

The New European Diasporas

*National Minorities and Conflict
in Eastern Europe*

Michael Mandelbaum, Editor



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228. Ibid., pp. 9–11.
229. Ibid., p. 10.
230. Ibid., pp. 11–12.
231. *Moskovskie novosti*, no. 25, June 23–30, 1996, p. 10.
232. Ibid.
233. *Nezavisimaya gazeta*, December 24, 1997.
234. See "Russia and Kosovo: A Toothless Growl," *Economist*, May 1, 1999.
235. Most of the studies on inadvertent war have tended to focus on the dangers of nuclear conflict and the risks of misperception; see, for instance, Marc Trachtenberg, "The Meaning of Mobilization in 1914," *International Security* 15 (Winter 1990–91): 120–50. Historically, though, there have been conventional conflicts that occurred as a result of miscalculation and misperception.
236. Zevelev, "Russia and the Russian Diasporas," pp. 270–84; Gail Lapidus's reply in "A Comment on 'Russia and Russian Diasporas,'" *Post-Soviet Affairs* 12, no. 3 (1996), pp. 285–87; and Jack Snyder, *Myths of Empire: Domestic Politics and International Ambition* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1991).
237. Aurel Braun, "The Incomplete Revolutions: The Rise of Extremism in East-Central Europe and the Former Soviet Union," and "Russia: The Land in Between," in Aurel Braun and Stephen Scheinberg, *The Extreme Right: Freedom and Security at Risk* (Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 1997), pp. 138–60, 162–84.
238. *Russia Today*, November 29, 1998.
239. *Russia Today*, August 10, 1999.
240. For a good treatise on "consociation," see Arend Lijphart, *Democracy in Plural Societies* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1977); Laitin, "National Revival," pp. 22–23.

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Diaspora, or the Dangers of Disunification? Putting the "Serbian Model" into Perspective

SUSAN L. WOODWARD

THE CONTEMPORARY view that diasporas can be dangerous owes much to the case of the Serbs. According to conventional wisdom, their desire to live in one state—a Greater Serbia—rather than accept their fate as minorities in republics bordering the republic of Serbia caused the collapse of Yugoslavia. The president of Serbia, Slobodan Milošević, is said to have planned the breakup and the creation of a Greater Serbia after his goal of becoming the new dictator of Yugoslavia was foiled by political leaders in the republics of Slovenia, Croatia, and Bosnia and Herzegovina. His instrument was the transborder Serbs. By reviving and manipulating their memories from World War II, when Serbs in Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina were, along with Jews and Gypsies, the victims of a genocidal campaign by fascist governments, and by then persuading the Yugoslav People's Army, which was formed in the antifascist struggle of World War II, to aid the Serbs' rebellion against the legitimate governments of these two republics, Milošević unleashed an avalanche of aggression and genocide in both republics that lasted from 1991 to 1995.

The persuasiveness of this argument, and the essential role in the violence of diaspora Serbs, was confirmed early on in the Yugoslav collapse by the brevity of the Slovene war for independence. Lasting only ten days, at the cost of no more than 68 dead, the Slovene secession did

not provoke significant violence, it is said, because there were few Serbs in Slovenia to give Milošević both the claim to land and the excuse to intervene. In contrast, substantial numbers of Serbs in areas of Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina bordering Serbia took up arms and received Belgrade's support in order to "unify Serb lands" and avoid becoming part of a diaspora outside Serbia. Beginning in 1985, moreover, the demand from the Serb minority in the southern Serbian province of Kosovo for protection from Belgrade against alleged discrimination by the Albanian-majority provincial government had propelled Milošević to power as the head of the Serbian League of Communists in 1987 and was said to be the grounds for a new campaign of violence in 1998–99 against the majority Albanian population there.

As early as late summer–fall of 1991, during the war in Croatia, predictions based on the Serb case sounded alarms throughout the entire region of dissolving communist regimes. The parallel was particularly strong with the collapse of the Soviet Union. Would Russians who suddenly found themselves living outside the Russian Federation in new, neighboring states, supported by Moscow, repeat the "Serb model"?¹ What of the reach for domestic legitimacy through nationalism by post-communist governments in Eastern Europe? Was there a harbinger of more Miloševićs in statements like that, for example, of Hungarian Prime Minister József Ántall, when he greeted the Brioni Accord of July 1991, which marked the end of the conflict in Slovenia, with a veiled, revisionist allusion to the 1920 Treaty of Trianon frontiers: "We gave Vojvodina to Yugoslavia. If there is no more Yugoslavia, then we should get it back!"² Although the population of Vojvodina, an autonomous province in Serbia on Hungary's southern border, was only 16.9 percent Hungarian in 1991, that figure was greater than the 12.2 percent of the Croatian population in that year who were Serbs.³ Such rhetoric from Budapest alerted many to the large Hungarian populations living outside Hungary in neighboring Serbia, Croatia, Slovakia, and Romania and the potential for the Serb example to move northward, provoking more efforts to change borders—if necessary, through war.⁴

Although the Serb population of Macedonia—the federal republic of Yugoslavia located to the south of Serbia—was only 2 percent in the 1991 census, the model had become sufficiently implanted in policymakers' minds by December 1992 that international troops were deployed, under United Nations Security Council mandate, to the Macedonian-Serbian border to prevent these Serbs from becoming another source of war. Like the economic sanctions first imposed on Serbia and Montenegro in May 1992 (when the two created a new state called the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia) to weaken Belgrade's ability to aid Serbs in

eastern Bosnia, the troops remained in Macedonia into 1999 to prevent a Serbian campaign in Kosovo from provoking spillover into Macedonia. The link in this case would be Albanian diasporas in both Serbia and northwestern Macedonia that might go to war, like Serbs, for a Greater Albania.⁵

The fears about Russians and Hungarians did not, for the most part, materialize. Most of the states emerging from communist rule in Eastern Europe adopted legislation early on that claimed their right to protect their conationals living in other states, but violence did not follow. Worry over the repeat of the Serb model among Albanians outside Albania (in Montenegro, Macedonia, and Greece as well as Kosovo) took a backseat to the focus on Slobodan Milošević, and the cause of the Albanian armed rebellion against Serbia, led by an inchoate Kosovo Liberation Army in 1996–98, came to be seen widely as a predictable and legitimate response to Serbian repression in the province. The analogy drawn between Milošević and Adolf Hitler, who used protection of transborder Germans in Sudetenland and Silesia as the excuse to invade Czechoslovakia and Poland but did not stop there, redirected attention away from the Serb diaspora and toward Milošević's guilt.

The German parallel, in fact, underlay most public debate about the Serb national question from 1991 to 1999 and motivated policy toward Yugoslavia. For example, an international criminal tribunal was established during the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina modeled after the one established at Nuremberg, Germany, after 1945 to try Nazis, and Serbia was treated as a pariah state in order to expunge the region of Milošević, until 1999, an unindicted but widely recognized "war criminal." U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright referred frequently to the Hitler analogy, drawing emotional force from her own origins as a child in wartime Czechoslovakia, and the Jewish community was particularly prominent in the campaign to defend Bosnian Muslims, based on the argument that the case fit its own commitment to prevent a repetition of the Nazi Holocaust, a commitment denoted by the slogan "never again."⁶ For all in this camp, there was no choice but the use of force—preferably bombing so that American troops were not at risk, but massive bombing nonetheless. Even those who criticized the unsympathetic view of Serbs in this conventional wisdom and in policy used the analogy to Nazi Germany. Contrasting the effects on Germany of sharply differing postwar settlements in 1918 and 1945, they argued that an international policy aimed at peace that punished Serbia with economic disaster would only give rise to a new Milošević and more violence in the future, similar to the effect of the punitive Versailles settlement on Germany in the 1920s and 1930s.

By March 24, 1999, the Hitler parallel had won. So rooted had the conventional wisdom become that all 19 NATO powers agreed to interrupt negotiations at Rambouillet, France, aimed at stopping the violence between Yugoslav security forces and the Kosovo Liberation Army and to begin an aerial bombing campaign of Yugoslavia that lasted 78 days. Having "taken a stand," they also began to succumb to the view that Serbs, after all, were collectively responsible for Slobodan Milošević and the four wars in the Balkans in the 1990s. The only solution to peace in the region was said by summer 1999 to be a thorough program of "de-Nazification" and the continued denial of aid until Serbs began openly to acknowledge that guilt.

Is There a Model?

The unexpected and horrific violence of the Yugoslav wars so shattered the optimism that first accompanied the end of the Cold War in Europe that they had unusually great influence on policy thinking and expectations for the future. It is therefore particularly important to get the story of the Serb case right. Anomalies that contradict the conventional wisdom should not be swept aside as inconsequential but made more prominent, as a necessary check against the costs, and the possibility, of error.

The first such check is to ask what a diaspora population is. In the more classic sense of far-flung émigrés, the striking characteristic of the Yugoslav story is the contrast between Croat and Serb diasporas. The Croatian diaspora—members of whom live in the United States, Canada, Australia, Germany (originating as foreign workers in the 1960s), and elsewhere, and were conscious of their status as a diaspora—was unusually active and influential in promoting and winning Croatian independence from Yugoslavia. Although for many of these Croats the campaign began immediately after (and in response to) the communist takeover in 1944, and included a period of intense activity in the second half of the 1960s and early 1970s, in the early to mid-1980s it included efforts to promote Franjo Tudjman and Croatian national rights. Tudjman became president of the Croatian federal republic in the first multiparty elections of April 1990, but his nationalist, independence platform won only 41.5 percent of the local vote—not an overwhelming mandate. This translated into a parliamentary majority only as a result of the election law written in 1989 by an overconfident League of Communists of Croatia. The role of the Croatian diaspora was critical, however, for it is difficult to imagine that electoral "victory" without the \$8 million sent to Tudjman and his party, the Croatian Democratic Union (HDZ, or "party of all Croats in the world"), by

Croatian émigrés when no other party in Croatia had any funds.⁷ Albanians in the United States and in Switzerland and Germany (again as foreign workers originally) also contributed substantial monies and volunteers to the independence struggle of Albanians in Kosovo, particularly its armed phase.

In contrast, the Serb diaspora community—largely in the United States but also in Australia and Canada, and as foreign workers, like Croats, in Germany and Austria—played a negligible role in the Yugoslav collapse and the Serbian cause therein. Few émigrés returned and little money was sent either to the nationalist effort at home or the public relations campaigns abroad. In a brief period *after* the Yugoslav dissolution, several prominent émigré Serbs, including the crown prince, Alexander Karadjordjević, a businessman in London with little knowledge of the Serbian language, and Milan Panić, a wealthy pharmaceuticals émigré in California, did become significantly involved in attempting to influence politics within Serbia, but they were far more circumspect in relations with Serbs outside Serbia in the new neighboring states.

If, however, by diaspora is meant transborder minorities *in the area*, and in the Yugoslav case, those living within the same state but in different federal units from those identified with their nation (Slovenes outside Slovenia, Croats outside Croatia, and so forth), then the role of diaspora Serbs historically "in Serbian and Yugoslav politics [has been] disproportionate to their numbers."⁸ Proto-political activity of Serbs outside Serbia, as Serbs, became quite substantial during the 1980s, in the form of cultural and educational activities to revive a sense of what it was to be a Serb. Many of these activities were organized by Serbian intellectuals from Belgrade who were also promoting a national renaissance, in many instances (like Tudjman) as anticommunism. But, if one compares Serbs outside of Serbia to other "internal diasporas" within Yugoslavia (people living outside the republic of their nation), they were relative latecomers.

