



The coat of arms of Socialist Yugoslavia

**“Brotherhood and unity?” The relationship between
nationalism and socialism in socialist Yugoslavia**

Master thesis Conflicts, Territories and Identities
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Map of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia



The Yugoslavia timeline

**note the 'Yugoslavia' in Italic isn't handled in this thesis due to research boundaries.*

1918-1929	the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes
1929-1941	the Kingdom of Yugoslavia
1941-1945	Yugoslavia is divided up by the axis occupiers
1941-1945	'National War of Liberation' (World War II)
1943-1946	Democratic Federal Yugoslavia
1946-1963	the Federal People's Republic of Yugoslavia
1963-1992	the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia
1992-2003	* <i>Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro)</i>

Since Yugoslavia had a couple of different names during its existence and I've used them together sometimes – for instance, when talking about Tito's policy or pre World War II nationalism I've grouped the states during this time. I use the term 'first Yugoslavia' to refer to the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes and the Kingdom of Yugoslavia. The terms 'socialist Yugoslavia' or 'second Yugoslavia' I have used for the Democratic Federal Yugoslavia, the Federal Peoples Republic of Yugoslavia and the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. When using the term 'both Yugoslavia's', I'm thus referring to both these states together when noticing and arguing about a parallel between both.

List of terms and abbreviations

COMINFORM	Abbreviation for the Communist Information Bureau, a Moscow controlled framework for communist parties founded in 1947
JNA	<i>Jugoslovensko Narodna Armija</i> - Yugoslav People's Army
KPJ	<i>Komunistička partija Jugoslavije</i> ; Communist Party of Yugoslavia, 1919-1952
MASPOK	Short for <i>masovni pokret</i> . A nationalist, reformminded mass movement in Croatia in the early 1970s
Matica Hrvatska	'the Croatian Centre', one of the oldest and most influential Croatian cultural institutions
NDH	<i>Nezavisna Drzava Hrvatska</i> , the Independent State of Croatia, a fascist quisling regime ruled by the Ustaše between 1941-1945
OZNa/UDBa	The communist secret police services in socialist Yugoslavia.
Šahovnica	The red and white chequered shield in the current Croatian flag. For Croat nationalists it's a Croatian symbol, for non-Croats in the SFRY it was associated with the NDH
SFRY	Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia
SKJ/LCY	<i>Savez komunista Jugoslavije</i> ; League of Communists of Yugoslavia, the name of the KPJ after 1952 until 1990
Ustaše	<i>Ustaša - Hrvatski Revolucionarni Pokret</i> in English: the Croatian Revolutionary Movement. A Croatian fascist movement that is responsible for killing King Alexander in 1934 and ruled the NDH

Introduction

When I started thinking about a subject for this master thesis, there was one issue that I couldn't wrap my mind around; how could some of the former Yugoslav republics that had been at war in the early to the mid-1990s in an effort to gain their national independence now apply for European Union membership? Currently Slovenia is already part of the EU and Croatia will join the EU on July, 1, 2013, if it meets the EU criteria on fighting crime and corruption. Serbia, Macedonia and Montenegro, three other former member states of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, are recognized candidates for EU membership.¹ The fact that these republics want to join the EU, seemed to me somewhat odd and bizarre; to give up the newly gained national sovereignty within 20 years after nationalism and war had torn up socialist Yugoslavia. During my stay in Zagreb in the summer of 2011 I did notice that I wasn't the only one who thought about it like that; several people said basically the same thing to me without me even hinting at this thought. Although a lot of the government buildings had European Union flags next to the Croatian flag, the graffiti I saw on the streets of Zagreb told another story.



Everyday when I rode the tram to the Hrvatski Institut za Povijest, I saw some graffiti at Vlaška street saying 'Euroslavija'; a combination of the words Europe and 'Jugoslavija', the Croatian word for Yugoslavia.

Perhaps, or most likely, this was the work of nationalists, but it did signal to me that among a significant part of the Croatian population the upcoming European Union membership isn't welcomed at all and that my initial ideas about giving up the newly gained sovereignty when starting this thesis were felt by others. The nationalism that tore up Yugoslavia still existed.

Nationalism in former Yugoslavia, as most forms of nationalism elsewhere, is full of symbolism. For Serbian nationalists it is not a coincidence that Gavrilo Princip killed Habsburg archduke Franz Ferdinand on the same date Stalin ended the

¹ *Volkskrant*, (2012a, 2012b)

relationship between the Soviet camp and communist Yugoslavia; which happened to be the same date of the battle of Kosovo Polje in 1389 when the Serb kingdom was lost to the Ottomans. All these historical events took place on June 28, coinciding with the Orthodox celebration of St. Vitus Day.²

Croatian nationalism also thrives on symbolism. During my stay in Zagreb the statue of Josip Jelačić on a square named in his honor, proved to be a site of this type of nationalistic symbolism; at this square I saw veterans come together and other national



The statue of Josip Jelačić decorated with some high ranking Croatian military figures (including Ante Gotovina) who are indicted by the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia. This symbolic act connects them with Jelačić and thus portrays these men also as national heroes.

ist rallies. The history of this statue says a lot about the sentiments it has for Croats. Josip Jelačić was the count who ended serfdom in Croatia and thus is seen as a national hero, even though he was employed by the Habsburg Empire which ruled Croatia at the time. A square in Zagreb was named after him in 1848 and a statue of him was placed there in 1866. It stood there until 1947 when the communists renamed the square to the Square of the Republic. The reason that the communist regime removed his statue was the fact that Karl Marx held Jelačić accountable for the suppression of the Hungarian republic of 1847-1849 and thus Jelačić was seen as an anti-communist – which made him all the more popular within Croatian nationalist circles, since he now was both pro-Croatia and anti-communist. In 1989 the statue returned to the square, now renamed as Trg ban Josip Jelačić.³ Someone I spoke with in Zagreb told me that ‘now it seems not that important, but in 1989 it was very important to us’.

The aim of this thesis

The aim of this thesis is to explain, based on academic theories, the nation building process in and disintegration of socialist Yugoslavia. I will analyze both these processes through the constructivist theory on nationalism as formulated by Gellner, Hobsbawm and Anderson and thereby not opting for oversimplified stereotypes about ‘the Balkans’. With the current rise of nationalism all over Europe this stereotype becomes harder to maintain and can’t explain what happened in socialist

² Campbell (1967), p. 12.

³ Ramet (2002), p. 39.

Yugoslavia. The goal of my master thesis is to give an explanation of how the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (SFRY) was able to disintegrate by the forces of ethno-nationalism (especially Serbian and Croatian) I will start by giving a historical analysis of the SFRY communist policy regarding nationalism and nation building. How did communist policy influence the outbreak of the conflict in the early 1990s? And how did the local nationalists react to this? The summary of the research question is thus as followed: *Why and how was it possible that the SFRY was to ultimately disintegrate through the forces of ethno-nationalism?*

The social relevance of this thesis

In several Western European countries right wing governments are in power and lean towards nationalist policies, as far as possible within the framework of the European Union. Until a couple of weeks ago in the Netherlands we had a government that is made up by two parties that don't hold a majority in parliament, but that do get support ('gedoogsteun') from Geert Wilders and his nationalistic, populist rightwing party the PVV; without the PVV being accountable for policy or contributing any of the members of the cabinet. A similar situation can be seen in some Scandinavian countries. While the European Union has expanded its powers greatly in the last twenty years, the idea of a European identity is far from being a reality.

In modern European history a similar project was undertaken, namely Yugoslavia and therefore I think that one could learn from the disintegration of the SFRY. This isn't to say that the SFRY and EU are comparable at all grounds, but both were/are a political framework that seeks to integrate different nations into one new, overarching identity after the massive destruction of World War II. In the case of the SFRY this was the idea of the 'Yugoslav', in the case of the European Union this led to the idea of 'European citizenship'. Now this 'European citizenship' doesn't mean that local identities are undermined in the case of the EU as Croat nationalists (to give an example) were under Tito, but I think that when it comes to identity the role of perception isn't to be underestimated. Lessons about how not to integrate a group of nations into one overarching political unit and identity can be learned from the case of the SFRY; on the other hand, there are also positive lessons to be learned from the SFRY, since it was a successful project for roughly 40 years. It was a communist project, but I do think that the EU and its member states could benefit from this research in the sense that they know what can lead to a population supporting (ethno) nationalism as a solution for political problems. As a historian, I think (perhaps somewhat naively), or at least hope, that one can learn from the past and think that this master thesis could help with that process.

I'm not arguing that I'm all-knowing and not influenced by certain ideas, since everyone is. However, with the end of the Cold War and the Yugoslavian wars being over for more than 15 years right now, I do think I have a more balanced view on the disintegration of the SFRY. Growing up in the 1990s, a much heard argument was that this was typical of the Balkans. The 'Yugoslav experience was minimized in its generality'; one couldn't learn many valuable lessons from it. However, Andrew

Baruch Wachtel argues that the lessons of Yugoslavia could perhaps be applied if one removes the term Balkan and chooses for terms like multi-nationalism, multi-ethnicism and multi-culturalism.⁴

Victor Zaslavsky argues that in the early 1990s Western Europe saw the rise of nationalism in Central and Eastern Europe as irrational and anachronistic; thus there was not much support or sympathy for the newly formed democratic nation-state on the ruins of the multi-ethnic, collapsed real existing socialism in Europe. He argues that the citizens of these countries didn't get their own country from their own will for self-determination, but that it was imposed on them from above. In the USSR, but also in Yugoslavia, both socialist countries with an internationalist ideology, ethnicity was in fact institutionalized. With the restructuring of the Marxist-Leninist states in the second half of the 1980s there suddenly was a possibility for old nationalist feelings to resurface. Nationality thus has become 'the most potent base of social mobilization' in time of crises.⁵

Now that the European Union and its member states are confronted with nationalism - something that really wasn't such a big issue during the 1990s - lessons can be learned from Yugoslavia and some form of reinterpretation may be necessary to actually learn something from it. If one assumes that, for example, Croats hate Serbians because they are Serbians, the policy regarding this region will try to find ways to cope with this assumption. If there in fact are other, deeper underlying reasons why one nation seems to hate another, or why national sovereignty becomes preferable and this isn't addressed in policy regarding the region, important causes may be overlooked and the policy which aims to solve the conflict can in fact even aggravate the problems in former Yugoslavia. This is also the practical goal, namely to get a more balanced insight in the relationship between nationalism and socialism in Yugoslavia and thereby also the relationship between nationalism and internationalism, and not starting with the idea that it would go wrong with Yugoslavia no matter what.

The scientific relevance of this thesis

This thesis can be useful in gaining more insight into the problem of how a political federation that was successful for almost half a century was able to disintegrate. Gaining more insight in how a political federation that fell apart within a timeframe of just couple of years can provide more insight in the relationship between nationalism (which essentially deals with the idea of solidarity with the nation) and socialism (which essentially deals with the idea of solidarity among the – international – working class) in the case of a multinational federation instead of a single nation state. So far, most literature has been written about the USSR.⁶

With this thesis I want to compare the classic constructivist theories regarding nationalism with the case of the SFRY and its disintegration. The theoretical goal is to

⁴ Wachtel (1998), p. 233.

⁵ Zaslavsky (1992), p. 97-107.

⁶ Suny (1993) is a good start for further reading about nationalism and nation building in the USSR.

apply the more recent theories not to a 19th century case, but to a very recent case. I want to do this by using the SFRY as a case study. The theories I use are those of the more prominent writers on nationalism, mostly Hobsbawm, Gellner and Anderson. I will test their theories, which are based on historical examples rather than the dissolution of the SFRY (their classic academic works all appeared in the early 1980s) and see if they still apply to the late 20th century. This makes my thesis a good contribution to the literature on this subject, for it gives a historical overview based on more recent theories regarding nationalism instead of what seems to be common when it comes to the Balkans, namely a short period analysis full of primordial stereotypes. While it is true that the SFRY only took a few years to disintegrate, the roots of it aren't just found in the late 1980s. By analyzing the nation building process in Yugoslavia, I will be able to point to longer term causes and not just to short term problems which plagued the SFRY.

Research methods

The research method I have used is that of the single case study. This has given me the opportunity to really delve deep into the substance and problems I wanted to research for my thesis. I'm not in favor of comparative studies, since they tend to disregard those things that can't be compared. Lessons can be learned from case studies when one focuses on one country (in this case the SFRY) and theory; when one wants to put several countries within one theory, important details get lost. Now this can give you a good theory, but I think if one really wants to understand the outcome of something, one really needs to look at the things that are typical and unique. Proving a theory by omitting certain facts is something that I don't think is very scientific and responsible.⁷ By just focusing on the SFRY, I really can go into depth into the subject matter without having to omit certain facts. By analyzing the case of the SFRY in the framework of the theories of Gellner, Hobsbawm, Anderson and Brown, I will have some sort of a comparison, which in my eyes isn't problematic; in fact, I think it can give insight into both the SFRY and the theories, since what can explain 19th century nationalism doesn't per se explain what happened in the late 20th century.

This thesis is based for a large part on literature research, mostly for practical reasons. I don't read nor speak any of the former Yugoslavian languages.⁸ Another reason is that since I already have a bachelor and master degree in history, I do know how to use literature and know what certain pitfalls are. Another big plus of doing a literature study is the fact that you can get fairly easy access to most of the materials you need, which makes sense when doing a single case study research, because then you can really go deep into the subject matter. The criteria of what literature to use and not to use is, as always is the case with historians, a personal judgment.

⁷ Verschuren & Doorewaard (2005), p. 163-171.

⁸ The Croatian literature I have used has English summaries at the end of the books, which I did use and for some of the statistical material I received help from Josip Mihaljević of the Hrvatski Institut za Povijest.

In addition to literature and source research, I also had interviews and digital correspondence with experts on the former Yugoslavia and I also used statistical data for this thesis. The reason I talked to Croatian historians and used relatively more books that were published in Zagreb than in Belgrade is purely a matter of having had an internship in Zagreb. This doesn't mean I'm biased in favor of the Croat view on the disintegration of the SFRY or rate the Serb version as less important. The Serb side of things is something I was able to extract through literature (Serb and non-Serb) about the subject which was translated into English. In my view most literature deals less with Croat nationalism than Serb nationalism, which is an issue I think I have been able to overcome by interviewing Croat historians and using some local publications.

The research question(s)

In order to answer my main research question: *Why and how was it possible that the SFRY was to ultimately disintegrate through the forces of ethno-nationalism?*, these are some sub-questions that have to be answered:

- *Was there an official 'SFRY national identity' and, if so, what was it and why was this problematic to some inhabitants? What was the Yugoslavian idea and where did it originate from?*
- *How important were Tito and the Partisan legacy for the legitimization of the SFRY?*
- *How did the SFRY deal with the past?*
- *What were the major changes in the 1974 constitution, what were the ideas behind it and how did they influence the development of nationalism?*
- *What state was Yugoslavia in before Milošević rose to power?*
- *Why and when did ethno-nationalism become a feasible option for political legitimacy? Had this anything to do with the death of Tito, the fading memory of the Second World War and the end of the Cold War, or was it ultimately the transition to democracy that gave nationalism a good chance? Was the rising nationalism a reaction to the official communist policy of 'brotherhood and unity' or was it a reaction to earlier historical experiences, for instance the Yugoslav kingdom or the Second World War?*
- *Was it nationalism that ultimately led to conflict, or was it conflict that led to nationalism?*
- *Was the rise of ethno-nationalism a home grown product or was it promoted by Diaspora groups outside of Yugoslavia?*
- *Can we compare the outbreak of nationalism in the SFRY and its disintegration with the theories of Gellner, Hobsbawm, Anderson regarding nationalism; is the SFRY a textbook example or the exception to the rule(s)?*

By answering these questions, I can reach my central goal of explaining why the SFRY was able to dissolve by the forces of ethno-nationalism and compare this result to the constructivist theories of Gellner, Hobsbawm, Anderson regarding nationalism and nation building.

The 1974 Constitution as a turning point in history

When I started the research for this thesis, I was struck by something that did not seem odd at first, but became more and more odd the further I got in my research; namely, the choice of turning points in post-war Yugoslavian history. Most literature either chooses the death of Tito (1980) or the rise of Slobodan Milošević (early 1980s) as the moment (or moments) in which socialist Yugoslavia became doomed and divides its history in the time before and after these events.⁹

In this thesis I opt for another turning point, namely the 1974 Constitution. By focusing on historical actors, I think that other factors, such as economic disparities, but more importantly, the 1974 Constitution as the problem instead of being the answer, tend to be overlooked. Therefore I chose for the following chronology in this thesis. The first chapter deals with the Yugoslav idea and the forming of the first Yugoslavia in the 19th and first half of the 20th century until the end of the Second World War. The second chapter handles the time between the end of the Second World War and the pronouncement of the 1974 Constitution. The third chapter deals with the 1974 Constitution and the effects this had on socialist Yugoslavia until the memorandum of the Serb Academy of Science and Arts in 1986. The fourth chapter describes the rise of open nationalism under Slobodan Milošević and Franjo Tuđman from the late 1980s onwards and will end with the breakup of socialist Yugoslavia, which formally ceased to exist in 1992.

The reason for choosing 1992 and not the Dayton accords of 1995, that brought an end to the Bosnian wars, have everything to do with the fact I am a political historian by trade and not a military historian. Therefore I won't take the Yugoslav wars of the first half of the 1990s into account and give details of what happened where during that war. My goal with this thesis is to try to explain how it was able to come that far by taking into account how the Yugoslav state tried to solve its national question(s) with socialism and how local nationalists reacted to that by looking at ideologies, policy and reactions to it. It is that relationship, or conflict, that is the focus of this master thesis. In this thesis, due to time constraints and other issues, I focus on Serbia and Croatia within socialist Yugoslavia. Since Serbo-Croatian speakers comprised more than 70 percent of the population, the border between the Serb republic and the Croat republic – but also the ethnic borders – were seen traditionally as the region that was regarded as most critical for fission and creating a

⁹ Most of the literature used for this thesis uses this division. For example, Leslie Benson's *Yugoslavia, a concise history* has a chapter that starts in 1980, the year in which Tito died, which is titled 'the end of Titoism' (pp. 132-154). A Bosnian Yugoslav communist and self-proclaimed Titoist, Raif Dizdarević, in fact wrote a book called *From the death of Tito to the death of Yugoslavia*, although he does recognize the fact that 'the roots out of which the crisis germinated and grew reached back into the Tito era', but 'Tito's historical achievements are incomparably greater than any of the mistakes he made' (p. 503). The importance of Tito for Yugoslavia's survival was in fact also recognized during his life. To give an example, James H. Seroka, wrote the article "Prospects for Stability in Post-Tito Yugoslavia" in 1978, two years before Tito would die. *The Death of Yugoslavia*, the book that accompanied the BBC television series with the same title, written by Laura Silber and Allan Little, traces 'the origins of the war to the rise of Serb nationalism among Belgrade intellectuals in the mid-1980s, and the subsequent [...] nationalist rhetoric by Slobodan Milošević' (p. 25). Sabrina P. Ramet's *Balkan Babel; the Disintegration of Yugoslavia from the Death of Tito to the Fall of Milošević* also clearly chooses Tito and Milošević as key figures in the (dis)integration of Yugoslavia.

new Yugoslav identity. War in this part of the country thus proved deadly for the Yugoslav idea.¹⁰

Historiographic problems regarding the SFRY

During my stay in Zagreb something became very clear to me. The problem with a lot of Western literature after 1990 was known to me as it was based on certain ideas that were a result of the end of the Cold War, mainly the idea of the Clash of the Civilizations as promoted by Samuel Huntington. Huntington argued that the economic division of the Cold War into First, Second and Third worlds, were now irrelevant and that underneath a much more fundamental division was a reality, namely that of eight different civilizations (Western, Slavic-Orthodox, Islamic, Hindu, Latin-American, Japanese, Confucian, and African). The conflicts rising from this division are, according to Huntington, much more natural and fundamental conflicts.¹¹ This view is related to the primordial view (which will be explained in the next chapter) and it argues that because the conflict in the former Yugoslavia was a conflict between civilizations (Western, Slavic-Orthodox and Islamic), it was inevitable. Cvijeto Job points this out:

*'Some contemporary observers, however, have misread Yugoslavia badly. At worst, their views verge on racist attitudes, such as amazement, even outrage, that such carnage is taking place in "the heart of Europe"-as if Europeans were somehow less prone to bestialities than their Third World or American cousins. Other commentators want to overlook the tragedy, noting that it is happening just to some strangely possessed Yugoslavs, not to mention "Oriental" Muslims. Some say the victims, being peoples of the backward Balkans, are not "true Europeans".'*¹²

What I didn't realize so clearly before my stay in Zagreb was that a lot of Western books from before the 1990s were also influenced by the Cold War, in which Yugoslavia seemed to be the communist exception.¹³ Certain constitutional ideas and theories were seen as a reality and thus paper became reality to some who admired Tito's third way; this can for instance be seen in an article by Gary K. Bertsch written in 1977:

'Yugoslavia is a genuine federal state providing a great deal of regional autonomy to its member nationalities and ethnic groups. In order to deal with its multi-ethnic condition and all the attendant inter-ethnic difficulties experienced before World War II, the new post-war Communist leaders created a federal [...] structure which copied the one earlier adopted in the Soviet Union. However, while the Soviet state

¹⁰ Denich (1994), p. 368.

¹¹ Huntington (1993), p. 22-23, 25.

¹² Job (1993), p. 54-55.

¹³ Interview with dr. Marko Zubak, June 2011, Zagreb.

tended to be federal in form only, the Yugoslavs attempted to make federal government and “self-managing socialism” a reality.’¹⁴

The reason that Yugoslav propaganda and figures were believed by westerners in these years has to do with the fact that certain aspects of Titoism, most crucially the system of worker self-management, could be interpreted as a form of participatory democracy.¹⁵

During Tito’s life, the fact that the SFRY still had problems with nationalism was recognized in literature, but it was seen as a force that couldn’t regain the same power as it had before. It was believed that industrialization in the end would undermine nationalist feelings. To give an example of this, Wayne S. Vucinich stated in 1968:

‘While nationalism gives cause for continuing concern, it does not seem at this writing to represent a serious threat to the existing regime or unity of Yugoslavia. Despite ethnic and cultural differences and the periodic eruption of serious discord, the centripetal forces of kinship and common interest have kept the South Slavs together [...]. The wartime fratricide does not seem to have created a permanent rift between the Serbs and Croats [...]. But if one were to select the single most important and perhaps irresistible force favoring Yugoslav unity, it would be the greatly increased social mobility that rapid industrialization has unleashed.’¹⁶

This wasn’t the position of an outsider; in virtually every book I read from the late 1960s this view was prevailing. All authors did recognize nationalism to be a threat, but one which would get overcome by time. This of course was before the oil crisis of 1973 and the economic crisis that hit Europe in the 1970s. In 1978 James H. Seroka predicted:

‘To date, the major institution capable of papering over and cutting across the basic social divisions has been the League of Communists led by Josip Broz Tito. Now 86 years old and the only individual not identified with Yugoslavia’s social conflicts, Tito has become the symbol of Yugoslav unity. His death could have severe and immediate repercussions on the stability of the country. [...] Two major objectives must be realized by Tito and his party in order to maintain unity and avoid civil strife in post-Tito Yugoslavia. First, nationalist, economic, and foreign pressures must be reduced or neutralized. Second, the party, as the intermediate group that transcends the major political cleavages, must be revitalized and strengthened.’¹⁷

¹⁴ Bertsch (1977), p. 88.

¹⁵ Allcock (2000), p. 241.

¹⁶ Vucinich (1969), p. 283.

¹⁷ Seroka (1978), p. 282.

With the outbreak of war between the former Yugoslav republics in the 1990s, the popular press during those years attributed the outbreak of ethnic conflicts to 'long-suppressed hatreds' that had been effectively suppressed by the 'communist party'. The metaphor 'prison of history' was used to explain the rise of nationalism in Eastern Europe in the late 1980s and the early 1990s. The rationale behind this thought is somewhat primordialistic in the sense that it makes the ethnic conflicts look almost inevitable, at least very likely without (communist) suppression. And because of this it doesn't take the actions of a person or organization in consideration, but it sees ethnic violence as something that was just bound to happen sooner or later. Thus, with the term 'prison of history', the communist regime had held the course of history hostage, but didn't end it. A good example of this line of reasoning can be found in a book from Elizabeth Drew from 1992 that stated that '*the disappearance of the Iron Curtain allowed long-suppressed - but no less bitter - ethnic hatreds to break out once more.*'¹⁸ One of the standard works on the history of the Balkans, written by Misha Glenny, in fact uses the term 'Prisons of History' as the name of the chapter on the history of the SFRY, communist Bulgaria, Romania and Albania in the years 1949-1989.¹⁹

John B. Allcock also points this out and adds that there is an interesting paradox when it comes to the history of the South Slav lands: on the one hand there is a clear consensus that the region's history is marked by abrupt breaks with the past (from medieval kingdoms to multi-ethnic empires to monarchic first Yugoslavia to communist Yugoslavia to the fragmentation of new democratic states), but in the discourse surrounding Yugoslavia in the early 1990s there is a strange continuity which portrays the inhabitants of the South Slav lands as violent tribes 'which are genetically programmed for violence'. Allcock argues that both views are a-historical and assumes that for Western readers it is impossible to understand South Slav culture since it is alien to us. He therefore concludes that this view on Yugoslavia and its fragmentation doesn't offer much for those who want to understand Yugoslavia within the context of world history.²⁰ The danger with this view is that for us who are active in the field of conflict studies, but also those who work in conflict resolution, the solutions which were made in the dismemberment of Yugoslavia might in fact supports nationalists who in some way are legitimized by this discourse and it undermines those parties which wanted to come to a less divisive solution.

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¹⁸ As quoted, in: Hodson, Sekulic & Massey (1994), p. 1535.

¹⁹ Glenny (1999), p. 545-633.

²⁰ Allcock (2000), p. 1-5, 11.

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(Ethno)-nationalism, communism and democratization: a theoretical overview

“For historians are to nationalism what poppy-growers in Pakistan are to heroin-addicts: we supply the essential raw material for the market. Nations without a past are contradictions in terms. What makes a nation is the past, what justifies one nation against others is the past, and historians are the people who produce it. So my profession, which has always been mixed up in politics, becomes an essential component of nationalism.”

Eric J. Hobsbawm, “Ethnicity and Nationalism in Europe Today”²¹

What is nationalism? Nationalism doesn't have a grand ideologue whose work can be read to understand the ideology. Nationalism can be liberal and it can be fascist. Nationalism found its enemy in Marxism, but has also been strengthened by Marxists. It has been liberating and oppressive, progressive and conservative, welcoming and xenophobic. It has looked to the future and the past for inspiration. It has been used for unification and separatist politics. Each case of nationalism is a product of its time and place in history.²² Nationalism can either strengthen a centralist government, such as it did in France, or be a reaction to centralization, as was the case in Austria-Hungary.²³ As a result of this, a good definition of nationalism isn't a simple thing. In this thesis I will use the definition of Gellner. Ernest Gellner uses a rather simple, but very clear definition of nationalism: “Nationalism is primarily a political principle, which holds that the political and the national unit should be congruent.”²⁴

Since we live in a world system organized around the idea of nation-states that tends to emphasize differences and deemphasizes common cultural traits – although there are of course exceptions - nationalism is a force that cannot be disregarded as something of the past. Claims based on ethnicity as a legitimate form of political organization have all but disappeared.²⁵ It is important to understand that the idea of the nation as a political unit and thereby nationalism is a relative new idea, albeit one with huge influence in the modern world. The only legitimate foundation for political organization is the nation, whether this is in the form of a nation-state, a federation or transnational cooperation; all these forms of political organization are based on the idea of the nation or multiple nations. This implies two things, namely the existence of distinctive nations and the fact that these are the only legitimate and

²¹ Hobsbawm & Kertzer (1992), p. 3.

²² Heywood (2007 [1992]), p. 143-145, 153, 157.

²³ Calhoun (1993), p. 218.

²⁴ Gellner, (2006 [1983]), p. 1.

²⁵ Calhoun, (1993), p. 215.

most appropriate units of political rule.²⁶ To understand what nationalism is we must look into the history of the term.

The history of nationalism

The idea of nationalism has its origins in the French Revolution and the Napoleonic wars. It was a reaction against absolutist rule. Early nationalists proposed that each people – or nation – had its own genius and cultural unity. The latter was self evident according to these early nationalists, since there was such a thing as a common language and history. In reality the standardization of languages and the historical research of most nations still hadn't taken place in a professional way, so local dialects flourished while only a small elite spoke and wrote a standardized language. Most people within the nation thus had problems understanding one another. The Industrial Revolution was very important for the spreading of the nationalists' ideas, since for the first time in history mass communication through newspapers became possible on such a large scale. Fast and widely understood forms of communication became a necessity in the newly, urban industrial society, so the process of standardization of language also started. Mass education made sure that within a few generations everyone spoke and understood the new standardized national languages, but it was also used as a tool to spread nationalistic ideas in school courses such as history and geography. Nationalism was particularly interesting to governments once they found out that they could use the feeling of national unity to draw attention away from class conflicts within their country. Nationalistic thinking thus led to "us versus them" thinking, you are either part of the nation or you are not. The era of mass politics had arrived; during the second half of the 19th century until the early 20th century the suffrage was extended, and universal suffrage became common in almost all of Europe.²⁷

National consciousness isn't something that reaches everyone at the same time in a society. Although these processes are different in each country, Miroslav Hroch discovered some patterns.. He compared European nationalist movements and found a distinct pattern, which he divides into three phases. The first phase, phase A, is the phase wherein among the elite in a society the idea of a *cultural nation* starts forming. In phase B the idea of cultural unity transforms into the idea that because of this cultural unity, there should also be *political unity* for the nation. Politicians and militants take over the national idea and use it to gain *support for their idea of national self-determination*. It is in phase C that these nationalist ideas are gaining support amongst the masses of a certain country, and where nationalism does become an idea carried by the 'whole nation' instead of just the elite.²⁸

²⁶ Heywood (2007 [1992]), p. 143-144.

²⁷ McKay, Hill & Buckler (2006 [1987]), p. 762-764, 823.

²⁸ Hobsbawm, (1992), *Nations and Nationalism since 1780: Programme, Myth, Reality* (Cambridge), p.12.

The theoretical debate on nationalism

In the theoretical debate about nationalism, three positions can be identified, namely the *primordialist* position, the *modernist* position and the *constructivist* position. Although there are a lot of differences between these three positions, they do have one thing in common, namely the acceptance of and agreement on the fact that the nation-state is the only appropriate social, cultural and political unit for the era of modernization and industrialization. The other thing these three positions agree on is the idea that this shape is facilitated by the ideological myths and symbols propagated by the political elites.²⁹ However, there are many differences between the views on other points, most importantly each position has a different vision on the origins of nations and what constitutes a nation. Primordialism sees the nation as having origins in a far away, distant, primordial past, or at least stresses the remarkable continuity between the ‘pre-modern kinship-based ethnic community’ and the modern nation. Therefore it doesn’t see nationalism as a product of the French Revolution, but something that is much older. A key thinker of primordialism, the 19th century German philosopher Johannes Herder, claimed that the nation was “*a natural division of the human race, endowed by God with its own character*”. This community was self evident, since each community has its own distinctive language. Self-realization of the individual was only possible if the nation achieved the same thing, namely statehood, which according to Herder was the destiny of each nation. This nation-state is created by the hands of the political elite, that shape the state and the myth of origin surrounding it, but the nation already exists in itself.³⁰

Modernists view the nation in terms of its functionality to the modernization processes of the 19th and 20th century. They see the nation-state as the political, economic and cultural unit which was conducive to the spread of commerce and industry and was in turn generated by the spread of commerce and industry. According to Anthony Smith the nation in the modern sense lineally descended from the older ethnic community, and it is the claim of common descent that is used by intellectuals and politicians to mobilize support for their ideas. Their choice of what might be ‘typical’ for a nation is based on their preferences and ideas about history; it never is merely a logical consequence. The idea of what the nation is (in the eyes of the intellectuals and politicians) thus needs to be spread amongst the masses, since in its beginning it is only the vision of a select group. It is thus no surprise that the idea of nationalism was something that became very influential during the century where the first steps towards ‘democracy’ were made. Both the primordial and modernist view of nationalism recognizes the independent role of the state elites in the articulation and mobilization of the national identity.³¹

The constructivist position started in the early 1980s with the works of Anderson, Hobsbawm and Gellner. Just like the modernists they believe that the nation and nationalism are a product of modernity, with the biggest difference that

²⁹ Brown (1998), p. 4.

