clergy, served to make history more enduring. Daily liturgies read to followers came from the same sources. Generation upon generation was taught an identical collective religious history serving to further infuse a sense of unity.

To understand the power of language in terms of inclusion within or exclusion from a group, one need only to enter a room full of people who speak a tongue foreign to one's own. Historically speaking, dialectical as well as linguistic differences amongst pre-national, or as Hobsbawm classifies, proto-national units such as kingdoms or ancient empires, abounded. For instance, during feudal times the only common dialect or language found across the kingdom was the one spoken by the nobility. The "higher culture" of the nobility, including the language they spoke, failed to trickle down to the bulk of the population: illiterate peasants. Peasants were much more inclined to identify with their local lord than with the king or the kingdom they lived in. The opposite could be said of the nobility and as such they served as a pilot project for nationalism which emerged with the formation of the state.

Even before this, however, technological advancements such as the printing press suddenly made written works available to a much wider audience. Intellectuals realized that some sort of standardized language was necessary, the one chosen being based on a number of political and historical predilections. It became increasingly important for anyone interested in reading to learn the most prominent language or dialect which works were written or translated in. The homogenization of language in the public and official sphere commenced.

It was in the 19th century that saw the true emergence of the modern state accompanied by the blossoming of nationalism. The industrial revolution sparked the genesis of capitalism on a grand scale. The aggrandizement of the economy and territory entailed a complex system of government and bureaucracy. More than ever it was necessary to speak the same language throughout the state. Education became offered to a wider strata of the population needed to fill the ever growing appendages of government. A unified education system taught both the common man and the elite the same complex set of rituals revolving around the adulation of the nation, written history, language, values, and symbols. Over time, what was once intangible, belonging to a nation, became something so real that it was taken for granted by most citizens.

This love for one's nation expressed through what became known as patriotism turned into a powerful tool used by the burgeoning armies across Europe. Compulsory military service amongst young males served to further cement the notion of *la patrie* to which they belong. The scale and brutality of the First World War was an attestation to the power of nationalism, with millions of young men sacrificing their lives for their country.

The end of the 19th century saw the collapse of both the Habsburg and the Ottoman empires. Disaffected minorities of the former empires began to view their plight in national terms, perceiving it as their best chance to finally gain freedom from foreign rule. National self-determination became a credible method of resistance to further foreign domination. Following 1918, we also see increased migration of people throughout the world assisted greatly by modern methods of transportation. Nationalism

relies on the exclusivity of membership and as such is prone to xenophobia. Extreme nationalism deals with minorities in any of three ways: assimilation, expulsion, or extermination.

The apogee of nationalism came about when the common man was allowed to play a role in politics coupled by the advent of modern telecommunications and transportation. Modern states, be they nation states or multinational ones, be they democratic, dictatorial, or totalitarian, share one common feature. Its leaders strive to present themselves as having at least the tacit support of the country's citizens. Democracies do it through the vote, dictatorial states through adulation of its leader, and totalitarian ones through a combination of both coupled by some form of doctrine professing to know *the* way. More than ever, is it important for the masses to speak the same language and to share similar values. The mass media serves to influence people on an unprecedented scale. Governments, the world over, have not been blind to this fact. All nationalist movements will use the media to present their views. Nationalist leaderships, to the last, make it their first priority is to control the dissemination of information. Further revolutions in transportation mean that very few places remain which are too remote to be within reach of government authority.

This thesis is divided into three sections. The first investigates the separate Croat and Serb histories under different oppressors. It will reveal how over time each people was influenced by their unique experiences. The thesis will then illustrate how and why their unprecedented union occurred under the first Yugoslavia with its tragic consequences played out during the Second World War. This serves as the backdrop on which Tito's Communist Yugoslavia was to unfold. This second section will point out how Yugoslavia managed to survive for as long as it did thanks to western assistance coupled with Tito's moral authority over the country. Tito's split from Stalinist doctrine in 1948 would prove crucial as it would lead to a series of policies and events resulting in Yugoslavia's structural weakness in both political and economic areas. Politically, it was weakened by becoming increasingly dependent on the sole guidance of the charismatic Tito; economically, it was compromised as it relied on favorable trade arrangements with

western countries in a stable world economy. By 1981, Tito was dead and the global economy was beset by crisis. This brings us to the final section that will demonstrate how resulting economic hardship and political turmoil ended in the rise of nationalism. It will be revealed how certain politicians capitalized on peoples' insecurities about the future, further radicalizing national tensions. Finally, the break up of Yugoslavia will be tracked up to and including the ensuing civil war.

The author of this paper is of Croatian national origin. It is hoped that in his treatment of Yugoslav history his humanism stands above his national affiliation. Although the paper itself relies exclusively on secondary sources, its writer has been a student of the area since 1990. He has traveled to the former Yugoslavia on many occasions and his experiences having worked for an NGO in key areas of Croatia (Knin and Osijek) over the course of a year have served as his fieldwork. Having been a native of the area afforded him familiarity with both the local language and culture permitting him relative ease and accessibility as a participant observer. His upbringing in multi-cultural Montreal furnished him with a relative sense of detachment from the day to day ethnic polemics witnessed.

Although these experiences are not outrightly demonstrated in the following paper they proved invaluable in sorting through a profusion of research material. There have been myriad works published that profess to make sense of Yugoslav history and especially the recent war. Sadly, many are terribly prejudiced, their authors becoming apologists of their particular nationalism. Some western writers proved equally biased by their ethnocentrism, descending to *ad hominem* arguments to explain away the conflict amongst Serbs and Croats. However, this is not to say that all or even any of the works chosen are unbiased by their own right. Using his experience, the author was able to choose from among works that presented, at least in part, a fair portrayal and analysis of events. As the paper shall demonstrate, though the history of the Balkans is complex, it is not beyond the comprehension of any reader interested in the legacy of peoples living on the fault-line of successive empires.

THE FIRST YUGOSLAVIA

The Roots of Croatian and Serbian Identities

There have been no confrontations of consequence between Croats and Serbs before the twentieth century. What is true, however, is that the roots of war between these small peoples can be traced back over a thousand years, and have much to do with being situated on a fault line demarcating successive empires. A short examination of their respective histories will shed light on how each people, living under very different rulers, were influenced through their respective experiences; Croats under the Habsburg Empire and Serbs under the Ottomans. Ultimately, these experiences would govern how each would interact with the another.¹

Roman Emperor Diocletian's decision to divide the empire in the early fourth century along the Drina River, situated on the border separating present-day Bosnia from Serbia, to better deal with the Christian threat, would have far reaching consequences. After the collapse of the Roman Empire, this same river would serve as the demarcation line between the ensuing Byzantine Empire to the east and the Holy Roman Empire to the west. Slavs migrating to the Balkans in the latter portion of the sixth century would become marked by the great schisms taking place in this part of the world. Their acculturation differed depending on which side of the Drina they chose to inhabit. To the east Serbs flocked to Orthodox Christianity choosing the Cyrillic script. Croats to the west embraced Roman Catholicism, opting for the Latin variant. The fall of the Byzantine Empire in the fifteenth century to Ottoman Turks meant that the Balkans would become the collision point of three competing faiths.

The first Croatian regent King Tomislav I was crowned in Knin in the tenth century. From the twelfth century, Croatia found itself under either Austrian or Hungarian rule. Regardless of the ruler of the day, Croatia was afforded a level of autonomy. Its elite had

¹Until the introduction of universal manhood suffrage in Yugoslavia in 1920, it should be understood that all political interaction and ensuing polemics between Serbs and Croats was between the minority elites of each society. The majority of the population was peasants, who until the introduction of the common man

a tradition of playing one power off against the other. As an attestation to their success, by the thirteenth century the country enjoyed an assembly of Croatian nobility called the *Sabor* ruled by a titular head called a *ban*.

In the sixteenth century, due to Ottoman encroachment, Knin and areas bordering Bosnia became of great military importance to the Habsburgs. Orthodox Vlachs were conscripted to defend the area. These nomadic herdsmen were neither Serbs nor Croats, but rather hinterland Romans. In return for their protective service, the Vlachs of what became known as Vojna Krajina were offered independence from the Croatian feudal system. They organized themselves into a communal order called a *zadruga* and were administered by local chieftains called a *knez*. With the passing of the centuries and the active support of the Serbian Orthodox clergy, they began to identify with Serbdom. This integral part of Croatia, populated by foreigners, became shielded from Croatian authority for several centuries. These people became emotionally attached to Serbia and developed a strong tradition of independence with the town of Knin as their center.

For their part, the Serbs possessed a kingdom from the late twelfth century under their first regent, King Stefan Nemanja. Peak expansion of the kingdom came under the reign of King Stefan Dusan, crowned in 1346, whose center was in present day Skopje (Macedonia). After Dusan's death, Serbia was fractured into many principalities making it vulnerable to Ottoman conquest. During this period, Dusan's heir, Prince Lazar, was to lose his own life and a decisive battle to Ottoman invaders at Kosovo fields in 1389, on Saint Vitus' Day. Five centuries of occupation and resistance followed culminating in Serbian insurrection against the Ottoman rulers ending in their full sovereignty in 1878. During these five centuries, the previously uprooted Serbs of Kosovo began to be replaced by ethnic Albanians in a parallel manner to the way that Knin had been resettled by Vlachs.

The spread of Orthodox Christianity amongst Serbs was initiated from Kosovo in the eleventh century. Orthodoxy as a breaking away from Rome infused a sense of

in politics, had no political voice.

independence in the Serb psyche. Because of the political implications of this dislocation, State and Church became intertwined, with the latter becoming the principle defender of Serbdom in the face of Turkish rule. In Serbia, memory of their kings as well as their great kingdom defeated by the Turks was preserved in songs and stories and sanctified by the Serbian Orthodox Church through daily liturgies to their followers. For these reasons, Kosovo became the heartland of Serbian national consciousness.

Serbs and Croats assimilated the different political traditions under which they lived. The Habsburgs followed the Roman tradition of equality of subjects before the law. The Croatian intelligentsia were inspired by the ideals of the French Revolution and the notion of Progress. Croats became well versed in passive resistance and political obstructionism. In contrast, Serb elites had no recourse to the law in seeking justice. They became adept in political intrigue coupled with occasional brute force to attain desired ends. Idealism had little place in political life. Subsequently, Serbs tended toward political centralism and authoritarian military solutions.²

Turkish subjects, although deprived of many rights, continued to form homogenous ethnic communities based on confessional lines. The subjects of Austro-Hungary belonged to a mosaic of non-ethnic territorial units that were diversified and were allowed to conserve their historic institutions. While individual inequality existed by virtue of a stratified class system imposed by the feudal order, equality between ethnic groups existed by and large by the same token.

Another difference lay in the fact that Ottoman enlargement was mostly a result of military expansion while the Habsburg Empire, also involved in warfare, owed the better

²As Paul Garde explains: "Mais ce régime est celui de l'apartheid. Quelle que soit l'autonomie des communautés chrétiennes dans le règlement de leurs affaires, l'infidèle reste une «non-personne» qui n'a aucun droit devant l'arbitraire de l'administration turque, de ses soldats, ou du simple particulier musulmans. Non seulement l'État turc dispose d'un pouvoir absolu sur tout le territoire, mais les sujets musulmans, qui peuvent seuls participer aux rouages de cet État, ont toujours le pas sur les infidèles. Le témoignages d'un chrétien n'est pas admis en justice contre celui d'un musulman. L'infidèle est donc soumis à l'arbitraire: exactions de toutes sortes, confiscations, pillages par les soldats, rapt de femmes, enlèvements d'enfants pour en faire des janissaires, massacres, supplices... l'empire des Habsbourg est un État du droit, où le sujet n'est pas à la merci de l'arbitraire. C'est aussi un État ouvert sur l'Europe, plus avancé économiquement et culturellement..." (Garde 1992: 32, 35)

part of its growth to the feudal system by the agglutination of successive fiefs and intermarriage of nobility from different kingdoms and dukedoms. The old adage summarizes this well: *Bella gerant alii, tu, felix Austria, nube*: "Let the others wage war, you, merry Austria, get married."³

Peoples of the Habsburg Empire were more open to assimilation than their Turkish counterparts. A subject of the Turkish Empire, unless they converted to Islam, had little chance to occupy a post within it and lived within the confines of a national and religious community. By contrast, apart from having to learn another language (German and/or Hungarian) as well as new customs, the Catholic Slav of Austro-Hungary could find employment within the state bureaucracy without prejudice. Differences are evident even contemporarily, as former subjects of Austro-Hungary are proud to display once having been part of the empire; highlighting the cuisine, architecture, etc. Whereas many former subjects of the Ottoman Empire, while being visibly influenced, shy away from or are embarrassed for having had any connections to the Turks.

Language played an important role in modern nationalism coming of age amongst Serbs and Croats. As a by product of religion, Serbs chose the Cyrillic script while Croats used the Latin variant. Among elites, the implication of mutually illegible scripts in determining membership and ethnic identity via exclusion of 'outsiders' is obvious. Historian, Miroslav Hroch aptly describes the process:

"In the first stage a group of "awakened" intellectuals starts studying the language, culture, and history of a subjugated people. In the second stage, which corresponds to the heyday of national revivals, the scholars' ideas are transmitted by a group of "patriots", that is the carriers of national ideologies, who take it upon themselves to convey national thought to the wider strata. In the last stage the national movement reaches its mass apogee" (Banac 1993: 28)

Croatian nationalism began in the eighteenth century in response to Hungarian drives at assimilation and the failed attempt to replace Latin with Hungarian. This response, the Illyrian movement led by Ljudevit Gaj, envisioned a federated South Slav monarchy under Croatian leadership. Gaj standardized Croatian, choosing the stokavian dialect,

³(Garde 1992: 35)

that was also spoken predominantly among Serbs, as the basis for the national language. The intellectuals of the then popular Pan-Slavic movement hoped to attract the Serbs into its fold. Unfortunately, the Illyrian movement was too entrenched in Croat traditions to spark much interest among other Slavic peoples, though it did serve to unify Croats of different regions.

Vuk Stefanovic Karadzic (1787-1864) was Serbia's great language reformer. An ardent supporter of the stokavian dialect, he believed everyone who spoke it to be essentially Serb. According to him, the fact that Croats had three dialects (stokavian, kajkavian, and cakavian in order of importance) could not be reconciled with his belief that language was the profound expression of national spirit. According to him, a country could not have three languages, nor could one language be shared by two countries. Thus, he argued that Catholic Croats and Bosnian Muslims who spoke the stokavian dialect were essentially Serbs. Further, all Serbs should be part of a Greater Serbia. This idea was expanded by Serbia's minister of the interior, Ilija Garasanin, who made it his country's mission to unite Serbs within the framework of a Greater Serbia. This mission was codified in a secret document called *Nacertanije* (Outline) in 1844⁴, which became Serbia's guiding principle of state policy.⁵

By 1848, the Illyrian movement was slumping as a result of the harsh Germanization which followed Europe's revolutionary wave. As a result, the idea of a relatively autonomous federated monarchy of South Slavs under Croat leadership became improbable. The shift in national ideology towards Croatian national radicalism was initiated by two men: Ante Starcevic and Eugen Kvaternik, both pragmatic and ethnocentric. They formed a political organization called the Party of Right which espoused that Croatians, by virtue of living in the area for centuries, had the right to determine their own destiny. The party advocated a popular army that would throw off the yokes of the Habsburgs as well as conquer and defend a Greater Croatia comprising

⁴(Banac 1993: 83)

⁵ Serbia's military successes during the nineteenth century in the Balkan Wars led to its full sovereignty by 1878. Militarily confident, its leaders' espoused an expansionist policy of reincorporating Serbs, or those they considered as Serbs, living throughout the Balkans.

all of present day Bosnia, Slovenia and Serbia.

Although the precepts of the Party of Right appealed to many Croats, the predominant movement was a "modified Illyrianism" called Yugoslavism under the direction of philanthropist Bishop Josip Juraj Strossmayer. He understood that Croatia could not stand alone against Austro-Hungarian assimilation efforts and envisioned a spiritual unification of South Slavs founded upon a common culture. Croats were to look towards contemporary Europe for inspiration. In 1866 he helped establish the Yugoslav Academy in Zagreb. The political instrument for the creation of a Yugoslavia was the National Party.

The National Party wished to form a federated monarchy to include Slovenia, Serbia, and Montenegro. Although they recognized Serbs and Slovenes as separate cultural entities, they saw these nationalities' principal role as sustaining Croat national development. In this way, Croatia could stand up to centralist Austria and assimilationist Hungary. As one might expect, the formula for fighting oppressive powers by upholding the development of a foreign yet friendly neighbor found little appeal amongst Serbs and Slovenes.

Several events took place in the latter half of the nineteenth century which both weakened Austro-Hungary and Croatia's place within it. In 1867, under the *Ausgleich* (Compromise), Austria had to repay Hungary for its support in the war with Prussia. It divided its monarchy into two with the Croatia-Slavonia section losing much of their previous independence to Hungary, while Istria and Dalmatia found themselves dislocated under Austrian rule. These were serious blows to the National Party and angered Starcevic's followers.

In 1883, Budapest appointed Count Karoly Khuen-Hedervary as the new *Ban* of Croatia-Slavonia. Following a policy of divide and rule, he bullied the political opposition and instigated conflict between Croats and Serbs within Croatia. Croatian Serbs, influenced by the Serb national awakening, welcomed Serbia's irredentist foreign policy. Hedervary

introduced Serb representatives within the Croatian Sabor and in the ensuing confusion appointed himself as mediator between the two people.

Concurrently, the Party of Right lead by Josip Frank, came into being. Frank believed that a rapprochement with Vienna was the way to assure an acceptable level of independence. In the face of Hungarian misrule and an expansionist Serbia, the Party of Right shifted its threat perception from Austria to Hungary and Serbia. Frank accused Croatia's Serb minority of treason as a result of their constant identification with Serbia. By 1895, the Party of Right split with Frank's wing calling itself the Pure Party of Right (Frankists). From the remaining liberal wing of the Party of Right arose two leading figures; Ante Trumbic and Frano Supilo. Both advocated a South Slav state as the best way to insure Croatian independence. They envisioned a union based on equality amongst the Croats and Serbs.

By the late 1880's, the *Ausgleich* had become a point of contention between Austria and Hungary; each power viewing the arrangement as more favorable to the other. In 1903, the simmering discord between the two powers, over the issue of a separate Hungarian army, allowed for renewed South Slavic political activity. Under Supilo's direction, a Croat-Serb coalition was formed encompassing Croatia's Serb parties, the National Party, the now liberal Party of Right and the Progressive Youth Party. As Serbia's influence increased after 1903, the idea of joining it as a way out of the Dual Monarchy became attractive to the coalition. Serbo-Croat differences were temporarily overcome as a result of external pressures seeking to divide up parts of the Austro-Hungarian Empire whose days seemed numbered. Furthermore, there was a growing concurrent Serbophilia amongst Croats themselves. Croats saw independent Serbia as the country they would like to become. This admiration served to incite Serb expansionist policies.

In 1908, Bosnia-Herzegovina was placed under the administrative yoke of Vienna and Budapest. Both Croats and Serbs were displeased as this move cut off a portion of their respective populations. Further, Austria began to take seriously the notion of indirect rule over the whole South Slav region. This, however was not to be. Serb irredentist

attacks against the Habsburgs resulted in Austria waging a customs war and then annexing Bosnia in 1909. The assassination of Archduke Ferdinand on Saint Vitus' Day by a Bosnian Serb triggered the First World War. Within ten years Austro-Hungary became a non-entity.

For the first time in their history, Croatia and Slovenia had a chance to enjoy freedom beyond the yoke of dominating powers. Nevertheless, Hungary remained a danger as did Italy and Serbia. Furthermore, the Entente governments supported whatever scenario would shorten the war. In the Treaty of London of 1915, Italy was promised large sections of Croatia (Carniola, Trieste, Istria, Northern Dalmatia). Serbia was offered control over Bosnia-Herzegovina, Slavonia, Backa, and parts of Dalmatia. By the end of the First World War, many Croatian politicians began viewing the Sabor as a relic. Its authority was transferred to the National Council manned by a pro-Yugoslav political elite lead by Supilo and Trumbic. Although Supilo campaigned for outright independence, it was Trumbic's thinking that prevailed at the time. He believed the encroachment of Italy and Hungary was best dealt with by aligning with Serbia.

The resulting 1917 Corfu Declaration, outlined the idea of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes headed by the Karadjordjevic dynasty of Serbia. This supposedly constitutional, democratic and parliamentary monarchy did not have a constitution. This was to be established by a future Constituent Assembly. Contention arose over the fact that the Constituent Assembly became dominated by Serbs as well as over the provision which stated that the constitution could only be ratified with the blessing of the Serbian King, Aleksandar Karadjordjevic. However, Croat leaders had little bargaining power as with the fall of Austro-Hungary in 1918, brigandry and looting became commonplace with ensuing general chaos. Desperate to restore order, Croat leaders asked the Serbian Army to intervene.

King Aleksandar's Yugoslavia

In November 1918, the Geneva Declaration was signed. King Aleksandar refused to ratify this accord. In the mean time, Vojvodina, Bosnia, and Montenegro decided to unite with Serbia. Slovenia and Croatia, fearing Italian and Hungarian expansion, hastened to join the new state. Thus, on December 1 1918, King Aleksandar proclaimed the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes.