This was particularly evident once the political ferment of the 1980s moved toward the creation of political parties independent of the communist party. Of those that formed along ethnonational lines, for example, Franjo Tudjman did initial organizing for his nationalist party among Croat residents of the Serbian province of Vojvodina and of western Herzegovina in Bosnia and Herzegovina; Alija Izetbegović likewise began campaigning for his new Muslim party, the Party of Democratic Action (SDA), in an area of Serbia with a large Muslim population, the Sandžak. Muslims from the Sandžak (who preferred the label Bosniac by 1994) are prominent in Sarajevo politics and business,

and many Bosniacs (Bosnian Muslims) speak hopefully of eventually uniting their new country with the Sandžak. Similarly, Croats from Herzegovina became increasingly dominant in Zagreb business and politics after Croatian independence, while Croats in Herzegovina and other parts of the western borderlands of Bosnia and Herzegovina were supported politically, financially, and militarily by Zagreb and Tudjman in their war against the Bosnian government and the SDA and even after the peace, and they still hoped in 1999 to unite with Croatia. Those who might be called "diaspora" Serbs, in Croatia and in Bosnia and Herzegovina, by contrast, formed their own political party, the Serb Democratic Party, not branches of a Belgrade party. It was the dominant Serbian party in these areas during the breakup of the country, but it was not the largest vote-getter. Serbs in Croatia voted overwhelmingly not for Serb "ethnic" parties but for the re-formed communist party, called the Party for Democratic Change (SDP). In Bosnia and Herzegovina, where 90 percent of the population voted for a national party in 1990, Serbs voted for ethnic parties, but that vote was spread among many Bosnian Serb parties, reflecting differences of political opinion and ideology within the community, not a nationalist vote *per se*. Only after 1991 did Serbian parties become politically involved among Serbs in Croatia and especially in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

In sum, while there is no doubt about the political, military, and economic support for Serbs in Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina from political parties and authorities in Belgrade, that relationship between diaspora and homeland capital was late in coming, when compared to other national groups in the former Yugoslavia. And the reverse relationship, the role of diaspora Serbs in the homeland capital of Belgrade, was insignificant compared to that of diaspora Croats and Bosniacs, respectively, in Zagreb and Sarajevo.

These facts—that the only relevant Serb "diaspora" for the question of violence in the former Yugoslavia was the "internal" diaspora of a federal system, and that these Serbs were not the only ethnonational groups there to behave as diasporas of their future homelands once Yugoslavia broke apart—suggest a second crucial anomaly of this "model." When diaspora populations are transborder minorities, the real issue at stake is the location of a political border. They are diaspora not by choice of emigration but by virtue of a political decision, over which they had no influence, to draw a state border in a way that leaves them outside the state of their national group.

The creation of Yugoslavia after World War I by the great powers convened at Versailles in 1918 gathered into one state most of the people in the area of southeastern Europe who were south Slavs, with the

exception of Bulgarians.⁹ They had lived under different imperial regimes (Byzantine, Ottoman, Habsburg [Austria-Hungary after 1867], and Venetian) and had followed very different political trajectories toward common citizenship in Yugoslavia, but their distinct national histories and cultures were joined into one, unitary state. Some Slovenes and Croats were left outside the country, in Austria and Italy, while some Macedonians found themselves in Greece, Bulgaria, or Albania. The new Yugoslav border also created many non-south Slav diasporas within the country, such as Albanians, Italians, Hungarians, Turks, and Romanians. After World War II, the new Communist regime restructured the country into a federation that recognized the distinctness of these south Slav peoples and drew internal borders along "national" lines that, reflecting the motley pattern of settlement within the country if ethnicity is considered, added to the number of people living outside their home state although still within the same country. The largest such group was Serbs. By the census of 1991, when these internal borders were transformed into international borders, about 25 percent of the Serb population in Yugoslavia did not live in the Serbian republic: They numbered at least 2.5 million out of 8.5 million Serbs, not including those who chose the "Yugoslav" identity (700,400 in total in 1991) instead.¹⁰ The constitutional order of federal Yugoslavia recognized the rights of national self-determination of all of its six constituent, south Slav nations, regardless of the divisions imposed by these internal borders; but once the country began to head toward dissolution into separate nation-states, the burning issues became the fact of these borders, where they had been drawn in 1945, and what it might mean to be a Serb in a non-Serb state.

Thus the second check on this model is that the Serb case is not an issue of Serbs *per se* but of the breakup of the country, the political decisions made about where the borders of the new states would be, and the nature of citizenship rights and national identity in these new states. International norms and actors play a significant part in this aspect of the story, for it is an international decision to recognize new states and their borders. Had the internal, federal borders been drawn differently in 1945, or redrawn in 1991, there would not have been a substantial Serb diaspora contiguous to Serbia or any violence contesting those borders. This is why the idea of a diaspora in Eastern Europe is better stated as one of transborder minorities—people trapped on the other side of a border that could have been drawn differently, and their status as an ethnic minority in a state claiming legitimacy on the basis of the majority nation.¹¹

The third check on this conventional wisdom—that the Serbs are analogous to the Third Reich, where an aggressive, expansionist leader

in the homeland capital links up with, and is even propelled by, diaspora Serbs to break up a state and foment war to create a Greater Serbia—is provided by the great variety of behavior among Serbs themselves in this internal Yugoslav diaspora. In both the Croatian and the Bosnian wars, the violence was concentrated for the most part in border areas and in ethnically mixed communities. More than two-thirds of the Serb population of Croatia remained loyal to Croatia as it was becoming independent and remained in place to take out Croatian citizenship. Of the third who lived in or fled to the contested border areas, many fled to Serbia rather than remain a minority, yet even the majority of those tried to stay but were expelled by Croatian military force in 1995. The Serb population of Croatia had been reduced by death, emigration, or expulsion from 12 percent in 1991 to 3 percent in 1995. How many Serbs in Bosnia and Herzegovina out of the 33 percent of the prewar population remained loyal to the new leadership of Bosnia and Herzegovina is difficult to assess. We do know that about 17 percent remained in “non-Serb” areas (controlled by and contested between Bosnian Muslims and Bosnian Croats) at the time of the Washington Agreement of March 1994, even though this agreement created a federation between these two Bosnian nations as an alliance against Bosnian Serbs and denied Serbs their prewar status as a constituent nation in their own country. This Serb minority in the federation was equal to the proportion of the entire prewar Bosnian population who identified themselves as Croats. And although during the war many Serbs fled these areas for regions controlled by the Bosnian Serb army or to Serbia itself, a very large percentage did not leave “federation” territory until the Dayton peace agreement of November 1995 acknowledged the tripartite division of Bosnia and Herzegovina according to “ethnonational identity.” Similarly in Macedonia, the Serb community was internally split between a larger part that remained loyal to Macedonia and a much smaller part, largely from an area bordering Serbia, that tried repeatedly to gain attention from politicians in Serbia (including Milošević) to come to their aid as an endangered diaspora, without success. Nearly all chose Macedonian citizenship, moreover.

A majority of Serbs outside Serbia, in other words, did not become mobilized under the nationalist banner to commit violence. An individual or family decision to stay and become a minority in a non-Serb state, to flee to Serbia or abroad, or to fight, moreover, was made in response to an environment shaped by others—most important, shaped by what the government of the new state signaled about the prospects as a Serb in a non-Serb state. As Rogers Brubaker argues, the role of diaspora is not dyadic, between the diaspora and its homeland state,

but triadic, between the diaspora and the nationalizing state in which its members unwittingly find themselves as new citizens, and between the diaspora and a homeland state with some interests (whether of state or nation is not foreseeable) in their fate.¹² Because the issue of minority rights has been a prominent feature of European security regimes throughout the twentieth century, beginning with the post-World War I settlements that created national states out of the dissolving multinational empires, this, like the issue of borders, is also subject to outside influence and policy.

More than 600,000 Serbs, furthermore, chose to flee instead to Serbia or Montenegro. There they were received in private homes rather than being housed in camps, as were Bosnian Croats in Croatia, for example. Nonetheless, they were classified as refugees (as citizens from Croatia or from Bosnia and Herzegovina),¹³ and as economic hardship grew more severe in Serbia, their hosts increasingly treated them as a burden, considering them as distant kin, perhaps, but not Serbian Serbs.¹⁴ The Serbian leaders who claimed the mantle of Serb protectors did little or nothing to provide for them or make them feel welcome in Serbia. Of the Serbs expelled from Croatia in 1995, the 150,000 to 200,000 who went across the river to Bosnia remain stateless, with no prospects of citizenship in the Serb Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The reason is that international authorities support the wishes of the government in Sarajevo, against that of leaders in the Serb entity in Bosnia, to deny them the rights to Bosnian citizenship that might increase Serb numbers proportionally. International efforts instead aim (unsuccessfully by late 1999) at persuading Croatia to allow Serbs to return to their homes and minority status there. Moreover, many hundreds of thousands (the numbers remain imprecise) of Serbs from Serbia also fled their homeland during the wars to go abroad rather than be drafted to fight for Serbs in Croatia or Bosnia and Herzegovina. Most striking of all perhaps is the treatment of Serbs from Kosovo, who are alleged to have started the problem in the first place. When a NATO bombing campaign against Yugoslavia in March–June 1999, following through to the letter in policy and rhetoric on the conventional protectorate in Kosovo led to Milošević, and a subsequent international wisdom regarding Serbs and the flight, or expulsion, of nearly all of Kosovo’s Serbs, these Serbs felt compelled at the start to hide their presence in Serbia proper. If discovered, they were refused any rights to a job, their pension, or residence as a government policy to force them to return to Kosovo.

The case of the Serbs, in sum, cannot be explained by simple and uncritical reference to an analogy with post-World War I Germany. Instead, the explanation must focus on the causes of the country’s

breakup, and the reasons why some Serbs outside of Serbia were willing to risk their lives and fight so as *not to become a diaspora* after the loss of Yugoslavia. These reasons include the mobilizing role of national ideology, the political struggle over the national question within and between the Yugoslav republics at issue, the characteristics of those who did fight, and, not least, the role of international actors and decisions.

The Breakup of Yugoslavia

In the course of the 1980s, the Yugoslav socialist political and economic system was heading toward collapse.¹⁵ The primary cause was a balance-of-payments and foreign debt crisis that was in turn a result of dramatic external shocks to the country's current account and the conditions for financing the trade deficit. The fact that a foreign debt crisis was general in Eastern Europe and Latin America at the time confirms the existence of some external causes, but the consequences were domestic. Throughout Eastern Europe, the final result was the same—the end of the socialist system. But while elsewhere socialism in time was replaced by market economies and parliamentary democracy, its demise in Yugoslavia brought an end to the country itself. The violence that accompanied its dissolution—in contrast, for example, to the breakup of Czechoslovakia—is easily explained as a contest over where the new borders of the successor states would be; but why the country did dissolve, and why there was such a contest over borders, requires a much deeper understanding of the reform process, the constitutional system that required change, and the way that the opposing sides of the political contest over reform used cultural idioms in their fight and made the contest into a “national question.”