³⁰ Herder, as quoted by Brown (1998), p. 3-4.

³¹ Brown (1998), p. 4-5.

they believe it was a deliberate project by the state elite to maintain control over a rapidly changing and industrializing society. They constructed the ideas of the natural nation by selective reinterpretation of the nation's historical symbols in mythical terms of continuity, which in most cases is far from accurate with the actual past. Claims to being descendents from a pre-modern society or community, formulated in ethnic terms, create a sort of organic unity, which is channeled by the state. By linking the contemporary society to this pre-modern past, the contemporary imagined community (a term coined by Benedict Anderson) is looked upon as 'natural and biological'.³²

Anderson, Gellner and Hobsbawm on nationalism

According to Benedict Anderson, author of *Imagined Communities*, 'nationality, or, (...) nation-ness, as well as nationalism are cultural artifacts of a particular kinds' that were created from the end of the eighteenth century onwards.³³ He points out the three main paradoxes regarding nationalists, namely that:

*"(1) the objective modernity of nations in the historian's eyes vs. the subjective antiquity of nations in the eyes of nationalists, (2) The formal universality of nationality as a socio-cultural concept – in the modern world everyone can, should, will 'have' a nationality, as he or she 'has' a gender – vs. the irremediable particularity of its manifestations, such that, by definition, 'Greek' nationality is sui generis. (3) The 'political' power nationalisms vs. their philosophical poverty and even incoherence. In other words, unlike most isms, nationalism has never produced its own grand thinkers: no Hobbeses, Tocquevilles, Marxes, or Webers. This 'emptiness' easily gives rise, among cosmopolitan and poly-lingual intellectuals, to a certain condescension."*³⁴

The anthropologist Anderson proposes the following definition of the word 'nation': 'an imagined political community – and imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign'. It is *imagined* because no member of the community will ever know all the other members of this particular community. It is *limited* in the sense that no nation claims that every person on this earth is a member of the same nation. The *sovereignty* comes from the fact that it is a product of the French Revolution and the time that followed it, namely the time were the divinely legitimized rule ended and the sovereignty of the people became central. The nation is seen as a *community*, because 'the nation is perceived as a deep, horizontal comradeship'.

The invention of the printing press was crucial for nationalism, according to Anderson. This has two reasons. The printing press made sure that large groups of people could read the same thing – say, for instance a newspaper – while knowing at the same time that other people also read the same newspaper. This thus led to the

³² Brown (1998), p. 3-4.

³³ Anderson (2006 [1983]), p. 6.

³⁴ Ibid, p. 5.

idea of a shared communal thing, namely language and time (the date on the top of the newspaper). But a second, and perhaps even more important way the printing press shaped nationalism was the fact that it played a huge role in the standardization of language, which as mentioned before is key to nationalists, since it is an expression of the national culture. The printing enterprise was a capitalistic enterprise in the sense that it published what sold. More people spoke and wrote a form of, say for instance German, within a certain territory than people spoke and wrote Latin in that same territory. The Reformation led to a further loss of importance of Latin in Protestant Europe and thus also led to a standardization of languages, since for the first time the Bible was translated into vernacular. The use of vernacular for governmental administrative tasks was as a result of this on the rise, which eventually led to what nowadays is known as ‘national print-language’. Language is important for nationalists for two reasons according to Anderson; first, no one can date a language, therefore it suggests that it’s something ancient and eternal; second, because language suggests a community, for instance in the form of a national anthem.³⁵ The nation according to Anderson thus finds itself relying very much on the idea of a national language at the core of the imagined community.

Ernest Gellner views modernity as a *‘distinctive form of social organization and culture’* and nationalism as *‘a function of modernity’*. Since nationalism came during the era of modernity, which also was the era of Industrialization, it is not a natural given fact, but merely a product of its time. The fact that more than ever before there was a need for a well organized state that needed loyalty from its citizens gave rise to nationalism. Gellner believes thus that there can be no nationalism without a state – and that without nationalism there isn’t such a thing as the nation, nationalism thus creates the nation - and therefore in the agrarian society where the state was rudimental at best there was no need for nationalism. According to him ‘nationalism is primarily a political principle, which holds that the political and national unit should be congruent’ and the nationalist sentiment gives way to what may become a nationalist movement. The fact that nationalism seems to be such a natural given thing is the reason that it is such a powerful concept. It offered people during the era of Industrialization a new identity after their old one had got lost in the process of urbanization which cut the ties with the agrarian cultures that most of the new city dwellers used to live in. The role that faith and church used to have in the old times is now occupied by nationalism and the state. Nationalism is thus a unifying process which forges links between intelligentsias and the working class, the whole spectrum of a society.³⁶ According to Gellner nations aren’t a natural given thing since:

“[...] nationalism is not the awakening and assertion of these mythical, supposedly natural and given units. It is, on the contrary, the crystallization of new units, suitable for the conditions now prevailing, though admittedly using as their raw material, the cultural, historical and other inherences from the pre-industrial world.”³⁷ “(...) nationalism

³⁵ Anderson (2006 [1983]), p. 6-7, 33-40, 44-46, 144-145.

³⁶ Gellner (2006 [1983]), p. xx, xxiii-xxvii, 1-5, 62-63, 134-135.

³⁷ Ibid, pp. 47-48.

*is not a sentiment expressed by pre-existing nations; rather it creates nations where they did not previously exist.”*³⁸

Nationalism can, according to Gellner, be seen as a tool to industrialization, but it can also arise without the industrialization (Gellner cites the case of the Swiss). For the first time in the history of mankind the idea of perpetual growth became important. There it isn't a surprise to Gellner that during this era the ideal and concept of progress and continuous improvement was invented, the era of industrialization was also, since this is a more and more egalitarian and mobile era than the eras before it. Therefore it isn't surprising that during modernity the values of universal literacy and the right to education originated, since without these rights it would be simply impossible to run an effective industrial and modern society. Just like Anderson Gellner traces the roots of the standardization of languages, so important in the modern era, back to the Reformation.³⁹

The British historian Eric Hobsbawm agrees with Gellner's definition of nationalism, but disagrees with his top-down approach regarding nationalism. He stresses a bottom-up vision towards nationalism, since it is crucial to understand its appeal to common citizens, although he realizes that this is something that is harder to research as a historian. Hobsbawm does point out that what the state elite and other elite propagate isn't necessarily something that hits home with the common citizens and therefore seeing the state discourse regarding the nation as that what was felt by its citizens may be wrong. Also, it may not be the main social identity someone possesses. In a religious or socially divided society, one's religious affiliation or class may be more important to one's own identity than nationality. Also, identity isn't fixed over time. People can change their mind about what they think constitutes their own identity.⁴⁰ Hobsbawm's most important contribution to the studies regarding nationalism is the idea of the invention of tradition which he pioneered in the book *The Invention of Tradition*. What is the invention of tradition?

*“Invented tradition’ is taken to mean a set of practices, normally governed by overtly or tacitly accepted rules and of a ritual or symbolic nature, which seek to inculcate certain values and norms of behavior by repetition, which automatically implies continuity with the past. In fact, where possible, they normally attempt to establish continuity with a suitable historic past.”*⁴¹

Hobsbawm argues that the idea of a tradition suggests that it is something that has been done since the dawn of mankind. However, most traditions known to us that invoke emotions regarding the nation state are relatively new and invented between the late 18th century and the first half of the 20th century by nationalists and national governments. In the 19th century state, nation and society converged. Good examples

³⁸ Gellner (2006 [1983]), p. xxv.

³⁹ Ibid , p. xxv, 22-28, 39-40.

⁴⁰ Hobsbawm (1992), p.9-11.

⁴¹ Hobsbawm & Ranger (2010 [1983]), p. 1.

of these symbols are flags, parades, national holidays and national anthems. When someone sees one's own flag, a national parade or hears the national anthem, it invokes a feeling of belonging to an ancient culture which is symbolized in these things. It is this paradox between the invented tradition and the emotions and ideas it evokes that are related to a 'natural' connection to an ancient past that are in fact not natural, that Hobsbawm views as key to understanding the invention of tradition and nationalism. The fact that these traditions are invented means that there actually is a radical break with the past, which in most cases was the Industrial Revolution and the new society required for the process of industrialization to take shape. Also the project of democratization is such a break with the past.⁴² Hobsbawm identifies three overlapping sorts of invented traditions, namely:

*"[...] a) those establishing or symbolizing social cohesion or the membership of groups, real or artificial communities, b) those establishing or legitimizing institutions, status or relations of authority, and c) those whose main purpose was socialization, the inculcation of beliefs, value systems and conventions of behavior."*⁴³

Civic nationalism, ethno-cultural nationalism and citizenship

The ideas of patriotism and nationalism are related, but not the same. Where patriotism derives from the Latin word *patria*, meaning 'love for the fatherland', the term nationalism derives from the Latin word *nasci*, which means to be born. In the form of a nation it means a group of people that are united by place of birth. Nationalism thus implies some form of ethnic or racial unity, where patriotism doesn't. One could relate these two terms to two forms of nationalism: civic nationalism (also called the 'French model' or the inclusive or subjective model) and cultural nationalism (also called the 'German model' or the exclusive or objective model). Nationalism and citizenship are two things that are closely related to each other, how one sees the nation also says a lot about how one thinks about citizenship. The model of civic nationalism has at its core the idea that anyone can become a citizen, as long as he/she is willing to do her/his civic duties. The reason that it's sometimes called the French model is because of the idea of citizenship that exists within France. Anyone can become a Frenchman, as long as they respect the French laws or are born on French soil. This is called the subjective model, because the criteria for it are subjective. Ethnicity doesn't play a role whether someone is a Frenchman or not. It is political nationalism and not cultural nationalism. Civic nationalism thus more or less favors multiculturalism.⁴⁴ Civic nationalism works inwards instead of outwards, meaning that the state boundaries are already defined, but the inhabitants of the territory need to be transferred into citizens of the nation in this case. Once again we can take France as an example of this; the borders of France

⁴² Hobsbawm (2010 [1983]), p. 1, 6-11, 263-267.

⁴³ Ibid, p. 9.

⁴⁴ Heywood (2007 [1992]), p. 143-144, 150-151, 153, 156-157.

didn't change significantly since medieval times, but that doesn't mean that there was something like Frenchmen. During the 19th century a project to achieve this was undertaken by the French state through education, language standardization and conscription.⁴⁵ Civic nationalism is thus a top-down form of nationalism, since the state already exists and promotes it, the people who live on its territory might not even feel like a citizen of the country, but may use their region or province as main source of identification.

The model of ethnic nation, or *Kulturnation*, is the German model and can be explained by looking at German history. For a long time, since the splintering of the Holy Roman Empire until the German Reich of Otto von Bismarck (1815–1898), the German people populated parts of Central and Eastern Europe, without having a German state. The idea of a German culture did live however: there was a sense of cultural unity among German speakers, who had their own standardized language since Martin Luther's Gutenberg Bible.⁴⁶ Ethno-nationalism is more of a bottom-up form of nationalism, since the nation already exists, but not the state. The nation-state is thus something that needs to be achieved. Citizenship depends on being a member of this particular nation. In Germany anyone who has 'German blood', i.e. German forefathers, can apply for German citizenship. This means that someone whose forefathers left the territory that is nowadays known as Germany in the 16th century and can prove this, can become a German citizen. On the other hand, the grandson of a Turkish guest worker who lived his whole life in Germany can't become a German citizen. This criterion, namely German ancestry or 'blood', is seen as an objective criterion. The idea of ethnic nationalism or cultural nationalism doesn't favor multiculturalism, in the sense that citizenship isn't open to anyone, but it is an exclusive affair. The ethnic community is thus a closed community which cannot be joined by outsiders.⁴⁷ Adam Michnik points out that this type of nationalism is a device for avoiding responsibility:

*“By identifying “the other,” which may be an ethnic minority, neighbors, or even just political opponents, as an enemy bent on subverting the nation, nationalists can shift blame for every social ill from themselves.”*⁴⁸

This type of nationalism thus leads to a situation of a world of 'us versus them, we versus the enemy' thinking, which can be both externally and internally. A good example of this can be found in the case of Nazi Germany, one of the most radical nationalist regimes ever. Hitler saw German Jews and socialists and communists as well as the 'international Jewry' and 'international Bolshevism' (which during the 1930s and 1940s was only made up by the USSR) as the enemies of the German

⁴⁵ McKay et al., (2006 [1987]), p. 823-826, 841-843.

⁴⁶ Ibid, p. 829-833, 839-841.

⁴⁷ Heywood (2007 [1992]), p. 148-152, 155-157.

⁴⁸ Michnik, as quoted in: Stokes (1994), p. 96.

nation, and the only way Germany could survive was a proactive policy towards these groups inside German society and outside the country.⁴⁹

Nationalism and ethnicity

The relation between nationalism and ethnicity is a complex one. Craig Calhoun points out that both aren't likely to disappear soon and both are 'categorical identities invoked by elites and other participants in political and social struggles.' Although one could argue that these things are a product of an industrializing society long ago, both nationalism and ethnicity still shape everyday life because they offer ways to grasp homogeneity and differences and construct specific identities. According to Calhoun 'it is impossible to dissociate nationalism entirely from ethnicity, it is equally impossible to explain it simply as a continuation of ethnicity.' With the collapse of communism, nationalism remains the most eminent rhetoric which aims at the demarcation of political communities, the claims to self-determination and 'rule by "the people"'. Ethnic claims and identities mostly start within state boundaries where an ethnic group doesn't necessarily want to separate themselves from the state, but seeks some form of recognition within it.⁵⁰ This of course doesn't mean that this claim – when suppressed - can lead to a separatist movement based on ethnic claims.

Thomas Hylland Eriksen comes to the conclusion that ethnic relations are constructed and made relevant 'through social situations and encounters, and through people's ways of coping with the demands and challenges of life'. Contact with another ethnic group is thus key to understanding one's own identity, ethnicity can't be found within one group according to Eriksen, ethnicity is a relationship between groups. It is the differences with the other group that are seen as important in ethnicity, not the things ethnic groups have in common. If there isn't a demand for seeing ethnicity as one main point of identity, ethnicity thus will not play a role in identity and a multi-ethnic society can be viable, if the conditions for this are right. One of the conditions relevant to this thesis is that Eriksen refers to the 'strong socialist state in central and eastern Europe'. When this disappeared, ethnicity became important again. Nationhood and ethnicity are thus related, but far from the same. However, both have myths of origins for instance, both think in a clear distinction between us and them, both think political legitimacy comes from a representation of the people by the people.⁵¹

Eric Hobsbawm and David J. Kertzer argue in 1991 that the concepts of nationalism and ethnicity are far from the same, since the first is a concept born out of political theory and the second is one born out of sociology and social anthropology. In the early 1990s it was clear that in Europe ethnic politics, slowly but surely had developed into nationalists politics. They argue that this is the result of the failure of society. If this happens, the loyalty of the nation becomes the ultimate guarantee. If one can't belong in the system anymore, because it has failed, there is

⁴⁹ Hobsbawm & Ranger (2010 [1983]), p. 279.

⁵⁰ Calhoun (1993), p. 235.

⁵¹ Eriksen (2010 [1994]), p. 1-3, 10, 17, 23.

always the other imagined community, namely that of the ethnic nation which seems permanent and indestructible and whose membership isn't up to debate. "Assuming the past is irrecoverable, the obvious fall-back positions are ethnicity and religion, singly or in combination."⁵² When the imagined community of International Socialist Solidarity ceases to exist, as it did in the former Yugoslavia, nationalism thus becomes a feasible option again.

Nationalism and socialism/communism

The reason that the ideologies of nationalism and communism clash lies in their core foundation. Socialists and communists view the nation as an artificial division of mankind, a division made to obscure social injustice and strengthen the established order.⁵³ It is therefore not strange that one of the basic ideas behind communism is the international solidarity of the working class ("*Proletarier aller Länder, vereinigt euch!*").⁵⁴ Marxists view nations as a product of the capitalist model of production. If capitalism would disappear, then logically nations would follow. So to them the idea that the nation is the sole legitimate foundation of a state doesn't make sense, since in the society of the future there is no need for nationality or ethnicity, since the political organization of the nationless future will have its basis in class and nothing else. The idea of having a nationality is, according to Marxists, nothing more than 'false consciousness'. Nations were purely born out of the socio-economic necessity within the capitalistic system.⁵⁵ However, there have been plenty of examples of the mixing of Marxism with nationalism, as was done by people like Mao Tse-Tung, Ho Chi Minh, Kim Il Sung, Fidel Castro and Josef Stalin.⁵⁶ But when one purely focuses on the theory of Marxism and Marxism-Leninism, it is an internationalist ideology. Nationalism on the other hand sees one's own nation, or people, as the sole group where loyalty and solidarity lies.⁵⁷ International solidarity doesn't make any sense to a nationalist, because nationalists are primordialists – after all, it would be impossible for somebody justifying being a nationalist while admitting that it's a construction made by a small elite to keep the rest of the population in check – and, as earlier mentioned, ethno-nationalists view the division between mankind as 'God given'. Solidarity should thus be among one's own people and not with foreigners based on their socio-economical status. This is where it differs with communism, because in communism the economical position of someone is crucial for his solidarity, while with nationalists it are cultural factors which makes a group of persons a nation, namely a shared language and history. Communism is an internationalist ideology, and nationalism, might imply everything except internationalist thought.

⁵² Hobsbawm & Kertzer (1992), p. 4, 6-7.

⁵³ Heywood (2007 [1992]), p. 150.

⁵⁴ Marx & Engels (1992 [1848]), p. 39, German quote from Karl Marx on: http://de.wikiquote.org/wiki/Karl_Marx, retrieved on 21-5-2011.

⁵⁵ Suny (1993), p.4-5, 15.

⁵⁶ Heywood (2007 [1992]), p. 167.

⁵⁷ Hah & Martin (1975), p. 367.

However, there is one big similarity between communism and (ethnic) nationalism, namely the fact they both claim that there can only be one 'single correct vision' of societal organization. Both opt for the idea of repression in the name of unity.⁵⁸ Therefore it is not surprising that in a communist (semi-)authoritarian country a good way for political opposition to challenge the powers that be, or to make sure that the political elite stays in its place during time of political turmoil is to opt for nationalism, since this is an idea that both challenges communism, but also is as much a complete answer to social ills and social organization. Democratization is one of those times of turmoil. Gale Stokes points to this and claims that:

"Both the Communists and nationalist seek purity, the Communists in their purges, the radical nationalists in their insistence on ethnic homogeneity. It is no accident that so many of the most virulent nationalists in today's Bulgaria, Slovakia, Romania, Serbia, and Croatia are former Communists. These men (and a few women) continue to believe, despite an entire human history to the contrary, in the ancient ideal of a homogeneous and virtuous people, on whose behalf, of course, they presume to speak."⁵⁹

⁵⁸ Stokes (1994), p. 99.

⁵⁹ Ibid, p. 99-100.

Chapter 1: The ‘first’ Yugoslavia and its origins

During the 19th century the early nationalists wanted to turn cultural unity into a political reality. They wanted the boundaries of the nation state to coincide with the territory where their people lived. Popular sovereignty was the goal; the political power of a certain territory should be in the hands of those who inhabited it, and not by a foreign monarchy hundreds of miles away. This political goal made it very revolutionary in large parts of Europe, since until 1918 most of the people in Central and Eastern Europe were the inhabitants of multi-ethnic empires. The territory that would later become the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia was the border region of two of such areas, namely the Austro-Hungarian Empire and the Ottoman Empire. In 1878 at the Congress of Berlin Serbia gained its independence from the Ottoman empire, while the right to “occupy and administer” Bosnia and Herzegovina went to the Austro-Hungarian Empire, which already possessed the territory that would later on be known as Slovenia and Croatia. In the late 19th century the Austro-Hungarian Empire was severely weakened because of the forces of local nationalist movements within its borders, and the Balkan was no different, where at the turn of the 20th century nationalism was on the rise again. On June 28, 1914 the Austro-Hungarian Archduke Franz Ferdinand and his wife were assassinated in Sarajevo by Gavrilo Princip, a South Slav revolutionary. This event led to what later would be known as the First World War, which would end in 1918. In the Treaty of Versailles the idea of national self-determination and the rights of small countries were of key importance in the peace proposal made by the American president Woodrow Wilson. After World War I (and with the joining of Montenegro in 1921) Yugoslavia as a political unit was born,⁶⁰ four years after the Serbian parliament had declared its aim to be *‘the liberation and unification of all our subjugated brothers, Serbs, Croats and Slovenes’*.⁶¹ This new state was called the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, and its foundation were the already existing Serb state with the incorporation of the Croat and Slovene territories.⁶²

The Yugoslav idea

While there already were Serbian, Croatian and later on also Slovenian nationalist movements, there also was the idea of South Slav political unity. Yugoslav means just that, South Slav. The first proponents of this idea were Josip Strossmayer and Franjo Rački, two Croatian Catholic priests.⁶³ The main sources of inspiration of the proponents of Yugoslavism were the Germans and Italians who by sticking together had made their own nation state out of a politically divided territory. The United States with its idea of a hybrid nation was another great inspiration to them. As a concept, Yugoslavism was opposed to the idea of an ethnic state based on historical

⁶⁰ McKay et al. (2006 [1987]), p. 838-839, 844, 891-893, 912-914.

⁶¹ Auty (1965), p. 69.

⁶² Rusinow (2003), p. 26.

⁶³ Cipek, (2003), p. 72.

rights; they instead opted for the liberal nation state. This however doesn't mean that the Yugoslavist ideal was a clearly defined ideology; far from it, as we shall see later as both king and communists chose for it.⁶⁴ By those who proposed this idea it was seen as 'the best solution' and 'the most natural possibility'. Why was this so? As stated before, the territory that would later become Yugoslavia was on the borders of two of the great, multinational empires of its time, namely the Ottoman Empire and the Austro-Hungarian Empire. Proponents of the Yugoslav idea were afraid that each nation on its own was too small to survive in such a world, but if the South Slavs would have their own state together they could survive in between the two empires. Furthermore, since the region was so ethnically and religiously divided, local nationalism would have a hard time succeeding. It was more important to focus on the things the South Slav people had in common, rather than what divided them. The focus was thus put on origin and language, which made the South Slavs a potential nation and which thus had the 'natural right' for statehood. Therefore Yugoslavism was seen as the best and most realistic option by those who proposed it.

Like other 'nationalistic' ideas, Yugoslavism and its predecessor, Illyrianism, was already an almost century old as an idea before it came into reality with the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes in 1918. Most of its proponents during the 19th century were a small group of Croats consisting of intellectuals, rich merchants or the lower strata of nobility. This small group had to compete with other, more successful forms of nationality politics, such as proposed by Serbian, Croat and Slovene nationalists who spread their ideas through schools and churches. A great advantage that the Yugoslavists had was that they had the idea of a language being the most common expression of nationhood on their side. Although there were differences in dialects, roughly the Serbs and Croats speak the same language – but in nowadays Serbia it's called Serbian and in Croatia it's called Croatian - and nationalists thought the same about this from the 19th century on.⁶⁵ The Yugoslavists thus argued if the Croats and Serbs are distinctly different nations, they must also have a distinct different language, which wasn't the case; therefore they were one nation. Slovenian on the other hand came closer to the *kajkavian* dialect, but still it differed more from Croatian than Serbian did.⁶⁶

In addition to language, all three groups shared a similar culture, although the Serbs had a different religion than the Croats and Slovenes. This however didn't mean that there already was such a thing as a shared Yugoslav identity, despite of what the Yugoslavists thought. And besides that, there was a large group of muslim Slavs living in the South Slav lands and their culture was different from those of the other groups living in the region. However, since they spoke the same language they were seen as people who had to go back to their former ethnic origin, namely Serbian

⁶⁴ Trgovčević (2003), p. 222, 229, 236.

⁶⁵ Croats speak three distinct dialects, *čakavian*, *kajkavian* and *štokavian*. The last dialect, the *štokavian*, was spoken by most Croats and a slight variation of it was spoken by most of the Serbs; thus *štokavian* became the basis for Serbo-Croatian.

⁶⁶ Rusinow (2003), p. 11-14, 19-20, 26.

or Croatian (or Yugoslav). Non-Slav muslims, such as Albanians, weren't taken into consideration by the Yugoslavists.⁶⁷

Still, there were other nationalisms to be taken into account, other than the Yugoslavian idea. The reason these were so powerful is the fact they were not a product of metropolitan ideology, but of the reality of living in an area which was the frontier between two multi-ethnic states. This led to a very much integrated idea of nationhood in which territory, language and religion play important roles.⁶⁸

The Serbian State and Serbian Nationalism

Serbian nationalism focused on its medieval past, when the Serbs had their own independent kingdom for some two centuries until it was invaded and conquered by the Ottomans. Since the Serbs had been incorporated in the Byzantium Empire their official religion was Orthodox Christianity. The Serb state and monarchy were destroyed in 1389. This defeat by the Ottomans at the Battle of Kosovo Polje remained important in the memory of the Serbs and became a huge influence on their idea about their own nationality. The Battle of Kosovo Polje was seen as one of the many attempts of a foreign conspiracy to subjugate the Serb people.⁶⁹ Since the Ottomans didn't force Islam on the people they ruled over, the Serbs remained Orthodox and this became an important part of their identity. The Serbs were predominantly illiterate peasants without both intellectual and political elite and therefore remained very much untouched by the encounters with the Islamic culture of their rulers. The relationship between the Ottomans and Serbs was never very peaceful as both sides distrusted each other which led to various conflicts during the five centuries the Serbs were part of the Ottoman Empire. Folk poetry and myths and the Orthodox Church made it possible for a Serbian identity to survive.⁷⁰ In 1828, after almost five centuries of Ottoman rule, the Serbs got their own state again which became truly sovereign in 1878.⁷¹

The Serbs would even after gaining their own state still adhere very much to the Orthodox religion as a cornerstone of their identity, which isn't a surprise since Orthodox Christianity features national churches. This importance of religion in the Serbian national identity was and is also reflected in the way Serb nationalists thought about the Croatian codification of the *štokavian* dialect by the Illyrianist Movement. In their eyes this was a conscious attempt to 'avoid anything that was akin to (Orthodox) Church Slavonic'. Vuk Karadžić was the most important person in codifying the Serbian *štokavian* and reforming the Serb language. He argued that the language used in literary so far was artificial, that most Serbs spoke *štokavian* and thus this should be the national language. In his eyes this was a strict Serbian language, anyone who spoke *štokavian*, so also Croats and Bosnian muslims, thus were Serbs who needed to be assimilated into being real Serbs, meaning they had to

⁶⁷ Trgovčević (2003), p. 223-224, 228, 231.

⁶⁸ Banac (1984), p. 60.

⁶⁹ Auty (1965), p. 25-28.

⁷⁰ Križan (1994), p. 48.

⁷¹ Auty (1965), p. 33-38.

adopt the Orthodox religion. Croat nationhood was a bizarre idea to Vuk Karadžić, since the Croats spoke three 'languages' and since language was the expression of the nation, one nation couldn't speak three languages. Ergo, all Croats who spoke *štokavian* were Serbs. The Macedonians and the Montenegrins, people who later did get granted their own nationhood together with the Bosnian Muslims (who then became known as Muslims) during socialist Yugoslavia, were also seen as 'corrupted' Serbs who had come under foreign influence. The Orthodox Macedonians were seen as Serbs who got corrupted by Bulgarian influences. Montenegrins were seen as some kind of Serbs, but one with their own special identity. They also had been conquered by the Ottomans, but the Ottomans never were able to exercise full control over Montenegro. Montenegrins also considered themselves to be Serbian, although they did manage to get recognized as an independent state at the Congress of Berlin.⁷²

Of all the nations in what would later become Yugoslavia, the Serbs had thus one great advantage; they had already had a state (technically speaking two, but since the Montenegrins saw themselves as Serbs I'll continue with the Serbian State) at the time of their 'national awakening'. Meaning they already had their own state since 1830 meant that the enthusiasm for the Yugoslav idea there wasn't big during the 19th century.⁷³ The population of Serbia was already actively becoming Serbs, with the help of their own state (although this was unstable at times due to a conflict between two royal families which both claimed the throne) and religion. Their nationalism was already very advanced by the time the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes came into existence. At that time, to most Serbian nationalists the idea of Yugoslavia was absurd and regarded as Dennison Rusinow claims '*a disguise for Greater Croatian nationalism and a new variation on Roman Catholicism's historic Drang nach Osten into the schismatic Orthodox world.*' Serbian nationalism was thus very much focused on their Orthodox religious identity, although the idea that the *štokavian* dialect was Serbian was firm and any Croat who spoke it was in reality a Serb. Serbian national consciousness was widely spread around the turn of the century. The interest in Yugoslavism only affected the Serb political and intellectual elite around the First World War, when they saw how it could further their own goals.⁷⁴ Since Serbia had already managed to get its own nation state, they had a certain prestige among other South Slav nations that hadn't achieved this goal yet.⁷⁵

The idea of a Greater Serbia or Pan-Serbianism was very important in Serbian nationalism, and around the turn of the century all but one small political party adhered to it. The idea of a Greater Serbia was perhaps not pioneered, but certainly codified by Serbia's minister of Interior in 1844, Ilija Garašanin in his work *Načertanije* (Outlines) in which he laid down a policy aimed towards the 'liberation and unification' of all the Serbs in one state under the monarchy. The ideas behind it were definitely aimed at expansion and assimilation of non Serbs and their territory in a Greater Serbian state.⁷⁶

⁷² Banac (1984), p. 44, 66, 78-81, 107.

⁷³ Pavlowith (2003), p. 57.

⁷⁴ Rusinow (2003), p. 16-17, 20, 22, 24.

⁷⁵ Trgovčević (2003), p. 230.

⁷⁶ Banac (1984), p. 82-84, 110.

Croatian Nationalism

Between 1102 and 1918 the Croats, a Catholic people, were ruled by the Hungarians after the Croat nobility signed a pact with the Hungarian king that granted that their customs and privileges remained intact. Over the centuries the Hungarians however became more and more dominating over the Croats, who lived in a border area that was frequently invaded by the Ottomans. When Croatia during the Napoleonic times got incorporated in a province called Illyria, it sparked the imagination of Croat intellectuals about South Slavic cooperation and unity. When Napoleon was defeated, they got reincorporated again in the Habsburg Empire, but the idea of Illyrian cooperation stayed and was reinvented by Ljudevit Gaj (who also codified and modified the *štokavian* dialect into a language) and count Janko Drašković. Both were key figures in what was later known as the Illyrian movement, which didn't receive much attention outside of intellectual circles. This Illyrian idea can be seen as a predecessor to modern Croatian nationalism, but also of the ideas that were later in that same 19th century promoted by Strossmayer and Rački. However, their ideas about South Slav (Yugoslav) cooperation initially didn't reach much further than the intellectual circles that they themselves belonged to.⁷⁷

The modern Croatian nationalism (sometimes referred to as the Croat Revival) was a reaction to the Magyar (Hungarian) policy of forced 'magyarisation' in their part of Austria-Hungary, which started in 1790 after the other half of the Empire chose to abandon Latin and go with German as their official language. The Magyars chose to make Hungarian the new official language. The Croat nobility responded with resistance and started countering by promoting a modern Croat nationalism.⁷⁸ While the Serbs had a strong tie between their religion and their identity, the Croats didn't have this. Although most Croats were Catholic, Catholicism wasn't being equated with the Croatian identity during this time by the Croatian nationalist ideologues and attempts to do so were extremely rare. This isn't surprising, since the Austrian Hungarian Empire was a predominantly Catholic empire, so the fact that the Croats were Catholic wasn't unique about them. There were attempts by the clergy to use Catholicism to unite Croats and Slovenes, but this wasn't met with great enthusiasm on either side since both had a distinguishable language. Bosnian muslims were seen as Croats, simply because they spoke the same language and were also South Slavs. While the Serb nationalist identity thus very much focused on assimilation, the Croat national identity was more integrationist during this time.⁷⁹ The Croat national consciousness was less furthered than those of the Serbs, since they didn't have a state. Most Croatian nationalists of nobility at this time seemed to favor some form of cooperation with the Serbs, although this wasn't always identical to Yugoslavism. They envisioned a more or less federal system in which every nation (meaning: the Serbian, Croatian and Slovene) had full equality.⁸⁰

⁷⁷ Auty (1965), p. 39-40, 42-43.