In December 1918, the National Council passed the Unification Act. Support for the unification was not unanimous. Frankists as well as former Austro-Hungarian soldiers - now unemployed, protested this move on the grounds that unification proceeded in an undemocratic manner. Street riots resulted in a bloody clash between themselves and supporters of the National Council. The fact that the Unification Act was never ratified by the Croatian Sabor, put into question its legality.

The unification was more a matter of expediency than the result of any real political desire to bring together South Slavs into one state. Slovenia was facing the possibility of being partitioned between Italy and Hungary. Croatia was losing Dalmatia littoral to Italy. To further complicate matters, both these newly "liberated" peoples had been independent from the Austro-Hungarian Empire for less than a month. Naively, the National Council's delegates had agreed to Aleksandar's regency without demanding guarantees against abuse of power. Further, there was a fundamental discrepancy between Croat and Serb perceptions of what the union was to accomplish. For Serb Prime Minister, Nikola Pasic, and his government, the unification was the fulfillment of an age-old dream of building a Greater Serbia. Croatian leaders understood the unification in terms of parity between the three nationalities. They envisioned a federated or confederated alliance whereby they could practice the then popular Wilsonian notion of self-determination within the tripartite union under Serbia. At worst, Croat leaders believed that they would simply continue in their long tradition of using political and legal means to gain desired ends. The Serbian leadership, being well versed in *real politik*, had scant patience for such methods.

Moreover, the union of the South Slav Kingdoms was not as large as envisioned, as it failed to encompass extensive portions of the Adriatic coast which fell to Italy and integral parts of Slovenia went to Austria and Hungary. Disappointment soon set in. Steps were taken to destroy Croatia's administrative autonomy by adopting Serbian laws and institutions. Serbia never made an equivalent sacrifice. Indeed her sovereignty grew as she expanded her administrative powers over these new territories. Croats found themselves under a legal system very different from that to which they were accustomed, serving to increase resistance to the new state. Local policing was given over to units of the Serb Army. This formation was unpopular among Croatian peasants who were disarmed in a bid to quell any socialist inspired attempts at land reform. The Serb dominated army comported itself in Croatia as though it were patrolling enemy territory tending towards corruption and appropriating whatever property it fancied. Resistance was met with corporal punishment, which had been abolished in Croatia since 1869. Both in the army and police force, Croats found they had little place as the use of the Cyrillic alphabet obscured the simplest functions.

Further centralization followed. The Austro-Hungarian bureaucracy was dismantled and replaced with an organization dominated by Serbs. The negotiated compromise between the National Council and various Serb parties resulted in thirteen ministers being Serbs, four Croat, two Slovene, and one Bosnian Muslim. Furthermore, Regent Aleksandar replaced Nikola Pasic with Stojan Protic, a Serb ultra-nationalist, as prime minister. Only the Serbian Orthodox Church was given semi-official status putting it at odds with its Catholic counterpart in Croatia.

In Bosnia-Herzegovina, Muslims traditionally made up over 90 % of landlords while Serbs made up most of the serfs. Following unification, the resulting land reform inevitably lead to disputes along confessional lines. After 1918, abuses in retribution against Muslims jumped to unprecedented levels. Unfortunately for Muslims, the number of incidents committed against them during the first month of the new state was far greater than all the transgressions of the preceding forty years under Austria-

Hungary.⁶

From a financial standpoint, the establishment of a national currency became a major issue of contention between Serbia and the former Austro-Hungarian provinces. The government drove up the purchasing power of the new dinar by appropriating a quantity of the Austro-Hungarian crowns in circulation. Peoples' savings decreased by 20% overnight. Furthermore, corruption coupled with administrative ineptness resulted in an unequal taxation system favoring Serbia. Hardest hit, were the bourgeoisie.⁷

Oddly enough, it would be the underrepresented peasant majority who would be the determining factor in the future Croatian politics. Fundamentally, Yugoslavia was an intellectual creation propagated by a minority of Croatian elites who neither cared for nor attempted in any manner to represent the needs and desires of the majority peasant population. Stjepan Radic was the man who led the peasants out of the political shadows. In 1904, he organized the Croatian People's Peasant Party or HPSS. Up to the end of the First World War, he believed that Croatia should become part of a federation of South Slav states under the protection of Austria. These states would have enjoyed a large degree of independence while cooperating based on the principle of *narodno jedinstvo* (national unity). In the wake of the fragmentation of the Empire, he proposed turning Croatia into an "American style" republic with a constitution adopted by a constituent assembly voted in on the basis of universal suffrage.

Radic became the most powerful Croatian leader precisely because he represented the majority. Furthermore, unlike other sections of society, peasant interests cut across regional differences, allowing for a unified voice on important issues. In 1918, as an elected member serving on the National Council's delegation to Belgrade, he was the only person to vote against unification. He warned against being "like drunken geese in a fog" and contested that the unification was against the will of the majority of Croats.

⁶(Banac 1993: 368)

⁷It is by no accident that this very same group would become the core supporters of the Croatian fascist movement during the Second World War.

Other political players at the time included the previously mentioned Nikola Pasic, leader of the National Radical Party (NRS) in Serbia with its vice-president Stojan Protic. Pasic was a firm believer in a Serbian manifest destiny and espoused a muted theory of political and cultural survival of the fittest.

The Serbs of Croatia were represented by the Democratic Party (DS) and led by Svetozar Pribicevic. His goal was to preserve Croatia's relatively isolated Serbs. Knowing that Croats felt most threatened by the Serb minority living there, the DS restrained excessive nationalism on the part of its people. However, the DS also cooperated with those external elements who encumbered the Croatian national movement. Pribicevic believed that neither Greater Croatia nor a Greater Serbia were tenable solutions, as their borders would inevitably exclude some Croats or Serbs. Although his was a rare voice of moderation, Pribicevic's contention that the two peoples be equal was unpopular among Croats who saw this as leading to Serbian assimilation.

The DS never gained favor in the eyes of Croat nationalist leaders. Undemocratically managed, the DS followed a tragic policy of trying to turn a minority into a majority through Belgrade. This controversial policy of insuring Serb security in Croatia would ultimately lead to tragic consequences for Croatian Serbs.⁸

Unification took the wind out of the Frankist sails. The twice-renamed Croatian Party of Right sought support from émigrés as well as reactionary elements in Hungary, Austria and Italy. Many feared Pribicevic's revenge for involvement in previous anti-Serb propaganda and left the country. Those that remained were persecuted. The Frankist following was insignificant, mainly attracting the Croat intelligentsia and petite bourgeoisie. As ever, their policy was to chase Serbs out of Croatia. In 1919, the party called for a Greater Croatia incorporating all of present day Croatia as well as Bosnia-Herzegovina. Oddly enough, it was ready to submit to whatever power was willing to aid

⁸Pribicevic prophetically observed: "After the war, Belgrade power holders always called upon the Serbs of Croatia for help when it was deemed necessary to defend imperiled state unity or to fight against 'Croat separatism'. But as soon as official Belgrade felt that it could profit from some sort of compromise with the Croats, it would sacrifice the Serbs of Croatia without hesitation and with merry heart, making them the red

it in liberating Croatia from Serb domination.

The Communist Party KPJ (*Komunisticka Partija Jugoslavije*) enjoyed legality for two short years after which it was forced underground in 1921. It had little support in the early years.

With the introduction of universal manhood suffrage in 1920, Radic became politically significant. He won in all rural districts by an overwhelming majority. The "Croatian Ghandi" was a man of contradictions. He was educated in cosmopolitan Paris yet loved Slavic folk culture. He was religious, yet anti-clerical. He was never for the Unification. As he put it:

"If Croats have not surrendered to Hungary and Austria in eight hundred years, why in the world should they now surrender to Serbia". (Gazi 1973: 291)

Playing the democratic game, he contended that Unification was illegal as it was neither consented to by the Croatian people nor their leaders. In February 1919, Radic called for a Croat republic with a constituent assembly along the American model, and the withdrawal of Serbian Troops. Radic refused to send representatives to the preliminary parliament in Belgrade. In reaction, Belgrade banned the HPSS paper *Slobodni Dom* (Free Home) and imprisoned Radic along with key members of his party. This only served to widen his support and the republicanism he espoused. In reaction HPSS advocated peaceful non-cooperation with tax collecting agencies and the military, causing considerable damage to authorities.

It was only by the regent's decree that the Interim National Legislature or PNP was called to order in Belgrade in February, 1919. Members of the PNP were delegated and the Protic government made sure a proportional system was followed in choosing the number of deputies from each region. The task of the PNP was limited to determining the procedure for election of a Constituent Assembly. So many regulations were enacted that by the time the Constituent Assembly was to be voted in, it was robbed of all its power.

rag to Croat eyes." (Banac 1993: 189)

Ultimately, the king was given the power to dissolve it should he deem this necessary. Furthermore, all parties had to exact an oath of allegiance to the king. The NRS-DS coalition, dominating the Constituent Assembly, elected a constitutional Committee that modeled the new constitution on the Serbia version of 1903. Finding this unacceptable, Radic and the HPSS decided to boycott the whole endeavor altogether. In September 1920, what started as economic griping lead to full scale political insurrection. Draft animals in Croatia were to be branded so as to be at the service of the military in case of need. Peasants thought the process would damage the animals and lower the price they could be sold at. In many cases, their livestock were simply confiscated. Peasants in their attempts to take over lines of transport, communication, and administration clashed with local gendarmes and police. The rebellion was contained within a few days.

In November 1920, Radic and the HPSS won a clear majority and became the official Croatian opposition. Changing the name of the party to the HRSS (Croatian Republican Peasant Party), he announced that he would not participate in the Constituent Assembly but only in a parliament where decisions would be made by mutual agreement. The DS and NRS were thus robbed of the chance of gaining a majority vote through political machinations.

Radic and the HRSS soon became an umbrella group for all disaffected Croatian political groups appropriately named *Hrvatski bloc* (Croatian Bloc). In February 1921, a message was sent to the regent demanding that the HRSS be granted administrative authority in Croatia-Slavonia and that the centrist constitution be scrapped. Getting no response prompted the HRSS to draft their own constitution; in which Croatia expressed its wish to be free from arbitrary rule and foreign domination within a confederated Yugoslavia. This prompted a new wave of peasant unrest in the Spring of 1921. Regardless of these events, the first Yugoslav constitution was passed on June 28 of the same year, ominously St. Vitus' Day. It dissolved Croatia's traditional institutions (The *ban* and *Sabor*) to be replaced by Serbian institutions.

The Constitution served only to propel the country into political turmoil. The parliament,

lacking democratic legitimacy, could not impose itself. Not one of the parliaments managed to survive to complete its four-year mandate with elections being called every two years (1921, 1923, 1925, and 1927). The parliament, as such, could do nothing to reconcile the burning national question. Furthermore, the inter-war period saw thirty-nine governments, mostly formed and, after failing to address outstanding issues, dissolved by the King. Those that had a parliamentary majority and were a threat to his power were also dissolved.

Croats saw the historical continuity of their state come to an abrupt end. They found themselves dominated by a people with which they had historically little in common, apart from being ruled by a foreign power and sharing a similar language. Serb elite cared little for Croatia's political preoccupations. The new country that had come to be was simply not the one they had envisioned. In a word, the notion of Yugoslavia lost its credibility amongst Croats. The new regime alienated the national aspirations of the Croat elite. The public at large was upset over Radic's frequent arrests and the harassment of his family and followers. The middle class was embittered over the currency issue and the peasants were angered when their dream of a peasant republic came to an end with the introduction of yet another foreign monarchy.

Radic went into exile seeking support for Croatian self-determination. In 1924 he visited Russia, Vienna and England. The tour was a failure. Although the Comintern reversed its decision to support a unified Yugoslavia, Radic was ill at ease with the precepts of communism. In London he discovered that no one was interested in an independent peasant republic. For having aligned the HRSS with the Peasants International, a Comintern front, he and the party leadership were again arrested upon their return to Yugoslavia in 1925. His spirits low, Radic made the radical move of abandoning the dream of the peasant republic. He accepted the despised St. Vitus' Day constitution as well as the Karadjordjevic monarchy. The party name was subsequently shortened to just the Croatian Peasant Party (HSS).

By 1926, DS leader Pribicevic had fallen out with Pasic and the Radical Party. He saw

that Pasic's corruption was slowly destroying Yugoslavia. Still faithful to the ideals of Yugoslavia, Pribicevic formed a coalition with the HSS, thus forcing Radic to look beyond the narrow scope of simple Croatian nationalism. The alliance strengthened Croatia's position *vis à vis* Serbia, compromised Pasic's control and made the Radicals more dependant than ever on the Serbian police, military, and royal court. Meetings at the Belgrade parliament became more heated. Radic and Pribicevic held public rallies where they openly criticized the regime and demanded changes to the constitution.

The polemic reached its apex when Radic presented evidence that Croatia had been over-taxed, that the national bank was mismanaged, that 80-100% of the most important positions in government and army were held by Serbs. Outraged, Serbian nationalists plotted Radic's liquidation. In June 1928, Punisa Ratic, a representative of the NRS, assassinated Radic in the Belgrade parliament. The significance of Radic's murder in the eyes of Croats was immeasurable. The populist leader-reformer became Croatia's greatest martyr. Although the king may have been innocent of the conspiracy, Croats attributed the crime to him. The gunman's punishment came in the form of being under house arrest for a period of time. The notion of Yugoslavia was further discredited and Croat-Serb relations were further polarized.

King Aleksandar dissolved parliament once again and proclaimed himself absolute ruler in 1929, only confirming Croat's belief in his complicity in the crime against Radic. He outlawed all political parties of "tribal" nature and relied mostly on the army to impose his rule. The king, remembering the fate of Archduke Ferdinand, was not concerned with minorities as much as with the reactions of his own people. He changed the name of the country from the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes to simply Yugoslavia. With the exception of the Orthodox Church, he abolished all national symbols and split the country into geographic, as opposed to administrative, units. In 1931, he reintroduced a rubber stamp constitution with wide discretionary powers for himself.

In an attempt to broaden his support, the king created the Yugoslav National Party (JNP). However, opposition was growing even in Serbia. In Macedonia, then known as

Southern Serbia, nationalist dissatisfaction led to the creation of the Macedonian Internal Revolutionary Organization VMRO. In Croatia, Ante Pavelic, a young lawyer from Zagreb, was a deputy of the hard-line Croatian Frankist bloc. Upon Radic's assassination he formed a paramilitary organization called the Croatian Home-Guard. In 1929, Belgrade sentenced him to death for publicly supporting the overthrow of the state. Fearing for his life, he fled successively to Austria, Romania, and Bulgaria where he met up with members of the VMRO. He finally found refuge in Italy. Under Mussolini's fascist instruction, he established a revolutionary terrorist organization called the Ustasha (Insurgent). Together with VMRO, the Ustasha plotted and successfully executed the assassination of Regent Aleksandar during his visit to Marseilles in October 1931.

The Regency of Prince Pavle

Since Aleksandar's heir, Petar II, was a mere eleven years old, the regency was taken on by his adult cousin, Prince Pavle. With the help of the Vatican, the Serbian government established better relations with the Croats in 1935. However, the agreement with the Vatican was denounced by hard-line Serbs, proclaiming it traitorous towards Orthodoxy. Dissident deputies were threatened with excommunication. Street battles waged against the gendarmes helped shelve the agreement in 1937. However, on the eve of war, Prince Pavle, with the assistance of the new Prime Minister, Dragisa Cvetkovic, reinitiated talks.

This initiative was only possible as a result of Radic and King Alexander having been removed from the scene. Pavle found Belgrade both boring and barbaric, preferring Zagreb's charming western lifestyle and architecture. Unfortunately, the Prince lacked credibility amongst Serbs. Unlike King Aleksandar, he had never been part of the military caste and lacked authority over both the Army and Church. Furthermore, his vision of peaceful Croat-Serb relations was anachronistic. Change and reform were painfully slow.

In 1939, the new HSS leader, Vlatko Macek, negotiated a deal with Pavle through his Serbian counterpart Cvetkovic. The result of the Cvetkovic-Macek *Sporazum*

(Compromise) created a semi-autonomous Croatian political unit, the *Hrvatska banovina* (Croatian Banovina). Croatia would enjoy more independence within the framework of Yugoslavia, though still tied through finance, the military, and joint legislation. The banovina would include all of Slavonia, Dalmatia, and the Zagreb area as well as Herzegovina (the portion of Bosnia predominantly populated by Croats). The Croatian Banovina was to have its own democratically elected constituent assembly and would govern in the name of the king through a ban. Macek was to become the vice-president of the government of Yugoslavia.

Pavle brokered alliances with France and England only to witness their weakness at Munich in 1938. On the eve of World War Two, Yugoslavia proclaimed its neutrality in 1939. With the fall of France in 1940, the monarchy was put under pressure to enter into the Tripartite Pact. Hitler, who was preparing to invade the USSR, wanted to first assure his dominance in the Balkans. He wished to prevent Allied access to airbases in Yugoslavia which would permit them to bomb German oil wells in Romania. Under great duress, the regent finally signed the pact in March 1941.

Two days after the signing, a military putsch, aided by British secret agents, dethroned Pavle and replaced him with Petar II. A new government was formed by General Dusan Simovic, which kept Macek on as vice-president. On April 6 1941, Hitler, incensed by the overthrow, invaded Yugoslavia, initiating Operation Punishment whereby Belgrade was mercilessly bombed. Yugoslavia capitulated and Petar and his cabinet escaped to London to form the government in exile.

Yugoslavia during World War Two

The rapid capitulation of Yugoslavia to Germany had a double effect. One was the rise of power of the Ustasha in Croatia, the other was the fact that the areas outside towns and cities were neither occupied nor disarmed, making resistance a feasible option.

The day Germany invaded, Ustasha supporters in the Yugoslav army revolted

proclaiming Croatian independence. Macek was approached by the Germans and asked to rule the new puppet government. His refusal opened the door to the extremist take-over of the country. As the first German tanks rolled into Zagreb, Pavelic's second in command, Slavko Kvaternik, proclaimed the *Nezavisna Drzava Hrvatska* (NDH) (Independent State of Croatia) with Ante Pavelic as *Poglavnik* (Leader). Macek, literally with a knife at his throat, asked that his supporters "co-operate sincerely with the new government". On April 15 1941, Pavelic reached Zagreb from Italy with 300 of his henchmen. The choice of Pavelic over Macek assured Mussolini's control over the Dalmatian coast.

The Ustasha wished to engulf Slavonia, Dalmatian and Bosnia. However, Pavelic had to concede the entire coastal area to the Italians. The rest of the country was under German influence. In August 1941, General Milan Nedic was appointed leader of rump Serbia. Nedic saw himself and his role in much the same way that Petain did in Vichy France.

The NDH was modeled on Nazi Germany in its brutality. Anything deemed against "the humor and interests of the Croatian nation" was a capital offense. Pavelic's entourage included Army head Slavko Kvaternik, Minister of Interior Andrija Artukovic known as the "Himmler of Yugoslavia", and Mile Budak. This last was a writer of popular novels.⁹ He tried to add prestige and historical continuity to the regime by attracting artists and resurrecting traditional Croatian medieval symbols, such as the red and white checkered Croatian flag taken from the coat-of-arms of King Tomislav I. As Minister of Education and Religion, he outlined a plan detailing what was to be done with the Serb population living in the NDH: one third were to be converted, one third expelled, and one third exterminated.

Muslims were considered Croats who had lost their way under the Turks and who were to be brought back into the fold. Although no attempt was made to convert them to Catholicism, they were encouraged to join the Ustasha units. Many became implicated in atrocities committed against Serbs.

⁹To name a few: "Pod gorom", "Raspece", "Ratno roblje", "Direktor Krizanic", and "Na Veliki Petak".

Orthodox schools were closed, the Cyrillic script was outlawed, and Serbs were forced to wear armbands. The conversion of Orthodox Serbs was restricted to peasants. All others were considered to have a 'Serbian consciousness' and were thus considered incapable of becoming Croats.¹⁰

Franciscan priest Viktor Gutic first coined the term 'cleansing' (*ciscenje*) in reference to the elimination of Serbs from the NDH.¹¹ The first wave of attacks on Serbs was against those in the Krajina region, the second against those in Bosnia-Herzegovina. In July 1941, the pullout of German troops to fight the Russians and the withdrawal of the Italians southward in Dalmatia afforded *carte blanche* to Ustasha's genocidal madness. By the Fall, they had built concentration camps for Serbs, Gypsies, Jews, and dissident Croats. Jasenovac camp was to become the Yugoslav Auschwitz.

Although initially receptive, Croatian support for the Ustasha was short lived. The fact that Dalmatia as well as the Croatian Crown had been given to Italy was resented.¹² Furthermore, the higher echelons of the Ustasha were from the predominantly Croatian portion of South Western Bosnia called Herzegovina. The Ustasha were another in a long line of rulers of peasant stock viewed by the urban population with contempt and fear. Zagreb was too cosmopolitan to accept the Ustasha. Furthermore, Mussolini's policy of forced Italianization in Dalmatia insured that Croats there would flock to the Partisan resistance.

Initially, the Partisans under Communist rule, had little following in Croatia. They remained equally unpopular among the Serb peasantry. The Communists had recruited

¹⁰Croatian Arch-Bishop, Alojzije Stepinac, gave his tacit blessing to Pavelic and the Ustasha regime. Croatia's "purification" by converting Orthodox Serbs to Roman Catholicism has been a subject of controversy as is determining what the relationship of the Church had with the NDH. Serb historians claim that the Church was an enthusiastic supporter of the NDH, while Croats contend that it was powerless and the conversions were performed in order to save Serb lives. This portion of Croatian history, like other aspects of the war period, remains controversial.