The remedy proposed by domestic economists and required by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) in exchange for credits in 1982 was a harsh austerity program of domestic contraction and export promotion, accompanied by a decade-long series of economic and political reforms. While the critical reform was liberalization of foreign trade and domestic prices, the creation of institutions necessary to implement such a policy mandated a radical change in the locus of political power over domestic and foreign currency. This was not the first IMF-financed effort to reform the Yugoslav socialist economy, but in all previous programs, the advice had been to decentralize. In line with a Marxist ideological commitment to the withering away of the repressive and extractive state, the communist leadership had concurred and progressively decentralized—and socialized (moving from state to social ownership and parastatal associations)—decision-making on monetary,

fiscal, developmental, and social policy. This entailed repeated constitutional amendment of the relationship between the federal government and the republics. The result, by the early 1980s when the debt crisis hit, was a central government with almost no authority over the economy and unable to act without the consent of all the republics. Decentralization had gone too far, the market promoters concluded. A true central bank had to be created; authority over monetary aggregates, debt repayment, and foreign exchange policy had to be reunified; barriers to the flow of capital and labor across republics had to be removed; and a state administration capable of performing the functions necessary to an open, market economy had to be restored.

The resulting reform program, beginning with the long-term stabilization program for debt repayment, restoring growth, and fighting inflation that was adopted by parliament in 1982, triggered three destabilizing political shocks to the Yugoslav system.

The first shock was the challenge to revise the 1974 constitution, the fourth constitution for Yugoslavia since 1945. Each new constitution was a type of way-station in which intervening amendments to the previous constitution were codified before a new process began. Each new constitution had been hotly contested because each one invariably raised the most neuralgic issue of the Yugoslav state since 1919: how to accommodate, through constitutional mechanisms, the rights and interests of the separate nations that had come together to form one country. The first Yugoslavia, created at the Versailles conference, had a unitary constitution. The legitimating ideology of this new state—Yugoslavism—was a Croatian idea (that the three south Slav peoples—Slovenes, Croats, and Serbs—were one, “triune” people). The union of these three was the choice not of Serbs but of Slovenes and Croats from the defeated Habsburg Empire who saw the new state as their means of national survival over absorption into Italy or Austria. (Serbs had been fighting for their own national state.) But the decision by the Versailles powers to institute a unitary constitution in 1919 under a Serbian king and army was opposed by the Slovene and Croatian political elite. Repeated administrative reforms to accommodate regional and cultural differences within a unitary constitution¹⁶ only led Croatian leaders, in particular, to push harder for a federal constitution and to view the government in Belgrade as anti-Croat. The constitutional fight also dominated factional politics within the Yugoslav communist party, the League of Communists, which ousted a Serb leader in 1928 and committed its revolutionary platform, under Croat and Slovene leadership, to a federal constitution and a fight against “Great Serb hegemony.”

Croats won an exception to the constitution in 1939, in a pact between a Serbian prime minister and the leading Croatian party politician, that gave them autonomy over territories they claimed historically, but the Axis invasions in 1941 splintered the country into separate territories and competing local armies. The Communist-led Partisan forces created a government by 1943, called the Anti-Fascist Council for National Liberation of Yugoslavia (AVNOJ, in Serbo-Croatian), and announced their commitment to a postwar republic and federal constitution. Although Serbs—particularly but not only from Croatian and Bosnian areas—were among the most numerous contingents of the Partisan forces, the majority of the population in Serbia tended to support the fighting units of the Royal Army, which called themselves Chetniks and which rebuffed, under their leader, Colonel Draža Mihailović, repeated offers by the Partisan leader, Josip Broz Tito, to form a wartime alliance. For these average Serbs who did not join the Partisans, the abolition of the monarchy in 1943, the execution of Mihailović in 1945, and the defeat of the Serbian political parties in communist-controlled elections in 1947 left a mark, to be exploited only 25 to 35 years later, that the bittersweet victory in 1918 had been overturned and that the purpose of the 1943 Communist ("AVNOJ") constitution and its federal boundaries was a form of revenge aimed at weakening the Serbs.

As a socialist system with a single ruling party, the effective political units of the second Yugoslavia were not political parties but the governmental units of this federation—the republics and the local organs of power called municipalities. The republics were said, moreover, to recognize the rights of national self-determination of the country's five constituent peoples—Croats, Macedonians, Montenegrins, Serbs, and Slovenes. A sixth nation—Muslims—was recognized in 1968. Therefore, by 1952 all matters of culture and education were assigned to the republics, and the first of the series of trade-oriented, decentralizing reforms in 1949 to 1952 made concrete the fiscal federalism written into the 1945 constitution.¹⁷ By 1974 (after the adoption of a constitution that only codified the amendments to the 1963 constitution adopted during 1967 to 1971), the balance of power lay with the republics, and the federal government had responsibility only for the common defense, veterans, setting guidelines on foreign trade-oriented investment policy, legislative standards for wage and labor policies in the separate republics, and managing the federal fund for regional development, which taxed the wealthier northern republics for redistribution to the south.

The economic reform required to obtain IMF loans and restore foreign credibility in the Yugoslav economy (when 90 percent of industry depended on imports at some stage of production) went for the jugular

of the Yugoslav political system. The reformers insisted that the country could not perform effectively in foreign markets if market relations did not also apply at home. Liberalization required the re-creation of a single market over the entire Yugoslav area, and this in turn required the reunification of monetary and foreign exchange policy, including the administrative apparatus necessary to such policy. The level of decentralization achieved by the mid-1970s, however, meant that the reform was a direct attack on the economic power of the republican governments—or fiefdoms, as they were called colloquially. Because the politics of the socialist system was a contest over money and economic assets among the republics (as party-governments), the reform could not avoid attacking the key bases of political power in the country as well. And in sharp contrast to the more centralized systems of Eastern Europe, or to the imperial basis of the Soviet state and Russia's role in it, the Yugoslav federal system was a delicate although frequently shifting balance among its politically equal nations. An attack on the power of the republics and their mutual relations at the federal level could not escape the "national question."

The particular reforms required in the 1980s were most threatening to the wealthier regions. Opposition was strongest from Slovenia but also from Vojvodina and Croatia, particularly where local industries had successful exports to hard-currency markets, earning the foreign exchange necessary to a heavily import-dependent economy and republic-based growth. Although their attack was on the market reform, their arguments were phrased in the neoliberalism then dominant in the West. The main obstacle to economic growth, they said, was not the chaos of the banking system but the federal policies of redistribution. Thus, a better reform would go the rest of the way toward dismantling the federal government. Those who believed in the re-creation of a single market were "unitarists" as well as "federalists," they said, reviving memories of interwar constitutional debates to signal that this was no economic reform but a campaign by those who would destroy the federal system, including parliamentary supremacy (where the republican factions dominated and were not required to form a common consensus as in the executive branch) and thus "national rights." By using the term "unitarism"—referring to the unitary constitution of the interwar kingdom—moreover, they cast the center-republic fight in ethnonational terms. They implied that this new threat from "Belgrade" was from Serbs. (Such obfuscation always was possible because Belgrade was the capital of both the federation and the Serbian republic.) Their alternatives were the decentralized status quo or confederation.

For the Serbian government and other "federalists" (including, e.g., many Slovene economists), the historical context of this emerging contest over economic reform was more immediate: the 1974 constitution, which to them had been disastrous for Yugoslavia. It was the culmination of a constitutional fight over an earlier market reform, introduced between 1958 and 1965 to meet the conditions of membership in the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), which also pitted proponents of decentralization and republican rights against proponents of a single market and liberal economy. In that reform, the decentralizers won and the market lost, for the 1974 constitution introduced a system of contractual bargaining among economic (public sector) actors in its place. Most significantly for Serbia, which was the only republic with autonomous provinces, this governmental decentralization applied to all federal units. Vojvodina and Kosovo were given all the powers of republics—separate legislatures, executives, and fiscal authority, and representation as equal partners in federal bodies—except in name. Serbia was thus, *de facto*, reduced to "inner Serbia," without its provinces and without even the same right to veto legislation in Vojvodina and Kosovo that provincial authorities had regarding legislation in Serbia and at the federal level. Second, the contest over market reform in the 1960s had given rise in Croatia to a nationalist movement. In it republican leaders demanded greater rights for the republic over the proportion of foreign currency earnings of "their enterprises" that they could retain in Croatia, using Croatian cultural associations and local party committees of Croatian nationalists in ethnically mixed communities to pressure federal authorities. In later stages of the movement, leaders went so far as to demand a separate foreign policy and representation in the United Nations, on the model of Ukraine. Slovene authorities, in fact, stopped short of pushing republican rights to the maximum in 1970–71 when they saw the effects in Croatia, but it was only the federal army and its repeated entreaties to President Tito about the serious threat of this Croatian populist "mass movement" (*Maspok*) of 1967 to 1971 to the very existence of Yugoslavia that brought an end to Croatian demands in December 1971. The standard Titoist solution was to require the Croatian republican leadership to resign, replacing them with antinationalist conservatives (including some Serbs), and then to balance this demand by purging the leadership of the Serbian party, who were highly regarded political liberals in Serbia, as threats to the communist system. For Serbs, this double loss—of the liberal reform and of their liberal leaders and managers—was adding insult to injury after a prominent feature of the Croatian events was explicit nationalist attacks, both rhetorical and physical, on Serbs and on the coexistence of

Serbs and Croats in mixed communities in Croatia. Within this political balancing act, Tito actually proceeded with economic reforms favoring the republics: granting Croatian demands for higher retention quotas of "its" foreign currency earnings and forcing the resignation of the market-oriented Serbian managerial elite, both in Serbia and in other republics (such as Croatian tourist areas) where market opportunities for investment had been followed.

The political legacy of the 1974 constitution and the constitutional amendments of 1967 to 1971 that it codified was resentment in both Croatia (including a political interpretation, which was factually incorrect, of republican investment and employment policy aimed at restoring the injured confidence of the Serb minority in Croatia) and Serbia (including a political interpretation of the 1974 constitution as an explicit continuation of the effort to weaken Serbs since 1943). In Croatian political life, resentment at the purge of nationalist liberals produced a "great silence," but in Serbia resentment at the purge of liberals and managers who had not been nationalists produced a core of writers, professors, and economists in Belgrade who increasingly saw federal policy in nationalist terms, as anti-Serb, and began to say so. Thus, when Slovene and Croat politicians began to use anti-Serbian rhetoric in their campaign against the 1980 reforms aimed at revising the 1974 constitution, Serb intellectuals already were engaged in a campaign to change the constitution for national reasons.

Two events at the time of the global debt crisis, which first hit Yugoslavia in 1979, were critical to the path of this emerging contest over economic and political reform in the 1980s. In May 1980 President Tito died. And in March 1981 a student riot against bad food in the cafeteria at the University of Pristina, the capital of the Albanian-majority Serbian province of Kosovo, escalated unexpectedly into street demonstrations demanding a separate republic, on the grounds that Albanians were a majority (77.5 percent in 1981) in the province and deserved full rights to national self-determination.