⁷⁸ Banac (1984), p. 107-108.

⁷⁹ Ibid, p. 44, 66, 107.

⁸⁰ Rusinow (2003), p. 24-25.

Like most nationalists in the 19th century, the Croat nationalists wanted their own nation state, and in their case independence from the Habsburg Empire. Outside of the circle of the Croat nobility more people believed in the ideas of the Croatian Party of Right, which favored an independent Croatian state which was called 'Greater Croatia', which would cover their own territory plus that of the Serbs and Slovenes, in which only Croats would be recognized as a political nation.⁸¹ Most Croat nationalists during this period, such as Ante Starčević, were in fact anti-clerical. To them the Catholic hierarchy was far too much involved with Habsburg affairs, and being Catholics within a Catholic empire didn't strengthen their claim for statehood. They thus argued that a Croat state should be formed based on the history of Croatia's state right, since they already did have their own state in Medieval times. The main goal was to achieve an own nation state.⁸²

The founder of the Croatian Party of Right, Ante Starčević, argued that the Croats were a separate nation and thus were entitled to having their own state. His view was that there should be a 'great Croatia' that would encompass most Serbo-Croatian territories, including Serbia itself. Starčević's innovation was to construct an ideological opposition between Croats and Serbs that defined Croatian statehood in terms requiring the exclusion of Serbs. The Croats were seen as the 'sole political people' of this 'great Croatia'. A problem was that the Croats were divided from each other since they lived in a heterogeneous border area and had much in common with their non-Croat neighbors. Starčević viewed the Muslims in Bosnia Herzegovina as Islamicized Croats, but still Croats. It was the Serbs that were the biggest regional obstacle to Croatian statehood and they were seen as a *'hindrance to the realization of complete Croatian sovereignty, expansion and homogeneity,'* and *'are racially inferior and fundamentally evil beings'*. In order to meet the linguistic criteria of Herderian nationalism, Starčević revived more archaic forms of Croatian and created new words to make the claim that Croatian was in fact a different language than Serbian – by doing so he wanted to separate Croatian from Serbo-Croatian.⁸³

Slovene Nationalism

Slovene nationalism arrived later than both Serbian and Croatian nationalism. It came in existence in the second half of the 19th century and was mostly inspired by the events of 1848. The 'United Slovenia' group wanted political and administrative unification of the Slovene lands within the Habsburg Empire, in which they would have the right to use their own Slovenian language in their schools and for their administration.⁸⁴ The Slovenian language was similar to Serbo-Croatian, but it still was distinct enough to be seen as an own, national language. Slovenes however stressed their cultural similarities with Croats and Serbs and favored statehood with these other nation around the 1890s.⁸⁵ The focal point of nationality was their own

⁸¹ Cipek (2003), p. 73.

⁸² Interview held with Mario Jareb during my stay in Zagreb in June-July 2011.

⁸³ Denich (1994), p. 373-374.

⁸⁴ Velikonja (2003), p. 84-87.

⁸⁵ Trgovčević (2003), p. 225, 228.

language which they had been able to preserve over centuries of Austrian rule, even though it wasn't allowed to use it in schools and for administration. Compared to other areas in the Kingdom, the Slovenes were a rather homogenous group in a homogenous territory. What also was unique was the fact that almost all Slovenes were educated, which wasn't the case in other South Slav territories.⁸⁶ In the years before the First World War, there definitely was such a thing as Slovenian national consciousness, but afraid of facing the Habsburg Empire alone most younger Slovenes opted for Yugoslav unity with one single Yugoslav identity; their vision on Yugoslavia was unitary.⁸⁷ The group that had thus the best claim to nationhood according to 19th century standards, namely a unique language, opted to give this away and wanted Yugoslavian unity, while those whose language wasn't so different in reality argued a lot about this issue.

The first Yugoslavia

When the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes was formed each of the three nations thus had a very different idea of what Yugoslav cooperation should mean in practice and what goals it should serve.⁸⁸ The new state - the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes - was founded on the Yugoslavist idea that once the Croats, Serbs and Slovenes would get to know each other their historical, cultural and religious differences would become less important and they would recognize that they in fact were one people. However, this didn't happen in what was later known as the first Yugoslavia.⁸⁹ What did happen?

Serbia came out of the First World War as a victor and a fighter for South Slav rights and independence. Serbian intellectuals thought it would be best to build it on the foundations of the already existing Serbian state and opted to keep the monarchy as a symbol of unity and keep the state a centralist state.⁹⁰ Although most countries in former Ottoman and Habsburgian territories were granted the nation state, the people who were united in the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes weren't, although it did have one big plus for the Serb nationalists since they were now united with all other Serbs.⁹¹ It was this state that would lay the foundation for all Serb, Croat and Slovene history during the 20th century. The choice for centralism wasn't surprising, considering that Italy and Germany also were centralized states during these years, and these two countries had become the model and inspiration for the newly founded nations which based themselves on 19th century nationalism. The problem of course was that Yugoslavism was such an idea, but it encompassed nations that also had similar processes and also were able to create their own recognized popular identity.⁹² Croat intellectuals, who initially were enthusiastic

⁸⁶ Auty (1965), p. 46-49.

⁸⁷ Rusinow (2003), p. 24-25.

⁸⁸ Ibid, p. 26.

⁸⁹ Trgovčević (2003), p. 233-234, 236.

⁹⁰ Ibid, p. 233-234.

⁹¹ Banac (1984), p. 138.

⁹² Wachtel (1998), p. 67-68.

about the Yugoslav ideal, grew disillusioned and bitter about it when it came into realization in the Kingdom of Slovenes, Croats and Serbs.⁹³

Since the state was a centralized democratic state, the Serbs that were the majority in it automatically had more to say than the other two recognized nations, the Slovenes and Croats (Muslims fell either in the Croat or Serb category if they were Slavs), much to the pleasure of the Serbs living inside Croatian territory, who would be afraid to be surrounded and dominated by Croats in a federation. The second largest group, the Croats, would thus automatically be in the opposition to any policy that in their eyes would serve any further Serbian domination. The main leader of the opposition, Stjepan Radić of the Croatian Peasant Party, opted for non-cooperation with the new state, since he felt it was oppressive to the Croats, which quickly led to problems. His stance led to problems with the Serbian members of parliament and in 1928 Radić and four other Croats delegates were shot in the Parliament by a member of the Radical Party from Montenegro. King Alexander saw the political crisis rising and chose to act.⁹⁴ In 1929 the Royal dictatorship of King Alexander started, which led to more complaints of forcefully 'Yugoslavizing', which was by most Croats seen as a policy of Serbian domination and centralization. In 1934 King Alexander was assassinated by the Ustaše, a fascist Croatian separatist group which was supported by Italy and Hungary, which would later rule the Independent State of Croatia from 1941 to 1945.⁹⁵

After the Royal dictatorship of 1929-1941, but also in the years before that, the first Yugoslavia in reality was a form of a 'Greater Serbia', a state in which smaller ethnic groups didn't have any rights. The idea of Yugoslavia thus left a bitter taste and lost its legitimacy with most non-Serbs before the Second World War. And the largest group of non-Serbs was the Croats, a group that couldn't be ignored. During the existence of the first Yugoslavia the central question was to suppress or conciliate with the Croats. The only attempt to reach this was the *Sporazum* [agreement] of August 1939 between the Croat leader Vlatko Macek and Prime Minister Dragisa Cvetković, a compromise that left the nationalist Croats dissatisfied and the majority of the ruling embittered.⁹⁶

World War II and the Kingdom of Yugoslavia

In 1941 the Kingdom of Yugoslavia was invaded and thus drawn into the Second World War. The policy of the Kingdom had been to stay neutral and – if the conditions were right – later join the Allied forces, although they urged their allies France and Great Britain to step in and open up a front on the Balkans. When Germany annexed Austria and Mussolini's invaded Greece, by March 1941 Yugoslavia suddenly was surrounded by fascist and semi-fascist regimes at its borders. The government of Yugoslavia was afraid to be usurped by the surrounding countries and

⁹³ Silber & Little (1996 [1995]), p. 28.

⁹⁴ Hoptner (1962), p. 1-7.

⁹⁵ Pavlowith (2003), p. 63.

⁹⁶ Lendvai & Parcell (1991), p. 254.

chose to sign the Tripartite agreement to at least save what was left to save. This Tripartite agreement was named after the Tripartite pact, which was signed by Germany, Italy and Japan in 1940 with the goal of mutual cooperation in establishing 'a new order in Europe and East Asia'. On March 27 a coup d'état took place by the army that wanted to save the nation's honor. In Croat nationalist circles this was seen as a betrayal and endangerment of the Kingdom by the Serb army elite, since it gave Germany a reason to invade Yugoslavia. The same day as the coup took place, Hitler ordered the attack on Yugoslavia, which took place in early April and won over the country within two weeks. After King Peter and his government had fled, Yugoslavia was left with a power vacuum.⁹⁷

The Axis forces chose to divide the territory of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia in three parts, with some of the border areas annexed by them and their satellite states. The first two parts were a smaller version of Serbia, now under German military administration which ended up as a Quisling regime and a Slovenia divided between Germany and Italy; the third part was the Independent State of Croatia, the NDH (*Nezavisna Drzava Hrvatska*), a more or less self governing Quisling state ruled by Ante Pavelić and his Ustaše.⁹⁸ Seeing themselves as a sort of continuation of the medieval Croat state, they adopted the *šahovnica*, an old Croat symbol of the red and white chequered shield on top of the blue, white and red flag of the former Kingdom.⁹⁹ The ideas of Ante Starčević were influential.¹⁰⁰ The Ustaše combined his ideas with more recent right wing nationalist ideas based on Italian fascism, German Nazi ideology, anti-Communism, but also on anti-Serbianism, anti-Semitism and anti-Masonry. Before their rise to power with the support of the Axis, they had little popular support in the Croatian part of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia. Most Croats didn't like or agreed with their ideas, but did welcome the idea of an independent Croatian state after the first Yugoslavia had been such a disappointment to them and their aspirations.¹⁰¹ The NDH was seen as something that would prevent the horror of war happening in Croatia and saved its population from foreign military occupation – in that sense NDH was welcomed. It soon turned out they were wrong, since the NDH was far from what people thought it would be.¹⁰² As a result, Croat support for the murderous Ustaše puppet regime was low during the war and most policies were treated with hostility. Only 6% of the Croats supported the movement.¹⁰³

It was during the NDH's existence when Ilja Garašanin's *Načertanje* became more politically significant than it had been before. Where before it wasn't a very important document, it was made so by the Croats who used it as a symbolic weapon against Serb hegemony within the first Yugoslavia, which the Croat critics claimed was directly inspired by Garašanin's work. It became a legitimization for the right of existence of a Croatian state.¹⁰⁴

⁹⁷ Hoptner (1962), p. 179, 187-189, 250-253, 267, 281, 285-297.

⁹⁸ Boban (1993), p. 45-48.

⁹⁹ Wachtel (1998), p. 129.

¹⁰⁰ Denich 1994), p. 373.

¹⁰¹ Cipek (2003), p. 77-78.

¹⁰² Jareb (2006), p. 648.

¹⁰³ Anzulovic (1999), p. 107.

¹⁰⁴ Allcock (2000), p. 344.

The Ustaše wanted to create one big Croatian state which meant that the Serbian minority, some 2 million, had to either convert to Roman Catholicism, expelled or exterminated. The Serbs were slaughtered in concentration camps and driven out of their villages, but also Jews, Gypsies and anti-Ustaše Croats were prosecuted and murdered in horrendous ways.¹⁰⁵ Bosnian muslims however were safe, since the Ustaše considered them to be Croats with Islamic faith and therefore they were just as much Croatian as the Croatian Catholics since both shared the same language, which was seen as a sign of common ethnicity. Islam was an integral aspect of Croatian cultural identity – in the same way as Roman Catholicism was - according to the Ustaše. The muslim masses however also didn't show much enthusiasm for this view of Croatian nationalism, instead they wanted the right to autonomous administration based on their own historical rights. Only a small part of the muslim elite choose to cooperate with the Ustaše regime.¹⁰⁶ This view regarding the muslims of Bosnia Hercegovina wasn't typical for the Ustaše, it already was a common idea for Croat nationalists years before the NDH came into existence.¹⁰⁷

As in most other European countries which had been invaded by the Nazi's, resistance came into existence. In the territory of what once was the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, there were two main groups into existence. In the Serbian part there were the Četniks, royalist Serbs who fought for their monarchy under the leadership of Colonel Draža Mihailović, who were mainly active in Serbia and Bosnia. The Četniks, just like the Ustaše, also had a murderous policy and massacred Croats and Bosnian Muslims.¹⁰⁸ Beside the Četniks there were the communist Partisans who fought against foreign oppression and fascism. They were led by Josip Broz, better known under his *nom de guerre* Tito. The communists had been a small and banned party in Yugoslavia, with 12,000 adult members and 30,000 members in its youth division, on a total population of 16 million people. One of their advantages was that they did already have some combat experience since some of their members had fought in the Spanish Civil War. They were the only party that offered a vision different than Quisling fascism or a return to the Serbian royal dictatorship, which was applauded by a great number of the south Slavs who saw the foreign occupation and its collaboration as unacceptable. Their position was also legitimate in the eyes of many of the intellectuals that still felt strongly about the Yugoslav ideal. Since the communist party had been banned, the Partisans already had experience with running a clandestine organization and saw that they could combine resistance with revolution. The extreme violence against the Serbs and Jews in the NDH had driven many of them into the hands of Tito's Partisans troops, thus strengthening them and further making the organization a truly Yugoslav organization.¹⁰⁹ Tito and his comrades declared the existence of a communist Yugoslavia in Jajce (eastern Bosnia) on November 29, 1943, and named it Democratic Federal Yugoslavia.¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁵ Tomasevich (1969), p. 78, 79.

¹⁰⁶ Kisić Kolanović (2009), p. 411-415.

¹⁰⁷ Interview held with Mario Jareb during my stay in Zagreb in June-July 2011.

¹⁰⁸ Doder. (1993), p. 10.

¹⁰⁹ Glenny (1999), p. 485-487.

¹¹⁰ Silber & Little (1996 [1995]), p. 28.

The Četniks and the Partisans soon ended up fighting each other, since they had such different views and aims on what the future should hold after the war. At the end of the Second World War, which also became known as The War of National Liberation, the Partisans won. The Partisans of Tito liberated their country of foreign influence by identifying with their own people and without the help of the Red Army, but what they inherited was a deeply divided country which had suffered extreme losses in human life, economic goods and production capacity.¹¹¹

¹¹¹ Tomasevich (1969), p. 59, 67.

Chapter 2: Historical background of Tito's Socialist Yugoslavia

"[...] since World War II every successful revolution has defined itself in national terms – the People's Republic of China, the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, and so forth – and, in doing so, has grounded itself firmly in a territorial and social space inherited from the pre-revolutionary past."

*Benedict Anderson – Imagined Communities*¹¹²

When forging a new, ethnically diverse state it is regarded crucial that its inhabitants adopt a new common identity, which may be based on diversity, but a new integrated and over-riding identity is important for such a state to be successful. Naturally, such a process leads to problems with some groups in society that would rather preserve their old identity as their primary identity. The Yugoslavian state Tito inherited in 1943 when he declared the Democratic Federal Yugoslavia was such a state. He and his partisans inherited a country that was deeply divided. Slovenes and Croats were still suspicious of Serb dominance, as was the case in the first Yugoslavia and its predecessor, the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes. The Serbs were deeply suspicious of the Croats - who they equaled with the murderous Ustaše regime that had killed so many Serbs – which led to great tensions between both populations. Therefore, forging a new, Yugoslavian identity was something that Tito deemed necessary.¹¹³

Settling the score with collaborators and traitors

After the war many people welcomed the fact that the nationalistic mood, which had prevailed during the war was over. What helped was the fact that the old nationalist parties and spokesmen were either scattered or suppressed, which left most nationalist forces that could be potentially dangerous leaderless or disconnected from the population. As in most other countries in Central and Eastern Europe, the German minority was stripped of its citizenship and expelled to Germany, sent to the Soviet Union or locked up in concentration camps.¹¹⁴ The concept behind the post-war settlements were based on two things, namely settling accounts with the enemy and settling accounts with the class enemy, a process that already started in 1944. It was directed at people who fell in these groups of all nationalities and religious affiliations. Former Croat Ustaše soldiers, but also administrative staff were prosecuted and many didn't return.¹¹⁵ In May 1945 the remaining administration, troops and supporters of Pavelić fled across the Austrian borders, where some 30-

¹¹² Anderson, (2006 [1983]), p. 2.

¹¹³ Sekulic, Massey & Hodson (1994), p. 84.

¹¹⁴ Shoup (1968), p. 101-103, 107.

¹¹⁵ Goldstein, I. (2005), p. 73.

40,000 of them managed to escape, but another 30,000 Ustaše supporters were massacred at Bleiburg by the Partisans who had followed them.¹¹⁶ The muslim elite who had collaborated with the NDH was prosecuted and some of them received the death penalty, while others got life imprisonment.¹¹⁷ The Bosnian muslims were made a distinct group by the communists, a group somewhere in between a nation and a religious group. The reason to do this weren't illogical since it did was a distinct group.¹¹⁸ Other Croats that weren't a member or a affiliate of the Ustaše, such as members of the Catholic Church and the Croatian Peasant Party that were seen as undesirable by the communist regime - because they were traditionalist and not very enthusiastic about the communist Yugoslav idea - also got branded as Ustaše, which damaged their public image to a great extent and also made prosecution possible.¹¹⁹ The archbishop of Zagreb, Alojze Stepinac was tried for collaboration with the Ustaše in a mock trial to satisfy anti-Croat and anti-Catholic feelings among Orthodox Serbs and their clergy. The fact was that there hadn't been something like one Catholic line regarding the Ustaše. Some clergymen actively supported them, while some others joined the Partisans and wanted to defend the Yugoslav idea. While the Ustaše did see itself and Croatia as a nation for Catholics (and muslims, as mentioned before), the Catholic Church in Croatia didn't per se thought this was true. However, what they were sure about was that communism was wrong.¹²⁰ The post-war prosecution of the Roman Catholic clergy wasn't done because of their policy regarding the Ustaše regime, but of their policy regarding the communists with whom they didn't want to collaborate. Also, they didn't want to sever the ties with the Vatican. Just like the traditional Orthodox anti-Catholicism during the first Yugoslavia's existence, the Catholic Church would be treated with hostility in the second Yugoslavia.¹²¹ The same applied to the Croatian Peasant Party, that didn't see much in cooperating with the Communist Party of Yugoslavia. The communists were in favor of cooperation, since the Croatian Peasant Party had a large pre-war popular following.¹²²

In the years 1946-47 tens of thousands of collaborators and alleged collaborators were executed and an additional hundreds of thousands were interned. This all happened under the eye of Aleksandar Ranković, the Serbian communist Minister of Interior, and his secret police, the *OZNa*, that helped the regime to neutralize all political opposition.¹²³ However, how hard traitors and collaborators were punished, the two biggest nations in Yugoslavia, the Serbs and Croats weren't reconciled and no excuses from both sides were made for the crimes and mistakes made since 1918.¹²⁴

¹¹⁶ Glenny (1999), *The Balkans 1804-1999; Nationalism, War and the Great Powers* (London), p. 530.

¹¹⁷ Kisić Kolanović (2009), p. 417.

¹¹⁸ Interview held with Mario Jareb during my stay in Zagreb in June-July 2011; The name of the muslims and later on Muslims when they were granted nationhood by the regime remained problematic in a communist state, but a solution wasn't found for this during the existence of the SFRY. In the 1990s the term 'Bosniak' was introduced.

¹¹⁹ Jareb (2005), p. 304.

¹²⁰ Ramet (2002), p. 52, 82-84.

¹²¹ Anzulovic (1999), p. 105.

¹²² Radelić (2006), p. 629.

¹²³ Glenny (1999), p. 531-532.

¹²⁴ Anzulovic (1999), p. 99.

The communist view on Yugoslavia and the national question

Tito had led the illegal, Moscow oriented KPJ (*Komunistička partija Jugoslavije*; Communist Party of Yugoslavia) since 1937 as its secretary-general. From that moment on the KPJ turned into a highly disciplined group of people and they decided to opt for federalism as the solution for the national question.¹²⁵ In good communist fashion the regime condemned nationalism as a ‘bourgeois prejudice’.¹²⁶ In the post-war leadership of the KPJ there were three key figures. There was Tito, a Croat-Slovene, as the political leader, Edvard Kardelj, the Slovene party ideologue, and Aleksandar Ranković, the Serbian communist Minister of Interior. Another important figure was Milovan Djilas, a Montenegrin communist, but he was ousted within a decade after the end of the Second World War. The political leadership was thus Yugoslavist in the sense of the first Yugoslavia, namely that all three recognized nations (the Slovenes, Croats and Serbs – and Montenegrin) of the first Yugoslavia were represented in it.¹²⁷ According to the communists, a supranational, universal Yugoslav identity could exist next to the other existing national identities. To quote Tito:

*“Our ideal is that the culture of each Yugoslav people, while retaining its own characteristics, should simultaneously become the culture of all the others in a dynamic, united totality.”*¹²⁸

The slogan they promoted this idea with during and after the Second World War was ‘Brotherhood and unity’ (*bratstvo i jedinstvo*).¹²⁹ Schoolchildren learned that they had to protect the brotherhood and unity as it was ‘the apple of their eye’, a frequent expression of Tito. A symbolic act of the brotherhood and unity policy was the ‘Relay of Youth’, a relay race that would go through all of Yugoslavia. Whenever Tito had his birthday, children from all over Yugoslavia would write him a letter which would be put in a hollow stick, which would be carried in the race from village to village. The brotherhood and unity concept was expressed through the fact that the baton with the letter in it would be given to someone who was from another ethnic group. Eventually all letters would be given to Tito himself.¹³⁰ Before it was given to Tito, there would be cultural and sporting events in the Yugoslav People’s Army Stadium in Belgrade. The receiving ceremony was on May 25 – Tito’s birthday and also the Day of Youth – and the whole event was set up to symbolize brotherhood and unity. This relay started in 1945 and was held yearly until 1988. It is estimated that one third of all Yugoslavs participated in it.¹³¹

¹²⁵ Banac (1984), p. 329, 339.

¹²⁶ Botev (1994), p. 462.

¹²⁷ Glenny (1999), p. 102.

¹²⁸ Wachtel (1998), p. 134.

¹²⁹ Ibid, p. 131.

¹³⁰ Ugrešić (1995a, 1995b, 1995c, 1995d), p. 9, 25, 66 & 98

¹³¹ Author unknown, *Relay Baton and Day of Youth*, website NSK State.

http://web.archive.org/web/20080324084642/http://www.nskstate.com/nk/day_of_youth.php, retrieved on 9-01-2012

Socialist Yugoslavia in 1945-1948

While settling the issues of what the communists saw as treason and collaboration, and ending remaining guerrilla activities throughout the country by Ustaše and Cetniks, Tito and his communist Partisans offered the citizens of the now socialist Yugoslavia a new future and promised them social justice. The collaborators that had survived the war were stripped of their right to vote, a method to prevent a resurgence of internal conflict. The Federal Peoples Republic of Yugoslavia was proclaimed in 1946 and the monarchy was abolished after three years of cooperation between Tito and representatives of the old Kingdom in the Democratic Federative Yugoslavia.¹³² In 1946 the first constitution of socialist Yugoslavia was proclaimed, which stated that the federation was made up of six constituent republics, whose borders didn't coincide with the ethnic borders, as to prevent that these republics would be regarded as an ethnic homelands. They did have the right to secede however, although the communists thought that the experience of the National War of Liberation had unified the people of Yugoslavia to the degree that no one would want this. Nationalism was heavily suppressed in post-war Yugoslavia by its one party regime, so in reality there wasn't much of a chance that any republic could secede if it wished to do so.¹³³ The political model of this federation was taken from the USSR and was strictly centralistic Leninist when it started.¹³⁴

At the outcome of World War II a new political elite had emerged, namely Tito's socialist partisan troops. The unity of this group – although socialist in name – wasn't based on a shared class background but on a shared experience; the partisan guerilla that homogenized this ethnically diverse group into Yugoslavs. It was this group that became key party officials in the second Yugoslavia. It was the partisan experience and the victory that it produced that gave the Communist Party of Yugoslavia its post-war political and moral legitimacy.¹³⁵ Post-war Yugoslavia was unique in the sense that the legitimacy of its communist regime came from the fact that it were the Yugoslavs themselves that liberated their country, and not the Red Army. This led to support – and thereby legitimacy - for the new communist regime.¹³⁶ To further legitimize the new communist regimes, statistics were manipulated to have a higher casualty number of the Second World War in which the people that died under fascists rule were enlarged and the deaths by the hands of the partisans downplayed. According to Yugoslav statistics 1.7 million people died – which also had the benefit of gaining more money for reparations, a number which was hard to question or prove during Tito's life.¹³⁷ [*Since the end of socialist Yugoslavia the death toll of World War II is estimated to be around 1 million deaths.*¹³⁸] Questioning Tito's exaggerated death toll of World War II meant

¹³² Auty (1965) pp. 104, 106 and Staar (1977[1967]) pp. 183

¹³³ Benson (2007 [2004]), p. 89-90.

¹³⁴ Doder (1993), p. 11.

¹³⁵ Allcock (2000), p. 184-185.

¹³⁶ Glenny (1999), p. 529.

¹³⁷ Anzulovic (1999), p. 100-103.

¹³⁸ Žerjavić (1997), p. 187-188.

undermining Tito and therefore the number of 1.7 million became a sort of communist mantra that legitimized the political power of the KPJ (and later the LCY) and Partisans.¹³⁹

Tito's Partisans thus came out of the Second World War with great prestige, but one of their greatest successes was their successful break with the USSR. This break took place after the Yugoslavian communists saw that further cooperation with the USSR would only help the USSR and make Yugoslavia just another satellite of the Soviet Camp; besides this Yugoslavia and the USSR plans for the Balkans were far from the same. In 1948 this eventually led to a break between Yugoslavia and the USSR when Yugoslavia was expelled from the Cominform (the Moscow controlled cooperation between Communist parties worldwide). Since Yugoslavia had already proved it could liberate itself from foreign oppression, this break with Moscow was feasible, the Partisans had already proven they could win a war with a far stronger enemy. With this they've showed to be able to be truly independent and socialist at the same time, a policy which was dubbed 'national communism' or 'the independent road to socialism'.¹⁴⁰

After the break with the USSR Tito was afraid that the Soviets would perhaps try to invade Yugoslavia, so he decided to rule his country with an iron fist to make sure nobody would help the Soviets from inside. Meanwhile Tito and the League of Communists of Yugoslavia claimed to have solved the problems of nationality. It led them to disregard what they thought were the biggest flaws in the Soviet system, namely 'over centralization' and state bureaucracy.¹⁴¹ After the death of Stalin in 1953 it became unlikely that the USSR would invade Yugoslavia and the country could now focus on itself and how it wanted to develop itself.¹⁴²

Although the United States government didn't pay much attention to this communist quarrel, in 1949 they realized the break-up of relations between socialist Yugoslavia and the USSR was real. The US government made it an official policy in helping Yugoslavia to keep and maintain its independence. From then on the idea behind US policy regarding communist Yugoslavia was to 'keep Tito afloat', meaning it would make sure that the Yugoslavian economy was helped so that the Yugoslav leadership couldn't lose legitimacy on this issue. When the break with the USSR was completed, this didn't mean Yugoslavia was in the western camp. After the death of Stalin in 1953 trade relations with the USSR were started again, but Yugoslavia remained independent. Tito's socialist Yugoslavia had opted for a foreign policy of non-alignment.¹⁴³ The USA wasn't really happy with Tito, since he was neither democrat nor capitalist, but there simply wasn't a better option than Tito at that time and place. For the USA the choice thus wasn't between Tito and democracy, but between Tito and a pro-Soviet leader, which made Tito the best choice.¹⁴⁴

¹³⁹ Glenny (1999), p. 500-501

¹⁴⁰ Zhaninovich (1969), p. 289-293 and Benson (2007 [2004]), p. 92, 94.

¹⁴¹ Zhaninovich (1968), p. 67, 74.

¹⁴² Vucinich, W.S. (1969), p. 281-282.

¹⁴³ Campbell (1967), pp. 14-17, 22-23, 30-31, 151-152, 163.

¹⁴⁴ Interview held with Tvrtko Jakovina during my stay in Zagreb in June-July 2011.

A big shift in communist policy came in 1952 when the name of the communist party changed from *Komunistička partija Jugoslavije* to *Savez komunista Jugoslavije*; League of Communists of Yugoslavia. The LCY had purged itself from members who stayed loyal to Moscow and managed to double their membership within four years.¹⁴⁵ This change of name had a lot to do with the break with the USSR, since from now on the party was named after the first communist party started by Marx in 1848, the League of Communists, and not in the fashion of the Cominform member parties as was the case before. With this change of name the party structure also changed, it became an over-arching organization for newly founded republican leagues of communists.¹⁴⁶

On the domestic front Tito and the communists opted for a system of government which kept the communists in power, but at the same time allowed and encouraged a high rate of popular participation.¹⁴⁷ The problem was that in order to make sure a new nation comes into existence a strong, centralist government is needed to enforce policy to this end. Since the break with the USSR in 1948 the Yugoslavian communists felt the need to justify this and thus inspiration was found in Marx's works and they in fact wanted to start – at least theoretically – the withering away of the state and making the means of production owned by the workers itself. By doing this it would legitimize their new Yugoslavia, where two of the three policies to strengthen the Yugoslav idea were based on this, namely the administrative reorganization and further federalization, and the idea of workers self-management. One of the most important reasons decentralization was chosen was to make sure that the mistakes of the first Yugoslavia, which ended in tragedy, wouldn't be repeated. The reality was that in the first decades of its existence, Socialist Yugoslavia was still as centralized and even less democratic than the first Yugoslavia. Tito believed that further federalization couldn't do any real harm to Yugoslavia, since it was in control of the LCY and because it had found a firm base in the then current world system; its dissolution would upset the whole balance of powers, which neither of the two superpowers wanted.¹⁴⁸

The Yugoslav identity and the Partisan myth under Tito

With a country whose population was heavily divided over its common past and their roles in the Second World War, Tito sensed that there was a need for a new, common identity, to have a break with the past. Tito believed that the Yugoslavs were a combination of all the people that inhabited it, and that socialism was the tool that could forge this new Yugoslavia. He wanted to make sure that his citizens' allegiance to a socialist Yugoslavia had to be first before other allegiances. Without this, he felt, the idea of Yugoslavia couldn't be very successful and thus the new Yugoslavia wouldn't prosper.¹⁴⁹ To achieve this, the regime used the story of the Partisans who

¹⁴⁵ Staar (1977 [1967]), p. 197-202.