¹¹(West 1994: 93)

¹²Pavelic had gone to Rome to offer the Duke of Spoleto the Croatian crown in order to legitimize the NDH by suggesting a continuity with the medieval reign of Tomislav I. The aristocrat accepted, but never actually went to Zagreb. The trip was meant to appease the Italians and give the regime a mock medieval luster. Pavelic also saw the Pope who paid lip service to the puppet government.

mostly among urbanites and neglected the peasants. The notion of social revolution was alien to peasants. However, they were ready to fight for King, Country and the Church. For these reasons, they joined another resistance group, the Chetniks (royalist guerrillas) under Draza Mihailovic, appointed Defense Minister by the Yugoslav government in exile. This formation carried on a long tradition of armed guerilla combat against Turkish rule and later against the Habsburgs.

Chetnik troops were the NDH's first real enemy. Recruitment was easy as Ustasha persecutions gave little other choice to Serbs capable of fighting. Furthermore, Italy, intent on keeping the NDH weak, provided Serbs with sanctuary in Dalmatia. Eventually, Chetniks came to resemble the Ustasha, their victims being Muslims and Croats. By early 1943, they controlled most of Serbia proper, Montenegro, the Sandjak, and Eastern Bosnia. The Muslim population had been 'cleansed' of the region. They also operated in the Krajina region where massacres against Croats took place.

The Communists used the war to counteract the devastation of Stalin's purges of 1937. Things took a positive turn when underground organizer, Josip Broz, took command. He became known by his secret code name "Tito" and helped Communists to change their position. Communists believed the differences between Serbs and Croats were an anachronism which would resolve itself with the passing of the church, the development of industry, a centralized legal administration and education system. Classes would wither and with this, all conflict between people. The Ustasha preached a nationalist utopia, the leftists an internationalist one.

On June 22 1941, the day Hitler invaded Russia, the Yugoslav Communist Party issued a formal call to arms. The Partisans did not limit themselves to one nationality and operated throughout the country. They embraced a large proportion of Serbs, but were also open to any other group wishing to fight the occupiers. Furthermore, because the Communist party was banned since 1921, they had been building a formidable underground organization with international connections. Members were ideologically motivated to take great risks for a higher cause. The multinational character of their

guerilla war would lead to their victory. Tito put Alexander Rankovic in charge of operations in Serbia, Milovan Djilas in Montenegro, Karadelj in Slovenia; all nationals of the respective areas.

Unlike the freely roaming Partisans, the Chetnik's principal concern was for their families and farms and thus tied to local interests. Initially, relations between the two were tense but did not result in conflict. Then Hitler decreed that 500 Serbs would die for every German soldier killed. In the Town of Kragujevic in rural Serbia, 10 German soldiers lost their lives and a number were wounded by Partisan guerillas. In revenge, 7 000 Serb males were executed. Partisan-Chetnik relations would never recover.

This incident taught Chetniks and Partisans different lessons. The Chetniks concluded that it would be better to amass weapons and manpower and wait until the war shifted in favor of the Allies. Tito understood that a mobile army was the best solution against reprisals. These cruel acts of revenge, in a dialectical fashion, would cause people to revolt and join the Partisans. This point of view did not endear Partisans to the Chetniks nor to the Serbian people. Tito and Mihailovic met on three occasions in 1941 but nothing came of it. Armed hostilities began between the two by November of the same year.

The fact that Tito and the Partisans were based in Western Serbia and adjacent Bosnia during the early phases of the war meant that most recruits were Serbs. Moreover, this population had a tradition of armed resistance against foreign rulers inclining them to join movements like the Partisans or Chetniks. The first Partisan victory was at a town called Uzice. Tito's attempts to install a Soviet-style republic were met with resistance from Serbian peasants. By the end of November 1941, Tito and the Partisans were forced to flee before a German tank invasion trekking through Bosnia and were hounded every step of the way. The much needed and much promised help from Stalin never came. In fact, the Russian leader had thrown his weight behind Mihailovic, as had Churchill. This was a particularly hard blow to Tito.

Tito learned a few important lessons from this. He understood that in wartime people chose their allies for their fighting ability and not their ideologies. It was precisely Mihailovic's popularity amongst Serbs that led Stalin and Churchill to support him. Mihailovic was viewed as the most dangerous man to the Germans. This same lesson was to be learned by Mihailovic later on in the war. Further, Tito learned that Communist slogans and symbols alienated Serbs and split the opposition to Germany. He changed strategies, appealing to their regional needs, playing on Serb's hatred of the NDH and promising a centralized Yugoslavia. Among Muslims and Croats, he attacked "Greater Serbian hegemonism" vowing that a Communist Yugoslavia would be based on equality amongst its peoples.

In November 1942, Tito set up the first tentative form of Communist government in Bihac Bosnia named AVNOJ or the Anti-Fascist Council for Yugoslavia. AVNOJ's purpose was to insure the status of Partisans as the leading anti-fascist resistance movement. Of particular import were plans for postwar Yugoslavia. A federal structure was hinted at. Five key nationalities were mentioned: Muslims, Croats, Serbs, Slovenes, and Macedonians. Macedonia would no longer be a part of Serbia and the 1939 Sporazum dividing up Bosnia between Serbs and Croats would not be repeated.

By 1942, Tito decided to march his Partisans right into the heart of NDH territory where he expected to get the bulk of new recruits from disaffected Serbs, Croats, and Muslims, who would help him win the war.

In the NDH, a civil war soon raged with Germans and Ustasha fighting against the Partisans and Chetniks who in turn were fighting against each other. Occasionally, the Chetniks joined forces with the Nazis against Tito. Partisans were fighting the Italians. The latter were protecting Chetniks from the Ustasha and assisting them in fighting the Partisans. Tito found a way to capitalize from this chaos by presenting himself as a Yugoslav patriot standing above local feuds.

However, in November 1942, the Partisans were still not a significant threat to the

Ustasha. Hitler, fooled by British intelligence, believed an allied invasion would take place in the Balkans. A serious initiative against the Partisans was launched by the Germans and Italians assisted by the Chetniks. Its failure with heavy losses on all sides, established Tito as the formidable enemy in the area. In light of this, coupled with atrocities being committed by Chetnik troops, London began to view Mihailovic's ruling Yugoslavia as improbable and subsequently began diverting its support to Tito.

The fall of Mussolini, in July 1943, led to a frantic race between Germans and Partisans to grab as many of the abandoned supplies and weapons in Italian held coastal and littoral areas as possible. This, along with the much overdue Allied support, meant that Partisans began to dominate the battlefield. Tito had established himself in Belgrade, assisted by the Red Army. In step with a previous agreement between Tito and Stalin, the Red Army withdrew from Yugoslavia leaving the country in the hands of the Partisans and Tito as its uncontested leader.

Atrocities were committed on all sides as the complexity of justice was ignored. The Chetniks, like the Ustasha, engaged in ethnic cleansing. However, the number murdered by Ustasha was far higher than those killed by the Chetniks simply because the latter lacked a state apparatus with which to do so. The Partisans proclaimed all who fell as victims of Fascism. This did little to resolve burning national questions, turned into national hatreds, resulting from five years of atrocities. At the very best, they were put on hold as a result of the sheer exhaustion felt by an entire generation at the conclusion of the war.

Unfortunately, the Partisans did not have the moral high ground in terms of their conduct during hostilities. The conclusion of the war saw 30 000 fleeing Serbs, Croats, Muslims, and Slovenes handed back to Tito by British troops, who were subjected to “people’s courts “ and executed. Massive massacres took place on the Slovenian-Austrian border in the town of Bleiburg.¹³

¹³(Beljo 1985: 66-67)

Chetnik leader Mihailovic was caught and sentenced to death by the Partisans for his role in the war. Ironically, Ante Pavelic and other potential allies against the growing red menace managed to escape with the help of the Allies, to live out the rest of their lives in countries such as Argentina, Spain, Canada, and the USA. The father of the Ustasha horror died peacefully in Spain in 1957.

TITO'S YUGOSLAVIA

There is no denying that Tito was one of the great leaders of our century. The fact that most of the world's leaders attended his funeral is an attestation to this. From his humble origins of Croatian father and Slovenian mother in a small village in the rolling hills of Zagorije in Northern Croatia, this former locksmith would fight in the First World War under the Austro-Hungarian flag. Later, becoming a prisoner of war in Russia, he was to participate in the October Revolution. Returning home, after ruthlessly liquidating rivals, he quickly became the Communist Party leader there. His activities in King Alexander's Yugoslavia would soon land him in jail, sparing him from Stalin's purges. With the onset of the Second World War, he proved himself a warrior leading the Partisans to victory. The rejection of his nationality in favor of the Yugoslav ideal would win him the support of all those opposed to fascism in Yugoslavia. The multi-national character of the Partisans and their effectiveness against the enemy would convince Tito that a Communist Yugoslavia was possible.

The Tito-Stalin split

Tito was a Communist in the true sense of the word. For him, nationalism was a retrograde fossil of Yugoslav society which modernization would finally bury. However, in its first years, Communist Yugoslavia was one of the most violent regimes in all of Eastern Europe with retributions and persecutions against all those suspected of being Fascist sympathizers. Tito aped Stalinist terror on a smaller scale.

His zealous adherence to Communist doctrine would soon land him in trouble with Stalin. In attempting to expand into parts of Italy and Austria as well as supporting guerilla activities under Markos in Greece, Tito became a wild card during the onset of the Cold War. The West, believing Tito a mere henchman of Stalin, blamed the latter directly for Tito's actions. Like the majority of Communists at the time, Tito saw Stalin more as a deity than a mere man. He believed that he was following the Communist doctrine and his efforts to expand were simply attempts at reaching the inevitable goal of

creating a Communist world.¹⁴ Stalin, however, envisioned a mercantilist system whereby Yugoslavia would remain a backward satellite state whose purpose, apart from being a buffer zone, was to provide the USSR with cheap raw materials as well as a market for Russian finished goods. Stalin's refusal to support Yugoslavia's expansionist claims in Italy and Austria, as well as drives to include Bulgaria and Albania into Yugoslavia, piqued the Yugoslav leadership¹⁵, especially as it unquestioningly supported all Soviet initiatives in the UN. The reason for the lack of Soviet support was simple. A secret bargain was struck between Stalin and Churchill at Yalta at the end of WWII dividing the globe into spheres of influence. For these reasons the Yugoslav leadership felt betrayed by Stalin and the USSR.

When the break finally came about in 1948¹⁶, Stalin had miscalculated the actual support Tito had. Tito had led the Partisans virtually without any assistance from the Red Army. The fact that the Red Army had passed through Yugoslavia would turn into a blessing. Yugoslav allegiance to the charismatic Tito "hero of the revolution" was greater than the adulation towards Stalin. Furthermore, the Yugoslav leadership openly published the polemics between the two leaders. When Stalin attacked the role of the Partisans during the War by belittling their contribution, he touched on a patriotic cord permitting the public to sympathize with their own leadership.

Fearing invasion, Yugoslav leaders exposed the conflict with the USSR internationally by bringing it up at the United Nations. The umbilical cord was severed. Throughout the Eastern Bloc, "Titoism" became a grave accusation. By the Fall of 1949, Yugoslavia had dismantled the cult of Stalin and criticism of the Soviet model was encouraged.

The Tito-Stalin split would prove momentous as it served to propel Yugoslavia on a specific historical course. Yugoslavia's first dilemma was having lost all of its allies and

¹⁴One can not blame Tito for believing that he was Stalin's favored leader. After all, in 1943 the Comintern was abolished and replaced by the Cominform (Communist Information Bureau) with the Secretariat's permanent seat in Belgrade.

¹⁵ The leadership consisted of Tito and his high ranking Partisans (Milovan Djilas, Edvard Kardelj, Mose Pijade, and Aleksandar Rankovic)

¹⁶Ominously on St. Vitus' Day

trade partners virtually over night. The first five year plan was formulated on the assumption that all necessary credits, loans, raw materials and machinery were to be provided by the Soviet Union and to a lesser degree by Eastern European countries. In some cases, Yugoslavia had already fulfilled its part of the bargain never to see repayment. By the end of 1949, trade with the Soviet bloc had come to a complete standstill. Furthermore, imposition of uniform farming methods throughout the country proved disastrous while drives at collectivization culminated into riots.¹⁷

Tito had no choice but to seek economic aid as well as a degree of political protection from the West. Yugoslavia's unpopular expansionist foreign policy was altered. The United States was receptive to rapprochement with Yugoslavia for several reasons. The Americans welcomed a breakaway Communist state. Acquiring the neutrality of the strongest army in Eastern Europe (after the Red Army) was a strategic success. Yugoslavia was the missing link in the eastern flank of Western defense. From a political perspective, supporting Tito was important as the line he advanced "struck at the heart of the system which made the Communist world so formidable, a system of unity in which relations and policies of the member states were determined on the basis the supremacy of the party line decided at the center".¹⁸ The final reason was a consequence of the issue just mentioned. The conflict inherent in the Communist world revolved around the divisive point of supporting communism at home or a wider international communism centered in Moscow. The choice was usually determined on the experiences of the leaders of those countries; i.e. had they spent their earlier years in the USSR or at home locked up in jail. The US, pleased by Yugoslavia's introverted form of communism, was hopeful that by keeping Tito "afloat" other Eastern European states might follow his example and break away, leaving the USSR weaker. As recompense for becoming the "bad boy" of the Communist bloc, Yugoslavia was allotted the status of "most favored trading partner" by the United States.¹⁹

¹⁷In fact, at its peak, collectivization only encompassed 16% of the total agricultural land (Singleton 1985: 225).

¹⁸Campbell 1967: 20

¹⁹From 1951 to 1960, 42.6% of all investments made in Yugoslavia came from foreign aid. This mostly non-repayable aid kept the Yugoslav economy afloat and contributed to its economic take-off in the early 1960s. (Pavlovic 1997: 54) Military aid came out to a total of \$588 million and continued until 1958.

Non-alignment

Tito was pleased with western support. However, there was an ideological dilemma with establishing relations with the capitalists. Having spared Yugoslavia from Soviet Union domination, he was not about to deliver it into hands of the Americans. The answer was to side with neither great power.

Initially, Yugoslavia distanced itself from the rivalry between the Super Powers. This was to change. The attack on South Korea by the North was interpreted by the West to be a clear case of Soviet expansion. By virtue of being given the "Eastern European" seat on the Security Council through the good offices of the United States, Yugoslavia was able to support the American-led UN intervention as far north as the 38th parallel. This incident taught Yugoslav leaders two lessons. They were further made aware of how effective a foreign policy and defense instrument the UN could be.²⁰ Secondly, Yugoslav leaders were impressed by India, Burma, and Egypt's unwillingness to support America over the South Korean issue. Up to that point, they considered these countries as mere satellites of the West. It is no accident that these very same countries along with Yugoslavia were to become the earliest members of the non-aligned movement.

The UN served Yugoslavia as a bridge to the Third World, further convincing its leaders that these weaker nations had similar objectives; independence, equality, and remaining beyond the scope of the Super Power struggle. They also realized that they shared the same economic and political problems and through association, via the UN General Assembly, they could enhance their political security. Many of the emerging post-colonial countries in Asia and Africa who chose socialism as a political system were attracted to Yugoslavia for having stood up to Stalin and for having influence on the Security Council. Furthermore, Yugoslav leaders augmented their prestige at home by opening new markets in these parts of the world.

Thus, between 1950-1955, a total of \$1.2 billion worth of "official" aid was given to Yugoslavia with only \$55 million to come back in the form of repaid loans (Campbell 1967: 28).

²⁰This was not the first time Yugoslavia used the United Nations to its benefit. Yugoslavia was one its founding nations. As such, it had access to the UNRRA (reconstruction fund) following the Second World

Through the non-aligned movement, Yugoslavia was able to play the West off the Soviet Union to their political and especially economic advantage. The Super Powers, for their part, were insecure about their own position in the world at the time and consequently believed that support from these smaller countries was vital. Tito became one of non-alignment's most outspoken proponents, tirelessly travelling the world in an effort to increase its membership. The former guerilla warrior established himself as a world-renowned statesman.

Decentralization

Another important consequence of the Tito-Stalin split was the decentralization of politics and economics to become the hallmark of the Yugoslav system.

Tito's initial openness to decentralization was predicated on the events that occurred in the first Yugoslavia. He knew that Serbia had an acute appetite for expansionism. Although the locus of power remained in Belgrade, Tito followed a policy of keeping Yugoslavia strong by keeping Serbia weak. According to the 1946 Constitution, Serbia's province of Vojvodina was given a separate status recognizing a substantial minority of Hungarians there. Kosovo, where two thirds of the population was Albanian, was also given a special status. Macedonia, known as southern Serbia since 1913, became a full republic as well as Montenegro. This was to become an issue of contention amongst Serbs later on. Regardless of these measures taken by Tito, maintaining a centralized economy, banking, defense, economic planning, and foreign policy in Belgrade proved impossible in light of the inherent distrust amongst the peoples of Yugoslavia.

Another reason for decentralization resulted from Tito's polemic with Stalin. Tito understood that Stalin would only accept total subservience. As this was out of the question, the break was inevitable. Tito's political and physical survival was dependant on providing a justifiable ideological reason for the split which Communists in Yugoslavia could accept. In 1950, Tito adopted Milovan Djilas' position arguing that the

centralized model of the Soviet Union had strayed too far from early Marxist teachings, transforming the socialist state into an oppressive form of state capitalism. Yugoslavia could avoid falling into the same trap by initiating administrative and economic decentralization. As such, ministries' functions would be brought down to the republican and district level. The ultimate goal was to see the "withering away of the state".

Finally, receiving aid from the West implied that the Yugoslav government had to show some token measures of liberalization both in politics and in the market place. It did so, eventually turning Yugoslavia into the most relaxed of Communist states; first by allowing tourists to enter without visas; second, by granting freedom of travel to its own citizens. The political devolution of the state from federal to republican control continued throughout the 1960's and culminated into the 1974 constitution. Up to that point Yugoslavia enjoyed many favorable terms of trade as well as considerable support from the West, masking its poor economic performance.

Economic decentralization and self-management

Decentralization of politics coupled with an equivalent economic policy resulted in problems that would become a determining factor in the rise of nationalism and the destruction of Yugoslavia. During the relatively prosperous years beginning from 1965 to 1973, its peoples were proud of their Yugoslav nationality, especially in the eyes of foreign onlookers, while at the same time retaining their national and local culture. There seemed to be no contradiction in such feelings or identity. During these years it was possible to simultaneously be a Yugoslav and, for example, a good Croat.

Between 1941-47, Yugoslavia was marked by a great leap upward in social mobility by participants in the national war of liberation. Thousands of workers and peasants rose to positions of power, changing the whole prewar social structure. This social mobility decelerated after 1950 and by the 1960s decisive jumps on a large scale from lower to higher positions of status ceased. Yugoslav society was becoming more and more urban, educated, industrial, and sophisticated.

The economic boom from 1947 went bust in 1961. By 1960, Yugoslav was not exporting enough to keep abreast with its balance of payments. Foreign debts had to be repaid, while it was impossible to import the raw materials needed to keep the Yugoslav processing industry fully active. An over-valued dinar encouraged imports, creating a balance of trade deficit. By the beginning of 1961, signs of severe inflation were evident. Industrial and agricultural production slowed while personal incomes in the social sector increased by 20% making the economy as such untenable. Furthermore, the gap between richer and poorer areas of the country continued to grow. This was the first serious economic crisis to the Yugoslav economy since the break with Stalin and the ensuing crisis in 1952. Tito realized that economic reform was urgently needed.

Reform came in the cast of further expanding the Basic Law on Worker's Self-Management introduced by Tito in 1950. Self-management promised to revolutionize the production process by placing the onus of responsibility on workers. Workers would be in charge of determining all aspects of production: what they were to produce, how much, their wages, as well as what portion of profits was to be reinvested back into the firm. Most important, self-management served as an alternative to the economic system of the Soviet Union. Instead of nationalization of the means of production, it instituted public ownership of the means of production in combination with participatory democracy in the workplace.²¹

To make an analogy, Tito's splitting Yugoslavia from the Soviet bloc was akin to Luther and Protestantism's split from the Catholic Church during the Reformation. Tito, like Luther, called for the purification of the Party (Church) by returning to the essential doctrine or early writings of Marx (St. Augustine), meaning to say, the bypassing of the bureaucracy (Church) and creating a direct link between the individual and the state (God). This served him well as it provided the moral and ideological pretext for the split. According to Yugoslav leaders, the apparatus of the state transformed itself into an oppressive form of state capitalism in the Soviet Union.²² As an alternative, Yugoslav

²¹(Wilson 1980: 71)

²² Milovan Djilas and Edvard Kardelj were the most prominent leaders and thinkers charged with revamping Yugoslavia's Communist ideological position vis a vis the USSR.

leaders were trying to come up with the roots of “real” Marxism. They were more concerned with the lived experiences of people in the concrete world through which to interpret every day events than by using obscure notions, like Stalin’s preoccupation with classes. In real terms, this meant turning Marxist ideology, with its focus on man in control of the means of production, into reality through the program of self-management. Self-management promised to transform the very quality of work by creating a world where those people who “make” things would also be in control of the place where things are “made”. Therefore, under self-management, workers would be spared the alienation their Soviet counterparts endured and thus would be happier. Humanists the world over were impressed by this novel concept. As a result, Tito, and Yugoslavia as the laboratory for this great experiment, won much praise and attention.