Tito's death opened the floodgates that had checked political criticism—violating taboos, reassessing history, challenging the system. By the mid-1980s substantial discontent with the economic crisis, severe unemployment, rising inflation, and political stagnation had given rise to explicitly anticommunist criticism from all quarters, from Slovene youth to Serbian intellectuals. Among the angry slogans of this intellectual ferment in Belgrade was the denunciation of "Tito's borders," the borders of AVNOJ, that had cut historical Serbia down into a small republic, internally divided with two autonomous provinces, and with 40 percent of the Serb population in other republics¹⁸ but with no protection as minorities

equivalent to the autonomy granted to minorities in Serbia. The long held but unspoken belief that Tito's Yugoslavia had been created on the principle that "a weak Serbia means a strong Yugoslavia" began to be expressed openly. At the same time, the level of decentralization had gone so far that some arbiter for republican competition and dispute was needed. The decision-making rules at the federal level of equal representation and consensus were recipes for stalemate. The one unified federal institution—the armed forces—had a constitutional obligation to safeguard the integrity of the socialist system, but it reported to the collective presidency, which Tito had created to replace him and which was composed of representatives of each of the eight federal units plus the armed forces. Without Tito's authority, the army could no longer perform the protective role it had played in 1971 when its warnings about developments in Croatia prevented the independence aspirations of republican leaders from threatening the very integrity of the state.

This absence of authority committed to the country as a whole also made the second event—the demonstrations in Kosovo—far more threatening to the country's integrity than they seemed on the surface. The demand, in effect, to secede from Serbia—to be "masters in their own house"—raised the question of borders for the first time since the Croatian events of 1967 to 1971, provoking concern throughout the country over the status of the internal borders. The greatest reaction was in neighboring Macedonia, where one-third of a large Albanian minority was concentrated territorially and bordered Kosovo. But even in Slovenia, the demand for recognition of national rights on the basis of *numbers* (the Albanians were not south Slavs and none of the non-south Slav citizens of Yugoslavia had a constitutional right to self-determination) revived periodic concern about the fate of the smaller nations in Yugoslavia. Moreover, the League of Communists leadership reacted immediately to the demands as "counterrevolutionary" and imposed martial law. Although all republican leaderships voted to approve such a policy, the decision to impose martial law also had a more insidious effect by raising doubts about the use of the army to restore internal order and therefore about the powers of the federal government to order martial law. Finally, the protest in Kosovo fed directly into the debate within Serbia proper over the 1974 constitution, the place of Serbia in the federation, the fragmentation of Serbs by the federal borders, and the formidable problem of governance that the extensive provincial autonomy of Vojvodina and Kosovo presented to republican authorities. There were few issues more likely to act as a lightning rod of Serbian nationalism, moreover, than Kosovo because of its central role in the historical development of Serbian national consciousness and identity.¹⁹

The first political shock—that the relation between the federal and republican governments set out in the 1974 constitution be revised fundamentally in the interest of economic reform and debt repayment—pushed the system toward polarization between factions favoring a confederal and those a federal concept of the state, with ever more open innuendos drawn from history about it being a contest between federalist ("unitarist") Serbs seeking to dominate the country in the absence of Tito and confederalists standing up for their national rights. The second political shock made the contest even worse. The decade-long austerity program and deflationary approach to economic revival mandated by the IMF forced cuts in public expenditures that placed on the public agenda the question of what interests the people (and peoples) of Yugoslavia had in common and wanted to preserve through a common state. What should federal revenues (and the taxpayers in the republics) finance, and what should be cut or be handed to the republics?

In the past, major differences on economic policy among the republics had been overridden and consensus found by compensating financially those republics that did not agree with the winning decision. But the banking reform and restrictive policy required by the IMF conditionality program eliminated this mechanism of maintaining harmony among republican leaders. The huge new investments needed in each republic to reorient its industries toward exports in Western markets, moreover, put an additional burden on republican coffers. The economic differences among them—in what they produced, in the size of the population that needed budgetary assistance (e.g., pensioners, the unemployed, the farming population), and in their dependence on federal aid for development or budgetary transfers—became an increasingly powerful motor of political conflict. While the confederalist camp protested the drain on members' incomes for federal taxes by claiming that the poorer republics were "less productive" and should not be handed money they would only waste, the poorer republics pointed to the federal subsidies to exporters and communications with Western markets that favored the wealthier regions and that kept them wealthy. In time the rich simply stopped paying federal taxes, and in Slovenia a pacifist and then a nationalist campaign against the federal army added a political argument to the assertion of their economic interests and a focus for their larger, confederalist agenda, with its historical echoes of attacks on Serbs.

Serbian authorities, however, faced a particularly difficult situation in the 1980s. Tax rates for federal redistribution were assessed on economic indicators of a republic: Were they above or below countrywide averages? Serbia was classified, along with Slovenia and Croatia, as a

wealthier republic that paid taxes accordingly, but by the 1980s its economic growth aggregates were all below average. Its investments in the 1970s had been oriented more toward Eastern markets and lower value-added goods (particularly textiles and agricultural products), so a fundamental restructuring of its productive activities was required to adjust to the new conditions. Unemployment in 1982 was at 17 percent and rising, and a new wave of immigration to Belgrade was predicted from the rural and poorer areas of Serbia proper and also from poorer Serb communities in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Montenegro; Serbia also had a disproportionately high number of citizens—pensioners, farmers, and unemployed with rights to welfare or income supplements—dependent for their subsistence on public transfers—the same government budgets (in this case, the republic's) that had to be cut under the new orthodoxy. The republic was taxed as a "northerner" but had the problems of a "southerner." It needed resources from a functioning federal government for investment and budgetary supplements, the benefits of a market economy, and a share of the developmental aid sent to the republic that went exclusively to the provincial authorities in Kosovo.

Despite the purge of the liberal faction of the Serbian party in 1974, 1980s party leadership was dominated by what would have been called liberals at the time: pro-federalist economic reformers, who gave priority to market reform and believed that economic growth would reduce political conflicts. This leadership also knew that if it confronted the Kosovo problem directly, it would be portrayed as anti-Albanian, a situation that would open it up to attack from the federal party for violating the constitutional prohibition (Article 170/3) against "incitement of national, racial, or religious hatred and intolerance." It also would feed the simmering nationalism of intellectuals' discontent in Serbia, which was ever more blatantly anticommunist. The leadership's choice was to try to toe a middle line and ignore the nationalist aspects of the Kosovo conflict, but the result was to provide, in the eyes of many Serbs, yet one more example of an indifferent ruling party that swept grievances under the rug and was responsive to no one.

By 1985–86, Serbs and Montenegrins in Kosovo, who had been trying to get attention for their complaints of discrimination against them and pressure to leave the province, under majority-Albanian rule since 1974, decided to take their grievances to higher authorities. In a series of petitions, local demonstrations, and delegations to the republican parliament in Belgrade, they set off a spiral of protest and reaction. Federal authorities first called their petition a provocation and ordered arrests; Serbs countered with new protests; and Albanian authorities in Kosovo, who imagined they were facing an insurgent

minority rebellion, responded with repression which appeared to justify Serbs' complaints and provoked a new cycle of protest and reaction. For nationalist intellectuals in Serbia who believed that Serbs were victimized by the Titoist system, the plight of minority Serbs in Kosovo was too useful an instance of endangered Serb rights to ignore. Academicians—members elected to the Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts (SANU)—had been meeting since early 1982 to analyze the causes of and remedies for the economic and political crisis in the country. By 1986 those critics of a nationalist persuasion had captured the group, and a draft memorandum on the crisis was leaked to newspapers in September, apparently by members of the communist party aiming to fight it through public exposure. Yet, in the context of rising nationalism in the other republics, the anti-Serb rhetoric of the western republics in the reform debate, the Kosovo turmoil, and growing economic troubles in Serbia, their strategy backfired by giving legitimacy to the strand of Serbian nationalism that included a concern with Serbs outside Serbia proper. The language of the memorandum is notable for its references to "Serbs at risk"—what a Serbian critic has called an "aggressive self-pity"—and the problem of borders.²⁰ The memorandum linked accusations of the damage caused by "Tito's borders" to Serbian economic and cultural development to claims of a "Serbian Holocaust" and "genocide against the Serbs." Its remedy for reversing the "injustice" of borders that had put Serbs at risk not only in Kosovo but also in Croatia and in Bosnia: Unite all Serbs in one state.

The academicians were locally influential but small in number, and they had no political vehicle; the mass media was, after all, controlled by the state.²¹ Only through the conjunction of the protests of minority Serbs in Kosovo and a generational change in the Serbian party did their memorandum get any attention at all, and the resulting political link was created not by a concern for border revision but rather by the economic crisis and the agenda of market reform, beginning with the need to restore monetary control and governing capacity within the republic to Belgrade authorities. Quite by chance, the Serbian president, Ivan Stambolić, decided in April 1987 to send his protégé, party leader Slobodan Milošević, to Kosovo in his place, to listen once more to Serb demands for protection of their human rights. Instead of a delegation, a chanting crowd of 15,000 met Milošević; chaos ensued, the police responded with their batons, and the crowd reacted by pelting stones. Milošević succeeded in reimposing the normal political rite, having the protesting Serbs select representatives for a closed meeting in which he was regaled with grievances all night long. But he also sought to calm the crowd with an expression of outraged sympathy.²² Saying "Nobody

must ever again dare to beat this people!" he appeared to accept the obligation to protect Serb minority rights and their claim to the land, abandoning the technocratic language of the party leadership and its political silence at growing grievances:

You should stay here. This is your land. These are your houses. Your meadows and gardens. Your memories. You shouldn't abandon your land just because it's difficult to live, because you are pressured by injustice and degradation. It was never 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 satisfied with. On the contrary, you should change it with the rest of the progressive people here, in Serbia and in Yugoslavia.²³

Laura Silber and Alan Little, journalists who have written one of the most widely read analyses of the Yugoslav collapse, shaping the conventional wisdom, argue that, with this speech, Milošević "donned the mantle of protector of all Serbs."²⁴ There is little evidence for what he thought about what the nationalists call "Serb lands." What is clear is the clarion call to defend Kosovo as part of Serbia and as an issue of borders—as he said in another infamous speech in April 1991, borders are "essential questions of state. And, borders, as you know, are always dictated by the strong, not by the weak"—and also his use of Serb cultural idioms for political purpose (witness his references to land, memory, injustice, struggle, and ancestors in the speech quoted above).

Apparently emboldened by the reaction to his speech to the Kosovo crowd, Milošević went on by September 1987 to engineer an inner-party coup against the old guard (including his mentor, Stambolić), then to purge the mass media in Serbia of his opponents. By December he was president of the Serbian party, and he began exploiting or mobilizing his own mass rallies as the means of breaking the political deadlock in the country. During 1988 weekly "meetings of truth" were organized by Kosovo Serbs in Belgrade and in Novi Sad, the capital of Vojvodina, to pressure for the resignation of the Vojvodina government, which had been so important a player in the antifederalist coalition and in vetoing policies preferred by the leadership in Belgrade. What Milošević came to call their "antibureaucratic revolution" used protests by steel workers and miners threatened with unemployment in neighboring Montenegro (where about 50 percent of the population identify as Serbs) to follow his example in 1989: force the resignation of the government and replace it with leaders more in line with Serbian positions at the federal

level. The result was to reduce the perceived disparity between Serb numbers and their institutional power by creating a voting coalition of four (out of eight) in federal bodies. Then in March 1989, to obtain parliamentary approval of a new republican constitution, Milošević exploited a strike of Albanian miners in Kosovo, who were protesting the replacement of their provincial leadership, and a burst of Serb outrage at Slovene leaders' accusations at a huge rally in support of the miners that their strike was a defense of "AVNOJ Yugoslavia" and that Serbia was now the enemy of Slovene democracy. The Serbian parliament approved a new republican constitution, and the extensive autonomy of the two provinces granted by the reviled 1974 constitution came to an end.