¹⁴⁶ Wolff (1974 [1956]), p. 398-403.

¹⁴⁷ Auty (1965), p. 215.

¹⁴⁸ Jović (2003), p. 158-159, 161-165, 175.

¹⁴⁹ Ibid, p. 157, 171.

had fought fascism and foreign invaders during The War of National Liberation to achieve unity among its citizens. With the idea of unity also comes a common enemy, namely the nationalists. They were the groups that threatened this unity and were seen as those responsible for the hundreds of thousands of deaths during The War of National Liberation.¹⁵⁰

This Partisan myth was very important in creating and maintaining Yugoslav unity. The Partisans weren't only fighting Nazi-Germany and its allies, but also against 'world reaction' (such as the Četniks) and racism. The fact that the Partisans had members of all nationalities within Yugoslavia who fought to liberate all of Yugoslavia from German occupation, Ustaše and Četniks gave them credibility. The war crimes committed by them were omitted from history and as such the Partisan myth was created. It was this myth that gave the Yugoslav leadership a true internationalist image and therefore depended on the unity and solidarity of all the nations within Yugoslavia. This myth was pervasive in communist Yugoslav society; not only were a great number of the post-war party members actual Partisans; it was also an important part of the school curriculum, radio shows played Partisan songs, TV shows reserved time for programming about the Partisans and history and schoolbooks all propagated the Partisan myth.¹⁵¹

For many years the Partisan myth was impossible to question. The myth told people that there had been a mass rising against fascism, which did contribute incredibly to the victory in the rest of Europe and that this fact gave the communist partisans the popular support to take over the country after the end of the war. The Partisan myth was designed to divert attention from some facts that might undermine the new socialist Yugoslavia. Firstly, during the war the Yugoslavs killed more of their own than they killed Axis occupiers. Secondly, in the greater scheme of things the guerrilla war waged by the Partisans wasn't that important in the outcome of the Second World War – it did liberate Yugoslavia from the Axis, the Ustaše and the Četniks, but it didn't cause Rome, Tokyo or Berlin to surrender. Thirdly, although the communist Partisans did win the war themselves, they did it under the patronage of Stalin.¹⁵²

The Communist regime held a firm ideological control over the representation of the past and everything that would undermine the current status quo and inter-ethnic cooperation was thus omitted from history lessons. A fairly crude and simplistic narrative of the Second World War divided people in collective categories, with the 'victims of fascism' on the one side as the 'good guys' with 'foreign occupiers and domestic traitors' as the enemy.¹⁵³ Partisan war crimes were omitted to preserve the revolution, there was no place for nuances of the traumatic war years and therefore visions that didn't fit into the narrative were banned.¹⁵⁴

¹⁵⁰ Sekulic et al. (1994), pp. 85-86, 88.

¹⁵¹ Ludanyi (1979), p. 239-240.

¹⁵² Benson (2007 [2004]), p. 73.

¹⁵³ Denich (1994), p. 370-371.

¹⁵⁴ Pavlakovic (2008), p. 4.



Symbol of Yugoslavism: *The monument to commemorate the victims of the fascist Ustaše regime at the ground of the Jasenovac concentration camp, an extermination camp where many Jews, Gypsies and Serbs died during the NDZ.¹⁵⁵ Monuments to commemorate the victims and heroes of the National War of Liberation were built throughout the SFRY during Tito's lifetime.¹⁵⁶*

The commemoration of the NDZ concentration camp Jasenovac, just like any other commemoration, was used to legitimize the LCY regime. The place of another mass killing, Bleiburg, where Ustaše troops were massacred by Tito's partisans after they had surrendered to the British, was a taboo in Socialist Yugoslavia, but it was something that was harder to control, since Bleiburg lay in Austria and therefore out of reach; thus the Croatian émigré community could build a monument and organize commemorative spaces at Bleiburg. This was done for the first time in 1952 by three survivors and the commemoration kept growing throughout the rest of the century. Although the Austrian state wasn't in favor of fascist commemoration on their territory, they never fully banned the commemoration at Bleiburg.¹⁵⁷

The Yugoslav identity thus meant condemning the forces that had another vision on the war and its outcome and identification with the Partisans and the creation of 'a

¹⁵⁵ Denich (1994), pp. 370-371

¹⁵⁶ Kempnaers, J., *25 Abandoned Yugoslavia Monuments that look like they're from the Future* on Cracktwo.com <http://www.cracktwo.com/2011/04/25-abandoned-soviet-monuments-that-look.html>, retrieved on 1-7-2011

¹⁵⁷ Pavlakovic (2008), p. 18-22.

progressive, socialist society'. It meant standing above the old identities and their discredited pasts. Plus, since there were mixed-marriages after the War it gave children who were born out of such a marriage a new identity and could avoid a conflict over what nationality they were. This also was the case with minorities in certain areas, by opting for a Yugoslavian identity they didn't have to assimilate or act as a minority; it was a way to opt for neutrality. This however didn't mean that these minorities gave up their religion or cultural traits.



Symbols of Yugoslavism: the flag of socialist Yugoslavia. *The flag of socialist Yugoslavia combines both (pan) Slavic and communist symbolism. The red star is a symbol of communism and blue, white and red are traditionally seen as the colors of (pan) Slavism. Four of the six flags of the republics (Slovenia, Croatia, Serbia and Montenegro) within the federal framework more or less had the same design with a difference in the sequence of blue, white and red on their flag. Serbia and Montenegro in fact had the same flag, but did have different coats of arms. The coats of arms also were a combination between communist and more nationalist symbols. All did feature the red star, but to give some examples the Croatian coat of arms had the šahovnica on it, Slovenia's coat of arms had the Alpines on it and the Montenegrin coat of arms had the rocky landscape for which it is known featured prominently on it.*¹⁵⁸

The fallout with the Soviet Union led to Tito adopting a nationalist (meaning Yugoslavist) policy to legitimize his regime and starting a massive purge to get rid of the Stalinists and Cominformists in his party and army.¹⁵⁹ This was the first time, and also the last time that this type of state promoted Yugoslavism was met with great enthusiasm by the people who lived on its territory.¹⁶⁰ One of the reasons this policy of 'Yugoslavification' was successful initially, was the fact that Tito and the partisans had a lot of authority and support from the majority of the citizens after ridding the country of the Četniks and the Ustaše and made sure it stayed independent from the

¹⁵⁸ For more information and visuals on the flags, see Appendix E.

¹⁵⁹ Benson (1007 [2004]), p. 95.

¹⁶⁰ Glenny (1999), p. 536

USSR.¹⁶¹ The problem with this new policy and historical narrative off course was that a sizeable group of the citizens of this new Yugoslavia hadn't been Partisans, but had been supporters or active members of the Četniks or the Ustaše.¹⁶² The divisions of the Second World War thus remained, but were contained.¹⁶³

Besides in the early years of socialist Yugoslavia the policy of 'Yugoslavification' however wasn't undertaken very actively since centralist policy could lead to negative reactions. Since in the first Yugoslavia there was a strong Serbian dominance, the LCY created, or recognized, three more people as nationalities as before (the Muslims, the Montenegrins and the Macedonians) to make up for a more equal balance. The LCY had the idea that it could provide unity since it was made up of people from all ethnic backgrounds and so that this would buy them the time for economic development, which was seen as crucial to erode local national identities.¹⁶⁴ The unity was reflected in the shared language of Serbo-Croatian, which was codified in the Novi Sad agreement of 1954 as the language of Serbs, Croats and Montenegrins.¹⁶⁵ The new unity was also reflected in the constitution of 1963:

*"The nations of Yugoslavia, proceeding from the right of every nation to self-determination, including the right to secession, on the basis of their will freely expressed in the common struggle of all nations and nationalities in the National Liberation War and Socialist Revolution, and in conformity with their historic aspiration, aware that further consolidation of their brotherhood and unity is in the common interest, have, together with the nationalities with which they live, united in a federal republic of free and equal nations and nationalities and founded a socialist federal community of working people-the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia."*¹⁶⁶

Modernization, decentralization, self-management and non-alignment

Together with this new national identity discourse, there were some other policies that would help diminish the influence of the old forms of nationalisms. Modernization would make sure that Yugoslavia would go from a primarily agricultural to a primarily industrial society after World War II. With this process came the process of urbanization and an increase in education and literacy which – was expected - would lead to a diminishing of the old national identities, since intergroup contact would grow and a new, national, Yugoslav identity would develop. This new Yugoslav identity would then in turn lighten tensions between people from different nationalities as it would 'minimize cultural barriers and distinctions'. In addition to the creation of this new national identity and the modernization program,

¹⁶¹ Wachtel (1998), p. 140.

¹⁶² Sekulic et al, (1994), p. 85-86, 88.

¹⁶³ Denich (1994), p. 370.

¹⁶⁴ Sekulic et al, (1994), p. 85-86, 88.

¹⁶⁵ Wachtel (1998), p. 140.

¹⁶⁶ Blagojevic (1963), pp. 3-4.

Tito and the LCY had three programs to reduce the causes of nationalist tensions with administrative decentralization, ending regional economic disparities by economic self-management and non-alignment. In order to relieve tensions and get rid of the fear of a dominant centralist government – which had been in place in the first Yugoslavia and which in practice had led to Serbian dominance – Tito opted for a federation of equal nations which was led by the local LCY at republican level, but these LCY subdivisions were to remain centralist and not choose their own republic. So, by having a loose federation which was governed by one strong centralist party, tensions were easily controlled.¹⁶⁷ In 1945 Yugoslavia became a federation which was made up of the republics of Serbia, Croatia, Slovenia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Montenegro and Macedonia, with two autonomous regions in Serbia to make sure it wouldn't dominate all political affairs. In the north of Serbia the autonomous region of Vojvodina was created and in the south the autonomous region of Kosovo-Metohija. One year later there were five nations recognized in the constitution, namely the Serbs, Croats, Slovenes, Macedonians and Montenegrins.¹⁶⁸ *[It took the muslims in Bosnia Herzegovina longer to be recognized as a nation; in 1967 they were granted nationhood and became Muslims from then on.]*¹⁶⁹ Just like the autonomous regions, the republics of Bosnia Herzegovina, Montenegro and Macedonia were new constructions to keep a more even power balance.¹⁷⁰ Tito legitimized the borders by saying that:

*“These borders, if I may present them thus, are meant to be something like white lines on a marble pillar. The borders of the federal units in Yugoslavia are not borders of division, but borders of unification.”*¹⁷¹

In reality however the new republican border became more and more viewed by their populations as borders for their ‘national homelands’ and because of their ethnic nationalism the republics didn't work together in the end and started competing with each other.¹⁷² Administrative decentralization meant in practice that more power was given to the local communities and it would evolve into the center of ‘mass political behavior’. It was valuable in a political way, for two reasons, since it could shift the center of political life away from the federal and republican level and thus national divisions became less important, which meant that certain problems couldn't be blamed on ethnic differences anymore. The second reason it was valuable politically is that expectations of the federal government were reduced, since it wasn't responsible anymore. Divisions thus were allowed to remain in existence, but in this way they weren't targeting the state anymore. Local communities got more power and a professionalization of communal responsibilities did occur.¹⁷³

¹⁶⁷ Sekulic et al. (1994), pp. 85-87.

¹⁶⁸ Shoup (1968), p. 114.

¹⁶⁹ Allcock (2000), p. 298-299.

¹⁷⁰ Bertsch (1977), pp. 89

¹⁷¹ Dragović-Soso (2004), p. 176.

¹⁷² Burg (1977), p. 123.

¹⁷³ Seroka (1978, p. 271 -272, 274-275.

The remedy against regional economic disparities was thought to be found by the policy of economic self-management and was closely interlinked with the administrative decentralization. This placed the means of productions in the hands of the workers and did the same as far as the capability to make decisions regarding production, which thus reduced the role of the state in the micro-economic realm and so the federal government was able to focus on investments in the macro-economic sector where it could have the most successful effects in the long term. In reality it didn't help to change the differences on economical levels on local level. The less developed and poorer regions remained poor and the more developed, richer regions remained so, although the federal government did also undertake policies to fight these differences.¹⁷⁴ Edvard Kardelj, one of the main theorists behind worker self-management, wrote in 1960 that this system would lead to a 'greater cultural merging' of the Yugoslav people.¹⁷⁵ For Kardelj more democracy didn't mean a multiparty system.¹⁷⁶ He saw self-management as a way to legitimize the one party state as being a democratic form of government:

"As far as Yugoslavia is concerned, the choice is not between multiparty pluralism or a one-party system, but rather between self-management, i.e. the democratic system of a pluralism of self-management interests, or the multiparty or one party system which negates self-management [...] The pluralism of interests is incomparably closer to the individual and immeasurably more democratic than any form of political party pluralism which alienates society as a whole from the real man and citizen, even though it decides ostensibly on behalf of the citizen."¹⁷⁷

The policy of non-alignment was an active attempt to make sure that intervening in Yugoslavia would be an expensive thing to do for a foreign nation in the political sense. Concretely this meant that if one bloc, for instance the Warsaw Pact, would intervene in Yugoslavia it wouldn't be allowed by NATO and the other non-aligned countries. It meant that Yugoslavia had to have a strong and uncompromised position in the non-aligned community, so deals with either of the opposing blocs had to be beneficial for Yugoslavia without looking like they were becoming lackeys of one of the two blocs. This was the most difficult thing to do for Yugoslavia, since it concerned a lot of factors they couldn't control, such as other countries' foreign policies, global economy and bipolar bloc politics. They did manage to pull off a rather successful policy as a very active member of the non-aligned community.¹⁷⁸ Combining building socialism in a country, opting for non-alignment and independence was what later came to be known as Titoism. By opting for this role, Yugoslavia could thus in fact become a sort of mediator between both blocs and thus increase its global political profile.¹⁷⁹

¹⁷⁴ Seroka (1978), p. 272, 277-278.

¹⁷⁵ Sekulic et al. (1994), p. 87.

¹⁷⁶ Benson (2007 [2004]), p. 97.

¹⁷⁷ Kardelj as quoted in: Howard (2001), p. 307.

¹⁷⁸ Seroka (1978) p. 272-273, 278-279.

¹⁷⁹ Zaninovich (1968), p. 92.

Non-alignment was a fundamental cornerstone of Yugoslav foreign policy. In the early years of the Cold War it was seen important to pose itself in between both the capitalist West and the Soviet controlled Warsaw Pact. The Non Aligned Movement was seen as a way to make sure Yugoslavia remained a main player on the international stage.¹⁸⁰ The policy of non-alignment didn't only give the Yugoslav communist regime the possibility to remain independent of Moscow, but it also legitimized its internal policy towards different ethnic groups. Non-alignment made sure the regime didn't give the appearance to favor one of the ethnic groups above the others and thus making sure it respected all national identities within its borders.¹⁸¹

History education and nation-building in socialist Yugoslavia

Socialist Yugoslavia, like most other modern nations attached a great deal of importance to history education, since this was a good way to transmit the ideals and values of the party and state, and thus led to justification of this state and spread nationalism, or in this case, 'Yugoslavism'. The communist regime considered that *"the communist education of the coming generation is the fundamental objective of our new, socialist school [...]"* and history education became a *"means for inculcating a deep and stirring patriotism"*. The history education before 1974 was characterized by an international approach; children throughout the federation learned the same things. The other thing that characterized the history education before 1974 in socialist Yugoslavia was Marxist interpretation of history. For instance, the cause of the first and second Balkan wars is explained by bourgeois interests in territorial and economic expansion, the period in between the two World Wars was called a 'fascist dictatorship'. Much of the emphasis is put on those people and cases that united the South Slav people, the idea of Brotherhood and Unity and proletarian internationalism were to be instilled through history education. A great emphasis was put on the internal developments during the Second World War and its aftermath: ¹⁸²

*"With the defeat of the fascist aggressors in 1945, the Soviet Union established its influence on the nations of Southeastern and Central Europe (...). The insistence and the attempts of the government of the Soviet Union also to compel our land to serve their interests resulted in bitter arguments. Seeing that it could not treat Yugoslavia in the same manner as these other countries, the leadership of the Soviet Union in those days denounced us and continually criticized the leadership of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia. They called on our working people to revolt - to begin a Civil War. (...) All these incidents could not break the unity and resolution of the peoples of the Federated Peoples' Republic of Yugoslavia."*¹⁸³

¹⁸⁰ Interview held with Tvrtko Jakovina during my stay in Zagreb in June-July 2011

¹⁸¹ Allcock (2000), p. 240.

¹⁸² Georgeoff (1966), p. 442-447.

¹⁸³ Ibid p. 447.

Communist reaction to nationalism

Since Yugoslavia was founded as a single party state, it tried to politicize and control all spheres of social life for their own revolutionary project. The secret police, led by Ranković was of great importance in this task. However, in the first half of the 1960s it became apparent to Tito that the power of Ranković had become too great and that he could become a threat to Tito's own power and legitimacy, Ranković was ousted from the party and from his power in 1966.¹⁸⁴ An important effect of the ousting of Ranković, himself a firm believer in centralization, was that now the staunchest opponent to further federalization was gone from the political life. It also meant that the most prominent Serb in the LCY was gone.¹⁸⁵ This didn't mean the end of communist fear for dissidence grew smaller, quite the opposite in fact.¹⁸⁶

In the mid 1960s there was a spirit of liberalization within certain ranks of the LCY and reforms spread through the country. When this liberalization started, it quickly became hard to keep control over what was happening, especially in the cultural field when Yugoslavia opened its borders in the late 1960s. The only thing that remained taboo in the cultural sphere was nationalism. In these years Slovenia and Croatia had a young and more liberal communist leadership that quickly gained popularity. They tried to democratize the communist system to some extent and used national enthusiasm to gain more popularity and thereby get more economic control over their own republics, but not wanting to get in problems they argued for this in Marxist terminology.¹⁸⁷

As a side effect of this liberalization nationalism was on the rise again. It first started to manifest itself culturally, mainly in literature, songs and language. Language remained a highly problematic issue. In literature, the publication of a Serbian poetry bundle which included religious medieval poetry in 1964, led to a controversy in literary circles. Communists blamed the editor for lacking 'progressive and revolutionary zeal'. The introduction of the Latin script in Bosnia and Herzegovina caused a feeling among many Serbs that the government was conducting anti-Serbian policies. Slovenians and Macedonians on the other hand felt that Serbian was corrupting their language. Croatian and Serbian nationalists still didn't recognize the terms Serbo-Croatian and Croatian-Serbian as terms fitting their language; they believed that their own respective language differed enough from the other to make claims of it being a separate language. The use of 'Serbian' as the language of the military commands led to friction with other nations in the SFRY, especially with the Croats. When a Serb professor of the University of Belgrade published a Serbian dictionary in 1966 its release it was confiscated and banned right away. Tito's common reaction to this was harsh intervention to crush the nationalist sentiment.¹⁸⁸

¹⁸⁴ Glenny (1999), p. 579-583.

¹⁸⁵ Allcock (2000), p. 80.

¹⁸⁶ Križan (1989), p. 290.

¹⁸⁷ Interview held with Marko Zubak during my stay in Zagreb in June-July 2011.

¹⁸⁸ Vucinich (1969), p. 269-275.

In March 1967 a group of Croat intellectuals linked to the *Matica Hrvatska* ('the Croatian Centre', one of the oldest and most influential Croatian cultural institutions) issued a statement that they thought it was proper to have the constitution amended to have four national languages, namely Serbian, Croatian, Slovenian and Macedonian and that each republic could teach its population in their own language.¹⁸⁹ By doing this they directly undermined the Novi Sad agreement that stated that Serbs, Croats, and Montenegrins shared a single language and culture, which implied that Serbs, Montenegrins and Croats constituted a single people. By denying there was such a thing as a Serbo-Croat language, the statement thus implied that the Croats were a distinct nation and should be treated as such.¹⁹⁰ The League of Communists of Serbia saw this declaration not only as a linguistic declaration, but as an ideological and political one as well.¹⁹¹

The Croatian Spring was a tendency to democratize and liberalize with a strong nationalist enthusiasm. It was strongly aimed at Croatia, which made it being viewed upon by the LCY leadership as nationalist.¹⁹² In 1971 the Croatian communist leadership lost control over the situation in their republic. A mass movement called MASPOK (short for *masovni pokret*; mass movement) had emerged in support of the *Matica Hrvatska*. Beside their support for the *Matica Hrvatska*, they also pressed for democratic and economic reforms. The Croatian communists tried to use their cause as a way to get more public support, which led to a situation where MASPOK members infiltrated the communist party. The communist party itself didn't support the ideas of the *Matica Hrvatska*, but saw it as a tool to push for reforms to end economic centralism. Tito decided that the reforms had to end and crushed the Croat Spring, purging the Croatian League of Communists from what he suspected to be nationalist elements within it. Students, academics, political leaders and others accused of nationalism were arrested and sent to jail. Amongst them was Franjo Tuđman, former partisan and JNA general turned historian.¹⁹³ Progressive forces throughout Yugoslavia were removed and replaced for more conservative communist leaders who would follow the official party line.¹⁹⁴ Croatian nationalism again became a taboo.¹⁹⁵ Although the Croat Spring was suppressed, it did signal to the LCY that the current constitution was insufficient and on the June 3, 1971 a commission was set up to prepare the new constitution, which was finished in 1974.¹⁹⁶

While Serb and Croat nationalism was banned or severely restricted to party meetings, the communists helped to develop a further nationhood by ways of language, traditions and customs in Slovenia, Macedonia, and to a lesser extent also in Montenegro and among Muslims. Apart from this, most of the secret police, army and party ranks at a federal level were Serbs who traditionally had played a huge role

¹⁸⁹ Shoup (1968), p. 195.

¹⁹⁰ Burg (1977), p. 122.

¹⁹¹ Shoup (1968), p. 195.

¹⁹² Interview held with Marko Zubak during my stay in Zagreb in June-July 2011.

¹⁹³ Benson (2007 [2004]), p. 122-123.

¹⁹⁴ Lendvai & Parcell (1991), p. 256.

¹⁹⁵ Interview held with Nikica Barić during my stay in Zagreb in June-July 2011.

¹⁹⁶ Đurović (1974), p. 5-7 and Todorović (1974), pp. 35-36, 41-42.

in the communist apparatus since the Partisan days and thus had a bigger affinity with the (communists') Yugoslav idea.¹⁹⁷ However, also the army became more and more decentralized. Since the late 1960s, the republics were allowed to set up their own militias for their own territorial defense, outside of the structures of the Yugoslav People's Army (JNA – *Jugoslovensko Narodna Armija*), as a reaction to the Soviet invasion at the Prague Spring of 1968.¹⁹⁸

Socialism and religion in the SFRY

The communist regime was hostile to religion; it was only allowed in the private sphere. Religion was in some ways the ultimate challenge to the socialist Yugoslav state since it offered an alternative way of life and identity. Organized religion was a good base for opposition since it was technically a non-political organization, but the Churches and the state thought different about this; the Churches were somewhat of a political organization, but a more abstract one since it wasn't a political party.¹⁹⁹ Religious education was discouraged and religions publications were curtailed.

However, the Yugoslav government did undertake some actions with big religious implications. Firstly, they granted the Macedonians their own national orthodox church, so that the balance between the republics would be more equal, thereby making sure that not all orthodox people fell under the Serbian Orthodox Church. Secondly, they gave the muslims of Bosnia and Herzegovina the title of Muslims, which meant that they were now recognized as a nation and derived rights from that – and not from their religion. This made the territory of Bosnia Herzegovina now a pressing issue for Serb and Croat nationalists. And thirdly, although the SFRY regime was hostile to religion, it for a large part depended on tourism for income so it did preserve and restore a lot of churches, mosques and monasteries within its borders, thus making sure that the places of worship remained intact, while at the same time wanting to make sure that the link between religion and national identity was discouraged, especially in the case of the Serbs and the Croats, as the potential results were feared.²⁰⁰ As a result of this policy in which the SFRY created new ethnic groups, it also gravely influenced the Croatian identity and nationalism, in which (the Roman Catholic) religion became a much bigger part than ever before and which thus turned the Croat nationalist view on the Muslims of Bosnia Herzegovina from fellow Croats into Croats converted to Islam.²⁰¹

How successful was the Yugoslav identity?

Since 1961 inhabitants of the SFRY had the option in the census to identify themselves as a Yugoslav, which meant that citizens – although born as for instance Serbian – could register themselves as Yugoslav. The category was reserved for

¹⁹⁷ Radelić (2006), p. 635.

¹⁹⁸ Ramet (2002), p. 6.

¹⁹⁹ Radić (2010), p. 192.

²⁰⁰ Allcock (2000), p. 298-299.

²⁰¹ Silber & Little (1996 [1995]), p. 86

'nationally non committed persons'. In 1961 however, the muslim population of Yugoslavia which resided mainly in Bosnia Herzegovina wasn't granted nationality, so they could (and in most cases did) opt at the census for 'Yugoslav' since most of them didn't feel either Serb or Croat. With the 1971 census muslims became Muslims; they had been granted Muslim as a nationality (but not as ethnicity). In that census many of these thus didn't opt for 'Yugoslav' anymore in the census, they opted for 'Muslim'. Between 1961 and 1981 there was a marked increase in the self-identification as Yugoslavs according to the census records. During those years it was Kosovo that had the lowest level of Yugoslav identification, most people over there still saw themselves as Albanian or Serbian.²⁰² But the idea of a new successful identity wasn't just based on the citizens' own perception; it also was based on a federal system led by a centralist party with local subdivisions, non-alignment and the idea of self-management. And it was at this level that things didn't work out as expected.

Since the 1950s the Yugoslavian economy saw a rising GNP, but it was unevenly distributed and not every region developed at the same pace or rate, which led to economic nationalisms between regions. It led to a more decentralized political and economic structure of the federation, since it led to a reduction of state power over the economy. The people in control over the local enterprises were the same people who had control over the local politics. The same thing happened with the federal political system; since the 1960s the communist parties in the republics didn't see itself as representing the Yugoslavian state, but their own nations. The communist party of Croatia or Serbia, for instance, would see themselves representing the Croats or the Serbs. Amendments to the constitution in 1967 even reduced the power of the LCY further as a reaction to the fear of 'increasing Serbian domination of the party'. In order to prevent this from happening also 'lesser' nations were recognized (the Muslims, Montenegrins and Macedonians). The LCY became more of an association than a centralist political party.²⁰³

Socialism and nationalism in the SFRY

One of the problematic things was the fact that Yugoslavia was a *socialist* federation and not a liberal democratic federation. As said in the theoretical chapter, the relationship between socialism and nationalism is full of tensions. Tito himself was against nationalism which could destroy the Yugoslav unity, but did claim that the Yugoslav culture was the free development of the national culture of all Yugoslav peoples. As shown, the federalization made it harder and harder to speak of a Yugoslav people. Edvard Kardelj, the main ideologue behind the system of worker-management argued that the SFRY was a supranational state, thus national culture would always remain important. Therefore he didn't speak of a Yugoslav nationality or nation, but of a 'Yugoslav social consciousness' in the SFRY. The unity in Yugoslavia was the unity of the working class according to Kardelj. Some complained

²⁰² Sekulic et al. (1994), p. 84.

²⁰³ Ibid, pp. 87-88.

that Tito's and Kardelj's reasoning thus didn't promote the Yugoslav identity to a level where it might have a chance of success. The prominent Serbian communist Jovan Marjanović complained that even to the state being a Yugoslav didn't mean to be an 'honest and sincere socialist'; it was the status of 'people without nationality'. Since officially there was not such a thing as a national Yugoslav culture, but a collection of cultures which made up the culture of Yugoslavia, it was hard to counter nationalism any other way than restricting it.²⁰⁴ During the early 1960s other important figures in the LCY already start to notice that Tito had abandoned the idea of Yugoslav integration – not the idea of Yugoslavia – and that therefore further federalization wasn't such a problem anymore to him. The 1963 federation even affirmed the right to secession by 'the people of Yugoslavia'.²⁰⁵

The main reason for not wanting to enforce a new Yugoslav identity was the fact that this was also tried in the first Yugoslavia, which had led to great resentment among non-Serbs who saw it as a tool to ensure a Greater Serbia. Since they wanted to avoid the instability of the first Yugoslavia, they thought it would be better to avoid creating a new source of resentment between the Serbs and Croats who just came out of a traumatic war experience. The LCY adopted a policy according to which class struggle should intensify for nationalism to be able wither away. Therefore national feelings should be allowed to develop, so that it could be a foundation for the eventual goal of communist internationalism.²⁰⁶ One could choose to call oneself Yugoslav, but the state wouldn't force it upon them. By doing this, there was really no alternative to identification with the 'previous' culture. Adhering to the Yugoslav idea thus became more of an (party) elite position than one carried by the masses.

Overall, although most of the nationalist outburst were contained and caused no serious threat during Tito's life, there was a marked rise, a slow but steady rise in nationalist outbursts which started to become more and more visible during the second half or the 1960s. From the late 1960s on cultural movements were recognized and supported by nationalist ones, which more and more became a challenge to the federal authorities.²⁰⁷ As John C. Campbell wrote in 1967,

*"It is a rarity to find a self proclaimed Yugoslav. A generation ago King Alexander used to say he was the only Yugoslav in the country. Today it is Tito himself who perhaps comes nearest to fitting that description: a man born in the border area between Croatia and Slovenia, [...] a leader in the resistance to Hitler and then to Stalin in the name of Serbs and Croats and Slovenes alike, and finally president of the whole country standing above its separate nationalities."*²⁰⁸

²⁰⁴ Vucinich (1969), pp. 269-275.

²⁰⁵ Wachtel (1998), p. 173-174, 184.

²⁰⁶ Hodson et al. (1994), p. 1542.

²⁰⁷ Shoup (1968), p. 214-215, 224, 264.

²⁰⁸ Campbell (1967), p. 4.

Chapter 3: Titoism and the new constitution, 1974-1986

“Even to the casual observer, Yugoslavia suffers from serious weaknesses which threaten its viability: inflation; consistently large balance-of-payments deficits; rising unemployment; border disputes with Austria, Italy, Bulgaria, and Albania; and regional economic and social disparity. Although these problems beset most developing nations to some extent, in Yugoslavia they directly threaten the legitimacy of the government and the political system.”

James H. Seroka, "Prospects for Stability in Post-Tito Yugoslavia" ²⁰⁹

The 1974 constitution was the direct product of the nationalist turmoil that had plagued the federation in the late 1960s and early 1970s, with the Croatian Spring being the most notorious example. A new constitution was deemed necessary to address the grievances of the population, but it should also maintain the then current power balance. The 1974 constitution with 406 articles was at that time the longest constitution ever written.²¹⁰ According to Mijalko Todorović - the president of the Federal Assembly and chairman of the Joint Constitutional Commission of all the Chambers of the Federal Assembly – the new constitution ensured *“full equality of the nations and nationalities on the principle of free agreement, association and socialist internationalism”*.²¹¹ Todorović did recognize the fact that the new power balance might lead to *“the possibility of the frequent taking of temporary measures or the preservation of the status quo because no agreement can be reached on a particular issue”*.²¹² Nevertheless, he was still positive about the prospects the 1974 constitution offered:

“The character of the constitutional solutions in the sphere of production and political relations provides social preconditions for the creation of a still clearer front of progressive socialist forces against various conservative, nationalistic and other forces within the individual nations of Yugoslavia. The chances of the various conservative and reactionary forces to present their political interests as national interests are now greatly restricted.”²¹³

The 1974 constitution

The words of Mijalko Todorović sounded promising, but what did this new constitution do in order to stop the rise of nationalism and keep the country together?

²⁰⁹ Seroka (1978), p. 268.

²¹⁰ Benson (2007 [2004]), p. 127.

²¹¹ Todorović (1974), pp. 11, 40.

²¹² Ibid, p. 43.

²¹³ Ibid, p. 44.