Unfortunately, the reality of self-management was far from what was foreseen in the utopian dream. Political patronage would continue to play the strongest role in determining all aspects of production. Directors were chosen on the basis of their Partisan credentials as well as their loyalty to the Party instead of on their actual management skills. As such, they were not held accountable for a firm’s lack of productivity. Furthermore, the premise that workers were capable of making management decisions was unrealistic as most were recruited from rural areas with no experience working in an industrial setting.

Self-management never resulted in the “withering of the state” either. Instead it had the opposite effect. For instance, six banking bureaucracies replaced the previous one. Furthermore, local branches of the national bank would receive credit funds from the state to be given only under strict conditions for viable projects. However, banks became extensions of their founding enterprise that controlled both their profits and credit policy. Directors and workers alike succumbed to the temptation of using credit to increase worker’s wages rather than reinvesting in the firm. Furthermore, the devolution of the banking system tended to localize funds, precluding cross-republic investment. This contributed to the growing gap between richer and poorer republics and provinces, an incessant problem plaguing post-WWII Yugoslavia.

In response to these problems, the 1963 Constitution furthered reforms. It ushered in the concept of "market socialism". The excesses of self-management were to be balanced by disciplinary measures exerted by the market. Autonomous public enterprises were to compete with each other with little central direction, at first within the country and eventually on the world market.

Unfortunately, even reforms proved a failure. Although initially successful, the reforms, by granting enterprises much more liberty to reinvest, leading to their control of 58% of the national income in 1967 compared to 45% in 1961, also drove toward both political and economic decentralization which incited economic fragmentation and the duplicating of industrial capacities between regions. Moreover, on average, an enterprise was only able to retain 10% of its foreign currency while the rest continued to go to the National Bank in Belgrade.²³ The reforms' greatest shortcoming was that they never applied the market principle to the degree that they claimed they would.

The gap between richer and poorer areas continued to grow regardless of reform measures. Too much emphasis was put on accelerating the growth of the developing regions as opposed to integrating these areas into the economy. Capital and labor never moved beyond individual republics. Demographic characteristics shaped both economic growth and labor migration. Labor migration necessary to reduce the unemployment levels in the lesser-developed regions (Kosovo, Macedonia, and Montenegro) was impeded by distance, cultural and linguistic barriers, poor inter-regional communication, and housing shortages. Reforms failed to address the development of politically motivated capital-intensive prestige industries dependant on imports over labor-intensive extractive ones. These poorer areas had the highest rate of unemployment and capital intensive industries did little to resolve this problem.

The discrepancy between the economic performance of individual republics and provinces was also the result of separate historical and cultural roots of different regions in Yugoslavia. To compare the richest republic, Slovenia, with the poorest province,

²³ (Singleton 1976: 225)

Kosovo: Slovenia, had an established industrial infrastructure and a tradition of expertise as a historical consequence of being part of the Habsburg Empire. Furthermore, Slovenes had inherited a work ethic from the Germans, which promoted female participation in the labor force. Albanians in Kosovo had no such infrastructure and centuries of Turkish rule left them with a tradition of adhering to strict Islamic laws preventing women from working outside the home. This feature of Albanian Kosovar culture coupled with the fact that it had the highest birth rate of all national groups in Yugoslavia both precluded women's participation in the work place and compounded its existing economic problems.

Political decentralization

Once enterprises were allowed to run their own affairs, it was only a matter of time before republics demanded the same privilege. Self-management provided republics with the legitimacy they needed to reinforce their independence from the center as well as their national individuality. It was no accident that this movement for republican autonomy was strongest in the two richest republics, namely Croatia and Slovenia, who also contributed the lion's share of foreign currency earnings to federal coffers.

By 1965, the federal government's power and even the Communist Party's central hierarchy was devolved in favor of the individual republics. A republic's right to succession, pending unanimous agreement among all republics, was restored. Furthermore, it could repeal laws enacted by the federal government, which infringed on its rights. Most important, the constitution confederated the League of Communists of Yugoslavia by giving the Communist Party in every republic a venue by which it could voice its republic's particular positions.

Although political decentralization sped up in the 1960s, its inception can be traced back much earlier when, in 1952, the Party, wishing to further disassociate itself from Stalinism, scaled down its "leading" role in society to a "guiding" one. By the 1960s, the traditional composition of the Party was altered when it opened its membership to

young liberals. This served to enhance the power of the progressive leadership in the Party, especially in Croatia.²⁴

Unlike the conservative element of the Party, which had the shared experience of the Partisan struggle as well as the belief in the socialist cause unifying them, younger progressives had no such experiences. However, they too sought to rally around shared experiences. In their case these revolved around having grown up within the same cultural area; in other words, using the same language, being of the same religion, and most importantly, being of the same nationality. As a result, they were open to nationalism as it provided them with the singular cause around which to unite.

In Croatia this dichotomy of membership eventually led to a split in the party between liberal progressives and the aging conservatives. The strongest liberal supporters were Croatian intellectuals and students while conservative supporters had their locus among old Partisans, the police and army, many of who were Serbs. By the time the Croatian Spring came about, the Party itself was split along republican/federal as well as national lines with the progressive Croatian bloc firmly in place in Croatia and the Serb-lead conservatives in control at the federal level

In 1961, Croatian Communist Party leader Vladimir Bakaric formed a coalition with the poorer reform-minded republics to beat conservatives and push through proposed changes. The progressives argued that if Communism was to survive in Yugoslavia, it needed to be reformed, and that the best way to insure this was through political and economic decentralization and the “withering” of the state. They argued that the national problem had not been solved by the revolution. They complained that the dinar was over valued hurting Croatia and Slovenia as Yugoslavia’s major exporters. As the primary

²⁴The invasion of Czechoslovakia by Warsaw Pact forces in August of 1968 forced the Party to look more towards the people’s support that meant further decentralization. In 1969, the old guard of former Partisans were evicted from their positions of power. Of the 300 people elected to the Republican Central Committees, 70% were new, 60% were under 40 years of age and 15% were under 30. The greatest Republican change was where it was most needed, in Serbia. The new President was Marko Nikezic, a known reformer. In Croatia the leaders were Vladimir Bakaric and Mika Tripalo. The Chamber of Nationalities began to play an increasing role, dominating the Federal Assembly by 1971 (Cuvalo 1990: 170).

hard currency earners, they wanted a reduction in federal contributions to the central banks based in Belgrade. They also argued that by opening the borders and allowing for tourism, Yugoslavia (especially the Dalmatian Coast) could provide much needed hard currency.

Conservatives, on the other hand, were of the opinion that nationalism was the biggest threat to the country, which only increased centralization could avert. Liberals countered that their own demands were not an expression of nationalism but rather a response to economic and political problems. They envisioned decentralization via self-management as the cure to economic and political problems, resulting in the final resolution of the national question in Yugoslavia.

It is important to mention that the rise of liberalism in the 1960's resulted directly from Tito's initial support. By the early 1960's, Yugoslavia was falling behind in repaying its debts. Tito, in the midst of an economic crisis, was receptive to reform-minded progressives and began to institute some of the changes they proposed. Tito wished to increase the pace of reforms but was kept from doing so by the conservative element of the Party with the active support of the Serb Aleksandar Rankovic, second only to Tito at the time.²⁵ His fall from Tito's grace in the mid-1960's sent a clear message to the progressive elements of the Party that Tito was behind them. Tito would never again permit any individual to become so powerful as to be able to usurp him, meaning to say that it also precluded anyone replacing him after his death. By 1963, tourists were allowed to enter Yugoslavia without a visa, followed by Yugoslavs themselves being allowed to leave the country. By 1964 the idea of "Yugoslavism" as a South Slavic cultural melting pot was no longer fashionable.

Another important factor in the progressives' victory and the subsequent ensuing political decentralization, lay in the fact that Yugoslav society itself had by that time radically changed. Since the 1950's an increasing number of universities were opened throughout

²⁵Following the split with Stalin, Tito began to purge the Cominform elements from the party ranks. As a result, the influence of the secret police (UDBA) and its head Aleksandar Rankovic grew.

the country. Moreover, the opening of Yugoslavia's borders lead to increased exposure to western liberal democracy. This experience was most felt by the Croatians who by the latter half of the 1960's were a mobile highly trained workforce complemented by an intelligent and increasingly outspoken society making them natural allies to the progressive bloc.

Vladimir Bakaric, the first among Party leaders to raise the issues touching on national relations, helped Mika Tripalo and Savka Dapcevic-Kucar to power in the Croatian Communist Party. Tripalo and Dapcevic-Kucar became its leaders. They were outspoken proponents of trying to put a "Croatian Face" to communism. Their eventual allegiance to extra-Party nationalist organizations would lead Bakaric to make an about face in his loyalty and persuade Tito to call for their resignations.

Ironically, it was the conservatives who were partly responsible for progressives becoming wedded to the nationalist cause. Their aggressive attempts at suppressing any manifestation of Croatdom, lumping it together with the Ustasha movement, or the open discussion of intra-national outstanding issues, only served to initiate a process of reconciliation between the two. The heated polemics between the conservatives and liberals ensured that the conflict would spill over into Yugoslav society at large. Each step the conservatives took to block proposed economic, political, and cultural reforms was another win for the more nationalist elements who could use their obstructionism to radicalize outraged citizens. This brings us to the culmination of the reform movement known as the Croatian Spring.

The Croatian Spring movement

The Croatian Spring was similar to the Prague Spring in that it called for change in the form of increased freedoms and democracy through the state apparatus or Party. The difference lay in that it was also colored by nationalism, evident in the types of grievances made by its participants. The three principle players were the progressive politicians of the Croatian Communist Party, who were firmly in control by the late

1960s, Croatian intellectuals and students.

Progressives felt that more decentralization was necessary in order to ensure the protection of their Croatian national heritage, arguing that if they did not take up this cause no one else would. The ideological debate between the conservatives and liberals of the Party eventually spilled over to Croatian intellectuals. Although the progressives initiated the Croatian Spring, it was the intellectuals who became the driving force of the movement. Through their participation in the media, arts, and educational establishments they were successfully able to bring the whole debate to the wider public, politicizing the average citizen in the battle to “save” Croatia.

Three major grievances were highlighted through a myriad of articles in a plethora of newspapers and journals. Earlier laws relaxing censorship ensured that these papers and journals would be allowed to circulate freely. They focused on grievances involving economic, demographic and cultural issues. These issues became convenient channels through which deeper national dissatisfactions could manifest themselves.

In the economic sphere there were three principle grievances: one, the concentration of financial power in Belgrade banks and exporting companies; two, the collection and distribution of funds - relating to investment policy; and three, federal policies on foreign currency exchange.

What piqued Croats and Slovenes alike was that a large portion of the foreign currency earned in each republic was diverted to Belgrade.²⁶ A related issue revolved around the 1965 Bank and Credit Law, based on the principles of self-management, which was supposed to free banks and investment funds from central political control. However, the same political bureaucracy remained in place. Under self-management, it was given even

²⁶Since WWII, it was argued that Croatia and Slovenia carried a disproportionate economic burden in the federation. Money was reinvested in less developed republics (Bosnia & Herzegovina, Serbia, Montenegro, and Macedonia) and provinces (Kosovo). In 1963, Croatia contributed 31.11% of the federal budget and received 18.89% in receipts whereas Serbia contributed 29.17% and received 68.13% back. Even after decentralization reforms in 1965, Croatia went from supplying 58.01% in 1964 to 63 % by 1970 (Cuvalo 1990: 84-6).

more freedom to do what it wished with funds. This led to a reduction of banks as the larger Belgrade based financial institutions swallowed smaller ones to control 54.2 % of Yugoslavia's capital. Belgrade banks became both the banks of the republic of Serbia as well as clearing houses for the government. The remaining banks had no choice but to assume a local character. The central banks had great investment powers, and together with the Belgrade based import-export firms, could determine the economic growth of an entire region. Croats found this unacceptable.²⁷

The developed republics were further upset over investment in "underdeveloped" republics which often amounted to building unprofitable "political factories" by decree of local Party leaders seeking political support. They also mentioned that although tremendous amounts of funds were being pumped into the lesser-developed republics and provinces, the gap between the richer and poorer ones continued to grow. Croats and Slovenes argued that they were being deprived of the necessary capital needed to keep pace with modern methods of production. They further contended that investments in their republics had a much higher rate of return than those based on unprofitable political favoritism.²⁸

Croats asked that Serbia, by virtue of being the political and economic capital of the country, be considered as developed. They could not come to terms with the notion of the republic containing the country's capital being categorized as underdeveloped. It was interpreted as an obvious ruse to exploit them for their hard-earned foreign currency. The conservatives argued that Croatia used the rest of the country as a market for their products thus extracting money from the less developed regions. Progressives retorted by

²⁷Furthermore, enterprises were only allowed to retain 7% of their foreign currency earnings, the rest going to special banks (five out of seventeen being in Belgrade) for distribution to enterprises for the purchase of imported goods (including to those firms which had initially earned the hard currency). Croats protested, claiming that they were being robbed of their funds and stating that 40% of Yugoslavia's foreign currency earnings came from them through tourism and guest-workers' remittances (Wilson 1980: 177). Accordingly, Croatia contributed over 50 % of all hard currency collected from foreign workers, tourism, industrial exports, and shipping. Yet Belgrade banks controlled 81.3 % while Zagreb had only 9.7 % of the total hard currency (Cuvalo 1990: 90-1).

²⁸ The most famous example was a refrigerator factory built on a mountain in Montenegro, which was devoid of paved roads, rendering transportation to and from it impossible for most of the year (Lampe 1996: 276). Another example that comes to mind, was a bauxite mine and impressive aluminum smelter established in the Dalmatian hinterland only to run out of bauxite within a year of production.

showing that Croatia had a trade deficit with these republics. To the man or woman on the street all this culminated into a feeling that Croatian money should stay in Croatian hands.

The second issue of contention revolved around the Croatian demographics and the guest-worker phenomenon. The economic boom in Germany as well as other western European countries was coupled with a shortage of manpower. The deficit labor was filled via guest-workers. Freedom of movement in Yugoslavia served as a pressure valve whereby both poor and politically disaffected individuals could leave the country reducing the unemployment rate and relieving political tension.²⁹ Remittances of hard currencies from guest-workers were used to pay foreign loans and purchase consumer goods which meant raising the standard of living. Eventually, this became the single most important source of hard currency for Yugoslavia, second only to tourism. Together, they shielded the economy, allowing Yugoslavia to continue to foster unprofitable economic schemes while remaining relatively competitive in the world economy. Tito won great praise from the West, who misinterpreted the guest-worker policy as a step closer to democratization.

The problem with guest-workers lay in the fact that the most developed western republics had the highest rate of emigration, constituting 83.8% of the Yugoslav total. At issue was that Croatians constituted both the majority of guest-workers and permanent emigrants, with 8.2 % of the population having emigrated by the early 1970s, the highest in Europe.³⁰ This exodus, coupled by a negative birth rate, prompted some Croatian leaders to talk of a "national suicide". A major goal of the Croatian national movement was to stop this outflow of citizens.

A secondary issue revolved around the subsequent brain drain resulting from emigration. As unemployment rose, better opportunities were available in the West. Furthermore, there was an increasing number of job seekers as students from the baby-boom

²⁹Even with massive out-migration from 1965-1968 unemployment was on the rise from 6 to 9% (Lampe 1996: 283).

³⁰(Cuvalo 1990: 97)

generation were finishing their education and entering the job market. The most educated were the most likely to leave and the least likely to return. Croatia could not absorb these new workers which, according to the liberal politicians and economists, were a result of Croatia's inability to expand the economy as a consequence of funds being diverted to Belgrade to be squandered in the poorer republics and provinces. For these reasons, guest-worker remittances were regarded as the property of Croatia as they were procured at such a high demographic price. To further complicate matters, this exodus of Croats was complemented by an influx of Serbs to Croatia who were taking the positions relinquished by guest-workers. Croats felt themselves under demographic siege.

The last major concern expressed by the Croatian Spring movement involved the preservation of Croatian culture with particular focus on language and history. The linguistic similarity between Croatian and Serbian has prompted some to dismiss the Croatian claim of cultural separateness from Serbs. The only unquestionable difference lies in the type of script used by each people: Cyrillic by Serbs and Latin by Croats. Croats claim that they have a separate language from Serbs and yet each can understand the other when speaking their respective tongues. It would seem that language for Croats goes beyond the issue of pure linguistics to being intimately linked with their national and cultural identity. The same could be said for Serbs as the obvious utility of switching to the Latin script has and continues to be out of the question on grounds of preserving their culture and heritage.

Following the Second World War, there were four official languages (Croatian, Serbian, Slovene, and Macedonian). Tito wished to unify the Serbs and Croats into an emerging Yugoslav nation, finally putting an end to their endemic rivalry by creating a single national consciousness. This took the form of the Novi Sad Agreement of 1954, which named the newly identified language "Serbo-Croatian" or "Croato-Serbian", not recognizing variants. Croats saw the Agreement as forced language assimilation and gradual Serbianization, whereas Serbs saw Croatian resistance as a clear sign of nationalism threatening the unity of Yugoslavia as a whole.

The language issue came out in the open when a dictionary, compiled in collaboration between *Matica Srpska* and *Matica Hrvatska* (Serbian and Croatian cultural organizations respectively), was published in 1967. According to the 1954 Novi Sad Agreement, the "variants" were supposed to be treated equally. Instead, the official Croatian language (Stokavian) was painted as an archaic and dying dialect, prompting *Matica Hrvatska* to drop out of the joint endeavor by 1971. Furious, Croatian intellectuals demanded an end to the preferential treatment given to Serbian and equality for the four literary languages (Croatian, Serbian, Slovene, and Macedonian) as well as minority languages (Albanian, Hungarian and Italian). Croatian was to be used equally with Serbian in all federal matters and exclusively in Croatia. Their Serbian counterparts accepted the Croatian suggestion but demanded that Serbs be given linguistic and cultural rights in the other republics.³¹

Newspapers and journals focused on the language issue making accusations that the language of the police, military, courts, and government was the Serbian variant, relegating speakers of Croatian to the status of second-class citizens in their own republic. They complained that the so-called *Jugoslavenska Narodna Armija* (JNA) (Yugoslav Peoples Army) was a Serbian dominated institution, evidenced by the fact that the official language used was the Serbian appellation including the exclusive use of the Cyrillic script.

Croatian intellectuals contested that Croatian history was neglected in Communist Yugoslavia. They cited examples whereby many schoolbooks hardly mentioned the words "Croat", "Croatian" or "Croatia" while Serbian history did not suffer the same fate. Furthermore, when Croatian history was mentioned, it was done so in a fragmented manner focusing on regions rather than on Croatia as a whole.

Moreover, they demonstrated that official Yugoslav historiography blamed the Croats for the destruction of the first Yugoslavia, portraying the royal dictatorship after 1929, in a

³¹This meant that the Serb minority in Croatia be given cultural autonomy, which Croatians rejected, interpreting it as a mere precursor to political autonomy.

positive light. It over-emphasized the Serb contribution to the Partisan movement while belittling that of Croats. It depicted the whole Croatian nation of being guilty of fascism. The number of war dead, especially the number of Serbs killed by Ustasha, remained highly controversial with official figures claiming close to a million murdered.³² The effect was an imposed collective guilt on Croats as being a fascist nation further likening all signs of patriotism to the Ustasha movement. Croats argued that the Ustasha movement lasted a short five years in the thousand years of the Croatian “national” heritage.

As the political debate eventually turned into an intellectual one, it was bound to trickle down to the foot-soldiers of the Croatian Spring, the students. Peasants lost their political voice when the Croatian Peasant Party was banned by the CPY after WWII. Workers councils were mere arms of the Party. This vacuum of representation was filled indirectly by the student movement as it enjoyed popular support. The Croatian Communist Party, which was dominated by progressives by the latter part of the 1960’s, was naturally drawn to the Croatian Spring as were the intellectuals. The students for their part were influenced by the growing world phenomena of “Student Power”. On a more mundane level, due to economic crisis coupled by political favoritism, many students and their leaders resented the fact that they would probably not hold key positions occupied by technically ill-qualified veterans. For these reasons they were drawn to any movement which promised to remodel the status quo.

The culmination of the Croatian Spring, consisting of a student strike in Croatia, was preceded by several important events. In March of 1971, the constitution was amended to effectively grant many of the demands made by progressives. Self-management was to be pushed forward in order to give a greater voice to workers and subsequently was extended to all spheres of public life. All federal decision-making was to be subject to the principle of republican and provincial parity. Republics and the autonomous provinces could veto federal decisions affecting them. The only direct and exclusive

³²One reason for such high figures was to garner a larger war reparation fund, as the amount allotted was based on the number of people killed.

sources of income for the federal budget came from customs and stamp duties with the rest of federal income dependant on the goodwill of the republics. Finally, a collective Presidency was to succeed Tito. The reason behind the devolution of power to the republics and provinces was the following: by addressing the legitimate aspirations of the nationalists, it was hoped that they would see the value of working together for the greater good of Socialist Yugoslavia.

Needless to say the conservatives were not pleased while progressives saw it as merely an initial step. Croatian economists pointed out the Constitution did not allow for economic independence. Republics were not allowed to manage their own foreign trade nor make independent credit arrangements. Nevertheless, for Croatian intellectuals, the amendments represented an opportunity for the creation of a sovereign state. To this end, they felt that it was the responsibility of the Croatian Communist Party to incorporate Croatian national interests into its platform.