While some saw Milošević's actions as a juggernaut of populist fever mobilized in support of Serbian domination of Yugoslavia or its destruction in favor of a Greater Serbia, the actual results were fully within the constitutional order. They were remarkably similar in many aspects to the way that Croatian authorities, in 1968 to 1971, had used mass support to pressure the federal authorities for republican interests, defined nationally. Moreover, in this traditional battle of republican politicians over federal policy, Milošević's goals faced a formidable obstacle on the other size of the polarized divide, in the form of Slovene intransigence in defense of its perceived republican rights, also increasingly defined nationally. Until 1987 this intransigence had amounted simply to Slovene noncompliance with federal rules and regulations it considered contrary to Slovene interests, such as the lifting of limits on landholding, the wage controls of the stabilization package, the educational reform aimed at facilitating labor mobility and a countrywide core curriculum, and changes in financing the defense budget. But in October 1987, when Milošević was beginning his purge of the Serbian party, Slovenia voted to reject the IMF program; and in November its delegates left the federal parliament in opposition to the 29 constitutional amendments for economic reform, stopped paying into the special fund for Kosovo, and used the veto to defeat the IMF proposal for majority rule in federal decisions and a strengthened executive branch, arguing instead for continuing the rule of consensus and for parliamentary supremacy. By November 1988 Slovene authorities also used the excuse of popular protests in Slovenia to veto a countrywide referendum on the new federal constitution. In response to a more radical IMF program in 1988, it adopted a new republican constitution that effectively made the republic fully sovereign. By May 1989 (when Milošević was becoming president of Serbia), the Slovene leadership made clear that its goal was independence. By October this was formulated in an

interim proposal, which the Croats also joined, that the country should become a confederation of independent states, linked only by a customs union but without a common defense, until such time as Slovenia was a member of the European Community (EC). Equally, if not more, radical were the reforms required by a 1988 IMF loan and a new federal prime minister committed to market reform: to reorganize the federal administration on the functional rather than the territorial principle and to adopt enterprise and labor legislation ending the socialist system.

The third destabilizing political shock to the system was the effect of the austerity program and the banking reform on republican finances. On top of the challenge to revise the 1974 constitution and its particular balance between republican and federal powers—and to do so in the context of an economic policy (federal budget cuts and export orientation westward) that raised intense conflicts of economic interest among the republics about those federal powers—the economic reform also reduced the means available to republican governments to finance social welfare and new investment. During the 1970s republican authorities were allowed to borrow abroad in capital markets; they also resorted to enterprise and banking debt to finance what was in effect deficit spending. Under the 1982 stabilization reforms, the resulting economic recession, and severe fiscal pressures, republican and local governments had to achieve solvency in other ways. The primary alternative to inflation and debt was to cut public employment and reduce the number of beneficiaries of social welfare and public programs. This was not the first time in postwar Yugoslavia that “downsizing” of the socialist commitment had been required by the needs of foreign trade and balance-of-payments deficits and debt, as translated into the borrowing terms of IMF conditionality. In the past the federal government always had made this adjustment by decreasing the number of people who remained in the protected public sector of employment and increasing those who were shunted, even if temporarily, to the private sector (private agriculture, crafts, household economies and dependencies, and unemployment).²⁵ The economic reform program of 1982 repeated this approach, but during the 1980s republics also began to make their own specific rationalizing decisions.

The first, and for a long time the only, republic to confront the employment/incomes trade-off of the anti-inflationary cuts was Slovenia. As the only republic with full employment, it faced a political decision quite different from that facing all other five republics: The issue was how to maintain or increase public expenditures and Slovene incomes under austerity, not how to avoid more unemployment. Early on Slovene planners began to be concerned about the economic and

social costs of the labor they had imported from other republics, particularly from Bosnia and Herzegovina and from Kosovo, and about the exodus abroad of Slovene professionals and skilled laborers, who were attracted by higher wages, particularly to Austria in factories set up along the border for the purpose. Their solution was to send the Bosnians and Kosovo Albanians home, on the grounds that Slovene cultural distinctiveness was at risk from non-Slovene speakers with high birth rates, and to ignore the federal wage controls so as to attract Slovenes back home. This “ethnicization” of the labor force in one republic never had a planned equivalent elsewhere, but the economic crisis triggered by the balance-of-payments deficit and foreign debt crisis did give rise in other republics to more spontaneous equivalents: for example, scapegoating and a growing sentiment, particularly among nationalist youth, that jobs should be reserved for certain groups, such as ethnically Croatian males in Croatia, where nationalist gangs were particularly vociferous against minorities and women. The fright caused by the Albanian demands in Kosovo led to restrictions on Albanian civil rights in Macedonia, and in Bosnia and Herzegovina political dissidents often were charged with nationalist tendencies, leading many to flee to other republics, particularly to Serbia.

The critical moment in this differentiation of citizens’ rights according to national identity, in a system that had prided itself on formal guarantees of equality among citizens (including as members of national groups), came with the revisions of the republican constitutions in 1989, revisions that all republics were required to make to bring their constitutions into agreement with the proposed changes to the federal constitution. The changes in the Serbian and Slovene constitutions have been mentioned already. In Croatia and Macedonia the changes were also profound: Both changed their preambles, as did Slovenia, to declare that the sovereignty of their republics resided in the majority nation—the Croatian, Macedonian, or Slovene people. This implied second-class citizenship for residents from other constituent nations, no matter for how many generations they had been there; their national rights of self-determination were demoted to the status of cultural rights of minorities. What Croatia and Macedonia did was to establish the Slovene model where Slovene conditions of ethnic homogeneity did not exist. By implying that each republic was a national unit, when in fact the borders of the republics were not congruent with the national distribution of the population, the three parliaments were creating internal diasporas. And they were doing so in places where the diasporas formed a territorially concentrated minority and could make the same claim as the Slovene government, namely that human rights and political freedoms

for a nation could be guaranteed only by territorial sovereignty. The reaction followed logically: A series of demands for territorial autonomy (by groups of towns, areas of cities, regions, provinces) within republics began to unfold during 1990 and early 1991, from Serbs in different parts of Croatia; Hungarians in Vojvodina; Serbs, Croats, and Muslims each in different areas of Bosnia and Herzegovina; Italians and others in Istria (Croatia); Albanians in Macedonia and Kosovo; and so on.

This shift occurred prior to the democratic (multiparty) elections that took place between April 1990 in Slovenia and Croatia and November–December 1990 in the other four republics. By then political parties had formed in every republic appealing for votes on the basis of national identity. The Yugoslav League of Communists, which had stood for the equality of citizens, regardless of national identity or republican residence, had dissolved, and the federal reform legislation abolishing the system of individual security and social insurance of the socialist regime had been introduced.

The trigger destabilizing an equilibrium based on individuals' expectations about the political system in which they live, its protections, and their own survival is strikingly illustrated by the shift of public opinion in Bosnia and Herzegovina during 1990. In mid-1990 the Bosnian population "pronounced itself 74 per cent in favour of a ban on nationally or confessionally based parties," but "six months later, vote[d] in the same proportion for precisely such parties."²⁶ Pan-Bosnian parties representing economic interests (e.g., social democrats or liberals) and the Yugoslav political system (e.g., as the reform party of the prime minister) received less than 20 percent of the vote and parliamentary seats. These election results were a shock to many in Bosnia, who saw their republic as the most pro-Yugoslav of all, in part because the only sure guarantee of its multinational composition was a multinational Yugoslavia. The vast majority of Bosnian voters had clearly chosen not only to express their national identity politically but to see the protection of that identity and access to goods and services in national leaders and parties, not nonnational, republican or Yugoslav ones.

For Serbs outside Serbia, the election campaign of Franjo Tudjman in Croatia was particularly influential, for he waged an anticommunist campaign using anti-Serb slogans. He asserted that a vote for him and his party was a vote for "decommunization," which he specified as the removal of Serbs from all official and political posts. The majority of Serbs in Croatia actually voted for the reformed communists, under the new name Party for Democratic Change, not for Serb national parties, as later assertions about Serb nationalism would have predicted. Such a party to represent Serbs as Serbs was formed in the areas of ethnically

mixed population along the border, but its fortunes rose only after the elections as a direct result of President Tudjman's policies toward Serbs, such as his decision that all Serbs in Croatia had to prove their loyalty by signing loyalty oaths, could no longer serve as members of police forces in border areas, and had to pay special taxes on homes in Croatia if their primary residence was elsewhere. (The Adriatic coast was a favorite place for vacation homes of many, including Serbs.)

During the 1980s the three destabilizing political shocks that were triggered by the economic crisis and particular market reforms required by two IMF conditionality packages led to increasing polarization on the very fundamentals of the political system, in a system still formally ruled by consensus; increasing nationalism in the political conflicts among and within republics; and increasing ethnicization of labor policies, citizenship rights, and political and partisan identities. The outcome of these developments was interrupted by a preemptive move in Slovenia. The manner in which the country dissolved, including the violence, cannot be understood, however, outside of the particular context in which it occurred.

Violence

The Slovenes followed through on their nationalist objective, despite the late-hour misgivings of many, and declared independence on June 25, 1991. Croatia followed—indeed rushed its actual parliamentary declaration so as to be first. As argued earlier, the collapse of Yugoslavia that this represented, and its particular form of collapse—into nationalist states—was not solely the work of a Slobodan Milošević or a Greater Serbia agenda. The shift from socialism to nationalism is not unique to Yugoslavia in the east European transitions,²⁷ and the causes of the Yugoslav collapse are far more complex, begin earlier than 1987, and are more political, in the sense of an interactive dynamic among political players in a serious contest over economic reform and constitutional change, than could be produced by the actions of one man or one nation. Nonetheless, external mediators who rushed to the scene in May and June 1991, particularly those representing the EC, Council of Europe, and Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe, knew little of these developments and assumed that the country could break apart without undue trauma along the seams of its internal borders into "national states." Until April 1992 the dominant external actor, Germany, actually believed that the country could survive the independence of these two republics, breaking into three independent states—Slovenia, Croatia, and a rump Yugoslavia of the remaining four

republics. The American view, which took precedence after Germany won its campaign to recognize Croatian independence in December 1991 and was shared by many Europeans, was that the country should break into six states, divided along the borders of the federal republics. (The American view was embodied in a declaration of the European parliament in March 1991, the EC peace plan of October 1992 for a comprehensive settlement of the dissolution, and the invitation to the remaining four republics to request recognition in December.) In either view, there was no reason for violence.

Conventional wisdom therefore blames the violence on the Serbs in Croatia during 1991 and the Serbs in Bosnia and Herzegovina beginning in March or April 1992 who refused to accept this *fait accompli*. Like the Serbs who found themselves an ever smaller and harassed minority under Albanian majority rule in Kosovo during the 1980s, these truly diaspora Serbs sought and received protection from Milošević's regime in Belgrade. (The term "diaspora" only applies once the borders of Croatia and of Bosnia and Herzegovina were internationally recognized and Serbs found themselves minorities there rather than in one state with other Serbs.) In these two cases, it led to war.