Essentially, it decentralized the country even further and gave more rights and power to the republics. This was seen as a good way to contain nationalism. The first sentence of the constitution declared:

*“The nations of Yugoslavia, proceeding from the right of every nation to self-determination, including the right to secession, on the basis of their will freely expressed in the common struggle of all nations and nationalities in the National Liberation War and Socialist Revolution, and in conformity with their historic aspirations, aware that further consolidation of their brotherhood and unity is in the common interest, have, together with the nationalities with which they live, united in a federal republic of free and equal nations and nationalities and founded a socialist federal community of working people – the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia [...].”*²¹⁴

The new constitution thus explicitly recognized ‘*the right of every nation to self-determination, including the right to secession*’.²¹⁵ A few pages further in the constitution it states that:

*“[...] the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia shall strive: [...] for the right of every nation freely to determine and build up its own social and political system by ways and means of free choice; for the right of nations to self-determination and national independence, and for their right to wage a liberation way to attain these aims [...].”*²¹⁶

Article 1 of the 1974 constitution stated that the SFRY is a federation ‘*of voluntarily united nations and their Socialist Republics, and of the Socialist Autonomous Provinces*’. Article 5 stated that ‘*the frontiers of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia may not be altered without the consent of all Republics and Autonomous Republics*’.²¹⁷ To promote local culture, but also making sure that smaller cultures weren’t usurped by the culture of the bigger nations, article 169 guaranteed the freedom of scientific, scholarly and artistic creation.²¹⁸ Article 247 elaborated further on this and stated that:

*“In order to ensure that its rights to express its nationality and culture shall be realized, each nationality shall be guaranteed the right freely to use its language and alphabet, to develop its culture and for this purpose to set up organizations and enjoy other constitutional-established rights.”*²¹⁹

²¹⁴ Đurović (1974), p. 53.

²¹⁵ Ibid, p. 53.

²¹⁶ Ibid, pp. 71-72.

²¹⁷ Ibid, pp. 71-72.

²¹⁸ Ibid, p. 176.

²¹⁹ Ibid, p. 204.

Article 170 guarantees Yugoslav citizens the right to opt for a nation or nationality and to express this national culture, including the right to use one's own language and alphabet, as long as it isn't used to propagate or practice national inequality and *'national, racial or religious hatred and intolerance shall be unconstitutional and punishable'*.²²⁰ The right to use one's own language and alphabet when exercising their rights, obligations and duties and also in proceeding before state agencies, courts and organizations that exercise public powers are guaranteed in articles 172, 214 and 246. Citizens thus have the right to be instructed and heard in their own language.²²¹ Article 176 states that religion is tolerated, but only in the private sphere (not in public) and religious training is only allowed for the training of clergymen. Abusing religion and religious activities for political purposes is unconstitutional.²²²

Although the republics thus got more rights than ever before, the 1974 constitution did formalize the role of Tito as a symbol of Yugoslav unity and his importance in creating Yugoslav unity by electing him president for life. Article 333 stated that:

*"the historic role of Josip Broz Tito in the National Liberation War and the Socialist Revolution, in the creation and development of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, the development of Yugoslav socialist self-management society, the achievement of the brotherhood and unity of the nations and nationalities of Yugoslavia, the consolidation of the independence of the country and of its position in international relations and in the struggle for peace in the world, and in line with the expressed will of the working people and citizens, nations and nationalities of Yugoslavia, the S.F.R.Y. Assembly [...] may elect [...] Josip Broz Tito President of the Republic for an unlimited term of office."*²²³

The constitution sees a good defense policy and preparation for war by all citizens as the best way to assure peace. Article 241 and 242 state that military service is the duty of all Yugoslav citizens and the officer corps shall be divided among the nations and nationalities in proportional representation. Article 239 states that:

*"It shall be the right and duty of the Communes, Autonomous Provinces and the Republics and other social-political communities, in line with the system of national defense, each on its own territory, to regulate and organize national defense and direct territorial defense, civil defense and other preparations for the defense of the country, and, in the event of an attack upon the country, to organize and direct total national resistance."*²²⁴

²²⁰ Đurović (1974), p. 176-177.

²²¹ Ibid, p. 177, 191, 204.

²²² Ibid, p. 177-178.

²²³ Ibid, p. 265.

²²⁴ Ibid, p. 200.

Local militias were formed to offer armed resistance in case of invasion and aggression. The republics thus also got some form of army with this, although all these militias fell under the command and administration of the JNA (the Yugoslav People's Army).²²⁵ Article 237 states that the protection and defending of the '*independence, sovereignty, territorial integrity and the social system*' of the SFRY is an inviolable and inalienable right and duty of the working people, citizens, nations and the nationalities of the SFRY.²²⁶ The new constitution led to an even more loose confederation and a lot of tasks and responsibilities of the federal government were given to the republics and the autonomous regions (which became virtual republics to give counterweight to Serbia's numerical strength and hegemony).²²⁷ A collective presidency was formed in which each republic had the right to veto a decision made by the presidency and every republic would lead the presidency in one of the eight year terms. Local rivalries between republican LCY parties thus became important in politics. Tito himself was one of the few forces that were able to maintain control over these rivaling LCY factions at a local level. What was started as a policy to increase the integration of the Yugoslavian nation, in the end thus led to increased fragmentation of identities and growing rivalries. In fact, identification with Yugoslavia was seen as a threat by the LCY factions on republic levels, since it wouldn't help their particular republic.²²⁸ With this new confederate system - although it remained a federation in name - the republics became more powerful than the federal government.²²⁹ Although the 1974 constitution declared itself to be federal, in reality all power still lay with Tito.²³⁰

The death of Tito and Kardelj

In 1980 Tito died; a year after Edvard Kardelj had died in 1979. These were the two men who had symbolized Yugoslav Unity the most in the country at a political level, but who also had the power to impose unity over division.²³¹ Two key figures from the revolutionary, partisan generation had gone.²³² It became clear to the LCY, but especially the JNA realized that they were the glue that held Yugoslavia together.²³³ A new national anthem was composed and installed. It was one of the last symbolic acts of brotherhood and unity that the regime made.²³⁴ The slogan 'After Tito - Tito' emerged in political circles. Within ten years the old communist discourse and leadership was replaced by a new leadership, which used a nationalist discourse.²³⁵

²²⁵ Đurović (1974), p. 70-71, 201.

²²⁶ Ibid, p. 199.

²²⁷ Anzulovic (1999), p. 110.

²²⁸ Sekulic et al. (1994), p. 87-88.

²²⁹ Radelić (2006), p. 633.

²³⁰ Silber & Little (1996 [1995]), p. 29.

²³¹ Ramet (2002), p. 6.

²³² Benson (2007 [2004]), p. 131.

²³³ Silber & Little (1996 [1995]), p. 50.

²³⁴ Ugrešić (1995e), p. 174.

²³⁵ Benson (2007 [2004]),pp. 132-133.

Tito's death was a very radical break with the partisan mythology as a way of legitimizing the regime with now most of the key Partisans out of the political arena. A new legitimization was necessary, but rather hard to find since the partisan legacy had played such a big role in legitimizing socialist Yugoslavia from its beginning.²³⁶ Tito was perceived by citizens as someone who stood above any nationality and also above the party. He was seen as a representation of Yugoslavia's future unity and was the last of his Partisan generation of any stature still in power that could claim that he was above any nationality and put Yugoslav unity first. Thus when he died, the only person within Yugoslavia that could handle the national questions and enforce the policy of Brotherhood and Unity was removed from the political scene. The 1974 constitution provided a rotating presidency, but by making Tito president for life this had functioned in the benefit of Yugoslavia. After Tito was gone each member would pay more attention to the needs of their own republics and less to the interests of the federation.²³⁷

The political leadership understood that the Yugoslav federation had its problems, but there wasn't anybody who could solve these or fill the void left by Tito's death. What also didn't help was the fact that many of the politicians in Belgrade from other republics than Serbia (especially those from Slovenia and Croatia) had become political 'guest workers', meaning they saw Belgrade as a place of work, but their heart didn't lay there.²³⁸ Ideology thus became merely a paradigm to express your ideas in, but a large segment of party members weren't really communist anymore. Although the population lived in a communist state, its official ideology didn't reach the population anymore. When the system had finally worn itself out, nationalism became attractive as a way to solve the problems that the Yugoslavian republics had.²³⁹ From the 1960s onwards communist politicians had found out that using some form of republican nationalism could in fact strengthen their position, since it gave them popular support. However, not all problems that Yugoslav society faced could simply be solved by politicians who acted for the best interest of their own republics.²⁴⁰

The effects of the 1974 constitution after Tito's death

Since the break with the USSR in 1948 socialist Yugoslavia had been relatively liberal, which for a long time gave the system a high level of acceptance of the population and intellectuals when compared to other Eastern European communist regimes. A certain degree of pluralism was allowed and the regime was more open to the West and did allow some ideas of the free market to be incorporated in its system. In the end this made sure that not all dissent and protest was criminalized or driven underground, but could be tolerated and given a place within the system – to a

²³⁶ Allcock (2000), p. 426.

²³⁷ Interview held with Josip Mihaljević during my stay in Zagreb in June-July 2011.

²³⁸ Jakovina (2011), pp. 1-2.

²³⁹ Interview held with Nikica Barić during my stay in Zagreb in June-July 2011.

²⁴⁰ Glenny (1999), p. 574, 587.

certain extent.²⁴¹ The fact that the system was more Western orientated and was in a lot of ways economically dependent on the West, led to a situation where the regime couldn't repress the opposition as much as its communist neighbors, since this would have repercussions for their economy and would do harm to the image that socialism in Yugoslavia was more human and softer than in the rest of Eastern Europe.²⁴²

What was most problematic about how Tito handled the Croat Spring and Serb protests in the late 1960s/early 1970s was that he drove nationalism underground and opted for a new constitution that would solve the problems of nationalism – at least on paper – and with Tito in power the country would remain intact. But during the 1980's both nationalisms reemerged and had lost their modernizing and liberal tendencies in the years of forced underground activity. The new nationalism of the 1980s was openly traditionalist.²⁴³ The reason why the problems created by the new federal constitution went unnoticed before it was too late was because the years between 1971 and 1981, regardless of all the economic and cultural problems were seen at the time as a sort of Golden Age of Titoism in which the new socialist society seemed to be within grasp.²⁴⁴

The 1974 constitution contained the provision of an eight year rotating presidency, in which each year one republic or autonomous province would deliver the president. In practice this led to a situation of a more and more loose organization of politics. Decentralization was seen as a step towards democracy, since each republic would have more to say over what was to be done within its own boundaries. The Federal Government of Yugoslavia became more and more just a Ministry of Economy that would coordinate economical development, but from 1974 onwards matters surrounding culture and education had been exclusively decided by the local governments. Since the constitutional reform each republic's own government had executive councils regarding finances, defense and foreign relations. With this less centralized political authority it was possible that the media became free in a way never seen before in Socialist Yugoslavia. With this also the previous taboo topics of nationalism and World War II were being dealt with in the media. National hatreds were less and less repressed than during Tito's life and in the 1980s the three fundamentals of Socialist Yugoslav politics (Brotherhood and Unity, Workers Self-Management and Non-Aligned foreign policy) were not the dogmas that used to be and became the topic of serious debate.²⁴⁵

How was this possible? Nationalism had slowly but surely gained more cultural power. The LCY had given up control over the Serbian and Croatian Academies of Science and Arts which became the strongholds of traditional forms of nationalism. University and intellectual control by the LCY also ended and controlling the media became harder and harder, although it was done in the early 1980s. All political power however remained formally in the hands of the LCY and the republican parties it was made up off. Culture thus became a field in which

²⁴¹ Spehnik & Cipek (2004), p. 202.

²⁴² Bernik (2004), p. 222.

²⁴³ Glenny (1999), p. 593, 623.

²⁴⁴ Ramet (2002), p. 6.

²⁴⁵ Jakovina, (2011), p. 2-4.

nationalism was allowed, but this couldn't be translated into politics for about a decade after Tito's death.²⁴⁶ Since the communist regime officially had a pluralist ideology when it came to society, opposition groups in the civil society tended to opt for nationalism, which – although forbidden – was always ready to erupt beneath the surface. The policy of banning of nationalism thus over the years led to strengthening and legitimizing already existing nationalist ideas, which were a threat to the SFRY since they had a radical different view of society and state.²⁴⁷

Pretty soon after the 1974 constitution, but more and more openly after Tito's death, the Serbian communists had problems with this new constitution. They saw it – and not without reason – as a concession to nationalist feelings throughout the federation and viewed the constitution as weakening the federation. With a federal government weaker than the constituent republics, they argued, the country was severely weakened. While the new constitution was certainly aimed at reducing nationalist sentiment, it also aimed at reducing Serbian dominance in the federation. A minority could now stop what the majority wanted through the new veto right. Slovenia and Croatia on the other hand saw this new constitution as an attempt to solve the political and economical crisis that had been plaguing socialist Yugoslavia since the 1960s. With this argument developing between the three communist leagues, the political scene of the early 1980s became to resemble that of the first Yugoslavia.²⁴⁸ The Croat communist discourse was similar of that the Croat Peasant Party and that of the Serbian Communist Party became more and more the discourse of the Radical Party, the main opponent of the Croat Peasant Party. The only thing that bound together the League of Communists was their name, not their ideology.²⁴⁹ It had become something like a political arena or platform in which political power was used, rather than one organization with the same vision.²⁵⁰

However, in hindsight it is obvious that the Serb communists had a valid argument in the early 1980s when saying the SFRY was severely weakened by the new constitution. This new constitution made sure that school curricula were decided upon at the level of the six republics and two autonomous regions. The new school curricula changed dramatically from the older ones. In the school textbooks for history lessons dealing with the South Slavs in the period of the early 19th century up to 1918 only six names were found in all of schoolbooks from the eight textbooks on a total of 392 names. In the textbooks dealing with the 20th century the same can be seen: out of 448 names only fourteen were mentioned in all the textbooks. The course of history in school became highly ethnocentric and republic-orientated throughout all the federal units.²⁵¹ The effect of this became clear when a survey was taken in the late 1980s about the attitudes towards other ethnicities among Serbian and Croatian secondary school children. These students had strong and highly negative stereotypes about the other ethnic group. The Croat students viewed themselves as “*proud*,

²⁴⁶ Denitch (1993), p. 7-8.

²⁴⁷ Denich (1994), p. 371.

²⁴⁸ Radelić (2006), p. 633-635.

²⁴⁹ Banac (2002), p. xiv.

²⁵⁰ Ramet (2002), pp. 8-11.

²⁵¹ Jakovina (2011), p. 5.

democratic, and peace-loving” and saw the Serbs as “*domineering, antagonistic towards others, aggressive, and perfidious*”. The Serbs on the other hand viewed their own ethnic group as “*proud, hospitable, brave, and lively*” and viewed the Croats as “*perfidious, antagonistic towards others, conceited, chauvinistic, and envious*”.²⁵²

The Serbs and Kosovo

The Serb population was disgruntled that the 1974 constitution divided their republic by creating two autonomous provinces within its borders. Kosovo, which had a population which consisted of 90% ethnic Albanians and 10% Serbs, was problematic to them. They saw Kosovo as the birthplace of their culture. When ethnic Albanians in 1981 took to the streets to demand for their own separate state outside Yugoslavia, the protest was beaten down by the JNA and the federal police, but it still instilled fear in Serbs; they were afraid to lose Kosovo, since Belgrade didn't have much control left over it.²⁵³

Since the 1960s Serbs and Montenegrins had been a declining part of the population of Kosovo in comparison to the Albanians who lived there, but this was a sore subject and people who did notice this and had critique towards the policy in Kosovo got expelled from the LCY as being Serb nationalists.²⁵⁴ Nationalists thus became the only ones that offered an alternative version to the state regarding the situation in Kosovo, and with Kosovo being seen as the birthplace of the Serb nation it was an issue which raised high emotions. The idea of Serbs being forced out of their homeland thus led to great support for the nationalist's idea, who claimed that there was a 'Muslim threat' for the Serb nation. It was a fact that Serbs were leaving Kosovo, but it was harder to prove if this was a voluntary choice or not. The fact that their percentage as a part of the population of Kosovo diminished did have something to do with Serbs leaving the region, but more important were birthrates. The Serb birthrate had been steady so their number wasn't declining; it was only a relative decline in percentage of the population since the Albanian population had a higher birthrate²⁵⁵

In Kosovo the Albanians had been granted the right to education in their own language and having the Albanian flag in public display underneath the Yugoslav flag in the late 1960s after mass rioting in Priština. Furthermore, the secret police in the autonomous region was staffed with Albanians while Serbs who used to hold this position were fired from their position. Another outcome of this unrest was the fact that Priština got a university, where teaching would also be in Albanian. As a result of this, Serb and Montenegrin intellectuals and professionals began leaving Kosovo. During the 1970s over 50,000 Serbs left the autonomous region making the percentage of Albanians in 1981 to be over 78%, while the autonomous region

²⁵² Botev (1994), p. 462.

²⁵³ Silber & Little (1996 [1995]), p. 34-35.

²⁵⁴ Wachtel (1998), p. 198.

²⁵⁵ Anzulovic (1999), p. 108.

remained backwards in economic terms; Kosovo had the highest unemployment rate of the whole SFRY. By the early 1980s most Serbs in Kosovo were lower educated than the Albanians in the autonomous region, when there was a steadily declining rate in industrial and uneducated jobs throughout the whole of Yugoslavia. With an unemployment rate of over 50% in the early 1980s, the question whether a Serb or an Albanian got 'the job' became problematic and led to tensions.²⁵⁶

The situation in the Socialist Autonomous Province Kosovo, although having received more rights because of the 1974 constitution, thus remained tense. In March 1981 a student protest for better conditions on their campus escalated into street demonstrations. Two weeks later workers joined the students in their demands and dissatisfaction with the current situation. From Priština the revolt spread to towns all over Kosovo. With the highest percentage of unemployment, dissatisfaction was widespread. After the demonstrators started shouting 'Kosovo Republic!', the army was sent in and the state of emergency was declared. The demonstrations spread fear amongst the Serbs in and outside Kosovo. Serb nationalism started growing out of resentment against the Albanians in Kosovo, but also against the 1974 constitution and the system that had made Kosovo an Autonomous Province and thereby had more or less separated it from Serbia.²⁵⁷

The socio-economic situation in the 1980s

In addition to the loss of a symbolic leadership, the 1980s were a tough time for Yugoslavia on social-economical standards. Yugoslavia got a tremendous blow during the economic crisis of the 1980s and was still feeling the effects of the 1970s oil crisis. Living standards declined by a quarter.²⁵⁸ From 1979 onwards socialist Yugoslavia was essentially bankrupt.²⁵⁹ In the early 1980s unemployment throughout the federation rose from 13,8% to 16,3% percent in 1985 with a high rising inflation (1979-1985 more than 1,000%). Most of the unemployed, some 60%, were under the age of 25. The population now definitely was in a worse social economical state than when Tito was alive. In 1984 one fourth of all families in the socialist Yugoslavia had fallen under the poverty line.²⁶⁰ The economic and developmental differences in Socialist Yugoslavia only became bigger instead of smaller. The first Yugoslavia started out with big economic differences, which in fact only grew during the existence of both Yugoslavia's. The socialist model of worker self-management and the central planning didn't eradicate economic and developmental disparities between the republics, but made them bigger.²⁶¹ As a result of the state the federation was in, the popularity of the LCY became low, and workers and students began to leave the party after 1985. Even 30% of the party members rated its reputation as

²⁵⁶ Lampe (2000 [1996]), p. 302-304, 339.

²⁵⁷ Benson (2007 [2004]), p. 136-138.

²⁵⁸ Sekulic et al. (1994), p. 86.

²⁵⁹ Ramet (2004), p. 767.

²⁶⁰ Lampe (2000 [1996]), p. 333, 341.

²⁶¹ Allcock (2000), p. 78.

being poor and over half the young people said they wouldn't join it on a federal level. In Croatia (70%) and Slovenia (88%) this number was much higher.²⁶²

The resurface of religion in Croatia, Slovenia and Bosnia

After Tito crushed MASPOK in the early 1970s, Croatia became known as the silent republic. The resurgence of Croat nationalism in the late 1980s had mostly the same spokespersons as it had in the early 1970s. Outside of the SFRY there was a big Croat political émigré community which had fled the country after the Second World War and in 1971. Croatian nationalism was very controversial in socialist Yugoslavia; it was virtually seen as attempt to rehabilitate the Ustaše and was repressed harshly after 1971.²⁶³ This of course didn't mean nothing was happening which in hindsight can be seen as the start of nationalism. In the case of socialist Yugoslavia it was religion. Although there were interreligious tensions, religion itself became less and less problematic within 'Yugoslav society'. In Slovenia and Vojvodina the Church and party relations became relaxed and in Serbia a theological faculty was opened, which led to the first publication of an official translation of the New Testament into Serbo-Croatian. In Croatia and Bosnia however the party stuck to its conservative communist stance towards religion.²⁶⁴ The problem was that the churches and mosques were the only possible organizations that could be viewed as a form of opposition movement to the communist regime, and thus when during the 1980s further dissatisfaction with socialist Yugoslavia grew, also the churches grew and were revitalized by this sentiment.²⁶⁵

Catholicism and communism were seen as incompatible by both sides and in reality this meant Catholics were second rate citizens. After 1945 Catholicism grew more and more important within the Croat identity. The reason for this was two-fold, firstly because of the earlier mentioned creation of the Bosnian Muslims as a distinct group. Another reason was the fact that the Catholic Church was the only influential organization besides the LCY and in addition to a religious organization it became viewed upon as a national organization. A lot of Croats weren't particularly religious, but the Church was the only place within communist Croatia where patriotic and nationalist Croats could be openly Croat. It was a site where the Croatian identity was preserved. People who attended Church thus weren't necessarily religious.²⁶⁶ Religion for the first time became important to the Croat identity from the 1970s on; church attendance grew, although this wasn't per se out of religious interest.²⁶⁷

²⁶² Lampe (2000 [1996]), p. 344.

²⁶³ Silber & Little (1996 [1995]), p. 82.

²⁶⁴ Ramet (2002), p. 11-12.

²⁶⁵ Radić (2010), p. 192.

²⁶⁶ Interview held with Mario Jareb during my stay in Zagreb in June-July 2011.

²⁶⁷ Silber & Little (1996 [1995]), p. 83.

The re-emergence of Serbian nationalism

The new generation of Serbs from the early 1980s on was much more nationalist in their ideas, a result of the constitutional reforms of 1974 and the implications this had in education; they were 'educated in separatism' by the generation that had survived the horrors and ethnic hatreds of World War II.²⁶⁸

During the 1980s Serb nationalists started with a fierce anti-Catholic campaign and claimed that the Vatican had been the first to recognize the NDH – while in reality the Vatican never recognized it during its existence. This campaign thus linked the NDH to the Catholic Church, and since most Croats were Catholic, the idea was that most Croats thus supported the fascist NDH. The fact that Serbs were also active collaborators in the Holocaust was easily forgotten or omitted. The idea behind this policy was that this way, Serbia would internationally be seen as a victim that had been on the right side during the war and all Croats were evil neo-fascists.²⁶⁹

The Serb nationalists felt that they were threatened on two fronts; on the one side there was the fear of the economic power of Slovenia and Croatia – with the last being seen as a fascist threat to the Serb nation – and a fear for the Muslims in Kosovo ('rapists' and 'secessionists') and Bosnia Herzegovina ('Islamic fundamentalists'). They felt as the eternal victims whose time had finally come to avenge past injustices.²⁷⁰ Serbia was seen as Christ, and as Christ it would thus return after death, and for Serbia it would take 600 years after the defeat at the Battle of Kosovo Polje to rise again. The way to spread these paranoid nationalist ideas was the media, which was in the hands of the local republics. When the nationalist paranoia became mainstream through constant media coverage, it became harder to deny and resist the oversimplifications being made for the common citizens and in this case it led to 'collective paranoia, an attitude of hostility to foreigners and a heightened antagonism towards others' among Serbs.²⁷¹

The memorandum of the Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts

The first time the effects of the new constitution became very clear is when in 1986 a memorandum of the Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts was leaked to the press. The sixteen authors who wrote it claimed that the federation was an obstruction to Serb self-realization and it favored the centralization of the first Yugoslavia, since this state didn't divide the Serbs into different republics. The main idea in it was that all Serbs had to come into one state of their own in order to survive outside threats, regardless of the wishes of the other nations in Yugoslavia. Furthermore it claimed the borders made by Tito were artificial since it didn't include all Serbs into one republic.²⁷²

²⁶⁸ Wachtel (1998), p. 197.

²⁶⁹ Anzulovic (1999), p. 106-108.

²⁷⁰ Ibid, p. 109.

²⁷¹ Ramet (2005b), p. 126, 128-132

²⁷² Anzulovic (1999), p. 114.

“The Serbian culture has more unsuitable, banned, silenced or undesirable writers and creative intellectuals, many of them even being completely being erased from literary memory [...] The establishment of full national and cultural integrity of the Serbian people, regardless of which republic or province they live in, is their historical and democratic right. [...] In less than 50 years, during two successive generations [it was] twice exposed to physical annihilation, forced assimilation, conversion, cultural genocide, ideological indoctrination, devaluation and rejection of its own tradition under an imposed guilt complex, intellectually and politically disarmed.”²⁷³

With the crush of the Croatian Spring in 1971 things that could be said without much problem in 1971 and earlier years now became a taboo until Tito died and even after then. After Tito died, slowly but surely voices that once had been suppressed were heard again.²⁷⁴ The memorandum of the Serbian Academy of Arts and Sciences in 1986 wasn't that different in form from the Croat nationalist intellectuals in 1971.

However, there was one major difference. While the Croat Spring was harshly repressed, in 1986 the communist regime didn't undertake any real action. No public intellectuals were fired from their jobs.²⁷⁵ Ivan Stambolić, the leader of the Serbian League of Communists, condemned the memorandum as dangerous, not only to Yugoslavia but also to the Serbs. He argued that *‘Yugoslavia was the only solution to the Serb question. Without Yugoslavia Serbia is condemned to dismemberment’*. All other Serb communists also condemned the document, with the exception of one man, Slobodan Milošević.²⁷⁶ This memorandum was an outright manifesto of Serb nationalism and it would later form the ideological basis for Milošević's pan-Serbian policy.²⁷⁷

²⁷³ Anzulovic (1999), p. 115-116.

²⁷⁴ Interview held with Marko Zubak during my stay in Zagreb in June-July 2011.

²⁷⁵ Ramet (2004a), p. 749.

²⁷⁶ Glenny (1999), p. 579-583.

²⁷⁷ Anzulovic (1999), p. 114.

Chapter 4: Nationalism and political legitimacy, 1986-1992

“The chickens of world war I are coming home to roost. The explosive issues of 1989-91 are those created in Europe [...] by the collapse of the multi-ethnic Habsburg, Ottoman and Russian empires in 1917-18, and the nature of the postwar peace settlements in respect of their successor states. The essence of these, you may recall, was the Wilsonian plan to divide Europe into ethnic-linguistic territorial states, a project as dangerous as it was impracticable, except at the cost of forcible mass expulsion, coercion and genocide which was subsequently paid.”

E.J. Hobsbawm & D.J. Kertzer, “Ethnicity and Nationalism in Europe Today”²⁷⁸

Most authors accept the view that nationalism in Yugoslavia became more and more accepted again after the death of Tito in 1980. This however doesn't mean that from the moment Tito died it was clear that the SFRY would break up within just over a decade, and that a new form of blatant, openly nationalism would be accepted. In my view, the memorandum of the Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts is a key moment in Yugoslav history. So what happened during the years after the leaking of the memorandum up to June 1991 and July 1992 when the territory of one state became divided and three new states were recognized internationally?²⁷⁹ Before I want to go into the story of the rise of nationalism in the late 1980s, I want to pay some attention to the local and international context within which this was taking place. Therefore I will first look at the socio-economical situation in the SFRY, Yugoslavism in the late 1980s, the end of the Cold War and the role of Diaspora groups in the rising nationalism, before turning to the internal affairs in the SFRY.

The socio-economical situation in the late 1980s

In 1989 a wave of hyperinflation hit the SFRY, which reached 35,000%. Slovenia, always one of the richest republics within the SFRY was shielded from this inflation since it already had introduced a new monetary system. In later years Croatia and Macedonia did the same.²⁸⁰ But high inflation – although not hyperinflation – was something that had plagued the SFRY since the late 1960s. Between 1968 and 1975 the inflation rose from 5% to 25%. This inflation exposed the weakness of the government and did put a lot of pressure on the entire self-management system. Since the early 1970s there was a trade deficit of over 1 billion dollars annually. The

²⁷⁸ Hobsbawm & Kertzer (1992), p. 5.

²⁷⁹ Bookman (1994), p. 176.

²⁸⁰ Ibid, p. 180.

federal government's inability to cope with these problems led to a serious decline of its authority among the Yugoslav citizens.²⁸¹

Since the SFRY was a Federal Republic, the republics had a lot to say about the income derived from their own activities, such as tourism, but also remittances of guest workers and export. This meant that Slovenia and Croatia were in a better situation than the other republics in the SFRY. Among the republics there were wide disparities in other fields such as unemployment rates; the poorer and less-developed republics for instance had a three times higher unemployment rate than the richer and more developed republics during the 1970s.²⁸² During the 1980s and early 1990s Slovenia and Croatia, the two richest republics, started to develop a form of resentment towards the poorer republics and the federal government. Both wanted to pay less to the federal government, because they perceived it as support to the less developed regions within the SFRY at the cost of their own republic and also wanted to withdraw their participation in the Federal Fund, decrease their contribution to federal expenditures such as the military and they also wanted to decrease their contribution in support of the federal administration. Both also proclaimed that they wanted a market economy and do this at a faster pace than the rest of the SFRY and had the idea that the other republics were holding them back. Of course, the less developed republics such as Bosnia Herzegovina and Macedonia thought differently about this, since they were to lose a lot of funds when both Croatia and Slovenia proceeded with their economic plans. On a political level both Croatia and Slovenia favored a multi-party system, direct elections and thus the end to the communist rule. Other republics were also moving towards this, but they moved too slowly for Slovenia. Also both Croatia and Slovenia wanted to get rid of what they perceived as Serbian hegemony. However, there was one thing that all republics wanted, despite the fact that linguistic and cultural accommodations were guaranteed in their federal constitution: they wanted to assert their independence culturally.²⁸³

Who were the Yugoslavs?

During the years of its existence those citizens who did identify themselves as Yugoslavs were mainly LCY party members, inhabitants of cities and people born from a mixed marriage. The term mixed marriage is perhaps somewhat deceiving in this case because most of these mixed-marriages were within the same cultural tradition, meaning that if one married outside of one's own culture it would be with someone from a similar cultural tradition. A Muslim would thus marry another Muslim, Orthodox Yugoslavs would intermarry and the Catholic Slovenes and Croats would intermarry.²⁸⁴

Since education fell under the control of the republics since the late 1960s, history lessons were thus national history lessons and not Yugoslavian history. Of course, not everything could be taught in schools under the control of the federation,

²⁸¹ Seroka (1978), p. 270.

²⁸² Ibid, p. 268-269.

²⁸³ Bookman (1994), p. 177-178.

²⁸⁴ Botev (1994), p. 461, 471-472.

but there was a relative freedom in such matters. However, still most people who identified with Yugoslavia were young people who associated Yugoslavia with modern Europe. In certain border areas where minorities lived, those minorities did opt for a Yugoslavian identity, but more to protect themselves against people from another nationality than that they embraced Yugoslavia as such. The number people that did claim to be Yugoslavian has always been rather small. One of the last surveys regarding identity was held in 1989, with the following results. In 1989 around 9% of the inhabitants of Croatia saw themselves as Yugoslav, in Bosnia this was 14.4% of the population, and in Serbia only 4.6% of its residents saw themselves as Yugoslavs.²⁸⁵ What was worst is the fact that this was a growth from the years before the 1980s and that this growth was perceived as a negative thing by some in the LCY. Since the 1974 constitution a further federalization of the SFRY had come into reality and this growth in Yugoslavs caused an outrage among its defenders. They argued that within Yugoslavia with all its ethnic recognitions of nations, religion and ethnicities nobody needed the Yugoslav label anymore. Claiming to be Yugoslav thus could be a sign of discontent with the system which promoted federal division instead of unity.²⁸⁶ The political system which was founded to undermine nationalism thus in fact became a vehicle for it.