Meanwhile, to further complicate matters, *Matica Hrvatska*, headed by the most immoderate of intellectuals, began to operate in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Vojvodina, mobilizing and radicalizing the Croatian population there. Tito was concerned over the Croatian leadership's wont to react. In *Matica's* hands the movement took on a life of its own. The Croatian Communist Party was essentially dispossessed of the Croatian Spring movement and was no longer able or probably willing to control it. The final showdown between the conservatives and progressives ended when *Matica* published a final amendment to the constitution which called for the right for Croatia to unilaterally secede if it chose to do so. The document was a challenge to the whole concept of Yugoslavia and could not go unanswered. Conservatives were able to convince Tito of their interpretation of events in Croatia, that a revamped Ustashism was coming into force.

Concomitantly, the students were well aware that the progressives were losing Tito's favor. The strike was launched on November 22, 1971 involving 30 000 participants and enjoying the quiet support of workers. It was an effort to demonstrate a show of support for the progressive platform and to illustrate to Tito that the conservatives did not enjoy

popular support in Croatia. Another reason for the strike was to force Dapcevic-Kucar and Tripalo to take a more aggressive stance. However, the strike only served to vindicate conservative claims of an attempted counter-revolution, sealing the Croatian leaders' fate. Tito chastised them for not keeping the Croatian complaints within the bounds of class rather than national ones.³³ Neither renounced their political activities in the Croatian national movement nor the principles for which they stood. A few days later both Dapcevic-Kucar and Tripalo would resign.

Initially, the conservatives remained friendly, as they did not know how the masses would respond. At the same time, police and army forces were amassing in and around Zagreb. Peacefully protesting students were clubbed and jailed followed by extensive purges and arrests. The Croatian Spring had come to a violent end. All reform elements from the Party were excommunicated throughout Yugoslavia.³⁴ What followed was to be known as the Croatian Silence.

Economic and political ramifications during the 1970s

The Croatian Spring had important political and economic ramifications for Yugoslavia as it marked the end of attempts to change the system via the Party. By destroying the movement which called for the democratization and increased sovereignty for Croatia, Tito and the League of Communists of Yugoslavia (LCY) destroyed any chance of reforming the Party. The unresolved national problems were again swept under the carpet. Furthermore, the purges only served to exacerbated intra-national tensions now boiling under the lid of suppression. The Party as the vanguard of society was discredited in the eyes of ordinary citizens and subsequent movements for change would necessarily come from outside its boundaries.

³³Another reason for Tito's decision was fear of the Soviet Union. Although the Soviets tolerated a Yugoslav way towards Communism, they made it clear that they would not allow a counter-revolution that would see the country leave the Communist camp.

³⁴From January to April 1971, 23 Party organizations were shut down, 741 people were excommunicated from the Party, 131 Party functionaries were sacked while 280 "resigned". Workers collectives, schools, the writers union, newspapers, TV and Radio stations, publishing houses, youth groups, and even filmmakers had to denounce the movement as counter-revolutionary. Hardest hit were students and *Matica Hrvatska*, the latter being shut down and its leaders arrested and jailed. In a token effort to impose equal

As the Party lost its credibility, many former Communists just dropped out of politics altogether. This was especially prevalent amongst Croats who bore the brunt of the purges. As a result, the lopsided tendency towards positions of power being held by Serbs was to increase and would serve to fuel national tensions in the future.³⁵ Meanwhile, the ranks of the Central Committee had to be refilled. The new recruits were even less educated than their predecessors and were composed of faceless conservatives called back from retirement as well as careerist *apparatchiks*. The latter were both power hungry and insecure personalities who would be the first to play the nationalist card in any future bid for power.

Another important consequence of the crackdown in Croatia was the 1974 Constitution, the world's longest. It was an attempt by Tito to defuse nationalist appeal by devolving power to the republican level. Foreign affairs, defense, and certain economic matters were left in the hands of the federal center while republics were left to pursue their own conflicting policies. The only unifying forces within this polycentric country were the Army, the Party, and the leader himself.

The constitution advanced that all federal institutions contain republican representatives on a rotational basis, making the aging Tito President for Life of a rotating federal presidency. As such, representatives from each of the republics and autonomous provinces held a one-year tenure and sat on a board presided by Tito. Office-holders had neither the time nor authority to remedy the failings of the system. After the purges, members of the LCY lacked the courage and idealism necessary to effectuate changes.³⁶ Concurrently, decentralization was not complemented by a clear division of rights and responsibilities between the different levels of power (federal, republican, district, right down to workers councils). The ensuing conflict and confusion from this ubiquitous powerlessness served to increase Tito's powers as final arbiter in all ensuing economic

hardship, Tito ordered purges in all the other republics and provinces (Cuvalo 1990: 82-84).

³⁵By 1981 only 14% of Yugoslav Communists were ethnic Croats even though they comprised about 20% of the total population. The same year, Serbs making up about 36% held 47% of the Party membership (Tanner 1997: 204).

³⁶As an attestation to the moral decay of the Party and its leaders: "When other members of the collective presidency appeared on movie screens in major cities, for instance audiences broke into laughter and

and political disputes.

Tito aside, the Constitution codified regionalism, turning the regional party leadership into the real locus of power within the federation. The federation was deemed "a union of voluntarily united socialist republics" including national groups who were given the right to secession and self-determination, with the exception of Hungarian and Albanian minorities.³⁷ The term "autonomous" was added to the province of Kosovo and Albanians were also given a right to veto federal decisions. Serbs resented this portioning out of what they felt was their homeland to appease the national minorities. Although the constitution allowed for the possibility of republics seceding, its vagueness on the actual procedure insured that any such move would become problematic. The law was contradictory as it both legally sanctioned secession while at the same time proclaiming any such move as illegal.

Economically, the 1974 Constitution reinforced the development of polycentric étatism. Capital flows between republics ceased. The regionalization of banks served to break-up the monopoly of the federal banks in Belgrade. This in turn made it difficult for funds to leave the republic from whence they originated. Banks became regional service organs. As a result, not only did the less developed republic become detached from the economic development of the developed regions but the developed regions from each other.

Politically, by the 1970s, the world situation was no longer in Yugoslavia's favor. The non-aligned movement lost its importance amongst Cold War participants, who by then realized that non-aligned states' domination of the General Assembly did not equate to any real power. This meant that free economic aid was ended for Yugoslavia. Although it would still be granted credits from foreign banks, it would no longer be shielded from paying them back and with interest.

The 1973 and 1979 oil crisis affected consumer spending worldwide and Yugoslavia,

openly exchanged jokes about who these anonymous figures might be". (Lampe 1996: 307)
³⁷(Todorovic 1996: 173-4)

being intimately linked to world market trends, was hardly spared. Two major consequences on Yugoslavia's economy ensued. The first was a world recession resulting in the reduction of guest-workers needed in western countries. The flood of guest-workers returning to Yugoslavia meant a sharp increase in unemployment.³⁸ The other consequence was a result of world banking trends at the time. When the OPEC countries quadrupled oil prices in 1973, western banks suddenly found themselves inundated with petrodollars. They could not invest this money with their traditional clients, developed countries, as they were undergoing a recession. Consequentially, they were willing to loan money to developing countries without consideration as to how this money would be spent or what the credit worthiness of the borrowers was.³⁹

As a socialist country, Yugoslavia could not allow unemployment to reach levels that would threaten the system as a whole. Fearing the economic problems would spill over into nationalist conflict, Tito opted for the myopic policy of taking on foreign loans to keep the economy afloat and cover industrial losses. By 1982 Yugoslavia had amassed an immense \$20 billion (US) foreign debt.

In order to further understand why Yugoslavia went from a national debt of \$2 billion in 1968 to \$20 billion a mere fourteen years later, it is important to understand how loans were mismanaged. At the root of the problem was decentralization and self-management encoded in the 1974 Constitution. Under self-management, workers were prone to increase their own wages rather than reinvest in optimizing methods of production and improving the quality of the goods they produced. Reinvestment of profits in research and development was most needed in capital intensive industries in order to remain competitive on the world market. Ironically, many of these were located in the poorest areas of Yugoslavia. Moreover, total disregard for research & development meant improvements in technology came from the costly practice of importing or leasing new technologies rather than developing them at home. Troubled Yugoslav industries,

³⁸Between 1971 and 1975 the number of unemployed doubled to reach 13.6% by 1978. The lesser-developed republics and provinces were hardest hit in some cases reaching, such as in Kosovo and Macedonia, an unemployment rate of 20%.

³⁹In fact, before the crisis the number of developing countries which had applied for loans was 16 whereas

already too large and overstaffed, were further held back by a lack of competition and republican protectionism resulting in poorer and less efficient methods, scale, and quality of production. Finally, under self-management there was no incentive to work hard or even work for that matter as it was nearly impossible to be fired.⁴⁰

Self-management further contributed to the problem as the onus of responsibility ended up falling on everyone (workers, directors, and government) and thus on no one. This had the effect of encouraging the misuse of funds. Oddly enough, it would not be a lie to say that a command economy was more responsible for this situation than the “market capitalism” practiced by Yugoslavia at the time.

Furthermore, under the 1974 Constitution, republics and even individual industries were allowed to take on their own loans. Unbeknownst to the federal government banks, enterprises, federal and local institutions commissioned their own private loans with foreign creditors. They simply emulated the federal government’s compulsive borrowing. Most of the loans were squandered, serving to shield the Party from having to close the most unproductive of these companies which implied politically unpopular layoffs.

In 1979, yet another oil crisis further exacerbated the troubled world economy. Yugoslav guest workers were flooding back to their various republics. By the 1980’s the crisis was acute with unemployment reaching previously unheard of levels. The economy slowed and debt servicing gulped up a considerable portion of hard currency earnings. Especially problematic was that the debt, although initially received in various currencies, was pegged to the US dollar. The US, in an attempt to offset the effects of the second oil crisis, raised interest rates thus artificially raising the value of the dollar. This made servicing the debt a very expensive endeavor placing many developing countries, including Yugoslavia, in a state of debt crisis.

two years later it had jumped to 43 (Korner 1986: 7).

⁴⁰According to statistics concerning workers and their productivity during the 1980s, “700 000 were absent everyday because of illness, each day some 600 000 were on vacation; and 400 000 a day were attending various conferences that kept them from work. With all this taken into consideration, the average Yugoslav

On a micro-economic scale, Yugoslav consumers were also partly to blame for the crisis as they were becoming ever more dependant on imported goods. Guest-workers returning imparted their expensive tastes on their families and that exacerbated the trade deficit. The tourist industry was equally dependant on imported goods as tourists required the luxuries they were accustomed to at home. The west gave with one hand and took back with the other. It is estimated that of the total borrowed from the west, over half was absorbed by consumption and unlucrative projects.

During the 1970's, Tito's charismatic power coupled with a policy of economic appeasement held Yugoslavia together. By early 1980's Yugoslavia was suffering from a debt shock, the shock of finally seeing the total debt tally. The economic crisis became a dual political crisis with the death of Tito in 1981. He left behind a political system that grew paralyzed without him. The Party spent a few years in denial attempting to function as though he were still alive. The ensuing "necrocracy" was best illustrated by the Party rallying call, "After Tito, Tito".

Tito in retrospect

From this episode in Yugoslav history we can make several conclusions. Tito was never a reformer for the sake of reform. Throughout his leadership he tried different tactics which ensured his continued power. Today he was for reform, tomorrow for the status quo. This may have been the miscalculation of progressives as, in retrospect, we see that Tito tolerated any movement so long as it did not threaten him as uncontested leader. His choice to support one wing of the Party over another was predicated on what he deemed necessary to keep order in Yugoslavia and remain in power. From the split with Stalin, to the deposition of Rankovic, to economic and political reforms, to the crackdown of 1971 and the subsequent victory of the conservatives over the progressives, Tito's singular motivation becomes evident. Anything threatening this was swept away by either carrots, using his political charisma, or by sticks, using *his* Yugoslav Peoples Army (JNA).

It is important to mention why Tito could rule an otherwise unruly Yugoslavia. His

worker was working only three hours and six minutes a day". (Cuvalo 1990: 153)¹

charisma and presence appealed to all the nationalities of Yugoslavia. To Serbs, his exploits as Partisan leader during WWII meant that he embodied the warrior spirit found throughout their folk history. Establishing himself as a world statesman, and especially his ability to play one power off another in a fine game of political brinkmanship to the benefit of Yugoslavia, meant that he followed in the footsteps of a long line of Croat political figures. This ensured him respect and admiration from the Croatian people. However, mere acceptance of him as leader does not explain his presence in the eyes of the peoples of Yugoslavia. Tito established a personality cult much like Stalin. He used the media in this regard. Indeed a whole system of yearly rituals was performed in adulation of Tito: school children composed poems for him; towns and squares were named after him; a flaming torch was relayed throughout the republic by runners to be finally brought to him on his birthday. How else could one explain the phenomenon of a young educated man having lived in a cosmopolitan town, who when asked about Tito, mystically looks at the town, parts of which date back to the Roman era, and waving his arms proclaims “all this is because of Tito”.

Tito’s acceptance as uncontested leader of Yugoslavia stemmed from the fact that he embodied what it meant to be a true Yugoslav. By virtue of being the product of a mixed marriage, his nationality was difficult to categorize. This was complemented by his own initial internationalist political ideology that, after his split from Stalin, turned Yugoslavist - equally vague. During the war he led and fought alongside Croats, Muslims and Serbs. After the war, his second wife was Serb. His once close friend, Milovan Djilas, described him as never being able to properly differentiate between the Croatian and Serb dialects when giving speeches. As one of his cardinal rules, Tito never outwardly favored any national group over another. In fact, when one nation group was punished for transgressions, all were punished equally as a consequence, as demonstrated by the purges following the Croatian Spring. Today, some revisionist historians claim that he favored Serbs over Croats and vice versa.⁴¹ This is totally untrue and the fact that members of each national group claim that he favored members of the other is evidence of his neutrality.

Tito's neutrality was noticed by the population at large. This imparted him with credibility in their eyes, at least until the crackdown of 1971. Following 1971, he had the Yugoslav National Army at his disposal to handle republican transgressions. But as previously mentioned, he decentralized government to such an extent that it grew dependant on his final ruling. One might say that Tito acted as a king would amongst the bickering noblemen to keep his court tranquil. Another aspect of his leadership, heightening his authority, was that he was sensitive enough to have the multinational character of Yugoslavia personified by its Party leaders; Tito (Croat), Edvard Kardelj (Slovene), Aleksandar Rankovic (Serb), and Milovan Djilas (Montenegrin).

However, it should be mentioned that Tito did little to solve the national question in Yugoslavia. He was naive to think that mere modernization would abolish this threat, but so did many other men of that time. What exacerbated the national problem was that the Communist system precluded any possibility of dialogue between the nationalities about past grievances. After all, Yugoslav history only started when Tito formed the Partisans. Discussing prewar Yugoslavia, and especially national grievances, was state sanctioned taboo. Tito merely replaced the historical nationalism of each of the different national groups with ideal nationalism of Communist Yugoslavia. Initially he did this by force, trying to impose Yugoslav nationalism over local ones. During prosperous times this seemed to work, but in decades of crisis, economic problems turned into social problems which quickly translated into political turmoil. The lure of blaming a neighboring republic and national group for all the ills of the country proved too great. Croats, Serbs, and Slovenians rallied around their respective nationalisms and leaders who blamed the "other guy", promising quick fixes to all the republic's problems through either forced secession or forced recentralization.

Throughout his 36 years of leadership, Tito tried different ways to retain the delicate balance of power between the republics. The sullied history of the First Yugoslavia and WWII, as well as the rejection of the Soviet model, necessitated a degree of decentralization given to the republics in order to maintain this balance. Ironically, the centrifugal forces inherent in Yugoslav politics which Tito most feared, were also

responsible for allowing him to rule for such a long time. People understood that a collapse of Yugoslavia would inevitably turn bloody. Although they did not want this, they could not tolerate being ruled by another national group. Tito became the pillar of neutrality necessary to preserve peace. Through a gradual policy of decentralization he was inadvertently able to create a system of balance of powerlessness between the republics and provinces. In turn, he became the only credible power broker whose final decision could satisfy all the nationalities. In this way, Tito as a person became larger than life, and as such adulation by the public was bound to follow. Was he not responsible for leading the Partisans to victory against a much stronger enemy? Was he not the man who stood up to the great Russian bear, Stalin, and lived to tell about it? Was he not the man who had the Super Powers at his beck and call for so many years? Finally, to never be outdone, his ego prevented against anyone ever replacing him, which he had enshrined in the 1974 Constitution. Tito became the last Yugoslav, and this turned out to be his greatest folly. What he worked so hard to preserve, a unified, strong and peaceful Yugoslavia, collapsed a mere decade after his death, ironically partially by his own doing. For these reasons, Tito will forever remain a controversial figure.

POST-TITO YUGOSLAVIA

The 1980s

Post-Tito Yugoslavia was a Yugoslavia in perpetual political crisis and economic decline. The standard of living had dropped by nearly 40% between 1982-1989.⁴² By 1983, the government was forced to cut imports and increase exports at any cost. The result was a great shortage of essential materials resulting in industrial stagnation with only between 30-60% of industrial capacity being utilized. Enterprises were increasingly working at a loss with basic industry (energy, chemicals, bulk metallurgy, and construction) suffering most as they consisted of large processing plants which lacked an extractive base from which to obtain raw materials. Furthermore, expensive industrial goods, shortages resulting in under-utilization of industrial capacities, low productivity of labor and high taxation of industry increased inflation, which reached 100% monthly by the late 1980s.⁴³

In 1983 the IMF, working in tight coordination with western banks and 16 western countries, agreed to postpone Yugoslavia's \$2 billion annual repayment and to provide the Yugoslav government with standby credits to cover the year's imports. However, there were conditions: the dinar was to be devalued, followed by realistic internal borrowing rates of 1% above the level of inflation, free market formation of the prices of goods and services as well as the drastic lowering of individual and social consumption. These conditions served to fuel more debt as by 1983, industry was already having trouble repaying its loans at 18% (inflation at 58%). In order to keep production going and continue paying wages to workers, industry was forced to take on more short term loans without even asking for terms. In 1983 alone, close to the same amount that was put into the capital reserve fund was used to pay short and long term loans. That same year about half of the larger enterprises had their bank accounts frozen as a result of their inability to repay debts.⁴⁴

⁴²(Bennet 1995: 68)

⁴³(Radosevic 1996: 71)

⁴⁴(Magas 1993: 96)

Austerity measures imposed by the IMF as well as the stabilization program initiated in 1983 had little chance of succeeding. There were two principal reasons for this. First, western analysts and financial institutions were misguided believing that Yugoslavia could be easily transformed into a true market-economy. Goods were priced according to market principles, however, this belied the fact that factor prices (wages and salaries, interest and exchange rates) were determined by regulations and laws. Thus, although wages were variable, employment was fixed, as firing workers was almost impossible. Furthermore, only the government could authorize opening new firms while the closure of existing ones was almost unheard of. Second, as a result of equality amongst republics and provinces, disagreements between them slowed down the decision-making process with most measures finally being vetoed by one or another member who found it to their disliking.⁴⁵

Unlike previous attempts to introduce reforms in Yugoslavia, this time it was done in the open with the media given front row seats. Daily reports detailed republican and provincial leaders lobbing mutual recriminations, each alleging exploitation by the other as well as accusations concerning responsibility for the economic crisis, and this had the effect of exacerbating ethnic and cultural intolerance amongst the population.⁴⁶ The population was receptive as it gave them someone to blame for suffering economic hardship unlike anything they had ever experienced.⁴⁷

⁴⁵Consequently, between 1980 and 1990, the average rate of growth of Yugoslavia's national income was 0.5%, the worst performance in Europe. Labor productivity declined sharply coupled by a decrease in wages (2.2% per annum). Investment suffered the same fate falling between 6% and 7% annually compounded by an average annual inflation rate of 108.7% which after 1989 entered a state of hyperinflation (Magas 1993: 96). This crisis translated into a total of over a thousand strikes, some involving up to 150 000 workers demanding higher wages and lower prices for basic items. Of all the regions affected by the economic crisis, the poorest ones were hardest hit.

⁴⁶Although varying versions of the "truth" were available to the public through different television stations in Yugoslavia, such as the ones in Belgrade and Zagreb, the author observed that people tended to side with the interpretations given by their own republic's news sources. With the onset of war, this identification with one's national news source became even more pronounced. For instance, Belgrade news would make fictitious claims about what was occurring in Croatia, which Croats understood to be obvious lies even farcical at times. As a consequence, Croats identified with Croatian news sources as being the most reliable. It is easier to believe pejorative claims about someone else than it is about oneself. Although both media sources were unreliable, each told their respective nationalities what they yearned to hear, namely, good things about themselves as a group while demonizing their enemies.

⁴⁷A study early in the decade showed that 16% of households could not survive on a regular income. In 1987 another study bode an even darker future demonstrating that 95% of the 6.7 million households in Yugoslavia could not survive on a regular income (Sekelj 1993: 159).

It did not take long for economic turmoil to transform itself into nationalist tension. Its first explosion took place in the Autonomous Province of Kosovo. Albanians, by then totaling 77% of the population, resented what they perceived as the privileged positions held by Serbs and Montenegrins in the province.⁴⁸ They subsequently became the targets of the most radical elements of the Albanian national movement. By 1981, Albanian demonstrations had reached a climax with ensuing sporadic acts of arson and terrorism coupled with demands for independence. Serbs and Montenegrins complained over what they viewed as a policy of genocide and terror being exercised against them by Albanian nationalists. Although this was greatly exaggerated, an exodus of Serbs from the area commenced. Ultimately, the LCY declared the rebellion as “counterrevolutionary” and purged the Kosovo leadership.