A complete history of the violence requires a more complex picture. For example, Slovene and Croatian preparations for independence included preparations for war. Slovenes and Croats secretly built up independent armies with both domestic and foreign arms and developed a public relations campaign in foreign capitals to promote the legitimacy of their cause. The prime minister and parliament²⁸ ordered the Yugoslav army to retake control of border posts on the international border (including the Ljubljana airport) after the Slovene national guard had replaced Yugoslav signs and flags with those of an independent Slovene state; most states would consider deploying the army a legitimate move against a rebel region. From all accounts, moreover, Slovenes were the first to fire—shooting down a federal army helicopter carrying food supplies and killing its crew.²⁹ Likewise in Croatia, the incidents of violence in the border region, in the Dalmatian hinterland around and north of Knin and in eastern Slavonia near Croatia's border with Serbia, preceded independence. It can be attributed as easily to the initiative of marauding Croatian youth against Serb families and businesses, to Croatian authorities who demanded that all Serbs in police forces be fired and dispossessed of their weapons (and sent militia to enforce its demand), and to the actions of right-wing Croatian paramilitaries aiming to accelerate the momentum for independence as it can be to the Serb citizens and paramilitaries who took up arms.³⁰ During the war, even the horror of the battle over the town of Vukovar, which

the federal army finally leveled with artillery, had its beginnings in a deliberate and violent instigation by the Croatian minister of defense.³¹ Who first began to arm in Bosnia and Herzegovina will remain a matter of bitter dispute for generations. The decision of Bosnian Serb leaders to go to war against Bosnian independence and to join a struggle for "uniting all Serb lands" followed a genuine effort at negotiation, under European sponsorship, which was interrupted by an American decision that recognition should occur immediately, despite Serb opposition. The Serb cause célèbre in Bosnia, a murderous attack on a Serbian wedding party in the heart of Sarajevo by a still-unknown assailant, had, like events in Croatia, been preceded by serious local violence in the west, north, and east of the country by paramilitary gangs from Serbia and from Croatia, by Bosnian Croat and Bosnian Muslim militia, and by the federal army as well as by Bosnian Serbs.

The point of these examples is not to absolve Serbs of responsibility but to seek understanding that will support the design of better foreign policy toward such cases in the future. Three variables are crucial for explaining the role of diaspora Serbs in the violence surrounding the breakup of Yugoslavia: the role of ideology, the role of social origin and of politics, and the role of foreign powers. To act politically as a Serb diaspora required, as does any collective action, an ideology. A national ideology is an ideology of statehood and citizenship, identifying whom one would fight for, what state one would defend or send one's children to defend, and why. A Serbian national ideology, which explains to individuals who identify as Serbs why they should act as members of the Serb nation, does exist. But not all Serbs chose to follow leaders who sought to mobilize their support behind that ideology; instead they chose their citizenship and state on other principles. As mentioned earlier, fewer than one-third of all Serbs in Croatia were in the area where violence occurred; and no studies have been done on how many of those were simply trapped and how many chose to fight, as Serbs. Similarly, at least 20 percent of all Serbs in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and surely many, many more (again, studies remain to be done), chose to remain behind Bosnian government lines, to fight in the Bosnian government army, or were expelled by force by non-Serbs into Serb-held areas. And in both Croatia and in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the choice of citizenship; loyalty to region, nation, or state; and violence was rarely an individual choice alone but one made in a political context, frequently by others or by circumstances outside a person's control. At the same time this political dynamic was internal to the Serb nation, between different strands of national ideology and different factions of Serbs, between Serbs who found themselves without a country (Yugoslavia) in

which they could live as one nation and the leaders of the new states being formed where they lived, it also was shaped by foreign powers, which made critical decisions on borders and rights to self-determination in the course of the Yugoslav breakup that limited the choices available to many Serbs.

SERBIAN NATIONAL IDEOLOGY

What did it mean for Serbs to have their state collapse such that, unlike most Russians after 1991 or Hungarians after 1920, and Czechs or Slovaks in 1992, for example, some would go to war? Those who did fight fought behind a nineteenth-century banner of four Ss ("Samo Sloga Srb Spašava [only unity can save the Serbs]," usually appearing as four Cs, in the Cyrillic alphabet) and to create a state that would "unite all Serb lands." This nationalist goal had found one solution in Yugoslavism after 1918: that all Serbs and Serb lands could be united in one state called Yugoslavia. The end of Yugoslavia raised the question anew: What would replace it?

Historians trace the formation of a modern Serbian nation to the defeat of the medieval Serbian state by Turkish armies, over a series of battles between 1389 and 1459. Without a state to preserve Serbian culture and religion, and living as subjects (*raja*) under the millet system of Ottoman rule, which defined social status and political rights according to religion (each forming one millet) and granted substantial autonomy to these subject, non-Muslim millets, the leadership of the Serbian community passed to the church. The governance structure of the Orthodox Church, in contrast to Roman Catholicism, was national, and Serbs already had won recognition of an independent patriarchate in Constantinople by 1219. After the Ottoman conquest, church leaders began to promote a national ideology that sought redemption—national liberation from the occupying Turks, preservation of the Christian faith, and status reversal (back to ruler from *raja*)—through the reestablishment of an independent Serbian state. Memory of the lost glories of medieval statehood was propagated by the church hierarchy and by an oral tradition of epic poetry and its traveling (secular) practitioners (*guslari*, named after the one-stringed musical instrument, the *gusle*, with which they accompanied their poems) who glorified Serbian battles and heroes and remained active into the 1930s.³²

Political independence became possible again when the Ottoman empire began to weaken in the late eighteenth century. The increasing repression of a declining imperial center, which imposed limits on local traders and higher taxes that were enforced by the garrisoned Janissary

troops who had asserted increasing autonomy from Istanbul over their commands, led to a series of revolts by wealthy pig traders and peasants in central Serbia in 1804 to 1813 and in 1815 to 1829. Ideological leadership for these insurrections, however, came from the educated middle class across the imperial border in Habsburg Vojvodina. These diaspora Serbs had migrated in many great waves, fleeing Ottoman rule throughout the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries, above all in the Great Migration of 1690 when the Serbian patriarch led his entire community north into southern Hungary, fleeing reprisals for Habsburg-instigated Christian uprisings. There he received, in compensation, church autonomy, privileges, and authority over Serbs.³³

This difference between state-building rebels and nation-building ideologists created a significant tension between state and national interests that lasts to this day. The borders of the Serbian state that emerged in the course of the nineteenth century were drawn by successive rulers, with advice and aid from Polish and Czech nationalists who hoped that Serbia would lead the liberation of all Slavs, to maximize security against renewed invasion, and to make Serbia as large and militarily defensible as possible in the vise between Turkey and Austria-Hungary. The revolutionary ideology provided by these Habsburg Serbs (called *prečani*, meaning those on the other side of the border), however, was based on ethnicity—defined by religion (according to the church-based autonomy granted by the emperor) and language (the "national awakening" of Serbs occurred here, in southern Hungary, and included linguistic reformers such as Vuk Karadžić and Dositej Obradović in Novi Sad and Vienna)—to defend rights to religious and cultural autonomy that were losing out to official Hungarian and German expansion. The goal of these Habsburg Serbs, and the state boundaries that goal implied, was the unification of all Serbs, as defined by Orthodoxy and the Serbian language, into one state.

The Serbian rulers won full recognition of sovereignty in 1878 from the Congress of Berlin, but they lost Bosnia and Herzegovina, including access to Bosnia's substantial mineral wealth, which they claimed on demographic as well as historical grounds. The great powers made it a protectorate of Austria, which was intent on preventing Serbia from becoming a serious rival and Balkan power and on countering its ability to aid emancipation movements of south Slavs in the empire (primarily Croats and Slovenes). The failure of nationalists throughout the Balkan peninsula to complete the revolutions of the mid-nineteenth century led to a new stage in the relation between the new states and the people and territories that remained within imperial control (whether Habsburg or Ottoman). In the case of Serbia, the two strands of Serbian

national ideology merged into a program for a Greater Serbia, transposed to Belgrade.

At the same time, however, the Serbian national movement was part of a larger arena of liberation movements, such as not only other Balkan peoples (Bulgarians, Greeks, Macedonians, Albanians, Croats, Slovenes) but also imperial peoples, such as the Young Turks and a Hungarian independence movement. While the consolidation of Serbian statehood shifted the balance of revolutionary leadership away from the Habsburg "diaspora" to Belgrade, therefore, a new division emerged within the ideology—between those who favored a Greater Serbia and those who aimed at broader south Slav liberation and some political arrangement unifying Serbs, Croats, Slovenes, and Bulgarians. These anti-imperial activities also interacted with broader European politics, in which the ambitions and alliances of the great powers in the Balkans were undergoing major shifts—with the exception of Austria, which remained consistently anti-Serbian.³⁴ Initiating a customs war with Serbia in 1906, which it lost, and then railway construction that provoked the opposition of the great powers, Austria responded to the growing revolutionary activity of youth in Bosnia and Herzegovina by annexing the province in 1908 and setting the stage for a truly bloody contest by 1914.

The complex revolutionary activities in the Balkans in the first decades of the twentieth century demonstrate the danger of any simple reading of national ideology. For example, the young revolutionaries in Bosnia and Herzegovina, who switched tactics in this period from uprisings to assassinations and terror, came from all national groups in the province, not just Serbs. They gained support from a secret military society in Belgrade, Union or Death, whose goals included the union of all Serbs, but official Belgrade was ambivalent about these Bosnian groups and played no hand (despite Austrian accusations) in the conspiratorial activities of the Black Hand (formally, Union or Death).³⁵ A national ideology is, instead, a repository of many themes, weighted by historical events but available for selection. Nevertheless, although the assassination in Sarajevo of the visiting Habsburg archduke, Franz Ferdinand, by a Serb rebel youth, Gavrilo Princip, was merely the spark of a great power war, it did much to implant in the minds of Europeans an image of dangerous and violent Serbs. Only one year after the relatively successful but bloody Balkan wars of 1912–13 over the statehood and boundaries of the Ottoman succession in the Balkans—Albania, Bulgaria, Greece, Montenegro, Serbia³⁶—Serbs joined the world war on the side of the Allies and suffered casualties—from exposure, disease, or battle—among nearly half their male population.