End of the Cold War

Although Tito made sure that Yugoslavia wasn't part of either the Eastern or Western Block, but was a member of the Non-Aligned Movement, it still noticed the effects of the end of the Cold War. After the Cold War was over, the USA lost strategic interest in the Socialist Federal Republic Yugoslavia.²⁸⁷ This meant that the outer border which kept the SFRY together began to crumble. US support against any Warsaw Pact aggression wasn't guaranteed anymore, since the Warsaw Pact fell apart. Moscow simply wasn't a threat anymore at the end of the 1980s and in the early 1990s. Therefore Yugoslavia – in the eyes of the former superpowers, but especially to the USA, became a just another East-European country.²⁸⁸ And therefore the same rules applied. When Warren Zimmerman became the last American ambassador in the SFYR the policy of 'keeping Tito afloat' was abandoned and human rights and democratization became priorities, and if possible within the current Yugoslav framework.²⁸⁹ As far as the US was concerned, Yugoslavia now was a European affair.²⁹⁰

The relative stability of the second Yugoslavia during Tito's life after the break with the USSR didn't have everything to do with Tito and him keeping the lid on ethnic conflict; during his lifetime the international political context (the Cold War) also assured stability. Neither of the two superpowers would gain anything from

²⁸⁵ Sekulic et al. (1994), p. 88-89, 94.

²⁸⁶ Jović (2003), p. 179.

²⁸⁷ Interview held with Tvrtko Jakovina during my stay in Zagreb in June-July 2011.

²⁸⁸ Jakovina (2011), p. 11.

²⁸⁹ Interview held with Tvrtko Jakovina during my stay in Zagreb in June-July 2011.

²⁹⁰ Doder (1993), p. 3-5.

internal conflict in Yugoslavia and therefore both superpowers – the West more than the Warsaw pact – had no interest in ending Tito’s regime; it hadn’t much external pressure other than maintaining the status quo. The end of the Cold War thus changed things dramatically; the Soviet threat disappeared and thereby also Western interest in Yugoslavia.²⁹¹

Diaspora groups and the SFRY

The nationalism which emerged during the 1980s thus was very much a result of Yugoslav internal affairs. However, this doesn’t mean that there weren’t any Diaspora groups active in it. Most of the financial, but also ideological, support came from right-wing religious, sometimes clerical émigrés, outside of Yugoslavia that hadn’t lost the xenophobic nationalistic thought of World War II. Since both nationalism and religion was frowned upon by the communist regime, people who professed it gained support by people within the SFRY who weren’t in favor of the communist regime. And the Yugoslav population in the 1980s - after 30 years of political and cultural repression and now amidst an economical crisis - was a good public for nationalist rally cries.²⁹²

Slobodan Milošević and the rise of Serbian nationalism

Eight months after the memorandum of the Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts was leaked and condemned by the Serb League of Communists, its ideas were beginning to gain political currency when Serb president Dušan Čkrebčić invited a group of Serb nationalists from Kosovo to speak at the Serb parliament, a thing that would have been unheard of during the Tito era. The communists thought that nationalism was useful to revive the political and economic stagnation of Serbia and chose the side of nationalists. What had been suppressed for decades now became an unofficial party policy in Serbia.²⁹³

Milošević became the head of the Serbian Central Committee in May 1986 and followed the party discipline. He called the memorandum of the Serbian Academy of Arts and Sciences ‘nothing else but the darkest nationalism’. However, he found out that nationalism could be used to his advance to gain support after witnessing a fight in April 1987 between police and demonstrators in Kosovo, during which he promised the Serb demonstrators that ‘*no one should dare to beat you*’. This was a controversial slogan, which in reality meant that a high ranking Serbian communist was on the side of Serb nationalists in Kosovo. Within the Serbian League of Communists it was a controversial thing, but with the help of the Belgrade media he managed to remain in position and even strengthen it.²⁹⁴ His speech at this rally in

²⁹¹ Allcock, (2000), p. 242.

²⁹² Denitch (1993), p. 9.

²⁹³ Silber & Little (1996 [1995]), p. 35.

²⁹⁴ Lampe (2000), p. 347-348.

Kosovo still featured some communist terminology (for instance *‘the progressive people’*), but its message is clearly in support of the nationalists:

“You shouldn’t abandon your land just because it’s difficult to live, because you are pressured by injustice and degradation. It was never a part of the Serbian and Montenegrin character to give up in the face of obstacles, to demobilize when it’s time to fight. [...] You should stay here for the sake of your ancestors and descendants. Otherwise your ancestors would be defiled and descendants disappointed. But I don’t suggest that you stay, endure, and tolerate a situation you’re not happy with. On the contrary, you should change it with the rest of the progressive people here, in Serbia and Yugoslavia.”²⁹⁵

Slobodan Milošević became the leader of the Serbian League of Communists in September 1987 after a confrontation with then current leader, Ivan Stambolić, at a Central Committee session. The first thing Milošević set out to do was to enlarge Belgrade’s influence by ending the status of the Autonomous Regions, recentralizing the system at the expense of the autonomy of the other republics and rehabilitating the Serb Orthodox Church to such a level it could become a vehicle for nationalism. This policy was legitimized by arguing that a strong Serbia meant a strong Yugoslavia. Within two years what used to be called Yugoslavia was in reality a federation of four national territories, namely Slovenia, Croatia, the enlarged Serbia & Montenegro as one and Macedonia. Bosnia, since it had such an ethnically diverse population was divided into several camps. Since the federalization was taken so far since 1974 it now was a situation in which six independent countries worked together rather than one of six republics under one federation.²⁹⁶

By using the memorandum of the Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts as a political program Milošević could count on the support of the Orthodox Church, which was of key importance in distributing anti-Catholic and anti-Muslim sentiment and the general rise in Serb nationalist sentiments.²⁹⁷ The Orthodox Church which was repressed during the pre-Milošević era – it was seen as a bulwark of Greater Serbia nationalism and chauvinism - suddenly became accepted and embraced by the Serbian communist nationalists in the second half of the 1980s with the rise of Milošević. Before it was seen as opposition to the regime, but a loyal one; since it was a national Church, it was easier to control than for instance the Catholic Church. By adopting nationalism and the Orthodox Church by the Serbian communists, the already weak opposition was even further undermined. Being a loyal Serb but anti-Milošević became virtually impossible.²⁹⁸

The rise of Milošević was helped by the fact that the Serb media supported him, which led to the support of the Serb population who felt that Milošević was giving the Serbs the right to be Serbs back after 50 years of Titoism. At rallies and

²⁹⁵ Silber & Little (1996 [1995]), p. 38.

²⁹⁶ Ramet (2002), p. 26-27, 35.

²⁹⁷ Anzulovic (1999), p. 121-123.

²⁹⁸ Ramet (2002), p. 100-102, 113, 156-157.

demonstrations where Milošević would speak there were banners stating “Down with the 1974 constitution!” and Cetnik symbolism was seen. Milošević recognized that these demonstrations and rallies helped him in placing his own people in towns throughout the two Autonomous Provinces and started using them to oust opponents. By portraying the Vojvodina leadership as unsupportive to the Serbs in Kosovo, who in Serb media were portrayed as martyrs for Serbia, great groups of Serbs supported Milošević’s ‘anti-bureaucratic revolution’, which would reunite Serbia after it had been divided by the 1974 constitution. In effect it made Slobodan Milošević the most powerful man within Serbia and Yugoslavia.²⁹⁹

In order to change the Serb constitution Milošević had to amend the Yugoslav constitution of 1974. In November 1988, this became possible after a majority of the federal parliament voted in favor of this amendment after Milošević had stated that if he didn’t get what he wanted demonstrations favoring it would certainly break out. The new Serb constitution came into being on March 28; Serbia now was whole again and the two Autonomous Provinces ceased to exist as they had before, the whole of what once was Serbia now was in the firm control of Milošević.³⁰⁰ Kosovo and the Vojvodina were placed again under the control of Belgrade, but remained to have their vote in the federal system. Milošević went forward to change the leadership of Kosovo and Vojvodina into people he could trust, thereby giving him together with Montenegro’s traditional support four out of the eight republican votes. The other republics quickly realized that this made Serbia’s position more dominant again.³⁰¹

On June 28th 1989, the 600 anniversary of the battle of Kosovo Polje was commemorated. Milošević spoke at this event, with hundreds of thousands of supporters, with some displaying Cetnik symbolism, such as old Cetnik hats, but also the double headed white eagle (the symbol of the Serb monarchy) was seen.³⁰² He said:

“Six centuries later, again we are in battles and quarrels. They are not armed battles, though such things shouldn’t be excluded yet.”³⁰³

The Serb communists wanted to introduce the ‘one man, one vote’ principle to make sure that Yugoslavia remained together and didn’t get divided. This principle should guarantee them a majority of the votes in this time of nationalism, since most Serbs (who were the largest population within the SFRY) would automatically support Serb politicians. The Slovene leadership saw this as a threat to Slovenian interests and wanted to keep the system in which each federal unit had one vote. In March that year the Slovenes also wanted to amend their own constitution – claiming that Serbia’s constitutional amend gave a precedent – so that it gave them the right to secede from Yugoslavia and thereby guaranteeing them a good position within Yugoslavia. The Serbs and the LCY weren’t happy with this, as this directly

²⁹⁹ Silber & Little (1996 [1995]), p. 58-61, 72.

³⁰⁰ Ibid, p. 64, 69.

³⁰¹ Lampe (2000 [1996]), p. 349, 352

³⁰² Silber & Little (1996 [1995]), p. 70-72.

³⁰³ Ibid, p. 72.

undermined them and created an asymmetrical federation, which they wouldn't tolerate, and claimed that these amendments would in effect be the end of the integrity of Yugoslavia.³⁰⁴

Slovenia

While the Serbian communists opted for a recentralization, Slovenia wanted more freedom. Certain propositions were made, ranging from full autonomy to an 'asymmetric federation' – the latter meaning a federation in which Slovenia would have a special position based on its wealth and prosperity. Slovenia, the wealthiest republic felt it bared the costs of other republics inefficiency. The fact that 70% of their national budget went to the JNA where it wasn't even used for its purpose seemed ridiculous to them.³⁰⁵

In the late 1980s the Yugoslav communists and the JNA felt more and more threatened by Slovene nationalism. After some Slovene artists had submitted a winning poster design for the Relay of Youth which was based on an old Hitler Youth poster with Nazi symbolism replaced with communist symbolism infuriated the JNA that considered itself to be the main protagonist of Tito and the Partisan legacy. In 1987, a year after the memorandum by the Serb Academy of Sciences and Arts, Slovene nationalist intellectuals also published an article that Slovenia would be better off outside of Yugoslavia and argued in favor of a return to its 'Christian [Roman Catholic] tradition'. Milan Kučan, the head of the Slovenian League of Communists downplayed the importance of the article and called it a rehash of old ideas, but the JNA saw this as a new memorandum and took grave offence to it. They argued that it was an attempt by the bourgeois right and nationalists to destroy the Yugoslav community. When the magazine *Mladina* published articles about a JNA admiral, the Slovene communists again downplayed the issue. More and more, the army saw the reaction of the Slovene communists as a form of tolerance which was almost identical with approval, and suspected that the Slovene leadership used certain outlets such as *Mladina* for its own ends. Kučan however thought that the growing anti-Yugoslav sentiment within Slovenia was a reaction to anti-Slovene sentiments in the rest of Yugoslavia and realized that the Army and Belgrade were closing ranks against Slovenia. In January 1988 *Mladina* published a classified document of the JNA which instructed how to go ahead in the case martial law was introduced. In March of that year it again got hold of some classified documents, this time stating a list from the JNA of people who should be arrested when martial law would be introduced. The army reacted furiously and arrested four journalists who became known as the Ljubljana Four, which led to the formation of a mass opposition movement. More than 100,000 people signed a petition calling for the release of the Ljubljana Four. When the Ljubljana Four were on trial, the public wasn't allowed in and the trial was held in Serbo-Croat instead of Slovene, which caused even more public outrage about this whole affair. Slovene nationalism and opposition against

³⁰⁴ Silber & Little (1996 [1995]), p. 73-75.

³⁰⁵ Ramet (2002), p. 32-35.

centralist Belgrade and the army couldn't be stopped anymore.³⁰⁶ In April 1988 Slovenian cultural organizations adopted their own alternative 'constitution' that didn't mention Yugoslavia, but it did mention Slovenia's *'historical right to self determination, including the right to participation in a union of states or the secession from such a union of states'*.³⁰⁷

Kučan, who felt enough pressure from Belgrade and the JNA, already recognized the danger of Milošević having three out of the eight votes in the federal presidency. Since the Montenegrin leadership was loyal to him, he effectively could block any proposals that weren't in his interest. Serbia would thus be the most powerful republic in the federation.³⁰⁸ Kučan saw independence as the only solution for Slovenia. Slovenia became a pluralist society and multi-party elections were planned for 1990. The shared view of all these political parties was defending Slovenia against the JNA and Milošević. The right to secession was added to the Slovenian republican constitution in case all other options weren't satisfying, which according to the Slovene leadership wasn't in contradiction with the federal republics. These developments were something that the Serb, Montenegrin and Bosnian leadership weren't too happy about.³⁰⁹

The resurgence of religion

Just like Serb nationalists manipulated statistics surrounding the population of Kosovo or the numbers of Serb casualties in World War II, the Orthodox clergy claimed it was being forced to become smaller in Slavonia (a part of Croatia where a part of the Serb minority lives) – but didn't mention the fact that the general orthodox population in that area declined. By doing so, it also gave the impression it was under siege by Catholic Croats. In regards to Serbs living in Bosnia, the impression was spread by the Orthodox Church that they were again being threatened by genocide. Orthodox clergy was thus very much in favor of a Greater Serbia and condemned any compromise to it.³¹⁰

The late 1980s saw a marked rising of Croatian Catholicism. While in the 1940s there were only three Catholic periodicals allowed in the whole of Yugoslavia, in the late 1980s there were 137 Catholic publications in Croatia alone. Since the Church had been attacked by the communists in the first ten years after the war, certain leaders, especially archbishop Stepinac had become something of a hero to the Croats. Rehabilitation of this archbishop was something that was hard for the communist regime to tolerate, since it would mean admitting their faults which would only strengthen the position of the Croats who admired him. Church officials started more openly defying the state on certain areas as education and the human rights situation in the SFRY. The Church thus was an active challenge for the communist regime, even though it had been weakened throughout the years. When

³⁰⁶ Silber & Little (1996 [1995]), p. 48-56.

³⁰⁷ Dragović-Soso (2004), p. 179.

³⁰⁸ Silber & Little (1996 [1995]), p. 63, 73.

³⁰⁹ Ramet (2002), p. 34-35.

³¹⁰ Ramet (2005a), p. 255-258, 275-276.

the introduction of democracy came to Croatia (and Slovenia) the Church did welcome this, but it wasn't supporting any particular party; the wave of liberalism meant that the Church was able to regain ground that was lost before.³¹¹

In Slovenia the Catholic Church hadn't been seen as collaborators as much and there weren't any high Catholics like Stepinac who had been prosecuted by the government. During the 1980s slowly but surely the relationship between the state and the Church became friendlier. It could openly be said that the Partisans had killed priests. The theological faculty that used to be a part of the University of Ljubljana – which was separated by the communist regime – again became a part of the university. All these things weren't without any controversy, but it was far less problematic and controversial than in Croatia.³¹²

The backlash of Tito's history falsification

During the 1980s the importance of the death toll of World War II in each nation became so important for nationalists in Zagreb and Belgrade, since it was one of the cornerstones of the communist political legitimacy.³¹³ Being the biggest victim thus had two roles: it undermined the then current communist political hegemony, but also made the claims for own nationhood seem more relevant. Since it was hard to estimate the real figures within the country, nationalists could manipulate these numbers. In 1986 a Serb newspaper published an article which claimed that 'at least 1.5 million Serbs were slaughtered in 'Pavelić's Croatia' [the NDH] while the Yugoslav statistics accounted for a total of 1.7 million dead people of all nationalities [which is a highly questionable number as mentioned before].³¹⁴ The Croat émigré nationalists on the other hand claimed that over 300,000 people died at Bleiburg, while a more realistic number is about 36,000 deaths.³¹⁵

In 1987 the NDH minister of Interior, Justice and Religious affairs was extradited from the US to the SFRY where he was put on trial and sentenced to death for his role in World War II atrocities. In the end he wasn't executed because of his bad health. Although, as mentioned before, most Croats didn't support the Ustaše regime, they perceived this trial as an attempt by the Serbs "to prove the genocidal nature of the Croatian people".³¹⁶ It revived old hatreds and animosities and gave a history lesson to the generations who hadn't lived through World War II.³¹⁷

This process led to a situation in which each ethnic group saw itself as 'victims rather than victimizers' and claimed that their own war crimes were exaggerated and those of the other ethnic groups played down. The historical discourse of the Tito era thus came with a huge ethno-nationalistic backlash.³¹⁸ During these years the vilification of the Cetniks in Titoist historiography was reduced in Serbian

³¹¹ Ramet (2002), p. 91-94, 96.

³¹² Ibid, pp. 95-96.

³¹³ Glenny (1999), p. 500-501.

³¹⁴ Anzulovic (1999), p. 100, 103-104.

³¹⁵ Ramet (2002), p. 53.

³¹⁶ Ibid, pp. 20-21.

³¹⁷ Jakovina (2011), p. 6.

³¹⁸ Job (1993), p. 57.

historiographic output, which in the end made the Ustaše look as the only collaborators with fascist foreigners. During the 1980s the portraits of Milošević and Četnik leader Draža Mihailović were seen next to the saints of the Orthodox Church and the kings of Medieval Serbia.³¹⁹ Also, portraits of the old monarchy of the first Yugoslavia resurfaced in the media.³²⁰ In May 1990 a statue of Draža Mihailović was erected and the Serb World War II fascist collaborator, general Milan Nedić, was seen as the architect of the Serbian national unity.³²¹ All these expressions of Serbian nationalism led to a rise of nationalism in neighboring Croatia.

The rise of Croat nationalism in the late 1980s

There were no real tensions after Tito died in Croatia itself between the Croatian and Serbian population; in general the relations were good until Milošević rose to power. Although the anti-Croat propaganda from the Serb nationalists had been going on for several years, it was only from 1989 onwards that tensions between the Croats and the Croatian Serbs became openly after Serb nationalist mass rallies took place in Krajina. Just like the Serbs in Kosovo, the Serbs in Croatia (and Bosnia Herzegovina) had been receptive to the Serb nationalist propaganda from Belgrade.³²² Croat communists found it hard to combat the aggressive politics of Milošević from fear of being branded as Croat nationalists, which the Croat communists definitely weren't. After Tito had crushed MASPOK, the Croatian League of Communists had been purged of its nationalist elements. Croatia did support the Slovenes since they saw it as the best chance to counterbalance the threat posed by Milošević, since there was a distinct Serb minority within Croatia.³²³ In Croatia all the Serb anti-Croat sentiments eventually led to a reaction; Croat nationalism became more and more openly and accepted. Croat nationalism wasn't just anti-Serbian, but also anti-communist. In Zagreb, the statue of Ban (governor) Josip Jelačić was put back on the main square in 1989 where it had stood until 1947.³²⁴

The nationalism in Croatia wasn't backed by a local communist party, but by an underground form of nationalism which resurged in the late 1980s. The HDZ, the Croatian Democratic Union, led by Franjo Tuđman, became a good alternative to the communists in the 1990 election since they did speak out against Milošević and in favor of Croatia.³²⁵ Tuđman and other new politicians (most of them former communist party members) on the scene used involvement in the Croat Spring and their time in jail under the communist regime for nationalist activism as a way to gain votes, since it was proof of anti-communism and also proof of their support for the Croat cause. The Croats saw them as the people who could represent them and their grievances.³²⁶ The different Croatian nationalist parties profited from Serb

³¹⁹ Ramet (2005b), p. 126, 128-130, 138.

³²⁰ Ramet (2002), p. 39.

³²¹ Ramet (2004b), p. 770.

³²² Interview held with Nikica Barić during my stay in Zagreb in June-July 2011.

³²³ Silber & Little (1996 [1995]), p. 73-75, 82.

³²⁴ Ramet (2002), p. 39.

³²⁵ Silber & Little (1996 [1995]), p. 82-83.

³²⁶ Interview held with Marko Zubak during my stay in Zagreb in June-July 2011.

nationalism, since it partly led to the rise of Croat nationalism. One of the reasons Franjo Tuđman became such a successful politician was that he recognized the importance of the émigré community early on, especially on the financing side of things and rallying international support for the Croat cause.³²⁷ Franjo Tuđman, a former partisan and JNA general turned historian had already been imprisoned in 1971 for his participation in the Croatian Spring. A decade later, in 1981, he again was imprisoned for ‘maliciously misrepresenting Yugoslavia abroad’ after publishing a book abroad which claimed that Bosnia Herzegovina was by historical right and geographical logic a internal part of Croatia.³²⁸ According to Tuđman the Muslims of Bosnia and Herzegovina were Islamized Croats; if Yugoslavia would fall apart it would thus be best to divide Bosnia and Herzegovina between Croatia and Serbia. But what was even more controversial was the fact that while he distanced himself from the Ustaše regime (which made sense with him being a Partisan during the war), he didn’t see the NDH as an entirely bad thing either; it did have some good sides.³²⁹

“Our opponents see nothing in our program but the claim for the restoration of the independent Croatian Ustaše state. These people fail to see that the state was not the creation of fascist criminals; it also stood for the historic aspirations of the Croatian people for an independent state.”³³⁰

The JNA was concerned with Tuđman and the HDZ, but – just like it was with Kučan in Slovenia - their attention to him only made them more popular in Croatia. In 1990, Croatia’s silence had come to an end and nationalism flourished.³³¹

The breakup of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia

The clashes between the Serbian leadership and the Slovenian leadership increased during the late 1980s. In 1989 the nationalist speech that Milošević held at the 600 year commemoration of the Battle of Kosovo Polje estranged him even further from the non Serbs within the federation and even terrified them of this ‘new Serbia’ which wasn’t going to cooperate within the federation unless it would serve Serb interests. Meanwhile in Croatia the tensions between nationalist Croats and nationalists Serbs in areas like Dalmatia and the Krajina had led to concern from the Federal leadership. In January 1990 the LCY held its last congress in which the Slovenes felt they were not taken serious by the Serbs and all their proposals were voted against. In reaction to that they decided to leave the congress and the LCY. Now Milošević had four votes out of the seven votes in the LCY, which upset the Croats; they didn’t want to go further with the congress without the Slovenian delegation.³³² When the

³²⁷ Silber & Little (1996 [1995]), p. 82-84.

³²⁸ Benson (2007 [2004]), p. 122-123, 139.

³²⁹ Silber & Little (1996 [1995]), p. 86.

³³⁰ Ibid, p. 86.

³³¹ Ibid, p. 87.

³³² Lampe (2000 [1996]), p. 352-355.

Slovene delegation walked out, the Croats which had pledged to support them also left the Fourteenth Party Congress on January 23, 1990 and the LCY ceased to exist.³³³ Two weeks later the Slovenian League of Communists led by Kučan changed its name into the Party of Democratic Renewal.³³⁴

The 1990s elections

The disintegration of the SFRY started with the clashing views of Serbian president Slobodan Milošević and the Slovenian president Milan Kučan. While Milošević and the Serb communists opted for a unitary, centralist approach to resolve further problems, Slovenian president Kučan wanted a further federalization and didn't like the new Serb quest for domination in the SFRY. He soon became the most prominent opponent to Milošević within the LCY.³³⁵ During the 1990s the first multi-party elections were held throughout the republics of socialist Yugoslavia. In Slovenia the opposition won, but Kučan was voted president as he was seen as defending Slovenian interests since 1986. In Croatia the HDZ led by Franjo Tuđman won and became president. In Serbia Milošević remained in power with his renamed Socialist Party of Serbia, and in Serbia's traditional ally Montenegro the communist Momir Bulatović was elected president. In Macedonia the once expelled, dissident communist Kiro Gligorov was elected president. In the Bosnian election the communist parties (there were two) together won 31 of the 240 seats in parliament, the rest went to ethnic parties; the Muslim party of Democracy led by Alija Izetbegović won 80 seats, the Bosnian branch of the Croatian Democratic Union won 44 seats and Radovan Karadžić and his Serbian Democratic Party won 72 seats. The remaining seats in parliament were divided between less nationalistic, but still ethnic parties.³³⁶ In Serbia however, the non-communist parties weren't legalized and elections weren't held, which meant that the SFRY now was an asymmetrical federation with within its borders both multi-party democracies and a one party state. Serbia, by annexing the leadership of Kosovo and Vojvodina and finding loyal support for its policy in Titograd now controlled half of the votes in the Federal Presidency.³³⁷ Within ten years after the death of Tito the old communist discourse and leadership was replaced by a new leadership, which used a nationalist discourse.³³⁸

The reason these nationalist parties won the elections - besides the fact that nationalism had become more and more accepted in the late 1980s - had everything to do with the fact that the communists outside of Serbia found it hard to form a coalition against the centralist policy of Milošević. The communists of the republics who opposed this, Slovenia, Croatia, Macedonia and Bosnia however couldn't agree

³³³ Silber & Little (1996 [1995]), p. 80.

³³⁴ Lampe (2000 [1996]), p. 354-355.

³³⁵ Dragović-Soso (2004), p. 178.

³³⁶ Lampe (2000 [1996]), p. 359-362.

³³⁷ Jakovina (2011), p. 9-10.

³³⁸ Benson (2007 [2004]), p. 132-133.

on an alternative.³³⁹ Ethnic nationalism did offer an alternative, since for the other nationalities than the Slovenes, Croats and Serbs a future Yugoslavia without Slovenia and Croatia was a bleak prospect. The Serbs, who already were the largest nation number wise, would only grow larger in this new Yugoslavia and the other nations would be left marginalized. Therefore, also for them secession became a viable idea.³⁴⁰

Milošević's interpretation of the 1974 constitution

While politicians from other republics interpreted the 1974 constitution as guaranteeing the right of the republics to secede from Yugoslavia, Milošević came with a different interpretation. He argued that the internal borders of the republics within the federation were just administrative and only nations had the right to secede from Yugoslavia. If Yugoslavia would disintegrate, the internal borders thus didn't mean anything anymore; in that case all bets would be off. On March 15, 1991 Milošević declared that Yugoslavia was finished and that Serbia didn't recognize any federal bodies anymore and proclaimed Serbia's secession from Yugoslavia in its then current version. A couple of days later he declared the aim to secure that all Serbs would live in Serbia, or Yugoslavia, but the Croats and Slovenes could leave any time they wanted. They however wouldn't take 'a part of the Serbian nation' with them.³⁴¹

In December 1990 Slovenia had held a referendum about its future; should or shouldn't it stay in the Yugoslav federation. An overwhelming majority of the voters thought it would be best to leave the federation. The idea of Slovenia leaving Yugoslavia wasn't a problem to Milošević, since no Serbs lived there. Croatia could also leave Yugoslavia in the eyes of Milošević, but the part where the Croatian Serbs lived wouldn't be part of that independent Croatia. According to him, and many other Serbs, that was Serb and not Croatian territory and it thus was to be controlled by Belgrade and not by Zagreb. So when on June 25, 1991 both Slovenia and Croatia declared its independence, Milošević felt he had to act. On June 26, 1991 the war in Yugoslavia officially began.³⁴²

After the LCY had ceased to exist the only guarantee for the existence of the federation was the JNA which had a Serb-dominated officer corps.³⁴³ Under Milošević the JNA changed from being an army dedicated to Yugoslavia to an army being dedicated to the Serb cause, whether at home (Serbia) or abroad (the other republics of Yugoslavia where Serbs lived) within a couple of months in 1991. After the secession of Slovenia the JNA hardly was what it had once been; it wasn't the Yugoslav People's Army anymore, it was Belgrade's army.³⁴⁴ The difference between the war between Slovenia and the JNA and the ones in Croatia and Bosnia is that the first was a war between Slovenia and a political system that hardly functioned

³³⁹ Lampe (2000 [1996]), p. 332, 349-351.

³⁴⁰ Silber & Little (1996 [1995]), p. 147-148.

³⁴¹ Ibid, p. 128-131.

³⁴² Ibid, p. 113-114, 117, 147, 149, 154.

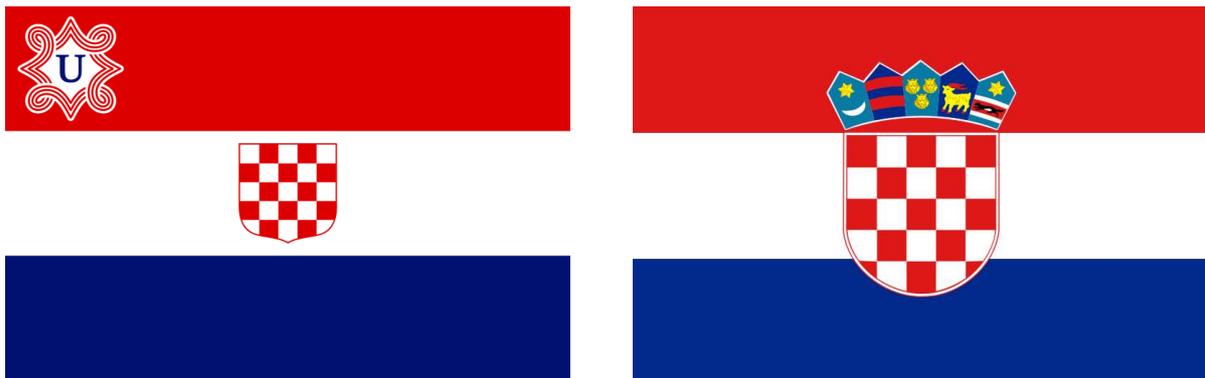
³⁴³ Lampe (2000 [1996]), p. 332, 245.

³⁴⁴ Silber & Little (1996 [1995]), p. 114, 169.

anymore as a result of fierce nationalism that had got hold of its republics. The war between Croatia and the JNA however was a war between Croatia and Serbia, and during this war both old Ustaše and Cetnik fatigues (such as hats) were seen again.³⁴⁵ What had happened in the relationship between Serbia and Croatia after the 1990 elections?

Tudman's Croatia

Although Franjo Tuđman had been sent to jail several times for nationalist activities, most Croats didn't know him until the LCY fell apart in January 1990; most of the Croats never heard about him or read his books. His popularity grew quickly amongst the Croats, but also within Croatia he wasn't without controversy.³⁴⁶ When Tuđman became the first non-communist president of Croatia, nationalism became allowed openly and this led to some serious problems. Certain symbols of statehood, such as coins, flags and the national symbol were chosen after symbols from the medieval past. The problem with these symbols was that they had been tainted since they also had been used by the Ustaše.³⁴⁷ However, it must be said that the *šahovnica* also appeared on the Coat of Arms of the Socialist Republic of Croatia.³⁴⁸



Symbols of Nationalism: the flag of Croatia. Both the NDH and post-Yugoslavia Croatia used symbols relating to their medieval past, such as the name Kuna for currency and the *šahovnica*, the red and white chequered shield as a symbol of statehood, which also was placed in a dominant position on their flags.