As a consequence, by the mid 1980s, Yugoslavia was undergoing a dual crisis: *vertical crisis*, among Party members and citizens who lost confidence in the organization’s elite to resolve the problems facing the country⁴⁹; and a *horizontal crisis*, among the republican and provincial party organizations which were becoming increasingly autonomous and refusing to implement country-wide decisions made by their representatives at the federal level.⁵⁰

The crisis of the 80s brought a new generation of political figures to the fore, who unlike their predecessors, sought legitimacy by addressing issues of national contention. As the legitimacy of the Party representing Yugoslavia was as a whole diminished, republican leaders, viewing cross-regional Party unity as being of secondary importance, focused on their Party’s regional survival. This made it increasingly difficult for the federal government to formulate a comprehensive reform program, and its failure would serve to bolster the positions of the very forces impeding it.

⁴⁸Due to their common religion and history, Serbs and Montenegrins tend, by the other nationalities of Yugoslavia and until recently by their own leaders, to be lumped together as being of the same ethnic origin.

⁴⁹Between 1982 and 1989, Party membership fell from 2.2 million to 1.5 million. However this trend applied to all the nationalities except the Serbs and Montenegrins whose support continued, further lopsiding the national composition of the Party. As a consequence, by 1989, Serbs and Montenegrin’s, although only constituting less than 40% of the population, formed 50% of the Party membership (Lampe 1996, pg. 337).

Serbia

In Serbia, it would be Slobodan Milosevic who would project a new vision for Yugoslavia. His political career began in 1982 through his long-time friendship with the then President of Serbia, Ivan Stambolic. His rise to power took off when, as Head of the Serbian League of Communists, he formed what was to become known as the Milosevic Commission in 1986 to deal with the crisis facing Yugoslavia and Serbia in particular. The plan envisioned market-oriented reforms coupled with greater federal control in areas of monetary, financial and taxation policy, including foreign economic relations. The goal of the Commission was to propel Yugoslavia into the world economy. According to Milosevic, there was too much state intervention in areas where it was unneeded and too little where it was vital. He blamed the crisis on the provisions in the constitution allowing for republican economic autonomy from the federation.

To remedy the situation, Milosevic proposed a political reorganization of Yugoslavia with particular focus on doing away with the clause calling for unanimity of all the regions in the federal decision-making process. Instead, he proposed a system of voting on the principle of a “qualified majority”. This was unacceptable to the other republics as Serbs, by virtue of being the largest single nationality in Yugoslavia, would have the majority of the votes at their disposal.

Milosevic’s advocacy of an anti-bureaucratic revolution appealed to many Serbs. They felt the clause securing ethnic representation in key administrative posts tended to neglect hiring the best person.⁵¹ Further, the policy of one-year tenure for these positions diminished the sense of responsibility on the part of decision-makers resulting in mismanagement and corruption. Many Serbs viewed officials as taking these short-term positions in order to enrich themselves. Moreover, they were displeased with the 1974 Constitution as it weakened their position on republican and federal matters, especially with regards to Kosovo and Vojvodina’s political autonomy. Milosevic was sensitive to

⁵⁰(Cohen 1995: 47)

⁵¹ Following the Croatian crackdown in 1971, proportional ethnic representation coupled with the principle of yearly rotation was applied to all key positions.

this feeling amongst Serbs and by 1986 began to concern himself with the rise of Albanian nationalism in Kosovo. His visit to the Kosovar Serb community in April of 1987 would become a watershed moment in post-Tito Yugoslavia.

During his stay, thousands of Serbs had congregated and were trying to push their way towards the Serb delegation. Police, fearing for the safety of the delegates, began to beat the attendants back. Milosevic, moved by the event, took a microphone and through the window overlooking the crowd announced “No one has the right to beat you! No one has the right to beat you! Yugoslavia and Serbia will not give up Kosovo. All of Yugoslavia is with you”. These lines were repeatedly televised turning him into an overnight success amongst Serbs. Milosevic became the first member of LCY to break Tito’s cardinal rule; that is, no overt nationalism or active participation of the masses in politics.

Upon his return to Belgrade, Milosevic proceeded to oust Stambolic. This proved easy as Stambolic was despised by radical Serbs for not being firm on the Kosovo issue. Milosevic learned that an angry crowd could destabilize the Yugoslav leadership. If he could direct that anger to the right place and time he could gain power. In this manner he used populist methods to deal with his opponents, organizing mass rallies to topple existing Communist leaders in Vojvodina (October 1988), Kosovo (November 1988), and Montenegro (January 1989). This “street democracy” consisted of gathering thousands of people who would jeer, shout slogans, and demand the resignation of unpopular officials. Officials, having suffered a no-confidence vote by the public, had no choice but to relinquish their positions, which were promptly replaced by individuals loyal to Milosevic.

Once having reincorporated historic areas of Serbia, Milosevic’s program was extended to the rest of Yugoslavia. Belgrade’s leading intellectuals wholeheartedly embraced his radical departure from Tito’s method of handling the “national question”. To this end, the Serbian Academy of Arts and Sciences published what was known as the “Memorandum” (1986) highlighting Serbia’s grievances within Yugoslavia. The Memorandum was to become the ideological underpinning of Milosevic’s nationalist

program. According to the document, Serbs' tremendous sacrifices for Yugoslavia during WWI and WWII needed to be recognized. Yugoslavia under Tito who was "half Croat and half Slovene" was committed to weaken Serbia by sacrificing it for a strong Yugoslavia. Furthermore, Tito favored both Croatia and Slovenia economically. As such, the Serbs in Yugoslavia were being discriminated against. The 1974 Constitution was described as a further example of discrimination in "genocidal" proportions, especially regarding Kosovo Serbs, as it encouraged Albanian abuses. Furthermore, it deprived Serbia of its national integrity by allowing Kosovo and Vojvodina to become autonomous provinces. In response, the Memorandum called for the unification of all Serbs throughout Yugoslavia regardless of where they happen to live. The document was especially irksome to Croats in Croatia as a 12% minority of Serbs lived there. To Croatians the Memorandum spelled the resurrection of a plan to create a "Greater Serbia".

Milosevic's popular appeal amongst Serbs derived from his image as a strong leader who would stand up to the rest of Yugoslavia. After years of economic decline coupled by a despised and weak leadership, he promised to sweep away incompetence and create an efficient regime while concurrently resurrecting past Serbian glory. This dual policy insured him support from both nationalists and Communists.

In March 1989, Milosevic proceeded to push through a decision in the Provincial Assembly to do away with Kosovo's provincial autonomy as safeguarded in the federal constitution. In July of the following year, a referendum was held throughout Serbia and the two provinces in order to ratify these constitutional changes. Although the Albanian population boycotted the whole affair, 96% of those who voted, voted in favor of the changes. Albanians were furious and took to the streets only to be crushed by police.

Milosevic was able to make these changes with little opposition from the other republics. Apart from the obvious double standard espoused by Serbia, that is its insistence that other republics protect Serb minorities all the while Serbia mistreated its own minorities, Croatia and Slovenia were too preoccupied with trying to distance themselves from

Milosevic, letting the issue go as an internal matter for Serbia. They further hoped that the reintegration of these two provinces would satisfy Milosevic's ambitions. He would use this indifference and indecisiveness to buy himself time. Milosevic would then use the discontent of Kosovo Serbs as a catalyst for more widespread discontent of Serbs in Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina. Bosnia with its three nationalities, Serbs, Muslims and Croats living "on the same mountain", steered clear from confrontation. Montenegrin and Macedonian officials supported Serbia on the Kosovo issue: the former as a result of many of the citizens identifying themselves as Serbs; the latter, also possessing a large minority of Albanians on their territory, was in favor of any move to quell Albanian separatism.

Serbia's new constitution was adopted in July, 1990, even before the free elections in December. Croatian and Slovenian leaders were shocked and outraged; shocked by Serbia declaring sovereignty within Yugoslavia, outraged over its annulling the 1974 Constitution thereby annexing both previously autonomous provinces while failing to abolish Serbia's right to vote on federal matters. This meant that Serbia alone held three of the eight votes of the federal presidency. Milosevic could count on Montenegro's support totaling four and making all decisions made by the head of state subject to his approval. More ominously, a provision empowered the Serbian republican government to maintain connections with the over three million Serbs living outside the republic with the aim of guarding their national and cultural-historic identity.

The results of the elections were a given.⁵² Milosevic's landslide victory was due to his promulgation of the new constitution that won him much popularity in Serbia. Furthermore, opposition parties did not have the same financial resources at their disposal or the organizational experience. Most importantly, Milosevic had a near monopoly control over the media. Finally, although Milosevic as a leader of the Serbian Socialist Party (SPS) won by a narrow margin, the first-past-the-post electoral system served to

⁵²The December 9 elections saw the participation of over 50 parties in Serbia competing for 250 seats in Serbia's unicameral legislature. Milosevic won a stunning 194 seats (77.6%) in the legislature (Cohen 1995: 155-6)

push the figures up for him.⁵³

The opposition explained Serbian support for Milosevic as a result of the population's lack of experience with democratic competition. Throughout Serbian political history, the winning party has always been the one that organized the elections. Fear of change was the principle reason why the Serbian electorate voted for Milosevic and it reflected in his electoral slogan "With Us, There is No Uncertainty". With Yugoslavia falling apart, many citizens were worried that capitalist reform would lead to the loss of their jobs. Those involved in politics feared being victims of post-Communist revanchism. Socialist pensioners and military personnel feared the loss of their pensions and the dismantling of the military respectively. Milosevic promising stability, defending the status quo, took these insecurities to the bank.

Slovenia

The first republic to react to Milosevic's policies was Slovenia. Slovenian leaders were satisfied with the 1974 Constitution for exactly the reasons that plagued the Serbian leadership. Majority voting was out of the question as it favored Serbs. Slovenia endorsed the principle of "one unit one vote" especially with regards to the country's most important political and economic issues. Furthermore, Slovenia advocated an "asymmetrical federation" whereby each republic would negotiate its own particular terms of power sharing with the federal government. Accordingly, a republic would enjoy autonomy in a wide range of spheres (i.e., economics, education, law, culture, etc.) while at the same time allowing the central government to handle defense and foreign relations.

Contrary to Milosevic, Slovenia's Party leader, Milan Kucan, argued that the cause of the economic crisis facing the country was a result of the single-party monopoly. Although Kucan was never an advocate of full party pluralism, only of pluralism within the

⁵³For instance the SPS received less than half of the total votes cast and yet took 77.6 of the seats in the legislature. The remaining 56 were divided amongst 14 parties, with the largest opposition winner with a mere 19 seats (7.6%) (Cohen 1995: 159).

Communist Party, his vision went well beyond that which the Milosevic Commission called “political pluralism on socialist foundations”.⁵⁴

These diametrically opposed visions of future power relations within Yugoslavia, soon developed into a row between the Serbian and Slovenian leadership. The conflict became acute when Milosevic, in a bid to change the constitution to recentralize the country, called for the convening of the “Extraordinary” Fourteenth Party Congress in September 1989. When it was announced that voting would be on the basis of one vote per delegate rather than equally proportioned among regional delegations, Slovene leaders refused to participate arguing that it would grant Serbs and their allies the decisive advantage.

The Slovenian leadership, having won the first round, was still concerned over future attempts by Milosevic to rob them of their autonomy. In September, the Declaration on the Sovereignty of the State of the Republic of Slovenia was adopted by a vote in the Slovenian legislature. A separate constitution was scheduled to be created in a year’s time. Milosevic reacted swiftly attempting to organize a “truth rally”, whereby tens of thousands of Serbs would be brought into Slovenia to prevent Slovenian independence. Slovenia stopped the procession at its borders and that prompted the Serb leadership to announce the cessation of all governmental and economic relations between the two republics. In January 1990, in a last bid effort to resolve the feud between republics, the Fourteenth Extraordinary Congress of the League of Communists was held. The Slovenian delegation proposed transforming the League into a union of free republican parties. Milosevic had his way in the voting system and humiliated the Slovene delegation by making them lose on every proposal advocated. Outraged, the Slovene delegation stormed out of the Congress followed by their Croatian counterparts. The League of Communists became a non-entity. By April of the same year the first free elections in Yugoslavia since 1938 were held in Slovenia resulting in Kucan being voted in as president.⁵⁵

⁵⁴(Cohen 1995: 64-5)

⁵⁵It is interesting to note that a poll taken at this time amongst Slovenian citizens indicated that only 20% were in favor of out-right secession while 58% were for increased autonomy (Cohen 1995: 94). This would indicate that Serb contentions at the time that Slovenia had already decided to secede but wanted to

Croatia

Throughout the 1980s, Croatian leaders sympathized with Slovenia's reform proposals. However, remembering the outcome of the Croatian Spring movement, they practiced extreme caution. Furthermore, as a result of the purges coupled with the discredit of the Communist party in general, many of the positions of power were relinquished by Croats to be replaced by local Serbs. As the political crisis grew throughout Yugoslavia, political organizations outside the Communist Party gained increasing support within Croatia.

A week after the Slovenes, Croatia held its first multi-party election. They had had a much shorter time to prepare. The Croatian Communist Party had changed little apart from its name. The party which emerged to win an easy victory over the Communist Party was the Croatian Democratic Union (HDZ). It sought a sharp break from communism while pushing for Croatian ethno-regional autonomy. At the elections, the Communists, certain of victory, chose a "first-past-the-post electoral system" which, to their surprise, resulted in their defeat, allowing HDZ to win 205 of the 356 seats in Croatia's legislature. Most Croatian Serbs voted against the HDZ and for the Serbian Democratic Party (SDS) under Jovan Raskovic.⁵⁶

HDZ, led by 66 year-old Franjo Tudjman, was a coalition of mostly moderate right of center parties but included some nationalist extremist groups. Tudjman's credentials included having fought with Tito's Partisans to attain the rank of Major General. As a Party official, he had rejected communism early on. His subsequent dissident activities and historical revisionist research concerning the number of war dead earned him time in prison.⁵⁷ His life embodied both the promise of Communist Yugoslavia under Tito and

do it gradually were unfounded.

⁵⁶Interestingly, in distant place to HDZ was the Coalition of National Accord (KNS), led by former dissidents Mika Tripalo and Savka Dapcevic-Kucar. The fact that these former dissidents, who enjoyed overwhelming support during the Croatian Spring, lost the vote by such a large margin attests to how much Croatian society had changed in twenty years. Croats no longer wished to experiment with any form of reformed communism however democratic it promised to be.

⁵⁷Tudjman contended that only about 30 000 Serbs were killed by the Ustasha. The number of war dead, especially the number of Serbs, continues to be an issue of heated contention. Croats tended to belittle the

the disillusionment that followed.

HDZ owed its success to the considerable financial support it received from Croatians living outside of Yugoslavia, where Tadjman campaigned exclusively, well before the election. His campaign posters promised to place Croatian interests first and appealed directly to Croats' patriotic sentiment as well as their fear of Serbia. His vision of Yugoslavia was similar to the existing pattern of the European Economic Community. His preference for a loose confederation derived from his belief in the fundamental irreconcilability of the different South Slav political and cultural outlooks.

Like his Slovenian counter-parts, Tadjman contended that Croatia, as one of the richer republics, was being exploited and held-back economically by the rest of Yugoslavia under Serbian domination. Akin to Milosevic's policy of protecting Serbs outside Serbia proper, Tadjman championed the cause of Croatian minorities in other republics, especially Bosnia. He envisioned the area of Bosnia called Herzegovina becoming closely linked to Croatia, but stressed that any changes would only follow a democratic referendum in that republic.

Both Tadjman and Milosevic shared their obsession with the history of their respective peoples. Especially important was the resurrection of all the traditions and symbols associated with their specific national group. As such, it did not take long for religion to become embroiled within their nationalist policies.

Both leaders wanted to be seen as embodying the spirit of their respective nations and used every opportunity to show off their good relations with the religious community, as did the religious community with them. Religion was important as it served as an ethnic marker definitively distinguishing Serb from Croat. This was especially important in Croatia as Serbs and Croats tended to share similar names, wrote in the Latin script and

numbers while Serbs exaggerated them. Two separate independent studies, one by a Croat and another by a Serb, tell the most accurate figures. According to the studies, over 500 000 Serbs died during WWII, close to 200 000 Croats, and just over 100 000 Muslims, with a total death count of over a million people from Yugoslavia (Judah 1997: 132-134). Of these numbers, an estimated 310 000 Serbs were killed

spoke the same regional dialects.⁵⁸

Tudjman's policy was to put power "back" into Croatian hands. To this end he wished to alter the clause encoded in the 1974 Constitution proclaiming Croatia as the republic of Croats and Serbs. In his opinion, the 12% minority of Croatian Serbs mentioned in the constitution as being equal to Croats granted them preferential status to the Croatian majority. This policy to rectify injustice suffered by Croats was controversial, especially in light of the inherent mistrust between the two national groups. Needless to say, most Serbs in Croatia were totally against Tudjman's plans.

Tudjman also wanted to rectify what he perceived as a disproportionate number of important positions being held by Serbs in Croatia. Once in power, HDZ initiated massive layoffs of Serbs in what were arbitrarily categorized as key positions. Those who were left were required to pledge an oath to the state of Croatia. Only the Latin alphabet was given official status while the slightly altered historic Croatian checkerboard coat of arms, unfortunately, also used by the Ustasha, was resurrected as the national flag. An official document (*Domovinka*), proving that one had been born within the borders of Croatia, was necessary to perform basic tasks such as opening a bank account, getting a job, gaining access to medical coverage, etc. Procuring this document was subject to the goodwill of newly appointed officials who, having neither the age nor experience to govern properly, were prone to abuse their powers. In such an atmosphere, being against a strong Croat national program became concomitant with being unpatriotic and Serbophile.

directly as a result of Ustasha atrocities (Garde 1992: 79).

⁵⁸ The Church was an avid supporter of the nationalism both in Croatia and Serbia and this fact deserves some explanation. Apart from the ideological competition and atheism Communism presented, after WWII, the Communists were unduly harsh, especially with the Croatian clergy as a result of their links with the Ustasha. Repression deepened the cleavage between the State and Church. Some were deserving of punishment for war crimes, but it was mostly innocent people who bore the brunt of Partisan vengeance. The Catholic Church became the only quasi-legal institution around which Croatian nationalists and those opposed to the system could rally. Even today the Church has an important influence in Croatian politics. It came to embody the spirit of heroic opposition on the part of those wanting to bring about an independent Croatia. Communist oppression served to cast the Church in a good light. As such, the Catholic Church began to resemble its Orthodox counterpart during the days of Ottoman rule. Once communism collapsed in Serbia, the traditional link between State and Church was quickly reestablished.

Naturally Serbs were displeased. Under Yugoslavia, they enjoyed equality even as a minority in another republic. The prospect of losing these fundamental rights practically over night was disturbing to say the least. Unfortunately, they perceived these events as a mere precursor to future genocide. Their inherent mistrust of Croats in general and their leadership in particular would draw them closer during this uneasy time to any leader who promised to keep Yugoslavia intact. For this reason, Milosevic became their natural leader. His outspoken support of Croatian Serbs made them less amenable to bargaining with the Croatian government. As with all rival political negotiations in Yugoslavia, the process resembled a zero-sum game more than anything else. Ultimately Milosevic's ability to manipulate this population via the Serbian media would become decisive in the ensuing war in Croatia.

Unfortunately Tudjman played right into the hands of Milosevic's program to unnerve the already skittish Croatian Serbs. While it was true that Tudjman guaranteed the safety of Croatian Serbs, many of his actions and alliances gave contradictory messages. For instance, early on after his victory, instead of calming tensions, Tudjman chose to heighten them by focusing on Croatian displeasure with rising Serbian nationalism. Moreover, at the first HDZ convention, many hard-line Croatian nationalist emigrants with ties to the Ustasha movement were invited to attend. This prompted many to claim that Tudjman was himself a fascist.

Tudjman was not a fascist but some of his entourage were ultra nationalist. While skillfully appealing to the Croatian people, he seemed unaware or cared little about the consequences of arousing Serbs fears. His whole pre-election political campaign was dependant on the financial support of the diaspora – who by virtue of not having to live with the consequences of their views and actions tended towards extremism; after all, they could always use their passports to return to their homes abroad. Statements loaded with political bravado, while popular amongst hotheaded supporters, could not be taken back. Tudjman's confrontational policy trapped him into using nationalism as a political platform. Any attempt to backtrack would cost him his constituency. Unfortunately, radical elements understood Tudjman's rhetoric as giving them *carte blanche* to harass

and terrorize local Serbs. These self-proclaimed patriots' activities only served to enflame national tensions furthering Milosevic's media campaign to portray Tadjman, the HDZ, and the Croatian people in general as blood-thirsty fascists.

Therefore by 1990, Yugoslavia was in a paradoxical situation: the north-western part of the country was under the control of non-Communist governments, democratically chosen in multiparty elections, while the country's federal elite and political leaders in the southeastern part of Yugoslavia had been selected through one-party authoritarian methods. As far as Croatia and Slovenia were concerned, the numerical and political dominance of Serbs became the essential problem of Yugoslavia. By the same token, the numerical and political dominance of Croats over Serbs became the fundamental problem in Croatia.