The wars reinforced the dominant element of the church's ideology of nearly 500 years, which had been commemorated in 1889, when the 500th anniversary of the battle of Kosovo Plain on June 28 was declared an official day of remembrance,³⁷ and contributed to what sociologist Veljko Vujačić calls a "special psychology" of the nation: a "sense of historical mission, the emphasis on military valor and their special role in the state-building process, as well as in any situation of grave state crisis . . . [and a] sense of martyrdom at the hands of empires." The "costly road to independence" in the wars of 1912 to 1913 and 1914 to 1918, in which every Serbian family lost someone, made the "cult of strong statehood," the sense of a "common political destiny," and the martyrdom won by a "righteous struggle against tyranny" essential elements in Serbian political culture.³⁸

The creation of the Yugoslav state at the end of World War I was the culmination of this state-creating and liberating national ideology and experience. It was a solution to the many conflicts over territory with other national movements in the area, which also were trying to create independent states, and the victory of the south Slav movement and the ideology of Yugoslavism—first developed by Croats in Austria-Hungary but championed as well by Serbs in Austria-Hungary—in the struggle against the Habsburgs. The creation of a south Slav state was also the preferred choice of the great powers at Versailles, who were thinking not of national liberation but of regional stability on the basis of balance of power, when they decided the borders of the new state.³⁹ The new state was also, however, the denial of more than 500 years of political struggle to realize (by reestablishing) a Serbian state. It gathered into one state all Serbs, as was the goal of nineteenth-century nationalists, but it did so only on the condition that they unite in a multinational state, not a Serbian state. This created, some argue, a 70-year "national identity crisis" for Serbs.⁴⁰

The interwar state—the Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes, renamed the Kingdom of Yugoslavia in 1929—for example, was governed by one of the two Serbian royal houses, the Karadjordjević dynasty, and by the Serbian political elite, in a series of shifting alliances with elites in other areas, particularly, at different times, Slovenes and Bosnian Muslims. It faced a wide range of social and economic issues related to the integration of very different legal, economic, transport, and political systems and the prolonged global crisis: the agrarian depression and foreign debt crisis in the 1920s, the financial and industrial depression of the 1930s, and the rearmament and war in Europe after 1937. Nonetheless, it could never escape the constitutional issue: the disputed legitimacy of the 1919 unitary constitution among Slovenes

and Croats, who wanted a federal state, and the continuing and sometimes violent challenge to the state from Croatian (and later Macedonian) nationalists, aided by Benito Mussolini (including the assassination of Yugoslav King Alexander in Marseilles in 1934). The label "unitarism," applied to this state by its critics, also hides a reality of disunity among Serbs. Now joined in one state, they nonetheless brought to it different political experiences and interests, formed a variety of political parties, and had ongoing disagreements, particularly between Serbs from the former Habsburg territories and those from the independent Serbian state. When Prince Regent Paul signed a pact with Hitler in 1941, it was Serbian air force officers who staged a coup d'état against him, provoking German occupation. The Germans set up a puppet government in Belgrade under Aleksandar Nedić. The government itself set up an all-Yugoslav government-in-exile in London, while a colonel in the royal army, Draža Mihailović, took to the hills to organize a resistance force—called the Chetniks—with the goal of restoring not Yugoslav but Serbian state institutions: the army, the king, and the ruling party. At the same time, a large proportion of the Serb population played "an important role in the reintegration of Yugoslavia"—particularly "'Western' Serbs from Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina [who] participated *en masse* in Tito's partisan movement."⁴¹ Among the leadership of this "antifascist struggle for national liberation" organized by the Yugoslav communist party and other patriotic forces were prominent figures from Serbia and Montenegro.

Outsiders captured by the idea that the 1991 to 1999 wars in Yugoslavia reflect "ancient ethnic hatreds" read back to the elements of civil war during World War II and wrongly see an ethnic struggle, in part because of the racist elements of fascist ideology and practice. No better evidence against this proposition can be found than the divisions among Serbs, many of whom fought each other in the civil war that the Axis invasions provoked between the nationalist Chetniks and the antifascist Partisans. These Serbs thus also fought together with Croats, Muslims, and many other Partisans against the Croatian fascist forces (Ustashe) and Muslim fascist units (Handžar units) in Croatia and in Bosnia-Herzegovina. The platform of the Yugoslav communist party, which emerged victorious from those wars, however, had been set instead in the interwar period, in part by Comintern policy on the nationality question and in part by an inner party struggle over the constitutional question. As early as 1928, it defined its struggle as the overthrow of "Great Serbian hegemony" and the creation of a federal republic that would protect the smaller nations of Yugoslavia from Serbian domination and "unitarism." Not long after the Partisans' founding

assembly for a postwar state in 1943, Winston Churchill shifted Allied support from the Chetniks to the Partisans.

The Serb population in the new federal Yugoslavia was still the largest national group (41.5 percent of the population in the first postwar census of 1948, when the second largest group, Croats, was 24 percent⁴²), but the internal borders of this federation cut across Serb settlements, scattering them among different federal units. The new Serbian republic also was subdivided by the creation of two autonomous units—Vojvodina and Kosovo-Metohija⁴³—while Serb requests for an autonomous province in border areas of Croatia, where Serbs were either the majority or half of most communities, were rejected. The creation of a separate republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina, where 44.4 percent were Serbs in 1953, instead of the long-sought division between Croatia and Serbia, was also interpreted by some Serbs as a further effort to punish Serbs. Nearly 40 percent of the Serb population would be citizens of non-Serb republics or share power with minorities in autonomous regions. At the same time, one of the primary reasons that many Serbs joined the communist party during or after the war was its fight against nationalist extremists and its program of national equality. For many, Yugoslavism was, before World War I and even more so after World War II, a solution to the Serbian national question—a state Serbs could embrace "as the Serbian homeland."⁴⁴

It is for this reason that the economic reforms and constitutional conflict in the 1980s created a national problem for Serbs. The Yugoslav communist party leadership had rejected the idea of a Yugoslav nation in 1928; occasional efforts to implant Yugoslavism as a national ideology and identity in the federal era were all fought successfully, particularly by Croats, as "unitarist" violations of national freedom. It was as if "Great Serbianism" (and, by implication, Serbs) remained the primary threat to the country rather than an insufficiently developed common Yugoslav identity. One could choose to identify individually as a Yugoslav on census and other official forms, but the identity was not institutionalized in the sense that the six constituent nations were—in the rights of the republics and the official quota requiring representation of each national group. The more decentralized the federation became, along the territorial lines of the republics, the more citizenship became effectively a matter of one's republic, despite the Yugoslav identity one had abroad. The greater the decentralization, the more the inherent contradiction in the structure of the federation, between its organization into republics and its legitimation by the principle of national self-determination when the borders of the nations were not congruent with those of the republics, created a serious problem for Serbs.

It is not surprising that the major intellectual debates over decentralization were between Slovenes and Serbs, not between Croats and Serbs, whom many see as the primary source of conflict in Yugoslavia because they shared a language⁴⁵ and a territorial border. As historian Audrey Helfant Bunting nicely shows in the debate between Slovene literary critic Dušan Pirjevec and Serbian novelist Dobrica Ćosić in 1961–62—which had a disastrous Slovene-Serbian reprise in 1989⁴⁶—there was a “structurally-determined difference of perspective between Slovenes (the only Yugoslav nation whose republic approximated a homogeneous nation-state) and Serbs (who were furthest from that ideal of modern nationalism).”⁴⁷ For Slovenes, the republics were “clearly formed national organisms . . . decentralisation and increased republican powers [were] the logical expression of national self-determination,” while for Serbs, republican centrism was a constant reminder that their nation was divided. As Bunting writes, “Ultimately, the Slovene assumption that national and republican rights were identical would provide a ‘simple’ model of secession that was workable for Slovenia, but disastrous for the rest of Yugoslavia.”⁴⁸

At the same time, the communist party’s idea that socialism and its commitment to national equality would, over time, make particularistic (usually called “chauvinist”) nationalism obsolete gave an ideological content to Yugoslav identity that had its own internal time bomb. What did Yugoslav identity mean independent of socialism? If the contest was between socialism and particularistic nationalism, what identity would bind people to Yugoslavia and protect the option of Yugoslav identity for non-nationalists if the West won the Cold War and socialism went? Alternatively, would pressures for democratization be resisted as a threat to the very idea of Yugoslavia? Intellectual debates raised the issue already by the early 1960s, when market reforms were leading to similar debates on economic policy, decentralization, and the role of the party similar to those in the 1980s. If socialism was internationalism, as some claimed, it could not give a national content to Yugoslavism. Even before the end of the socialist regime itself in 1989–90, the Serbs faced an unresolved dilemma—a turning point, in Budding’s view—with the way that the purge in 1966 of Vice President Aleksandar Ranković from the party leadership was justified. Although this purge sealed a critical political victory for the proponents of decentralization in a complex factional fight over foreign policy, the organization of internal security services, defense policy, and economic reform, Ranković was charged—by the Serbian party leadership⁴⁹—with “Great-Serbian chauvinism” and “unitarism, nationalism, and centralism.” As Budding writes, “When the [Serbian] Party denounced Ranković as

both a Serbian chauvinist and Yugoslav unitarist, it made the ‘Yugoslav option’ all but unusable for Serbs.”⁵⁰ The 1918 alternative to a Greater Serbia looked ever less like an alternative, and the result, Budding argues, was the emergence of two competing Serbian programs to fill the vacuum.

Serbian liberals supported the radical decentralization to the republics but gave priority to economic modernization and political liberalization. They focused Serbian national interests on the republic of Serbia, arguing that the “location of state borders mattered far less than the nature of the state they enclosed” and rejecting “the idea that Serbia could or should act as the protector of Serbs in other republics.” Given the structure of Yugoslav federalism, they even argued that “identifying Serbia with Yugoslavia” had led to economic neglect (“because Serbia’s economic interests were wrongly assumed to be identical with the federation’s”) and to political interference (“because the federation assumed in Serbia, and especially in Belgrade, the right to intervene in affairs that in all other republics were considered internal”). “The premise that political centralism worked to Serbia’s advantage was false.”⁵¹

On the other side were Serbian cultural nationalists, who defined the nation as Serbdom rather than the republic of Serbia. Focusing more on cultural and literary aspects of national identity, they responded in kind to the Croatian language declaration in 1967 by accepting its premises. Each nation had the right to develop its own cultural associations, use its own language and alphabet (Cyrillic in the case of Serbs, in contrast to the preference for Latin by the liberals who were modernizers and Westernizers), and protect its historical heritage. Opposed to decentralization because of its further fragmentation of the Serb nation into separate political universes, this historicist program focused increasingly after 1971, when the decentralizing amendments were adopted, on the problematic role of Serbia in the federation, attacking the internal borders as then drawn and adopting a stance of *ressentiment*—the idea that the Serbian national community was an “endangered species” and its national identity was formed on “the enmity of other Yugoslav peoples.”⁵²

The similarities between these two programs and those of the nineteenth century reveal the extent to which decentralization had focused politics on the republics and diminished a common Yugoslav space; not only in Croatia and Slovenia but also in Serbia, the amendments of 1967 to 1971 and the 1974 constitution ended the achievements of unification and revived a pre-1918 state-building process. Tito’s 1972 purge of the liberal leadership in Serbia also deprived the first program not only of leaders but of legitimacy, giving far greater weight by default to the ethnic elements of Serb national ideology. But most serious of all was

the silencing of any political debate on the costs and benefits of decentralization independent of the national question and the historical baggage and emotion it evoked. The serious problem of governance created for Serbia by the extensive autonomy granted its two provinces by 1974 could not be discussed without inviting charges of unitarist nationalism, Serbian hegemony, and the threat posed by Serbs to other Yugoslav nations, as the persistent but unsuccessful efforts by Serbia's leadership from 1974 until 1987 to find a way around this trap demonstrate so tragically. When the core issues of economic and political reform in the 1980s, as in the 1960s, polarized into a debate between federalists and antifederalists, the liberal leadership in Serbia was deprived of acceptable language to argue in support of either reform, restoration of federal powers, or republican nationalism. The result was an intellectual renaissance of Serbian cultural and ethnic nationalism—the second program—and its critical reassessment of postwar history, including Titoism.