What thus might be a symbol that for a Croat represented their nationhood regardless of what had happened in World War II, had different connotations with Croatian antifascists and the Croat-Serb minority who saw them as symbols of the Ustaše regime. After five years of relentless cries in Serb media that portrayed Croats as Ustaše it isn't surprising that these new symbols led to problems with the Serb minority in Croatia.³⁴⁹

³⁴⁵ Silber & Little (1996 [1995]), p. 93, 166, 180.

³⁴⁶ Interview held with Nikica Barić during my stay in Zagreb in June-July 2011.

³⁴⁷ Ramet (2002), p. 165, 169.

³⁴⁸ An example of the Coat of Arms of the Socialist Republic of Croatia can be found in Appendix D.

³⁴⁹ Denich (1994), p. 378.

Under Tuđman new public holidays were installed which differed greatly from the ones already in existence. Previous public holidays were mostly Yugoslav (such as the Day of the Republic and the First May festivities) and were seen as important to keep Yugoslavia together after Tito had died. Tuđman recognized the importance of public holidays in nation-building and Catholic holidays and the remembrance of Bleiburg were installed to reinforce the Croatian identity at the cost of the Yugoslav one.³⁵⁰

The constitution of the Republic of Croatia declares quite explicitly that it sees itself as the continuation of the ‘millennial national identity of the Croatian nation’ which has manifested itself in various forms since the 7th century, but it doesn’t recognize the NDH as a legitimate form of Croatian statehood and declares that:³⁵¹

*“the historical right to full sovereignty of the Croatian nation, manifested itself: [...] in laying the foundations of state sovereignty during World War Two, through decisions of the Anti-Fascist Council of the National Liberation of Croatia (1943), to oppose the proclamation of the Independent State of Croatia (1941), and subsequently in the Constitution of the People's Republic of Croatia (1947), and several subsequent constitutions of the Socialist Republic of Croatia (1963-1990).” [...] “the Republic of Croatia is hereby established as the national state of the Croatian people and a state of members of other nations and minorities who are its citizens: Serbs, Muslims, Slovenes, Czechs, Slovaks, Italians, Hungarians, Jews and others, who are guaranteed equality with citizens of Croatian nationality and the realization of ethnic rights in accordance with the democratic norms of the United Nations and countries of free world.”*³⁵²

The problem was that no matter how nicely the constitution put it, in reality the resurgence of nationalism had led to violent confrontations between Croats and the Serbs living in Croatia during the late 1980s. This, combined with earlier HDZ campaign rhetoric which talked about ‘a Croatia for the Croats only’ and Tuđman being quoted calling the NDH “standing for the historic aspirations of the Croatian people for an independent state” and denying that the NDH was “the creation of fascist criminals” as had been the common interpretation in socialist.³⁵³

Tuđman claimed that he and his party based themselves on the ideas of Starčević and thus demanded “the right of the Croatian people for self-determination and state sovereignty” within Croatia's ‘historical boundaries’ which sounded a lot like the Ustaše territorial claims and reiterating definitions of Croatian nationhood that included the Bosnian Muslims also as Croats, intended to justify Bosnia-Herzegovina's incorporation within the Croatian national state.³⁵⁴ Tuđman started to bring over people who had fled socialist Yugoslavia afraid of being pursued into

³⁵⁰ E-mail correspondence with Vjeran Pavlaković; Appendix B.

³⁵¹ *Constitution of the Republic of Croatia*, on: <http://www.constitution.org/cons/croatia.htm>, retrieved on 8-7-2011.

³⁵² Ibid

³⁵³ Lampe (2000 [1996]), p. 359-362.

³⁵⁴ Denich (1994), p. 377.

Croatia and issued those people passports, people who the communist regime had called fascists and Ustaše before. After years of installing fear by depicting all Croats as Ustaše, Belgrade Television now started referring to the Croatia of Tuđman as the 'revived Ustaše regime' in the early 1990s.³⁵⁵

Croatia had a sizeable Serb minority who remembered vividly the horrors of the NDH and saw themselves as the survivors of slaughter, who only had escaped this fate by taking up arms. They felt threatened by Tuđman's Croatia and just like the Serbs in Kosovo they wanted to be part of Serbia and felt that they couldn't live in an independent Croatia.³⁵⁶ The government of Tuđman used and enforced the *šahovnica* aggressively at the cost of the red star, the traditional communist Yugoslav symbol.³⁵⁷ When the *šahovnica* and other symbols that Serb nationalists deemed Ustaše symbols were reinstalled under Tuđman Belgrade started calling for a separate Serb state within Croatia and aiding the local Serbs to achieve this goal.³⁵⁸ This led to violent confrontations when in August 1990 the Croatian government introduced new police uniforms with the new symbol of the state, the *šahovnica*, on it. The police in Knin (a town in the Krajina region where the Croatian Serbs lived) refused to wear it, since they saw it as a symbol of the NDH and its atrocities committed against the Serbs in World War II. The region had parted with Croatia on the level of jurisdiction and Milošević supported them. When the Croats wanted to reinforce their authority in the region it was met by the JNA, who warned them to return to Zagreb. Arms had already been smuggled into the region by the Serbs. From August 17, 1990 onwards the region was cut off from Croatia and the war between Serbia and Croatia started.³⁵⁹

The Serbs in Croatia initially just wanted to be recognized in the new constitution of Croatia as a nation which stood on equal footing with the Croats and had the same rights; being a national minority wasn't satisfactory to them since they wanted autonomy and recognition as citizens, not as a minority. For Tuđman this was unacceptable; according to him this would undermine the Croat sovereignty which he was aiming for in his state. When the draft of the new constitution of Croatia was published a few months later, the Serbs of Croatia saw all their previously enjoyed rights disappear right in front of them. The Croatian Serbs were afraid that their lives would change dramatically in the new Croatia and radicalized under the leadership of Milan Babić and formed an alliance with Milošević. They prepared for armed insurrection and aimed to take the Croat Serb parts out of Croatia and into Serbia.³⁶⁰

In the spring of 1991 the rebel Serbs of Krajina started expanding their territory, the self proclaimed Serbian Autonomous Region. During the following months more and more violent incidents occurred and Croatian media started calling the Serb rebels Cetniks (which some extreme nationalist Serb elements within this militia also started calling themselves) and terrorists. During this period Tuđman

³⁵⁵ Silber & Little (1996 [1995]), p. 84, 120.

³⁵⁶ Ibid, pp. 84, 93.

³⁵⁷ E-mail correspondence with Vjeran Pavlaković; Appendix B.

³⁵⁸ Interview held with Nikica Barić during my stay in Zagreb in June-July 2011.

³⁵⁹ Silber & Little (1996 [1995]), p. 98-103.

³⁶⁰ Ibid, pp. 96-97.

changed his position; he started out thinking that a sovereign Croatia could be a part of a confederate Yugoslavia, now he came to the conclusion that only the total independence of Croatia from Yugoslavia would suffice. A referendum held on May 19, 1991 showed that 90% of the electorate of Croatia agreed with him; the Croatian Serbs however had boycotted this referendum.³⁶¹

The Serb minority refused to leave Yugoslavia and that is exactly what the new Republic of Croatia opted for. Six months of fighting broke out in the Serbian parts of Croatia between the Croatian Serbs – supported by the JNA and Serbia – and the newly founded Republic of Croatia. When the European Community in January 1992 recognized the Croatian and Slovenian independence from the SFRY and claimed it would recognize the secession of other republics the end of the SFRY was nearby and its dismemberment almost complete.³⁶² Croatia had won its independence, although one third of its territory was lost into Serb hands. It would take them until 1995 to see the old republic borders restored as they had been within the Yugoslav federation.³⁶³

The end of the SFRY

In late 1990 around 88% of the Slovenes had come to the conclusion that secession was the best option, in early 1991 94.3% of the Croats thought the same and in Macedonia and the Albanians of Kosovo there also was a firm majority who favored this option. When gaining independence the new republics were all led by nationalist, non-communist leaders. Slovenia, the first republic to get out of the SFRY, however was led by the communist Kučan who became popular since he had stood up to Serb pressure.³⁶⁴ But the biggest threat throughout the existence of both Yugoslavia's wasn't the dispute between the Slovenes and the Serbs.³⁶⁵

The biggest conflict throughout the history of both Yugoslavia's was the conflict between the Croat nationalist aspirations and the Serb national aspirations. Croat nationalism had a lot to do with the Second World War and proving that Croatian nationalism and the Ustaše weren't the same. Where the Serbian Yugoslavs had left the SFRY, in Croatia it was mostly nationalists and former Ustaše that had fled and left the country. So while Serbian nationalism was getting bizarre casualty numbers from homegrown nationalists, Croatian got fed nationalist propaganda by foreign Croatians.³⁶⁶

The main issue in the war between Croatia and rump-Yugoslavia was the refusal of Serbian communities within Croatian territory to become a member of the new independent Croatian state. After six months of fighting the dismemberment of socialist Yugoslavia was clear when in 1992 the European Community recognized the now independent Croatia and Slovenia and promised help to other republics that

³⁶¹ Silber & Little (1996 [1995]), p. 134-135, 142, 147.

³⁶² Denich (1994), p. 368-369.

³⁶³ Silber & Little (1996 [1995]), p. 188, 370-371.

³⁶⁴ Ramet (2002), p. 34, 54, 59-60.

³⁶⁵ Lampe (2000 [1996]), p. 354.

³⁶⁶ Ramet (2002), p. 53.

wished to secede.³⁶⁷ It had done so after the Badinter commission (headed by French politician Robert Badinter) looked at the 1974 Yugoslav constitution and agreed with Slovenia's and Croatia's claim to secession; their secession was legitimate and thus recognized by the European Community.³⁶⁸

The problems with these new republics, but more generally with most nationalists during this era was that each chose to opt for a majority-minority based citizenship instead of a overarching, universal and egalitarian citizenship. The fear of becoming a minority within a majority controlled democracy was what made the war in border regions and ethnic enclaves so violent, since war was seen as something that could make sure that a minority in one country could forcefully become part of the majority of their own new nation state.³⁶⁹ Thus the war between Croatia and Serb controlled Yugoslavia led directly to the end of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.

However, it didn't mean that both sides recognized the new borders. Besides their own borders it was Bosnia Herzegovina that was problematic to them. Although Milošević and Tuđman disagreed over the right of Croatia to secede as a republic in its then current form, both did not want an independent Bosnia Herzegovina with its current borders. As mentioned before, according to Milošević the internal borders of the republics within the federation were just administrative and only nations had the right to secede from Yugoslavia. If Yugoslavia would disintegrate, the internal borders thus didn't mean anything anymore and the Serbian nation had to be kept together. This meant that in the case Bosnia Herzegovina would declare its independence the Bosnian Serbs had to rejoin their motherland.³⁷⁰ Tuđman believed that the same thing applied to the Bosnian Croats. In a book published in 1981 he had already claimed Bosnia Herzegovina was by historical right and geographical logic a internal part of Croatia.³⁷¹ In March 1991 Milošević and Tuđman met to discuss the partition of Bosnia Herzegovina. During the Bosnian war both men supported and organized military actions that promoted the ethnic cleansing of Muslims in what they perceived to be their own national territory and set up detention camps to detain members of other national groups.³⁷² What had led to a war in Bosnia Herzegovina?

Bosnia and the democratization of Yugoslavia

The resurgence of nationalism in the second half of the 1980s proved to be the biggest test for Bosnia and Herzegovina, the heartland of the federation with the most ethnically diverse population. For over 500 years these people had lived together in peace, with World War II as the exception. However, in World War II ethnicity didn't necessarily play a role in where one stood. There were Muslims and Catholic Croats found in both Ustaše and Partisan ranks, and Serbs could be found in Partisan and

³⁶⁷ Denich (1994), p. 368.

³⁶⁸ Interview with Marko Zubak during my stay in Zagreb in June-July 2011.

³⁶⁹ Denich (1994), p. 368-369.

³⁷⁰ Silber & Little (1996 [1995]), p. 128-131.

³⁷¹ Benson (2007 [2004]), p. 122-123, 139.

³⁷² Ramet (2004a), p. 746-747.

Četnik ranks. While the population during those years was divided, it wasn't on ethnicity, but on politics. There was a sense of 'Bosnianness' regardless of ethnicity or religion. This changed during the more and more openly nationalist era of the late 1980s, where loyalty depended on ethnicity and not on belief.³⁷³

With the 1974 constitution the Bosnian Muslims became Muslims. However, they were the only nation within Yugoslavia that didn't have their own republic and found it hard to claim one. As a result of this, for the Serbs and Croats living within Bosnia Herzegovina after the elections of 1990 and especially when it was out of the Yugoslav framework, it simply wasn't a legitimate state, but merely a remnant of Tito's Brotherhood and Unity policy.³⁷⁴

The Muslim population, especially that in Bosnia, was seen as problematic to Yugoslav unity by Serb and Croat nationalists alike, since both claimed that Bosnian territory had been Serb and Croat in the past. Being the only republic that was ethnically divided in three large minorities (in the 1991 census 44% of the population was ethnic Muslim, 31% Serbs, 17% Croats and 6% saw themselves as ethnic Yugoslavs) nationalism was something that had to be handled with care, since there was no dominant population there. Serbs and Croats saw ethnic Muslim trade and cultural activities with other Muslim states as a sign of non-willingness to integrate into Yugoslavia, even though the Islam as an institute had a pretty low profile compared to the Orthodox and Catholic Church. Some Muslims wanted to declare Bosnia to be a Muslim state, which led to fear of Islamization with the Bosnian Serbs and Croats. They started thinking about joining their 'own' republics as the only option to survive, but the problem was that all three populations weren't neatly separated from the rest in their own part, they lived in the same areas. The Bosnian leadership said that division or leaving Yugoslavia wasn't an option since this surely would lead to violence between the republics' ethnicities.³⁷⁵

However, both Serbs and Croats were minorities within Bosnia and Herzegovina, but the Muslims, although numerically superior didn't make up half of the population. In the tide of nationalism and democratization each group formed their own nationalist parties. The Serbs and Croats could get support from Belgrade and Zagreb, where presidents Milošević and Tuđman had already agreed to partition Bosnia Herzegovina and annex it into their own countries. The Muslims however found it harder to have some outside party backing up their claim in the early 1990s. What made the constitution of Bosnia unworkable in a time of rampant nationalism was the fact that the Serbs, Croats and Muslims were all recognized as constituent nations and therefore consensus was needed, but very hard to obtain. The Serbs wanted to remain in Yugoslavia, the Croats wanted the right to secede from what was left of it and the Muslims wanted sovereignty. Tensions between all groups mounted and late October 1991 the Bosnian Serbs declared their own parliament which voted to remain part of Yugoslavia. On 20 December 1991 Alija Izetbegović, the president of

³⁷³ Ramet (2002), p. 203.

³⁷⁴ Silber & Little (1996 [1995]), p. 190-191, 207-209.

³⁷⁵ Ramet (2002), p. 118-119, 121-122, 124-125.

the Muslim SDA declared that Bosnia Herzegovina had to get its independence, since Yugoslavia didn't exist anymore; it had been replaced by Greater Serbia.³⁷⁶

In March 1992 a referendum regarding Bosnian independence from Yugoslavia was held and although the Bosnian Serbs boycotted this referendum, 63.4% of the population voted and 99.4% of them favored an independent state, which in the end led to a pro-independence vote of 62.7% of the population.³⁷⁷ Two months before, in January 1992, the Bosnian Serbs had declared their own state into existence, which would later be known as the Republika Srpska.³⁷⁸

The Bosnian Serbs led by Radovan Karadžić, who were seen by the Milošević administration as defending and willing to fight for the Greater Serbia ideal (which meant that any area in which Serbs lived, even if they were a distinct minority, should be incorporated into a Serbian state) were supplied by the Yugoslav Army, which gave them an immediate advantage over the Bosnian Croats and Muslims (which would later get control over smuggled weaponry in 1992). By the time Bosnia Herzegovina left Yugoslavia in 1992, the JNA left Bosnian Serb officers behind to command to newly formed militias. On 9 January 1992 the Bosnian Serb separatists declared their part of Bosnia, the Serbian Republic of Bosnia Herzegovina, to be independent. In July 1992 the Croatian minority would also proclaim their part of Bosnia, Hercegovina, to be an independent state that would later have to merge with the Republic of Croatia. In early 1992 war had broken out in Bosnia Herzegovina between the Bosnian Serbs – supported by the JNA and Belgrade - and the troops of the government of Alija Izetbegović, only to be followed by Bosnian Croats troops joining in the turmoil later that same year.³⁷⁹

Aftermath

The wars in the former Yugoslavia ended with the Dayton accords of December 1995 after three years of ethnic violence and cleansing. Bosnia Herzegovina came out of the wars as a confederation between a weakened Republika Srpska and the Muslim-Croat Federation. Croatia eventually had the same borders as it had had within Yugoslavia after the Croatian army had ran over the Croat-Serb strongholds in eastern Slavonia and the Krajina. Serbia and Montenegro opted to cooperate in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia from 1992 onwards. Although Yugoslavia thus still existed in name, the federation of Serbia and Montenegro had no longer anything to do with the communist Yugoslavist ideal of Tito and his Partisan comrades.³⁸⁰

³⁷⁶ Silber & Little (1996 [1995]), p. 211, 213-214, 217.

³⁷⁷ Ramet (2002), p. 206.

³⁷⁸ Silber & Little (1996 [1995]), p. 218.

³⁷⁹ Ramet (2002), p. 204-208.

³⁸⁰ Silber & Little (1996 [1995]), p. 377-378, 380-382, 385-387.

Conclusion

“One of the supreme ironies of the twentieth-century experience must be that nationalism’s principal opponent, namely Marxism, has both been empowered by its alliances with nationalism and responsible for creating the conditions for the development of nations in the Second and Third Worlds.”

Ronald G. Suny – The Revenge of the Past ³⁸¹

Can we compare the outbreak of nationalism in the SFRY and its disintegration with the theories of Gellner, Hobsbawm, Anderson regarding nationalism and is the SFRY a textbook example or the exception to the rule(s)?

With this thesis I want to test the constructivist theories on nationalism by Gellner, Anderson and Hobsbawm which focused on 19th century nationalism on the case of socialist Yugoslavia. After having explained the theories in the theoretical chapter and telling the story of Yugoslavia, I will now combine both and see if the nation-building process in socialist Yugoslavia can be interpreted through the constructivist theories.

Applying constructivism onto the SFRY

Benedict Anderson focuses on the importance of language in nation-building and the imagined community. The language issues that plagued Yugoslavia regarding the status of Serbo-Croatian do fit into the constructivist theories regarding nationalism. The idea of one language was very important in Yugoslavia since it legitimized the cooperation between the different ethnic groups; it suggested the existence of a community.³⁸² Any attempt to say that Serbian and Croatian were two different languages was harshly repressed until the memorandum of the Serb Academy of Sciences and Arts of 1986, which, as I’ve mentioned before, wasn’t repressed as earlier nationalist activities were repressed, especially compared to the repression of the Croat Spring.³⁸³

Gellner points out that nationalism was used as a way to legitimize the state and argues that there can’t be a nation without nationalism.³⁸⁴ In socialist Yugoslavia the project of Yugoslavification was given up pretty soon after it had started after World War II.³⁸⁵ After the 1974 constitution identification with Yugoslavia was in fact seen as something bad by some people in the top ranks of the LCY since within the federation everybody could use their *own* nationality; opting to be a Yugoslav was seen as being discontent with Yugoslavia.³⁸⁶

³⁸¹ Suny (1993), p.4.

³⁸² Anderson (2006 [1983]), p. 6-7, 33-40, 44-46, 144-145.

³⁸³ Ramet (2004a) p. 749.

³⁸⁴ Gellner (2006 [1983]), p. xx, xxiii-xxvii, 1-5, 62-63, 134-135.

³⁸⁵ Sekulic et al. (1994), p. 85-86, 88.

³⁸⁶ Jović (2003), p. 179.

While Gellner argues from a top-down perspective, Hobsbawm in fact turns this around. He points out that what the state elite and other elite propagate isn't necessarily something that hits home with the common citizens. Also, it may not be the main social identity someone possesses. In a religious or socially divided society, one's religious affiliation or class may be more important to one's own identity than their nationality,³⁸⁷ especially after the idea has taken hold that society has failed them and nothing is certain anymore.³⁸⁸ This is something that can be viewed clearly in late 1980s and early 1990s Yugoslavia; the USA had stopped supporting it after they had lost their interest in Yugoslavia as a result of the end of the Cold War,³⁸⁹ the LCY that had ruled the country since 1945 had fallen apart,³⁹⁰ and the country was in a deep economic crisis, so it isn't surprising that the population of Yugoslavia after more than 40 years of political and cultural repression became a fruitful breeding ground for nationalist views.³⁹¹

Yugoslavism and the other nationalisms

As I've demonstrated with the case of France, it takes an active state policy for civic nationalism to become installed in the hearts of its citizens. It is a clear form of top-down enforced nationalism.³⁹² The Yugoslav identity under the communists was seen as a way to ease tensions between people from different nationalities as it would 'minimize cultural barriers and distinctions'.³⁹³ Yugoslavism was a form of civic nationalism, or political nationalism,³⁹⁴ but the nations it was made up off had developed into *Kulturations*, and beside the already recognized nations (Slovenes, Croats and Serbs) Yugoslavia created new nations (such as the Muslims of Bosnia and the Macedonians) instead of trying to continue the process of making all of its citizens into Yugoslavs by arguing that economic development would erode the old nationalism.³⁹⁵ When this didn't happen, the tools of nation-building (education and conscription) had already been placed in the republics - which already were viewed upon as national homelands³⁹⁶ - with the constitution of 1974.³⁹⁷ And although these republics were technically speaking not republics for a specific nation, they were regarded as such. Thus the tools of nation-building were given to politicians who directly or indirectly strengthened the idea of the *Kulturation*, a closed form of nationalism which works in the opposite way as civic nationalism, meaning that the idea of being part of a nation exists, but not the nation state in itself; the nation state

³⁸⁷ Hobsbawm (1992), pp. 9-11.

³⁸⁸ Hobsbawm & Kertzer (1992), p. 4, 6-7.

³⁸⁹ Interview held with Tvrtko Jakovina.

³⁹⁰ Silber & Little (1996 [1995]), p. 80.

³⁹¹ Denitch (1993), p. 9.

³⁹² McKay et al. (2006 [1987]), p. 823-826, 841-843.

³⁹³ Sekulic et al. (1994), p. 85.

³⁹⁴ Heywood, (2007 [1992]), p. 144

³⁹⁵ Sekulic et al. (1994), p. 85-86, 88.

³⁹⁶ Burg (1977), p. 123.

³⁹⁷ Đurović, (1974), p. 70-71, 201, 204.

is the ultimate goal of this nationalism.³⁹⁸ The state border of Yugoslavia was there, but there were hardly any Yugoslavs within those borders.³⁹⁹ Thus, as a consequence of the new constitution of 1974, although it didn't become clear for at least a decade, socialist Yugoslavia gave away exactly those institutes that can make or break a nation. The reason for this is that while Tito was alive there was an important factor in keeping the country together; in reality all power still lay with Tito.⁴⁰⁰

In Tito's Yugoslavia there was the idea that a strong communist party and industrialization would eventually delegitimize former identities by eroding the traditional bases for national differences. This was done by emphasizing economic development, workplace democracy (worker self-management), economic and gender equality, the tolerance for national differences and equal rights for its population regardless of ethnicity. The constitution of 1974 and the idea of worker self-management in fact led to a form of economic nationalism and competition between the republics instead of cooperation. It thus also led to the creation of local powerbases. Nationalism was thus eroded at a federal level, but not at a republic level. Competition was promoted by the leadership without fully recognizing that this could lead to anything but unity.⁴⁰¹ What thus happened in the years 1948-1980 was that the LCY gave up the idea of converting all of its citizens into Yugoslavs and allowed political life to be based on nationality. They tried to counter the nationalism, by repression on the one hand, but also by trying to elevate the Yugoslav state to a level above any nationality and tried to turn cultural and national issues into mere differences in lifestyle (instead of cultural or national issues and thereby downplaying the issues at stake) than of those in political economy.⁴⁰²

The Partisan myth

The nation building efforts of the LCY differs in some very important aspects from those in the 19th century; it didn't interpret its own history in terms of continuity and didn't claim Yugoslavia to be the heir of an ancient, pre-modern community to make it look 'natural and biological'.⁴⁰³ Yugoslavia was a relative new project and legitimized itself by the relatively recent Partisan liberation struggle, which as shown before, was indeed a more or less constructed and altered historical narrative. The Partisan myth, which was key in socialist Yugoslavia's national identity served to legitimize the regime and Yugoslav unity and there by delegitimize the common enemy, namely the nationalists, who were seen as those responsible for the hundreds of thousands of deaths during The War of National Liberation.⁴⁰⁴ The Partisan war crimes were omitted from history and as such the Partisan myth was created.⁴⁰⁵ The

³⁹⁸ Heywood (2007 [1992]), p. 148- 152, 155-157.

³⁹⁹ In Appendix A I've put the statistics of identification with Yugoslavia, and as can be seen there and in the bar chart in this chapter, identification as Yugoslav never reached 20% of the population.

⁴⁰⁰ Silber & Little (1996 [1995]), p. 29.

⁴⁰¹ Sekulic et al. (1994), p. 95.

⁴⁰² Hodson et al. (1994p. 1538.

⁴⁰³ Brown (1998), p. 3-4,

⁴⁰⁴ Sekulic et al. (1994), p. 85-86, 88.

⁴⁰⁵ Ludanyi (1979), p. 239-240.

Partisan myth thus played a very important role in socialist Yugoslavia, and for many years it was impossible to question it. The Partisan myth was designed to divert attention from some facts that might undermine the new socialist Yugoslavia.⁴⁰⁶ With this policy there was no place for nuances of the traumatic war years and therefore visions that didn't fit into the narrative were banned.⁴⁰⁷

When the 19th century nationalists came up with a historical myth that traced back to an ancient, pre-modern community this was far less problematic than the very recent legitimization of the SFRY, where the citizens actually were alive during the period that was used to legitimize the new state. The problem with the Partisan myth was that a sizeable group of the citizens of this new Yugoslavia had been supporters or active members of the Četniks or the Ustaše, or of less extreme forms of nationalism and knew for a fact that the Partisan myth wasn't true.⁴⁰⁸ In central Yugoslavia the memories of the Second World War remained alive, and these memories often clashed with the communist historiography. Although contained, the divisions of the Second World War remained.⁴⁰⁹

The Partisan myth is a good example of what Eric Hobsbawm has termed 'the invention of tradition'.⁴¹⁰ Public holidays regarding its past were installed such as the day of the Anti Fascist struggle.⁴¹¹ Other new traditions were also invented that had less to do with the Partisan myth, such as the annual Relay of Youth, a mass public event which symbolized Brotherhood & Unity,⁴¹² and after Tito died a new national anthem was installed.⁴¹³ Again, while in 19th century nationalism all these things were installed to connect the then current regime to an ancient past, in socialist Yugoslavia it was mainly connected to the Second World War. But other important tools of nation-building, namely education and conscription, became the responsibility of the republics and autonomous provinces after the 1974 constitution.⁴¹⁴

Education & nation-building in the SFRY

As pointed out in the theoretical chapter, education plays a huge role in nation-building, especially the history education.⁴¹⁵ Much of the emphasis is put on those people and cases that united the South Slav people, the idea of Brotherhood and Unity and proletarian internationalism were to be installed through history

⁴⁰⁶ Benson (2007 [2004]), p. 73.

⁴⁰⁷ Pavlakovic (2008), p. 4.

⁴⁰⁸ Sekulic et al. (1994), p. 85-86, 88.

⁴⁰⁹ Denich (1994), p. 370.

⁴¹⁰ Some of the Yugoslav public holidays were the Day of the Anti-Fascist Struggle, the Day of the Republic and the traditional socialist celebrations of the first of May; see Appendix B for more information on how Franjo Tuđman changed these in Croatia.

⁴¹¹ Hobsbawm (2010 [1983]), p. 1, 6-11, 263-267.

⁴¹² Author unknown, *Relay Baton and Day of Youth*, website NSK State, on:

http://web.archive.org/web/20080324084642/http://www.nskstate.com/nk/day_of_youth.php, retrieved on 9-01-2012.

⁴¹³ Ugrešić (1995e), p. 174.

⁴¹⁴ Đurović (1974), pp. 70-71, 176, 201, 204.

⁴¹⁵ McKay et al. (2006 [1987]), p. 762-764, 823.

education. A great emphasis was put on the internal developments during the Second World War and its aftermath in which the Yugoslav unity was stressed “*All these incidents could not break the unity and resolution of the peoples of the Federated Peoples’ Republic of Yugoslavia.*”⁴¹⁶ With the 1974 constitution the creation of the school curriculum wasn’t the responsibility of the federal government anymore, it became the task of the republican governments. With this part of the further federalization the federal government gave up one of the most important tools in nation-building and the effects were considerable. Before 1974 the state considered history education to be a “*means for inculcating a deep and stirring patriotism*”, but that idea was dropped. And the curriculum changed dramatically: in all of the school textbooks for history lessons dealing with the South Slavs in the period of the early 19th century up to 1918 only six names were in common, on a total of 392 names. In the textbooks dealing with the 20th century the same can be seen: out of 448 names only fourteen were mentioned in all the textbooks. The course of history in school became highly ethnocentric and republic-orientated throughout all the federal units.⁴¹⁷ The nation-building tool called education was now firmly in the hands of the republics, which were run by politicians who became less and less dedicated to Yugoslavia and since the 1960s had started using nationalist sentiments to gain legitimacy.⁴¹⁸ When in the late 1980s a survey was taken amongst Serb and Croat secondary school students, both groups had strong and very negative stereotypes about each other.⁴¹⁹

The theory of Miroslav Hroch tested on socialist Yugoslavia

When following Miroslav Hroch’s schematic framework regarding the spread of national consciousness in European nationalist movements, it’s fairly easy to understand the huge problems Yugoslavist, both communist and non-communist faced. Hroch found out that there were some distinct patterns in all of these movements. The first phase, phase A, is the phase wherein among the elite in a society the idea of a *cultural nation* starts forming. In phase B the idea of cultural unity transforms into the idea of creating a *political unity* for the nation. Politicians and militants take over the national idea and use it to gain support for their idea of national self-determination. And finally, in phase C these nationalist ideas are gaining support amongst the masses of a certain country, and where nationalism does become an idea carried by the ‘whole nation’ instead of just the elite.⁴²⁰

Dennison Russinow makes the valid point that the idea of Yugoslavism never passed phase B, meaning that there was a cultural and political elite who stood behind it, but it never motivated the masses, which was exactly the thing that the Slovene, Croat and Serb nationalists did manage to achieve.⁴²¹ When looking at the

⁴¹⁶ Georgeoff (1966), p. 442-447.

⁴¹⁷ Jakovina (2012), p. 5.

⁴¹⁸ Glenny (1999), p. 574-576.