Both Croatia and Slovenia became natural allies, especially since both identified much more than Serbia with Central European culture and multiparty democratic traditions. Both were thus strongly influenced by the collapse of the Soviet Union and the pro-democratic trends taking place in countries such as Hungary, Czechoslovakia and Poland at the time. However, unlike these countries, Croatia and Slovenia were not interested in building a civil society. Like Milosevic, Kucan and Tadjman addressed themselves exclusively to their own nationalities and focused on defending their own political and economic interests. Milosevic inadvertently contributed to this by attacking any and all expressions of Croatian and Slovenia national sentiment. He forced the Communist leaders in both republics to choose between pan-ethnic unity at the risk of alienating their own constituencies or embracing views that were in opposition to Serbia's. In other words, Milosevic's form of Serb nationalism under the guise of recentralizing Yugoslavia prompted a reaction-nationalism in Croatia and Slovenia in a bid for self-preservation. While Tadjman and Kucan's nationalist programs threatened to break up the federation by leaving it, Milosevic's policies threatened to tear it apart up by forcing them to remain. Milosevic claimed that he was only interested in keeping Yugoslavia whole. However, the moral thread of his policy ran rather thin. It is true that he wanted to keep Yugoslavia together but only on condition that Serbia in general and he in particular

could dominate it.

Secessionism was bound to run into problems as nationalities overlapped in Croatia (Serbs and Croats) and especially in Bosnia (Serbs, Croat, and Muslims). Unfortunately, nationalist leaders had a turbulent and bloody history to draw upon to incite public support. It did not take long for this state-sanctioned antagonism to germinate into real acts of hatred. Formerly imagined or historical grievances germinated into real ones. This served to radicalize nationalist fervor further poisoning relations of yet another generation of, for want of a better term, “Yugoslavs”.

Bosnia

Bosnia was Yugoslavia’s traditional powder keg with three constituent nationalities living on its territory where no one constituted the majority. When Tudjman emphasized that there should be a special relationship between Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina, hinting at a possible reorganization of the republic’s territorial lines, Serbs in Bosnia became anxious. Although Tudjman criticized Milosevic for his nationalist policies that created a reaction-nationalism in Croatia, his own policies caused a similar response amongst Croatian Serbs. Back in Croatia, Raskovic knew that Krajina could not survive very long isolated in Croatia. This prompted him and his followers to establish links with the heavily populated Serb communes in the northwestern and central parts of Bosnia directly adjacent to the Krajina region, potentially broadening the conflict to neighboring Bosnia-Herzegovina.

As in all the other republics, the formation of parties prior to multi-party elections was based on ethnic lines. Three major parties were formed; Tudjman’s HDZ, Raskovic’s SDS, and the Moslem Party of Democratic Action (SDA) under Alija Izetbegovic, who had spent eight years in prison for his Islamic fundamentalist beliefs. Of all the groups, Croats in Bosnia were the most enthusiastic for the confederate idea as they constituted the smallest number of the three main nationalities. Tensions in Bosnia soon rose as ultra-nationalist elements existing within each of the three main parties began causing

trouble. Serb extremists saw the Croats as Ustasha and the Moslems as wanting to turn Bosnia into a fundamentalist Muslim state. As such, the traditional ties between Moslems and Croats were interpreted as a “Khomeini-Ustasha” alliance. The militant Croats and Muslims saw the “ethnic sovereignty” on the part of the Serbs as a plot to create a Greater Serbia whose minorities could expect similar treatment to what the Kosovo Albanians had endured. The radical portion of the HDZ in Bosnia-Herzegovina advocated political autonomy and even the total annexation by Croatia of predominantly Croatian areas in Herzegovina. Election results, held in November and December 1990, reflected the national composition of the republic.⁵⁹

The SDA leader, Izetbegovic, was elected president of the multiethnic seven-member presidency, a Croat from the HDZ was elected as prime minister, and a Serb from the SDS was chosen to be president of the republic’s legislature. However this coalition was anything but solid. The fact that each of the parties had diametrically divergent agendas for what Bosnia and even Yugoslavia should look like, meant that it would be only a matter of time before the Bosnian coalition broke down. Even the best case scenario of two of the ethnic groups creating a coalition, which amongst Croats and Muslims was possible, would prove futile as it would be unacceptable to the Serbs.

The federal government under Ante Markovic

In light of all the forces attempting to rip Yugoslavia apart at the time, there was one last hope to keep the country together. In 1989, the new federal Prime Minister, Ante Markovic, a Croat, attempted to implement a Yugoslav-wide reform program. The program wed Slovenian and Serbian recommendations and called for an open-market economy. To quicken the process, the Federal Executive Council decided that regulations could be adopted without total unanimity between the republics and provinces. While balanced representation of provincial and republic personnel continued, ethnic affiliation was discarded as the major criteria for recruitment. Furthermore, enterprises were

⁵⁹Of the 240 seats in the republic’s two chamber legislature, the SDA won 87 seats (33.8%), the SDS won 71 seats (29.6%) and the HDZ 44 seats (18.3%). The reformed Communists won a pitiful 18 seats (8%) and Markovic’s Alliance of Reform Forces did even worse with only 13 seats (5.4%) (Cohen 1995: 146).

allowed to run their own affairs without having to adopt numerous self-management acts, compacts, etc.

Markovic cautioned that his changes would take five years to implement, focusing first on the control of run-away inflation. Initially his program looked promising as he had on his side the military, the federal apparatus of the LCY, much of the federal legislature, regional allies amongst Croatia Communist government and party officials, and foreign countries and international organizations which were keen on Yugoslavia's survival.

The federal government proceeded to deregulate the economy, opening the market to imports, eliminating government controls over pricing, allowing the general public to buy and sell foreign currency for dinars, introducing privatization of "social property" and joint ventures with foreign companies. The initial result was the creation of over 160 000 small private businesses. Furthermore, debt decreased and the foreign exchange stabilized.⁶⁰

Initially, successful reforms meant that support for Milosevic's nationalist program began to wane, turning Markovic into his principle political enemy. Unfortunately, Markovic's success was short lived. Given the radical fall in the standard of living, Serbia's population did not care to endure the short-term difficulties inevitably accompanying any drastic reform program. Milosevic, promising quick and painless fixes, soon regained the upper hand.

Before long all three republic's leaders turned against Markovic.⁶¹ They did all they could to undermine reform efforts by slowing or halting the process of its implementation and jeopardizing its effectiveness. Moreover, they had increased their budgets four times in order to purchase weapons leaving the social services and education with less funding than before. Finally, inter-elite mistrust between republics served to sabotage the

⁶⁰(Sekelj 1993, pp. 260-1)

⁶¹Ironically, during the move for Croatian independence (1990) it was not Milosevic that was targeted the enemy by Tudjman, but President Markovic and his reform plan. In fact, Milosevic and Tudjman were cohorts in the scheme to blockade Markovic's reform measures in order to see it fail and discredit him.

reform program that depended on unity in the application of its prescribed measures throughout Yugoslavia. Only Tito possessed sufficient moral authority to successfully implement such a Promethean program.

By February 1991 Slovenian and Croatian lawmakers formally voted to annul the validity of all federal laws pertaining to the republics. Federal court rulings, which Markovic oversaw in the best interests of the state were ignored by the republics. This served to set a precedent as the future Serbian break-away communes in Croatia would exhibit the same disregard for decisions made in the republic's legislature as the republic had for decisions made its federal counterpart. By December of the same year, Markovic resigned in protest of 86% of the federal budget going towards military purposes.

With Markovic out of the way, republican leaders turned to dealing with each other. As previously mentioned, Milosevic's program sought to rectify the problems created by the 1974 Constitution by recentralizing the country. However, Milosevic enjoyed even less moral authority than Markovic amongst the other nationalities. They would not tolerate losing their political privileges and especially not to aggrandize those of Serbia. Milosevic's aggressive nationalism opened a venue for both Tudjman and Kucan to solve two problems in one stroke. First, by declaring independence each would theoretically end the political threat presented by Milosevic. Secondly, each republic could solve its national debt by making a clean break of it, leaving rump-Yugoslavia to foot the bill.

Republican election results in 1991 reconfirmed two opposing visions of how Yugoslavia should be transformed in the age of post-communism. Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia-Herzegovina and Macedonia formed one bloc that advocated creating a loose confederation. Serbia and Montenegro were firmly committed to reorganizing the federation to include a strong central government ensuring that all the Serbs in Yugoslavia remain within one state. These two diametrically opposed visions were bound to lead to conflict. Furthermore, the pitiful defeat of the Markovic-led Alliance (50 out of 735 seats in four republican elections) demonstrated that citizens clearly rejected "Yugoslavism" or a unified Yugoslav national consciousness.

In such an atmosphere, reaction to criticism by the various nationalist parties began to take on a disturbing form expressed as “[one] who is against us, is against the nation”.⁶² All the republican leaders put their parochial ethnic interests above the fate of the country as a whole. The leaders of the different republics could not work together as a result of mutual distrust borne from recent experiences, personality conflicts, and pressure from their respective national constituencies. Under these circumstances it is hard to imagine how they could negotiate a peaceful settlement on the dismantling and restructuring of Yugoslavia. The conflagration of increasing national animosity became probable.

The Yugoslav Peoples Army (JNA)

To understand how the political and economic disintegration of Yugoslavia led to a full scale civil war, it is necessary to examine the JNA and how it was gradually transformed to eventually side with Milosevic and Serbs.

Since its inception, the JNA saw itself as the principle force for ensuring the country’s unity and cohesion. This sentiment further increased following Tito’s death as it saw its new role as replacing him as the final arbiter, especially as it had the means by which to enforce its decisions. However, any military action was to be a unified one. In the mindset of the military elite, they were charged with the preservation and defense of Yugoslavia in peacetime from both external and internal threats, especially those opposed to socialism. Party pluralism was seen as a threat to the status quo.

1990 saw the ascendancy of a multi-party system that was both nationalist and anti-federalist while external threats to the country had virtually disappeared with the end of the Cold War. The JNA needed to find a new sense of legitimacy in order to justify its large portion of the federal budget. One of its most prominent shifts was to search for internal enemies that threatened the state’s unity, which by early 1990, became the emerging parties in Slovenia and Croatia. Antagonism was further increased when new nationalist parties in power in both republics refused to pay for the JNA and demanded

⁶²(Cohen 1995: 168)

control over the military on their territory.

For their part, Croatia and Slovenia, paid most to sustain the army. The military being a plaything of Tito, was traditionally spared no expense. The army lived in a separate parallel world of its own in Yugoslavia. It provided housing for its staff, had its own educational, medical, recreational, and even farming facilities. Typically youths from the countryside would begin their training at the age of fourteen. The JNA was alleged to be even more secretive than the Soviet Red Army. As a result, its officers tended to be out of touch with mainstream society and events. Eventually, the gap in the standard of living between army personnel and the regular public began to widen. With the economy in crisis, the public increasingly saw high military spending as unjustified.⁶³ Slovenia was the first to break the taboo on criticizing the military. Slovenes wanted to know why Yugoslavia needed such a large military and how the money it was granted was spent. The Slovenian and Croatian media demanded that military spending be reduced, that recruits be allowed to serve in their own republics and that there be some alternate service available for those unwilling to bear arms. The JNA high command took this as a personal affront.

The fact that the republics' representatives were unable to agree on anything, while political structures that had kept the country together were being chipped away, resulted in most of the top-ranking JNA officers seeing themselves as the last bastion of Yugoslavism and state unity. Ideology aside, the destruction of Yugoslavia would mean not only the army's loss of might and power, but on a personal level, the collapse of the income, status and privilege its members traditionally enjoyed. Another feature of the JNA was that the majority of its officer corps was Serbian.⁶⁴ For these reasons, the JNA was naturally drawn to Milosevic's appeal for the preservation of Yugoslavia.

Early on, Milosevic followed subtle tactics of discrete courtship with the army, making

⁶³Opinion of the JNA varied according to national lines. A survey taken at the time, demonstrated 78% of citizens in Slovenia, 65% in Kosovo and 54 % in Croatia felt that there should be a reduction in the republic's contribution, while support for continued funding remained high in Serbia, Montenegro and Bosnia (Cohen 1995: 184)

sure that no criticism came their way from any of his ministers. By 1989, he had his first occasion to see if he could truly manipulate the JNA. When Albanians in Kosovo demanded autonomy, Milosevic managed to influence the army to interpret the situation as “counter-revolutionary” prompting them to act, and that served to further institute repressive measures on the Albanian population.

Following this, the JNA’s beginning to side with Milosevic was further demonstrated, oddly enough, on the streets of Belgrade. In early March 1991, anti-Milosevic street demonstrations took place, organized by the Serbian opposition parties. The protests were held in opposition to the republican regime’s stranglehold over the media and resulted in clashes with police. JNA armored units rolled into Belgrade without the authorization of the federal Prime Minister but with tacit support from federal President Borislav Jovic. This incident set a precedent and was a warning sign to the northwestern republics. It was the first time the JNA had intervened in an internal quarrel within a republic between the government and the opposition since 1971 during the Croatian crackdown.

The media

The media was well developed in Yugoslavia, especially the electronic variant.⁶⁵ The 1974 Constitution contributed to the self-containment of the media in each of the republics. Milosevic and Tudjman owed their political support to the media and, once in power, quickly assumed control of it, isolating it from rival views. As such it played an important role in preparing the groundwork for the ensuing conflict.

Before the war broke out, Belgrade television was focused on WWII history in an effort to heighten Serbian grievances. In keeping with national injuries highlighted in the “Memorandum”, media campaign aimed to plant the idea that official WWII history did not tell the complete story, covering up the full extent of Croatian atrocities. The media

⁶⁴60% were Serbs, 8% Montenegrins, 14% Croats and 6% or less others (Lampe 1996: 337).

⁶⁵By 1983, there were 27 daily newspapers in circulation reaching over 2 million people. There were 200 radio stations and 175 televisions per 1000 people (Lampe 1996: 335).

campaign was in part a response to Franjo Tudjman's book *Bespuca* (1989) which was published a year prior to his election as President of Croatia. In the book he stated that the Communists had exaggerated war crimes by the Croats. The Serbian media demonized Tudjman as a fascist while in Croatia he was portrayed as a well-honed and dignified statesman. On the other hand, Milosevic was portrayed by the Croatian media as a "Stalinist-Bolshevik, an authoritarian populist and bank robber" while in Serbia he was shown as a wise and unwavering leader whose mission was to restore Serbian national dignity.⁶⁶

A year before the onset of war, the Serbian media focused on portraying the plight of Serbs under the hand of Croatian authorities referred to as "Ustasha". Particular focus was put on relatively isolated cases of harassment and the destruction of Serb property. These images were shown repeatedly, followed by panel discussions that warned of the imminent extermination of Serbs in Croatia. The word "genocide" became commonplace. Equivalent images of Albanian mistreatment in Kosovo were shown in Croatia with the underlying message "this can happen to you if Milosevic has his way".

When war broke out, the demonization of opposing national groups intensified exponentially. The Serbs were portrayed as hairy unshaven drunken bloodthirsty Chetnik soldiers while the Croats were shown as maniacal genocidal Ustasha fascists. Later, with spiraling inflation that plunged into an economic crisis engendered by warfare, people no longer having sufficient funds to purchase daily newspapers relied more heavily on state run television, which served to further narrow their perception of the truth.

The war in Slovenia and Croatia

Prior to the full-scale hostilities in Yugoslavia in 1990, several key events took place serving to escalate tensions. After the election in Slovenia and Croatia, Borislav Jovic, a Serb, annual federal president of the presidency of Yugoslavia, proclaimed the elections illegal and threatened military actions. In reaction the Slovenian government appointed

⁶⁶(Milosevic 1997: 111-12)

Janez Jansa, a radical opponent of the federation and of the Yugoslav Peoples Army (JNA) in particular, as defense minister. Jansa refused to hand over Slovenia's weapons and supplies from their Territorial Defense Forces (TDs) to the JNA.⁶⁷ This was followed by the adoption of an amendment in the Slovenian legislature allowing army recruits to serve in their own republic. Slovenia was forming its own separate army.

In December 1989, Slovenia held its own plebiscite where 88.5% of its citizens turned out to vote in support of Slovenia's secession from Yugoslavia, should it be deemed necessary.⁶⁸ There was a further amendment that transferred control of the TDs from the federal presidency to the president of the republic. Prior to this, when the electoral victory of the separatist nationalist forces seemed imminent in both Croatia and Slovenia, the military focused its attention on maintaining control of the JNA and especially the TDs in those republics. To this end, it began transferring weapons and supplies from the TDs to JNA armories on the pretext that they feared theft. Thus by May 1990, two days after the new Slovenian government began to take office, the JNA began dismantling Slovenia's and Croatia's TD units. Deprived of their weapons, the citizens would not be able to fight in the guerilla war for which the TD units were designed. In Croatia the disarming of the TDs was done quickly and efficiently, while in Slovenia, they remained intact as Slovenes blocked the moves by the JNA early on. Both Slovenia and Croatia began to import arms illegally. Croatia decided that since the TDs were disarmed it would turn its domestic police force under the guidance of the Ministry of Internal Affairs (MUP) into an army.

In Croatia trouble was first to appear amongst the Serbs living in the Krajina region where, although they only constituted 26% of all Serbs living in Croatia at the time, they formed 69% of the population.⁶⁹ At issue were the changes to the Croatian constitution, especially the fact that it relegated Serbs to a minority status.

⁶⁷Territorial Defense Units were introduced in Yugoslavia following the Tito-Stalin split. Tito fearing invasions formed these local units to wage guerilla warfare should the Russians ever invade. Small caches of weapons were scattered throughout the country that could be used by the TD forces.

⁶⁸Cohen 1995: 173)

Negotiations between Tudjman and Raskovic came to a head over the issue of Croatian Serbs being granted “ethnic sovereignty”. In reaction, Raskovic and the SDS rejected the draft amendments of the new Croatian constitution over the Serb minority losing its previous position of equality with Croats. Further, Raskovic called for a referendum for an autonomous Krajina. To the outrage of Croatian politicians, he stated that if Croatia were to drop out of the Yugoslav federation, Croatian Serbs would also seek political autonomy.

Tudjman retorted that he would not allow territorial autonomy for the Serbs and furthermore would proceed with the formation of special Croatian police for the area. Serb officials in the Knin region, upset over this reorganization of the police, feared losing their jobs and refused to wear the uniforms displaying the hated Croatian checkered shield. As the referendum approached, Serb vigilantes in the Krajina region barricaded roads in protest, blocking traffic to the coastline and hurting the tourist season.

The standoff between Serbs and Croats broke when in August 1990, the Croatian government sent helicopters full of police to Knin to stop the referendum. However, Raskovic had earlier managed to get federal protection for the referendum from Yugoslav President Jovic and Croatian police were turned back by the JNA airforce. The referendum took place and the result held no surprises, prompting Krajina officials to announce the adoption of the Declaration on the Sovereignty and Autonomy of the Serbian People. However, this area only included one-third of the Serbs actually living in Croatia. The Croatian government was affronted and dismissed the validity of the referendum.⁷⁰

⁶⁹(Cohen 1995: 128-30)

⁷⁰A Croatian politician Stipe Mesic’s reaction is edifying as it accurately describes the feeling of the Croatian leadership and people over the Krajina issue at the time: “What kind of referendum in Croatia is this when the Croats are not taking part in it, only Serbs and nobody else... They are not a God-given nation, they are equal to everybody else, not more equal. If there are problems we should discuss them with the system’s institutions... Who gave them the right to go to [Federal President] Jovic, to speak on behalf of the Serbs of Croatia? Who authorized Jovic to have talks with them without the presence of representatives of the Republic of Croatia? I am not aware that he held talks with Albanians, and Kosovo is a greater problem than Knin. These people think that everything in this country should be measured with criteria that suits the Serbs.” (Cohen 1995: 135)

Tudjman naively believed that by ridding himself of Raskovic the Serb problem in Croatia would be solved, and he managed to successfully discredit him amongst his constituents.⁷¹ Unfortunately, with the relatively moderate Raskovic politically dead it allowed more radical elements to assume control. These were Milan Babic and Milan Martic, a local police inspector and dentist respectively, who went from virtual anonymity to becoming key figures in the republic. They would be generously supplied with weapons by Milosevic to become his pawns in Croatia.

In December 1990, Croatia following in Slovenia's footsteps, adopted its new constitution which carried a provision enabling it to secede from Yugoslavia should their legislature support such an initiative in a two-thirds vote. Furthermore, the Croatian constitution proclaimed Croatia to be "the national state of the Croatian People" exclusively. Serbs were not mentioned and were relegated to a minority status. Two months later the Serbian National Council in the so-called Serbian Autonomous Region of Krajina (SAO Krajina) adopted a similar resolution that favored its separation from Croatia.

December was also when the federal presidency organized a special round of meetings in order to determine Yugoslavia's future. Included in the discussions were all of the country's federal and regional decision-makers, thus the term the "expanded" collective presidency as used. Croatia and Slovenia followed a two tiered strategy of negotiations. On the one hand they tried to persuade the other republics to support the restructuring of Yugoslavia into a loose confederation. At the same time, they were slowly disassociating themselves from the federation through complete military and political autonomy. The entire notion of confederation was based on the premise that each republic had a right to self-determination and secession and that any reorganization of Yugoslavia must preserve the "inviolability and permanence" of republican borders. Milosevic and his allies rejected separation on the grounds that it was politically unacceptable and constitutionally illegal as it would partition Serbs into different states against their will.

⁷¹A tape-recording was released of discussions held between the two leaders. During the conversation Raskovic made very unflattering statements about both the Serb people and Milosevic.

Negotiations were at a standstill.

Croatia's round of confrontation with the JNA came in January 1991 when the collective federal presidency, having out-voted Croatia and Slovenia, concluded that all paramilitary forces be disbanded and all weapons be handed over to the JNA within ten days. Croatia not intending to comply put the JNA on high alert. Tudjman and Croatian Prime Minister Stipe Mesic managed to hammer out a compromise averting war. They promised to disarm Croatian reserve police forces. Of course they never intended to fulfill this promise but it gave Tudjman valuable time to pursue a program of confederalization with the option of opting out of Yugoslavia if things did not go their way. To this end, Tudjman announced a month later that should Slovenia leave the federation, Croatia would follow suit.

Negotiations began falling apart by the Spring of 1991, when on February 28, Krajina Serb leaders declared their autonomy from Croatia. In response, the MUP sent special Croatian police units to regain control of the town of Pakrac. The ensuing clashes between the MUP forces and the Serb reservists prompted President Jovic to call in the JNA to restore order. Soon the JNA found itself embroiled in the fighting and shots with Croatian forces were exchanged. This was to become a familiar pattern of events whereby Krajina Serbs would provoke a fight with Croatian forces, the JNA would be called in to separate the belligerents and restore order. In light of Croatian hostility towards the JNA, the latter would side with the Serb renegades protecting them from Croatian authorities and ultimately indirectly assisting them to consolidate their territorial gains.

In reaction to the fighting in Pakrac, Jovic and top army officers presented the collective presidency with a plan drafted by the military which gave Croatia a forty-eight hour ultimatum to fully comply with the January 9 decree (disbanding and disarmament of paramilitary units in both Croatia and Slovenia). In the case of Slovenia, the TDs were to be turned over to the JNA and the government was to abrogate legislation that interfered with the recruitment of young Slovenes into the JNA. Failure to comply would

result in a state of emergency being called, followed by military action in the offending republics. The collective presidency twice refused to adopt the military initiative, prompting Jovic and representatives in Montenegro and Macedonia to resign from their posts. On March 16 1991, Milosevic publicly announced that Serbia would no longer recognize the authority of the federal presidency. His reason was that the presidency was failing to prevent the destruction of Yugoslavia as outlined by Croatia and Slovenia's plans and that Serbia's vital interests were threatened. He went one step further by ordering the mobilization of Serbia's police reserve units.⁷²

A month later another clash between Croats and Serbs transpired, this time in Plitvice National Park. Milan Martic and his paramilitary forces began establishing control of the park by force, subsequently mobilizing Croatian Police forces into action to prevent the park from falling under the dominion of Krajina Serbs. After military actions and bloodshed, the JNA again stepped in to prevent further conflict as they had done a month earlier. This episode marked the first combat casualties of the war suffered on both sides. Furthermore, this pattern of intervention by the JNA was quickly becoming intolerable to the Croatian leadership that complained that it undermined its authority. Tudjman, realizing that the JNA was shifting in favor of the local Serb militias, stepped up his initiatives to transform the MUP forces into national-guard units. Slovenia too was influenced by these events. Kucan interpreted the JNA intervention as a dangerous precedent in attempting to redraw Yugoslavia's borders and he proceeded to quicken the pace of Slovenian secession.

In negotiations with Croat leaders, Milosevic used the Croatian Serbs as a bargaining chip. While clearly stating that he had nothing against republic seceding from the federation in order to express their right to self-determination, he added that if republics

⁷²In retrospect this whole episode looks to have been carefully orchestrated by Milosevic. By planning Jovic's resignation he hoped to cause a state of crisis which would prompt military action. The ensuing military action in Croatia and Slovenia would deflect attention from his opposition and the crisis in Serbia. At the very least by concentrating on the plight of Serbs outside Serbia, he could divert attention from himself and his unpopular policies at home. However, when the ploy failed and Croatian Vice-President Stipe Mesic announced that he would take Jovic's place, Milosevic had to scramble to reinstate Jovic. Although the JNA was still dedicated to defending the unity of Yugoslavia, it was for the moment unwilling to become Milosevic's political pawn.

seceded from Yugoslavia then Serbs living in Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina also had a right to assert their right to self-determination and secede from those republics. Milosevic was also becoming comfortable with the idea of letting Slovenia secede but stressed that any republic wishing to leave the federation which had a substantial Serb population could do so but would have to face major border changes as a consequence.⁷³ Milosevic played a clever game of actively supporting the goals of the breakaway regions of Croatia while at the same time withholding his full recognition of their status. By keeping the “Serb question” open and threatening the need for border changes he hoped to prevent Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina from summarily seceding. Moreover, he believed that should negotiations disintegrate, the same issue could be used as an excuse for military actions against the secessionist republics.

In May, the issue of the rotating federal presidency marked the political death knell for Yugoslavia. It was Croatia’s term to appoint a federal president with Croatian Prime Minister Stipe Mesic chosen to hold the position. Although his candidature was supported by Croatia, Slovenia and Bosnia-Herzegovina, it was blocked by Serbia and two provinces (Montenegro and Macedonia) abstained.

The war in Croatia began from a watershed incident in a town called Borovo Selo in Eastern Slavonia. It marked the point of no return in the minds of Croats. Borovo Selo was barricaded by the Serb population living there. On May 1 1991, four policemen from the neighboring town of Osijek learned of a way to enter the Borovo Selo undetected. In a hare-brained scheme, the policemen sneaked into the town in the middle of the night in order to replace the Yugoslav flag in the town square, with a Croatian one. Their plan was foiled as they ran into a hail of gunfire resulting in two being wounded and taken prisoner, the rest escaping. The policemen who escaped reported what transpired to their colleagues. This was followed by a busload of policemen setting off the next day to rescue their compatriots. When they entered the town, Serb militiamen opened fire killing twelve and wounding over twenty. This incident changed Croatian

⁷³There were less than 2% Serbs in Slovenia both as a historical consequence and as a result of the Slovenian language acting as a barrier.

public opinion especially after the Croatian media repeatedly televised images of the blood soaked bus as well as of the bodies of those who fell.

This incident coupled with the ill treatment of the Croatian representative for the federal presidency served to boost support in Croatia at the subsequent referendum on independence held on May 19. Voter turnout was at 84% with 93% in support of turning Croatia into a sovereign and independent country, and at least in writing, guaranteeing cultural autonomy to the Serbs and other minorities. Croatian officials announced that they would decide the future of the republic in June. Having voted a week prior to link with Serbia, the Krajina Serbs boycotted the Croatian referendum. Slovenia followed suit by proclaiming the formation of its own army. On June 15, Croatian and Slovene officials met and agreed that they would proclaim the independence of their two republics no later than June 26, 1991.

Prior to this, Milosevic had spent several months pressing Jovic to change the Federal Presidency's instructions to the JNA. The idea was that if the Croats wanted to secede, the JNA should let them. However, if it did so the JNA would withdraw from areas where Croats formed a majority to places where Serbs predominated on the premise of protecting them. In this manner, Milosevic slowly undermined the JNA's historic purpose which was to protect Yugoslavia as a whole. By June the JNA was openly assisting the Krajina Serbs to maintain control of their enclaves.

Following the June 26 declaration of Slovene independence, the JNA, in an attempt to demonstrate federal authority over the country, began operations to secure control over Yugoslavia's borders in Slovenia. The JNA quickly found itself surrounded by better prepared and trained Slovene forces. JNA forces suffered from low morale especially since Slovenia was not regarded as an important region by Serbs. Total casualties of the ten-day war were 12 Slovenes killed and 144 wounded as opposed to the 37 of the JNA forces who lost their lives and 163 suffering wounds. Furthermore, over 3,200 JNA soldiers were forced to surrender.⁷⁴

⁷⁴(Cohen 1995: 217-8)

The action in Slovenia was a limited one. Out of the 20 000 JNA troops stationed in Slovenia only 10% were used in the operation.⁷⁵ They did not expect the Slovenian TDs to try and oppose them and were subsequently ill equipped to fight back. Initially, General Kadijevic of the JNA had two plans. Plan A, a limited action to recover border crossings had failed. He then wanted to institute Plan B, to use the full power of the JNA in Slovenia to crush the rebellion. To his surprise, Jovic, who felt that the war option could not be used there as the bulk of the population were Slovene, vetoed Plan B, forcing the JNA to withdraw and effectively recognizing Slovene secession.

In Croatia it was quite another matter. The Serb minority there wanted to remain within Yugoslavia. While the European Community (EC) managed to broker a deal to keep peace between the JNA and Slovenia, what it did not realize was that, regardless of their intervention, the war would not have continued in Slovenia as Serbia had no interest there. In fact, Kucan and Milosevic had previously agreed that Slovenia could go. Under this false confidence, the EC instituted a similar plan to try and end the war in Croatia only to see it fail miserably. As soon as the belligerents would sign a cease-fire, fighting would break out again. On many occasions, cease-fires were signed by the belligerents who had no intention of respecting them.

The humiliating defeat of the JNA in Slovenia, with JNA POWs being stripped to their pyjamas before being sent back to Belgrade, had a profound impact on the JNA. When fighting broke out in Croatia, Croat forces emulated their Slovene counterparts by surrounding and blockading JNA barracks. JNA would react differently from the relatively peaceful manner with which they treated the Slovenes. The JNA had suffered a serious blow in Slovenia and their reputation was on the line. Furthermore, the predominance of Serb officers in the JNA was heightened with the Slovene conflict as many conscripts of other nationalities began deserting *en masse*. By the time the conflict in Croatia began, the multinational character of the JNA had virtually disappeared, becoming exclusively Serb. As such, it was much more inclined to take the side of their rebel brethren in Croatia and fight the Croats using all means at their disposal.

⁷⁵(Sikavica 1997: 139)

By late August, the Krajina Serbs enjoyed the full support of the JNA that was directed by Ratko Mladic (later to be responsible for countless murders in Bosnia and one of the worst war criminals in the Bosnia conflict). Under Mladic, the JNA began to cooperate with Martić and his paramilitaries in an all out land grab. In that year alone, the total death toll in Croatia would exceed 10 000 with approximately 30 000 wounded. The tremendous destruction of property, industry and infrastructure, was accompanied by a massive dislocation of people.

In a lethargic international response, United Nations Peace Keepers were sent in a year after the war began, only to fail as miserably as had the EC before them. The problem was twofold. First, their mandate was unclear. There had never existed any peace to keep. Secondly, their presence was interpreted differently by each side. Croats understood the Peace Keepers' role as assisting them to take back "occupied" land. Serbs on the other hand, interpreted the Peace Keepers' role as protecting them from the Croats and assisting them in consolidating their gains.

When fighting erupted in Bosnia, world opinion gradually turned against the Serbs. This was a result of the high level of international media coverage reporting on numerous atrocities committed mostly by Serb forces. By 1995 the international community, tired of being taunted and held hostage by Bosnian Serb forces, realized that decisive action was necessary. With the tactical support of the United States, Croats and Muslims lead a victorious two-pronged attack against Serb forces in both Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina. Following "Operation Storm" in the summer of 1995, Krajina Serbs were totally defeated. What followed was a massive exodus of Serbs from Croatia, effectively solving the Serb national question there. The ensuing Dayton Agreement, signed by the belligerents, served to both end the war in Bosnia and restore Croatia's borders to their prewar delineation. Under the sponsorship of the international community, the agreement managed to institute a fragile peace. However, the international community did so at the cost of ignoring two dangerous ultra-nationalist policies and thus becoming a complicit supporter of them: "ethnic cleansing" followed by state sponsored "ethnic engineering" which sought to repopulate formerly ethnically heterogeneous communities with

homogeneous ones. Therefore, while the agreement served to end the bloodiest conflict in Europe since World War II, it also set a new international precedent.

Nationalist leaders have and still continue to use their power to manipulate history and language to attain desired ends. As the world gets smaller, national groups are becoming more and more nervous about losing their identity within the global village. Perhaps Hobsbawm was right when he says that the very fact that nationalism has attracted so much attention means that it has passed its apogee. The resurgence of nationalism in recent years has been a result of the collapse of the Soviet Union in particular and Communism in general. As with the collapse of all empires, there is period of chaos which precedes and immediately follows.

In all fairness, however, let us not forget that nationalism has some positive aspects, too. It serves to unite people affording them comfort through a sense of unity and common purpose. This unity of purpose by an entire population has the potential to result in very positive manifestations. Unfortunately, it can be just as easily manipulated by leaders, resulting in popular support for policies of exclusivity and prejudice. Nationalism becomes dangerous when it crosses the thin line whereby people cease to be viewed as individuals but rather as archetypes of whatever nationality they are seen to belong to. In this way, nationalism becomes akin to racial prejudice. It also serves to radicalize formerly benign nationalism. This is exactly what happened in the former Yugoslavia. Republican leaders preyed on divisive issues to bolster their own power. Sadly, this served to increase the likelihood of conflict.

Yugoslav unity was weak to begin with. Its very position on the globe meant that it had historical, cultural, religious and linguistic fault lines running through its center. The events which transpired during the first Yugoslavia had negative consequences, culminating in the insanity exhibited there during the Second World War. Tito's Yugoslavia fared a little better but was structurally fragile as its survival was dependent on his immortality and the stability of world capitalist markets.

The recent conflict in the former Yugoslavia continues to hold the attention of the international community. European leaders spent years coming to grips with the notion of a war being waged at their doorstep. With the end of the Cold War, the European

Community saw intervention in the Yugoslav conflict as a chance to gain more international authority. Indeed, former Cold War rivals too saw it as the stuff influence is made of. The resulting international rivalry over who gets to become the architect of peace in the former Yugoslavia served to prolong the war. Initially, when the international community saw that it could do little to stop the fighting, it concentrated on containing it. What followed were contradictory policies costing tens of thousands if not hundreds of thousands of lives. The most prevalent which comes to mind was the arms embargo imposed on Bosnia in spite of the fact that Serbs had the majority of weapons and Muslims almost none. The former Yugoslavia has and continues to influence how conflicts are dealt with by the international community. In this way it will have far reaching consequences for all of humanity in the next millennium.

Yugoslavia, though it failed, served as a grand social experiment that cannot but fascinate any student of the social sciences. What transpired there was a tragedy of epic proportions. However, it serves to remind the world and especially Europe, that although it has come along way from its violent past, there still remains ample work to do. Ironically, during the time when steps were being taken to unite Europe, the bloodiest war since WWII was being waged within one of its countries. This thesis, through its macro level analysis of the Yugoslav conflict, sets a solid foundation on which to conduct further studies. Micro level studies dedicated towards further uncovering how and why individuals and communities became divided would further our understanding of the full dynamics of nationalism. In this regard, traditional Anthropological field studies would be perfectly suited to this task. Hopefully, a better understanding of the destructive nature of nationalist movements will permit us to avoid future similar human catastrophes.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

ban - titular head who leads the sabor.

Bakaric, Vladimir - Croatian Communist Party leader and reformer during the 1960s. He initiated reforms in Yugoslavia and contributed to the Croatian Spring movement by aiding Savka Dapcevic-Kucar and Mika Tripalo, two ardent reformers, to power in the Croatian Communist Party to eventually become its leaders as well of the subsequent Croatian Spring movement.

Chetniks - Serb royalist guerilla rebel forces led by Draza Mihailovic who fought against both the Ustasha and Partisans during WWII.

CPY - see **LCY**

Croatian Party of Right - see **Frank, Josip**

Dapcevic-Kucar, Savka - see **Bakaric, Vladimir**

Djilas, Milovan - a Montenegrin member of Partisan leadership. Later he was the thinker who devised the ideological justification for Yugoslavia splitting from the Stalinist doctrine to pursue its own road to communism.

(DS) Democratic Party - see **Pribicevic, Svetozar**

Sabor - historic Croatian political institution dating back to Hapsburg times was originally constituting an assembly of Croatian nobility later to refer to the Croatian parliament.

Frank, Josip - became leader of Party of Right eventually to split to become leader of newly named Pure Party of Right in 1895. Following the Unification the Party was renamed Croatian Party of Right. It was an ultranationalist formation seeking to expel the Serbs from Croatia. Frank's followers became known as Frankists – see **Starcevic, Ante**

Frankists – see **Frank, Josip**

(HDZ) Croatian Democratic Union - see **Tudjman, Franjo**

(HPSS) Croatian Peoples' Peasant Party - see **Radic, Stjepan**

(HRSS) Croatian Republican Peasant Party - see **Radic, Stjepan**

(HSS) Croatian Peasant Party - see **Radic, Stjepan**

Illyrian movement - led by Ljudevit Gaj in the later half of the 18th century which envisioned a federated South Slav monarchy under Croatian rule.

JNA – Yugoslav Peoples Army

Jovic, Borislav – a Serb holding the position of President of Yugoslavia in 1990.

Krajina - a portion of Croatia adjacent to Bosnia inhabited by a predominantly Serb population for over four centuries.

Kucan, Milan, - former Communist Party leader in Slovenia who became its president following free multi-party elections in 1990.

(LCY) League of Communists of Yugoslavia - Originally known as the Communist Party (CPY) of Yugoslavia under Tito but renamed to the LCY following his ideological split with Stalin.

Macek, Vlatko - Leader of the Croatian Peasant Party (HSS) following Stjepan Radic's assassination.

Matica Hrvatska - Croatia's oldest cultural organization responsible for radicalizing the Croatian Spring movement.

Memorandum - document published by the Serbian Academy of Arts and Sciences during the 1980s highlighting Serbia's grievances within Yugoslavia. It was to become the ideological underpinning for Slobodan Milosevic's ensuing nationalist program.

Mesic, Stipe - Prime Minister of Croatia and next in line to replace Serb Borislav Jovic as federal President of Yugoslavia in 1991.

Mihailovic, Draza - see **Chetniks**

Milan Martić - became military leader of the rebel Croatian Serbs forces in Krajina. Together with the Croatian Serb political leader Milan Babic (who inherited leadership following the discredit of Jovan Raskovic) they led the break-away region of Croatia called (SAO Krajina) Serbian Autonomous Region of Krajina.

(MUP) Ministry of Internal Affairs - the Croatian institution devised in 1990 under HDZ leadership which began as Croatia's police force eventually transforming into the Croatian Army.

National Council - a coalition of all Croatian Serb and Croatian parties under the direction of Frano Supilo and Ante Trumbic who sought a way out of Austro-Hungary for Croatia by joining with Serbia.

National Party - a political party formed by philanthropist Bishop Josip Juraj Strossmayer first to advocate the union of the South Slav people under the term Yugoslavia.

(NDH) Independent State of Croatia - Croatian puppet state lead by the fascist Ustasha under Ante Pavelic's leadership during WWII.

(NRS) Serbian Radical Party - see **Pasic, Nikola**

Party of Right - see **Starcevic, Ante** and **Frank, Josip**

Pasic, Nikola - Originally Prime Minister of Serbia under King Aleksandar to become the leader of Serbian Radical Party (NRS) during the Kingdom of Croats, Serbs and Slovenes.

Pavelic, Ante - father of the Croatian fascist movement called the Ustasha.

Pribicevic, Svetozar - leader of the Democratic Party (DS) representing Croatian Serbs during King Aleksandar's reign over the Kingdom of Croats Serbs and Slovenes and then pre WWII Yugoslavia.

Pure Party of Right - see **Frank, Josip**

Radic, Stjepan - leader of original Croatian Peoples' Peasant Party (HPSS) enjoying popular support amongst Croatians during the pre-WWII Yugoslavia, later renamed to Croatian Republican Peasant Party (HRSS) and finally to simply the Croatian Peasant Party (HSS).

Rankovic, Aleksandar - Serb member of Tito's Partisan leadership. Following WWII he was to become the leader of Yugoslav secret police and, until his falling from Tito's grace, was second most powerful man in Yugoslavia.

Raskovic, Jovan - leader of Croatian Serbs under the Serbian Democratic Party (SDS) in post-Tito Yugoslavia.

Saint Vitus' Day - refers to June 28 when in 1839 Serbs lost a decisive battle against Ottoman invader in Kosovo fields followed by four centuries of occupation.

(SDS) Serbian Democratic Party - see **Raskovic, Jovan**

Starcevic, Ante - along with Eugen Kvaternik he founded Party of Right in the latter half of the 18th century which advocated Croatian radical nationalism calling for a Greater Croatia.

Sporazum (Agreement) - An agreement made in 1939 between Serbian Prince Pavle and Croatian representative Vlatko Macek allotting Croatia a greater degree of power and

independence within Yugoslavia. It also proposed to enlarge Croatia by linking the Herzegovina region of Bosnia to it.

SAO Krajina - see **Milan Martić**

(TDs) Territorial Defense Units - following the Split with Stalin, Tito, fearing Soviet invasion created local units which could fight a guerilla war if the need arose. Included were small caches or weapons scattered throughout the country conceived to arm TD forces.

Tripalo, Mika - see **Bakarić, Vladimir**

Trumbić, Ante - following the split in the Party of Right initiated by Josip Frank, Trumbić along with Frano Supilo became leaders of the rump liberal wing of Party of Right. Initially both advocated a South Slav State as the best way to insure Croatian independence from Austro-Hungary. They envisioned a union based on equality amongst Croats and Serbs. Trumbić, the more radical of the two eventually called for total Croatian independence. - see **National Council**

Tudjman, Franjo - leader of Croatia's ruling party called (HDZ) Croatian Democratic Union and following multi-party elections in 1990 to become President of Croatia.

Ustasha - terrorist revolutionary organization established and led by Ante Pavelić seeking Croatian independence to become Croatia's puppet government during WWII.

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