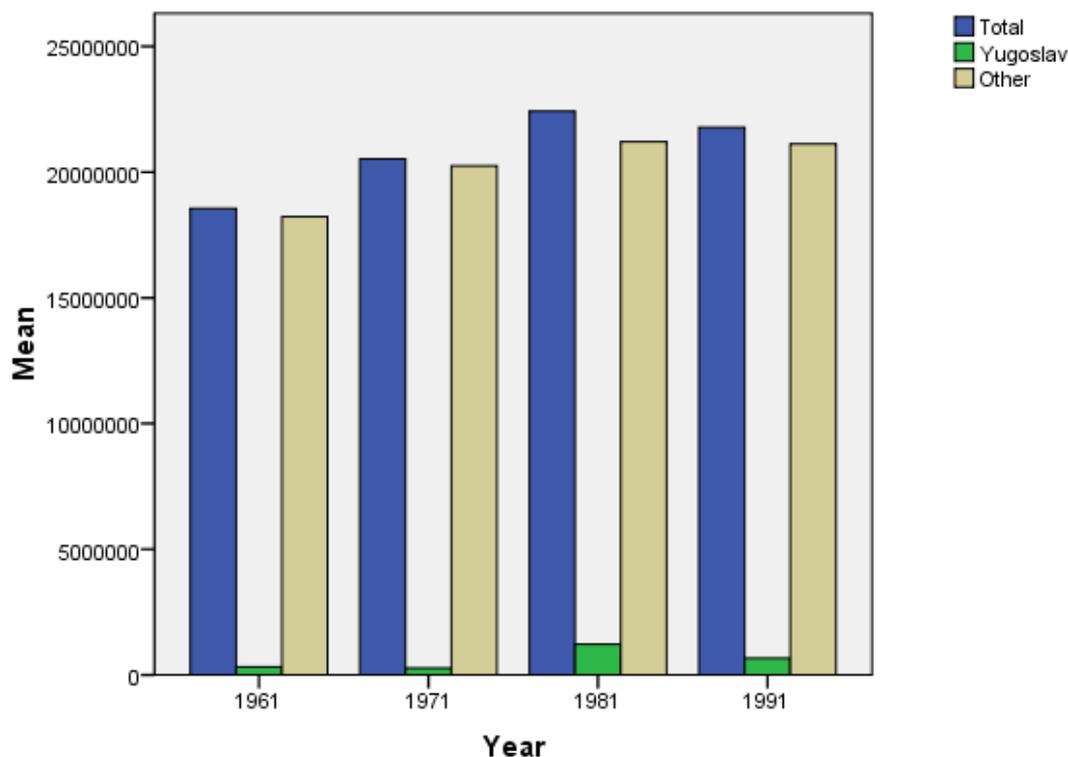
⁴¹⁹ Botev (1994), p. 462.

⁴²⁰ Hobsbawm (1992), p.12.

⁴²¹ Rusinow (2003), p. 13.

bar chart on the next page one can come to the conclusion that the Yugoslavist project never was a success in socialist Yugoslavia, but that ethno-nationalism did manage to reach phase C,⁴²² the phase in which nationalist ideas are gaining support amongst the masses of a certain country, and where nationalism does become an idea carried by the ‘whole nation’ instead of just the elite.⁴²³

The percentage of the population of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and it's former territory who identified themselves as Yugoslav



As this table clearly shows the percentage of the population of the SFRY that called themselves Yugoslav in censuses instead of, for instance Croat or Serb, was low during the entire existence of the SFRY.⁴²⁴ In the 1981 census 5,44% of the population identified themselves as Yugoslav, the highest percentage of the population ever to do so (1.219.045 persons on a total population of 22.424.711).⁴²⁵

⁴²² Botev (1994), p. 461, 471-472.

⁴²³ The statistics for the individual Yugoslav republics and autonomous provinces can be found in Appendix A.

⁴²⁴ This bar chart is based on several sources; a full list of sources can be found in the Used Literature section and in Appendix A. Similar bar charts on each of the republics and the autonomous regions in the SFRY can be found in Appendix A. The 1991 Macedonian census results are controversial – but taken into account for this table since the percentage of identification as Yugoslavs wasn't much different than in the results of the 1961, 1971 and 1981 census - and the results of the Albanians in Kosovo weren't taken into account since there wasn't any reliable data of that segment of the Serbian population from the 1991 census. The end result however doesn't differ much from earlier census results. Taken the rise of openly nationalism since the second half of the 1980s until the outbreak of wars which ended the SFRY in the early 1990s, the decline of enthusiasm for the Yugoslav idea expressed through identifying with it isn't a surprise.

⁴²⁵ Socijalistička Federativna Republika Jugoslavija (1989), p. 44.

If we look at the history of the region, this isn't surprising. It is significant that two of the nations (the Croats and Serbs) that were recognized as being part of the first Yugoslavia had already acquired something which can be called a national identity before the rise of modern nationalism in the 19th century. This doesn't mean that it wasn't further shaped later on, but the idea of being either Serb or Croat was something that was not only actively remembered by the elite, but also by the common population for centuries after the demise of their medieval states. There was something like a collective memory from that moment on regarding one's past and identity. Perhaps the most bizarre thing of the history of socialist Yugoslavia was that it did create the Montenegrins, Macedonians, and Bosnia-Herzegovinian Muslims, but it never really created such a thing as 'the Yugoslavs'.⁴²⁶ Important in explaining this is the fact that quite a lot of top leaders within the LCY didn't consider the label 'Yugoslav' to be a positive thing. After the 1974 constitution, they argued that within Yugoslavia with all its ethnic recognitions of nations, religion and ethnicities nobody needed the Yugoslav label anymore. Claiming to be Yugoslav thus could be a sign of discontent with the Yugoslav system.⁴²⁷

Socialist Yugoslavia was a country without Yugoslavs, or at least, a large majority of its population didn't identify themselves as such. People who did declare themselves to be Yugoslav were mostly members of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia, army officers and NCOs, civil servants, diplomats and partners in or children from the mixed marriages.⁴²⁸ And although there were nearly two million mixed marriages in the SFRY, this didn't make a difference in the end in the dissolution of it. Mixed marriages did occur, but in the long run nationalism proved to be a more powerful unifying force.⁴²⁹ In addition, most of these mixed-marriages were within the same cultural tradition, meaning for example that Slovenes were more likely to marry a Croat and vice versa since both came from a more western, catholic tradition. Serbs thus mostly married with other orthodox ethnicities and Muslims mostly married with other muslims in cases of mixed marriages.⁴³⁰

The prominent Croatian historian Ivo Banac argues that the governance of Yugoslavia always relied on coercion.⁴³¹ As I've showed in this thesis, the problem with this coercion was that during the lifetime of socialist Yugoslavia this coercion became harder to keep up because of its federalization and ideology of workers self-management which gave more control to the republics and to the local level. Sure, dissidents were repressed, especially during the Tito years, but as I've demonstrated the seeds for the break-up were already sown. In hindsight it seems a bit naïve to think that a federation can be less and less centralized and stay together without there being much of a common identity.

⁴²⁶ Banac (1984), p. 23.

⁴²⁷ Jović (2003), p. 179.

⁴²⁸ Lendvai & Parcell (1991), p. 253.

⁴²⁹ Job (1993), p. 60.

⁴³⁰ Botev (1994p. 461, 471-472.

⁴³¹ Banac (1984), p. 15.

The chicken and the egg; nationalism and conflict

In the introduction to this thesis I asked the following question; *Was it nationalism that ultimately led to conflict, or was it conflict that led to nationalism?* The answer is that such a distinct division between both cannot be made, since in the SFRY both nationalism and conflict with the system were intrinsically linked together. As shown in the theoretical chapter, in a communist regime opting for nationalism is one of the most effective ways to challenge it, since both have the claim that there can be only one 'single correct vision' of societal organization and provide a complete answer to social ills and social organization.⁴³²

However, this wasn't simply a result of World War II or communism; in both Yugoslavia the biggest conflict throughout its histories was the conflict between the Croat nationalist aspirations and the Serb national aspirations.⁴³³ The legitimacy problem that socialist Yugoslavia had was seen through a local historical narrative, which meant that Tito's Yugoslavia wasn't a communist system. For the Serb nationalists it was *'the anti-Serb federal system, created by the Croat, Tito'*. The Croat nationalist viewed socialist Yugoslavia as having an *'anti-Croat communist system, dominated by Serbs at the expense of Croats'*.⁴³⁴ Since Serbo-Croatian speakers comprised more than 70 percent of the population, the border between the Serb republic and the Croat republic – but also the ethnic borders – were seen traditionally as the region that was regarded as most critical for fission and creating a new Yugoslav identity.⁴³⁵

During the existence of the first Yugoslavia the central question of the Serb dominated government was to suppress or conciliate with the Croats. The only attempt to reach this was the *Sporazum* [agreement] of August 1939 which in reality left the nationalist Croats dissatisfied and the majority of the ruling embittered.⁴³⁶

After the horrors of the Second World War the Croats were still afraid of Serb dominance and the Serbs were deeply suspicious of the Croats and great tensions remained between both populations.⁴³⁷ The two biggest nations in Yugoslavia, the Serbs and Croats weren't reconciled and no excuses from both sides were made for the crimes and mistakes made since 1918. The conflict between both groups wasn't solved⁴³⁸ and intergroup boundaries and resentment and distrust remained.⁴³⁹ From the 1960s onwards communist politicians had found out that using some form of republican nationalism could in fact strengthen their position, since it gave them popular support and the local communist parties in the republics didn't see itself as representing the Yugoslavian state, but their own nations. The LCY became more of an association than a centralist political party.⁴⁴⁰ But also in Yugoslavia's capital this

⁴³² Stokes (1994), p. 99.

⁴³³ Ramet (2002), p. 53.

⁴³⁴ Ramet (2004b), p. 775-776.

⁴³⁵ Denich (1994), p. 368.

⁴³⁶ Lendvai & Parcell (1991), p. 254.

⁴³⁷ Sekulic et al. (1994), p. 84.

⁴³⁸ Anzulovic (1999), p. 99.

⁴³⁹ Ramet (2004b), p. 765.

⁴⁴⁰ Sekulic et al. (1994), p. 87-88.

process was happening. In the 1980's many of the politicians in Belgrade from other republics than Serbia (especially those from Slovenia and Croatia) had become political 'guest workers', meaning they saw Belgrade just as a place of work, but their heart didn't lay there.⁴⁴¹

After the Croat Spring was crushed by Tito – which wasn't all about nationalism, but also about liberalization and democratization – nationalism was pushed underground again and opted for a new constitution that would solve the problems of nationalism. But when in the 1980's nationalism reemerged it had lost their modernizing and liberal tendencies in the years of forced underground activity and was openly traditionalist.⁴⁴² And by then, as a result of the 1974 constitution which made socialist Yugoslavia into a de facto confederation important nation building were in the hands the republican governments. ⁴⁴³ All of this made sure that the seeds for both nationalism and conflict were sown and ready for harvest in a time of crisis. The prediction of Mijalko Todorović - chairman of the Joint Constitutional Commission of all the Chambers of the Federal Assembly – that *“the chances of the various conservative and reactionary forces to present their political interests as national interests are now greatly restricted”*⁴⁴⁴ proved to be false in hindsight. The political system which was founded to undermine nationalism became a vehicle for it.

Hobsbawm and Kertzer argue that the transformation of ethnic politics into nationalistic politics was a result of the failure of society. When the state and its society can't protect its citizens, the loyalty of the ethnic nation becomes the only ultimate guarantee, since the ethnic nation seems permanent and indestructible with a fixed membership. Religion and ethnicity become the obvious fallback situation. ⁴⁴⁵ Eriksen argued that when the 'strong socialist state in central and eastern Europe' disappeared, ethnicity became important again.⁴⁴⁶ This is exactly what happened in socialist Yugoslavia, with the difference that the 'strong socialist state' had been disappearing slowly since 1974. The society failed and the country proved to be destructible. But this wasn't simply the result of conflict leading to nationalism or vice versa, it was an interaction and a result of policy of which the future results were everything but what the LCY thought it would do. It thus was the failure of society and faulty constitutional engineering that led to an open resurgence of nationalism and a never resolved conflict which were intertwined since the existence of the first Yugoslavia.

Conclusion

What I've tried to demonstrate with this thesis is how socialist Yugoslavia legitimized itself and how it tried to cope with being a federation of nations that just came out of the horrors of the Second World War by focusing on the nation-building efforts of the

⁴⁴¹ Jakovina (2011), p. 1-2.

⁴⁴² Glenny (1999), p. 593, 623.

⁴⁴³ Silber & Little (1996 [1995]), p. 29.

⁴⁴⁴ Todorović, 1974), p. 44.

⁴⁴⁵ Hobsbawm & Kertzer (1992), p. 4, 6-7.

⁴⁴⁶ Eriksen (2010 [1994]), p. 1-3.

Tito and the LCY and comparing these to the constructivist ideas of Gellner, Anderson and Hobsbawm. What is extremely interesting and in my view underappreciated in the literature regarding the former Yugoslavia is the fact that some key tools in nation-building (education and conscription) changed hands with the 1974 constitution; where the federal government before had controlled these, they now were given to the republics and the autonomous provinces, thereby further undermining the Yugoslav state in the long run. After Tito died, the last person who really represented the Partisan legitimacy disappeared from the political arena; a new legitimacy was necessary but hard to find.⁴⁴⁷ Tito was perceived by citizens as someone who stood above any nationality and also above the party. He was seen as a representation of Yugoslavia's future unity. When he died, he was the last of his Partisan generation of any stature still in power that could claim that he was above any nationality and put Yugoslav unity first and the only person within Yugoslavia that could handle the national questions and enforce the policy of Brotherhood and Unity was removed from the political scene.⁴⁴⁸ Although it took a couple of years, the nationalist forces within the country could use the 1974 constitution to their own ends with Tito gone and the LCY being delegitimized.⁴⁴⁹ More traditional forms of identification were on the rise again, namely religion and ethnicity. With this process also came the resurgence of ethnic resentment, which was especially dangerous since these tensions were never solved, but had been suppressed since the end of the Second World War.⁴⁵⁰

The problem of Socialist Yugoslavia was that it was a somewhat schizophrenic arrangement. On the one hand there was a constitution which recognized six republics and two autonomous provinces that hypothetically could secede from the federation. But the operation of the country was functioning on the basis of rule by the communist party. It was this party that held the country together with the army and the secret police, but also in symbolic form in the person of Tito. Democratization was dangerous in the sense that it could undermine the very thing that held the country together. Since the League of Communists of Yugoslavia had party branches at a republican level, the LCY became more and more nationalized and represented mostly their own regional and national interest, which became very clear in the late 1980s and early 1990s when some of the nationalist leaders in fact were or had been members of the LCY.⁴⁵¹ The more nationalized LCY divisions are also more or less a result of the 1974 constitution. Where in the 1940 and 1950s the communist party members were highly ideologically motivated, this changed in later decades. Party membership became seen as something that would help you get ahead in life, especially after the 1974 constitution. The LCY became merely the framework to operate in and not a ideologically uniform group of people with the same goals.⁴⁵²

⁴⁴⁷ Allcock (2000), p. 426.

⁴⁴⁸ Interview held with Josip Mihaljević during my stay in Zagreb in June-July 2011.

⁴⁴⁹ Interview held with Marko Zubak during my stay in Zagreb in June-July 2011.

⁴⁵⁰ Flere (1991), p. 191-192.

⁴⁵¹ Lendvai & Parcell (1991), p. 255-257.

⁴⁵² Interview held with Marko Zubak during my stay in Zagreb in June-July 2011.

In my eyes the first time this became openly visible was with the reaction to the memorandum of the Serbian Academy of Arts and Sciences in 1986. While the Croat Spring was harshly repressed, in 1986 the communist regime – although condemning it – did not undertake any real action. No public intellectuals were fired from their jobs.⁴⁵³ After the death of Tito, nationalism slowly but surely had gained more power in the cultural realm. The LCY had given up control over the Serbian and Croatian academies of science and arts which became the strongholds of traditional forms of nationalism. University and intellectual control by the LCY also ended and controlling the media became harder and harder, although it was done in the earlier 1980s. All political power however remained formally in the hands of the LCY and the republican parties it was made up of. Culture thus became a field in which nationalism was allowed, but this couldn't be translated into politics for about a decade after Tito's death.⁴⁵⁴

The death of Tito is therefore seen in most literature as a historical turning point in Yugoslav history – which it also is in my eyes, but what seems to be far more important is the 1974 constitution to understand why Yugoslavia was able to disintegrate. I agree with Dejan Jović, who makes a very valid point regarding the new constitution of 1974, which gave way to further federalization. His analysis is that:

*“The 1974 constitution prevented anyone from becoming a ‘new Tito’ after Tito’s death. Although still the main arbiter in conflicts between republican and provincial elites, Tito was increasingly becoming a symbol, an icon of great influence but little power. Indeed, the de-Titoisation of Yugoslavia began in 1974 and not in 1980. Consequently, this is why the ‘transfer of power’ was so smooth when Tito actually died in 1980. There was no much real or constitutional power left in him.”*⁴⁵⁵

Without an overarching symbol of unity, which Tito undoubtedly was and a constitution that gave up what constructivism views as the tools of nation-building and promoted further federalization is thus isn't surprising that Yugoslavia was able to disintegrate through the forces of ethno-nationalism.

⁴⁵³ Ramet (2004ap. 749.

⁴⁵⁴ Denitch (1993), p. 7-8.

⁴⁵⁵ Jović (2003), p. 176.

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The personal collection of the author of this thesis, C.A. van Gorp

Appendix A: statistics regarding nationalism and Yugoslavism in the SFRY.

Although the SFRY had its first census in 1948, it was for the first time in 1961 that citizens could select 'Yugoslav' as nationality. On this and the following pages I've put the of the results for each of the republic and autonomous regions that together made up Yugoslavia.

Socialist Republic of Bosnia Herzegovina

	Yugoslavs	non Yugoslavs	Total population
1961	275.883 (8,42%)	3.002.065 (91,58%)	3.277.948 (100%)
1971	43.796 (1,17%)	3.702.315 (98,83%)	3.746.111 (100%)
1981	326.316 (7,91%)	3.797.940 (92,09%)	4.124.256 (100%)
1991	242.682 (5,54%)	4.137.860 (94,46%)	4.380.542 (100%)

Sources:

- Socijalistička Federativna Republika Jugoslavija; *Savezni zavod za Statistiku, Jugoslavija 1918-1988; Statistički Godišnjak* (Beograd 1989) pp. 44-49

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Socialist Republic of Croatia and the Republic of Croatia

	Yugoslavs	non Yugoslavs	Total population
1961	15.559 (0,37%)	4.144.137 (99,63%)	4.159.696 (100%)
1971	84.118 (1,90%)	4.342.103 (98,10%)	4.426.221 (100%)
1981	379.057 (8,24%)	4.222.412 (91,76%)	4.601.469 (100%)
1991	45.493 (0,95%)	4.738.772 (99,05%)	4.784.265 (100%)

Sources:

- Republički Zavod za Statistiku, *Popis Stanovništva, Domaćinstava, Stanova I Poljoprivrednih Gospodarstava 31. ožujak 1991 Stanovništvo Prema Narodnosti po Naseljima* (Zagreb 1992) pp. 8-9

- Socijalistička Federativna Republika Jugoslavija; *Savezni zavod za Statistiku, Jugoslavija 1918-1988; Statistički Godišnjak* (Beograd 1989) pp. 44-49

Socialist Republic of Macedonia

	Yugoslavs	non Yugoslavs	Total population
1961	1.260 (0,09%)	1.404.743 (99,91%)	1.406.003 (100%)
1971	3.652 (0,22%)	1.643.656 (99,78%)	1.647.308 (100%)
1981	14.225 (0,74%)	1.894.911 (99,26%)	1.909.136 (100%)
1991	15.703 (0,77%)	2.018.261 (99,23%)	2.033.964 (100%)

The 1991 census results for 1991 in Macedonia are quite controversial. The census of 1991 was held in a time when Macedonia already was preparing to leave the SFRY. Two of the dominant Albanian political parties called to boycott the census since they were afraid the SFRY might misuse the results and not give the correct numbers of Albanians and thereby delegitimizing their political struggle. Due to the consequent inability to obtain exact numbers, the Statistical Office of Macedonia used statistical projection instruments to determine the approximate figure of Albanians living in the areas where the census was boycotted. I've still used these statistics for two reasons; first people who identified with Yugoslavia wouldn't boycott a census because ethno nationalist parties called for it and secondly because the number of Yugoslavs doesn't change very much in the period 1981-1991.

Sources:

- Gaber, Natasha & Joveska, Aneta, "Macedonian census results – controversy or reality?" in *South East Europe Review* #1 (2004) pp. 99-110
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Socialist Republic of Montenegro

	Yugoslavs	non Yugoslavs	Total population
1961	1.559 (0,33)	470.335 (99,67%)	471.894 (100%)
1971	10.943 (2,06%)	518.661 (97,94%)	529.604 (100%)
1981	31.243 (5,37%)	553.067 (94,63%)	584.310 (100%)
1991	26.159 (5,03%)	493.607 (94,97%)	519.766 (100%)

Sources:

- Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, 1999 Statistical Yearbook of Yugoslavia (Beograd 1999) pp. 64-65
- Socijalistička Federativna Republika Jugoslavija; *Savezni zavod za Statistiku, Jugoslavija 1918-1988; Statistički Godišnjak* (Beograd 1989) pp. 44-49

Socialist Republic of Serbia (including SAP's Kosovo & Vojvodina)

	Yugoslavs	non Yugoslavs	Total population
1961	20.079 (0,26%)	7.622.148 (99,74%)	7.642.227 (100%)
1971	123.824 (1,46%)	8.322.767 (98,54%)	8.446.591 (100%)
1981	441.941 (4,74%)	8.871.735 (95,26%)	9.313.676 (100%)

The reason 1991 isn't mentioned is because the Statistical Yearbook of Yugoslavia because there wasn't any reliable data available for the Albanian [Kosovar] population.

Sources:

- Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, 1999 Statistical Yearbook of Yugoslavia (Beograd 1999) pp. 64-65
- Socijalistička Federativna Republika Jugoslavija; *Savezni zavod za Statistiku, Jugoslavija 1918-1988; Statistički Godišnjak* (Beograd 1989) pp. 44-49

Socialist Republic of Serbia (minus SAP's Kosovo & Vojvodina)

	Yugoslavs	non Yugoslavs	Total population
1961	11.699 (0,24%)	4.811.575 (99,76%)	4.823.274 (100%)
1971	75.976 (1,45%)	5.174.389 (98,55%)	5.250.365 (100%)
1981	272.050 (4,77%)	5.422.414 (95,23%)	5.694.464 (100%)
1991	323.625 (5,02%)	6.122.970 (94,98%)	6.446.595 (100%)

Sources:

- Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, 1999 Statistical Yearbook of Yugoslavia (Beograd 1999) pp. 64-65
- Socijalistička Federativna Republika Jugoslavija; *Savezni zavod za Statistiku, Jugoslavija 1918-1988; Statistički Godišnjak* (Beograd 1989) pp. 44-49

Socialist Republic of Slovenia and the Republic of Slovenia

	Yugoslavs	non Yugoslavs	Total population
1961	2.784 (0,17%)	1.588.739 (99,83%)	1.591.523 (100%)
1971	6.744 (0,39%)	1.720.393 (99,61%)	1.727.137 (100%)
1981	26.263 (1,39%)	1.865.601 (98,61%)	1.891.864 (100%)
1991	12.075 (0,63%)	1.901.280 (99,37%)	1.913.355 (100%)

Sources:

- Socijalistička Federativna Republika Jugoslavija; *Savezni zavod za Statistiku, Jugoslavija 1918-1988; Statistički Godišnjak* (Beograd 1989) pp. 44-49
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http://www.stat.si/popis2002/en/rezultati/rezultati_red.asp?ter=SLO&st=7 (retrieved on 8-7-2011)

Socialist Autonomous Province of Kosovo

	Yugoslavs	non Yugoslavs	Total population
1961	5.206 (0,54%)	958.782 (99,46%)	963.988 (100%)
1971	920 (0,07%)	1.242.773 (99,93%)	1.243.693 (100%)
1981	2.676 (0,17%)	1.581.764 (99,83%)	1.584.440 (100%)

The reason 1991 isn't mentioned is because the Statistical Yearbook of Yugoslavia because there wasn't any reliable data available for the Albanian [Kosovar] population. However, looking at these numbers it's safe to assume that the identification as Yugoslav wasn't very high in 1991, especially considering that Milosevic had annexed the area into Serbia without much problems.

Sources:

- Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, 1999 Statistical Yearbook of Yugoslavia (Beograd 1999) pp. 64-65
- Socijalistička Federativna Republika Jugoslavija; *Savezni zavod za Statistiku, Jugoslavija 1918-1988; Statistički Godišnjak* (Beograd 1989) pp. 44-49

Socialist Autonomous Province of Vojvodina

	Yugoslavs	non Yugoslavs	Total population
1961	3.174 (0,17%)	1.851.791 (99,83%)	1.854.965 (100%)
1971	46.928 (2,40%)	1.905.605 (97,60%)	1.952.533 (100%)
1981	167.215 (8,22%)	1.867.557 (91,78%)	2.034.772 (100%)
1991	174.295 (8,65%)	1.839.594 (91,35%)	2.013.889 (100%)

Sources:

- Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, 1999 Statistical Yearbook of Yugoslavia (Beograd 1999) pp. 64-65
- Socijalistička Federativna Republika Jugoslavija; *Savezni zavod za Statistiku, Jugoslavija 1918-1988; Statistički Godišnjak* (Beograd 1989) pp. 44-49

Appendix B: Digital correspondence/interview with Vjeran Pavlaković

1) Can you explain to me why the use of the red and white chequered shield was/is so problematic to non Croats in the (former) Yugoslavia? I understand and know about the fact that the HDZ's flag featured it prominently which made it a very controversial symbol (as seen in the early 1990s with the new Croatian Flag), but during the Socialist Republic of Croatia it also was featured also very prominent on it's Coat of Arms and I couldn't find anything about any controversy surrounding this Coat of Arms. Is it purely the prominent place on the flag or more a case of (anti-) nationalist sentiment that made it such a controversial symbol in the late 1980s and early 1990's? Do you think it is something that would also be controversial in other times or was the controversy surrounding at the time exactly a product of the time?

Some additional thoughts are that even though you rightfully note that the šahovnica was present during the SFRY, it was not featured on the republican flag, nor was it used in places such as police uniforms (see transcripts of the trial of Milan Martić in the ICTY for example). I think the key role was the aggressive use of the šahovnica, without the red star, and with the white field first (the red field became first after the new constitution in December 1990). While I argue this was not an "ustasha" flag, it resembled it and was used provocatively enough that the Serbs could only be reminded of the NDH. The white field first flag without the additional symbols above is still used today by right wing groups who consciously choose that flag over the official one.

2) After the 1974 constitution most institutes that are involved with nation building were relegated to the level of the republics, with Tito, the LCY and Army still having a federal, Yugoslav symbolic identity. However, your articles showed me that there were still national holidays that in fact were truly national (such as the 22nd of June which is still celebrated in at least Croatia). What is your idea about the importance of such holidays and commemorations in nation building, or at least in keeping the idea of Yugoslavia alive after Tito's death?

Regarding holidays, you should note that the 22nd of June holiday was changed in 1991 by Tuđman, since the previous holiday was 27 July (each republic had its uprising day). Roksandić has a good article about that in EEPS. The majority of the holidays were pan-Yugoslav (dan republike, dan vojske, 1. maj). I think the holidays were very important in "trying" to hold yugo together after Tito (for example, if you look at holidays in the 1980s, the message was always that Yugoslavia is doing well even after Tito, but it was clear that it was increasingly just propaganda). In fact, the introduction of new holidays was a key factor in nation building, especially for Croatia. Catholic holidays, homeland war holidays, memory of Bleiburg - these were all intended to reinforce Croatian, and not Yugoslav, identity. Even the 22 of June was made more Croatian rather than the "Serbian" 27 of July

3) What according to you is a under appreciated factor in explaining the demise of the SFRY? What do you think eventually led to its disbanding and the wars following that?

I think a key factor of the collapse of Yugoslavia was the inability of the regime to liberalize politically along with economically. So when things got into a crisis, rather than peaceful transition it was a rapid destruction. Unresolved issues from the past, the Kosovo factor, pressure from the IMFY (there are a lot of conspiracy theories about the West trying to break up Yugoslavia), and new elites taking advantage of the changes in Eastern Europe to take power. have you taken a look at Dejan Jović's book on Yugoslavia? He gives a great overview of the various theories.

Appendix C: Digital correspondence/interview with Sabrina P. Ramet

1) *One of your books is called Balkan Babel, which I presume is a reference to the Biblical tale of the tower of Babel. Why did you choose this title? Does it mean you view the Yugoslavist ideal as something that was never to be attained (and if so, which party is the God who doesn't want to see it succeed?), or is it a reference to the controversial language issues between the Serbs and Croats which played a influential role in the nationalism of both sides which led to the situation in which the Yugoslavist ideal couldn't be attained? Or is there another reason why you chose for this metaphor?*

Concerning your first question, it is clear to me from what you ask here that you did not look at the latest (4th) edition of my book because, seeing that some people were not sure what I meant by referring to a collective undertaking which fell apart because of disagreements, I added a very clear and very explicit explanation in one of the first paragraphs in chapter 1. At any rate, in brief: the story of the Tower of Babel involves people wanting to construct a great tower, but at some point they found that they were speaking different languages, and therefore could not continue and the project collapsed. In the case of Yugoslavia, the people of the country (mainly the politicians, of course) undertook to construct a common country and system, but, from the very beginning of this undertaking (i.e., already from December 1918) they were speaking different political languages, with the Croats speaking the language of federalism and devolution, the Serbs speaking the language of unity and centralism, the Albanians simply wanting to be able to stay out of and later leave the country, etc., and eventually the Yugoslav project collapsed. The difference between the two is that, while the story of the Tower of Babel suggests a certain inevitability about the failure, I am convinced that, as late as November 1971, Yugoslavia could definitely have been preserved, and that POSSIBLY as late as 1985 this was likely the case.

2) *Some of the articles and books I read from you had a focus on important players and institutes (i.e. Slobodan Milosevic, the Serbian Orthodox Church) within socialist Yugoslavia. How do you relate the rise of these figures in regards to the 1974 constitution? Do you think their rise was possible because of the 1974 constitution, or would these persons/people always become influential even without the new constitution of 1974?*

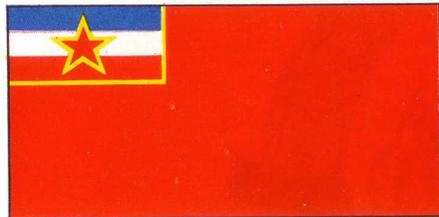
Turning to your second question: if you read my attached articles from December 2004, you will see that, while I stress (in NP2) the role of Slobodan Milosevic as a key player in the disintegration of the country, I also underline (in NP1) the importance of other factors, including the illegitimacy of the system itself, the extent of devolution to the republics, and economic deterioration among other factors. These factors are also mentioned in BALKAN BABEL where, in chapter 3 of the 4th edition, I also itemize the various unconstitutional and illegal actions undertaken by Milosevic and his people. For this question, you might also look at Viktor Meier's YUGOSLAVIA: A HISTORY OF ITS DEMISE.

3) *And finally, how important was the 1974 constitution in your eyes in the break up of socialist Yugoslavia?*

Your third question is, to some extent, answered in my response to your second question. While it is true that some (but not all) Serbs were discontent with the 1974 constitution, and likewise true that the extent of devolution created a system with some confederal features, that alone was not sufficient either to save or to doom the country.

Appendix D: the flags and coats of arms of the six Socialist Republics

From top to bottom, the flag and coats of arms from the Socialist Republic Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Socialist Republic Montenegro and the Socialist Republic Croatia.



SR BOSNA IN HERCEGOVINA



SR CRNA GORA



SR HRVATSKA



From top to bottom, the flag and coats of arms from the Socialist Republic Macedonia, the Socialist Republic Slovenia and the Socialist Republic Serbia



SR MAKEDONIJA



SR SLOVENIJA



SR SRBIJA



Images derived from Dragoljub Đurović, (ed.) *The Constitution of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia* (Belgrade, 1974)

Appendix E: Burned cd with audio recordings of the interviews

Note: some of these recordings, especially the interview with Marko Zubak and in a lesser degree also the interview with Josip Mihaljević have some much distorted passages within the recordings. I didn't use these parts of the interviews, but to keep the authenticity of the recording and not making it look like certain thoughts were made as a reaction to something said a few minutes earlier I've let these passages in the recording.

VN850014.wma is the interview with Josip Mihaljević

VN850015.wma is the interview with Marko Zubak

VN850017.wma is the interview with Mario Jareb

VN850018.wma is the interview with Tvrko Jakovina

VN850019.wma is the interview with Nikica Barić