Vesna Pešić identifies seven key themes of Serbian nationalist intellectuals' *ressentiment*, as portrayed in the media in the late 1980s and in the infamous 1986 draft Memorandum of the Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts:

1. Yugoslavia is a Serbian delusion, into which Serbs were duped while other Yugoslav nations continued to build their national states.
2. There is a conspiracy against the Serbs by outsiders, from the Comintern in interwar Yugoslavia, to the League of Communists and Tito.⁵³
3. Serbian economic backwardness is due to economic exploitation by Croatia and Slovenia.
4. Serbs are the losers because they "are the only ones who do not have a proper state. They win at war, but lose in peace."⁵⁴
5. Serbs are exposed to hatred from all other Yugoslavs.
6. Serbs are exposed to genocide.
7. The goal of a national state for all Serbs is to be rid of these hatreds from others and of Serbophobia.⁵⁵

In contrast to the period of Serbian state-building and liberation, ideological debate and leadership on these questions now were centered in the Serbian republic, not among Serbs outside Serbia or between them and Belgrade. Many liberal commentators tried to protect the alternative

legacy by emphasizing that the origins of this new Serbian political and intellectual leadership still appeared to be disproportionately from diaspora Serbs who had moved from Croatia, Montenegro, Herzegovina, or Bosnia to Belgrade. The legacy of migration—in reverse direction after 1945 from that of the Ottoman period—still haunted an unresolved debate: Who was a proper Serb, who would become the leader of Serbia, or Serbs, and with what platform and borders?

The deadlock in the Serbian political system was broken as a result of Serbs and Montenegrins not within Serbia, but in the province of Kosovo. Their appeals for protection—as if they had already become a diaspora—gave an opportunity to party leader Slobodan Milošević to kill two birds with one rhetorical stone: to end the imposed silence on the constitutional order of the Serbian republic and to preempt, for the ruling party, the growing challenge to the socialist system from nationalist anticommunists in the Serbian Academy, writers' and cultural associations, and universities. His innovation was not his challenge to the federal system or to the communist party, as his opponents allege, but his skillful combination of elements of socialist and Serbian nationalist ideology to channel growing social discontent toward his rivals, both within the party and outside it. The theme, as Jasminka Udovički (a member of the true Serbian diaspora, in the United States) has analyzed so well, was an appeal not to Serbs as an ethnonational group, as his critics charge, but to the theme of injustice:

Rather than addressing ethnicity directly, Milošević addressed something much less abstract and closer to heart: his people's sense of fairness. He drew on their real grievances and then conjured up others that began to appear real only after endless repetition. His focus, however, had never been on ethnicity, but on national injury and injustice. The point was to awaken among the Serbs a sense of being, through no fault of their own, massively wronged by others, endangered wherever they lived as a minority outside of Serbia itself—in Kosova, Croatia, or Bosnia. The voice was shrill, warning of the possibility of physical peril and drawing parallels to the genocide of World War II. The appeal was not to ethnic hatred and revenge but to the innate need for elementary fairness: the Serbs have not deserved this. The appeal was also for righting the painful wrongs by claiming back the inalienable rights of the Serbs as a people—no more. Milošević portrayed himself as their only true friend: of all Serbian politicians, he alone was committed to assisting the Serbs in regaining their pride and fighting for fairness. This approach worked infinitely better than the appeal to square some fictitious ancient accounts would have done, particularly because Milošević was talking to the Serbs in Serbia not about their own experiences and grievances but about someone else's: those with whom most of his audience had little contact—the Serbs

in Kosova, Croatia, and Bosnia. Their grievances were not verifiable through direct personal perceptions of the Serbian Serbs; the truth of Milošević's claims could not be challenged without an uncomfortable sense of betrayal of one's own kin.⁵⁶

The purpose of this appeal mirrored precisely that of its primary rival within Yugoslavia—the leadership of Slovenia—namely, the development of a mass-based ideology to maximize support for a political contest increasingly defined in terms of national rights, within Yugoslavia. But the actors in this contest were still governmental—the republican and federal government and party leaders—and Milošević's synthesis was to exploit Serbian ethnic themes for a republican agenda. Its transformation during 1990⁵⁷ cannot be explained apart from its context: the interaction between republican leaders, each using national arguments in the constitutional and reform contests; emerging anti-communist politicians who had no reason to remain confined by republican borders and who used national arguments against the regime itself; and the emerging collapse of Yugoslavia.

In the case of Serbia, the contest for leadership ratcheted up by January 6, 1990, when the oppositional nationalist activities of writers, clergy, and historians emerged from their camouflage in cultural associations, both in Serbia and outside it (and therefore in response in part to the nationalist politics of other republics) and took on partisan form.⁵⁸ The program of the Serbian National Renewal Party, the first radically anticommunist Serbian political party, was, in the words of its chief ideologist, writer Vuk Drašković, "to create a democratic and multiparty Serbian state within her historical and ethnic borders, according to the ethnic map dated April 6, 1941, thereby preventing contemporary or any future Croatian state from benefitting from the genocide committed under Croatian banners during World War II."⁵⁹ In the party's printed program, it was more specific: incorporation into Serbia "of our people in Bosnia, Hercegovina, Lika, Kordun, Baranja and Kninska Krajina."⁶⁰ Prohibited one week later for being too "pro-Chetnik," it split into three nationalist parties, whose leaders remain prominent today. Within a month the Serbian liberal tradition also found partisan form, in the Democratic Party, which emphasized that "the national problem is a problem of democracy." But their "Letter of Intentions" revealed how far the pendulum had swung from the liberals of 1971, for it added that "the future independent ex-Yugoslav states cannot claim their right over territories populated mainly by members of another Yugoslav nation."⁶¹ Only a few associations of liberal or social democratic, antinationalist intellectuals refused to take a position

on the national question; among them were the Association for a Yugoslav Democratic Initiative, formed in February 1989 and operating throughout the country, and the Civic Alliance.

On January 23, 1990, the Slovene party walked out of the extraordinary party congress called, at the urging of the army, to confront the political crisis and disunity. Although Milošević called for continuation, the party committees from Croatia, Macedonia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and the army voted to adjourn, thus ending the Yugoslav League of Communists. By April the first of six multiparty elections for new republican parliaments and governments was held in Slovenia. Fifteen months earlier, in January 1989, the federal prime minister, Ante Marković, had introduced legislation that ended the property rights of the socialist system, including job security, local solidarity wage funds, limits on landholdings, managers' rights to hire and fire without consulting the workers' council, and party supervision of managerial appointments. The time bomb that had equated Yugoslavism with socialism by the 1960s exploded, and now it is clear that the days of Yugoslavia itself were numbered. The 70-year-long "national identity crisis" for Serbs no longer had a solution in Yugoslavism, socialism, or antifascism. Thus Serbs had no choice but to begin a search for a new ruling myth, choosing one or another strand of nationalism and its concept of the Serb nation and its borders.

POLITICS AND SOCIOLOGY

While Serbian national ideology contained sufficient elements to justify going to war to create a national state out of the collapsing Yugoslavia—the "righteous struggle" to recapture lost statehood, "regaining with the sword what was lost with the sword," the glorification and martyrdom of those who avenge the "traitors of the land," "a people chosen by God"⁶²—they were not sufficient to make these particular ideological appeals, as opposed to alternative elements in the national tradition, credible to individual Serbs. A second element—the factors of politics within and between the republics and of social origin that influences individual choice—is necessary to explain the violence. No study has been done on the relative numbers of Serbs in Serbia who refused conscription, hiding from the police with support from their families or leaving the country; of those who joined paramilitary gangs organized by criminals such as Željko Raznatović⁶³ interested as much in looting as in national goals or who became "weekend warriors" on a youthful jag; and of those who fought as members of the Yugoslav People's Army out of the conviction they were fighting to prevent the destruction of

their country, in hopes of keeping as much of it together as possible, because they were paid in necessities such as heating fuel they could no longer afford for their families, or felt duty-bound as professional soldiers. The smallest numbers of all were those who joined paramilitary gangs formed by right-wing nationalist political parties claiming to be heirs of the Chetniks (e.g., the Serbian Radical Party of Vojislav Šešelj or the Serbian Renewal Movement of Vuk Drašković) and committed to uniting all Serbs into one state. Much of the brutal campaign of terror against civilians in eastern Bosnia, across the Drina River from Serbia, in the spring and summer of 1992 appears to have been the work of "outsiders"—not Serbs threatened with becoming a diaspora but Serbs from Serbia—as was some of the fighting in eastern Croatia, across the Danube River from Serbia. But Serbs outside Serbia, particularly in Croatia or in Bosnia and Herzegovina, had to make a choice—to become a minority in a new state, finding some accommodation with the new rulers, or to fight to unify with Serbia.

The central question, in other words, was one of citizenship. It was therefore a choice determined in no small part by others—the signals sent by non-Serbs and by the authorities of the nationalizing state in which they lived about their status, rights, and welcome as citizens. As Rogers Brubaker attempts to explain in his emphasis on a triadic field of struggle—among national minorities, nationalizing states, and national homelands—the claims that Serbs outside Serbia were endangered and in need of protection by Belgrade were credible because they "resonated" with experience in the recent past—the genocidal policies against Serbs in Croatia and the parts of Bosnia and Herzegovina incorporated into the "murderous wartime Independent State of Croatia" in 1941 to 1945. In addition, the policies and rhetoric of the Croatian president, Tudjman, in his campaign after the election of April 1990 to create a Croatian national state and gain independence generated genuine "grievances and fears" of a "repeat performance" that had "their own destabilizing logic; they were not orchestrated from Belgrade."⁶⁴

Serbs in Croatia already had been victims of physical attacks by nationalist gangs before the election campaign of April 1990, but Tudjman's campaign was run on a theme of "decommunization," which he defined as "de-Serbianization" and that he proceeded to execute after being elected. In addition to losing their jobs because they were Serbs, Serbs in Croatia found they had no choice but to identify ethnically because they were labeled as Serbs by their fellow citizens, were required to sign loyalty oaths by the new government as if their loyalty were in question, and had to endure a Croatian nationalist euphoria that included the restoration of key national symbols (e.g., the

flag, shield, and currency) that had last been used during the wartime fascist state. Serbs also had to tolerate neofascist gangs, uniforms, and songs, which like the symbols struck visible terror into those who had lost family in the World War II pogrom. The signals being sent about Serb rights and safety as citizens of Croatia were worrisome, to say the least.

The concept of citizenship also influences what a member of a national minority can expect. The difference between Slovenia and Croatia, for example, was less the size of the Serb minority and imputed interest or disinterest of Belgrade politicians in its fate than it was the different concepts of a nation and definition of citizens between the two republics. The concept of a nation can vary, from ethnic and exclusionary definitions to civic and inclusionary ones. Before the founding of Yugoslavia, Slovenia belonged to the Austrian crownlands, which had a multiethnic, incorporative concept of citizenship that did not require one to abandon one's ethnic identity to serve in state office or be viewed as loyal; similarly, in border areas of Croatia (Krajina) where Serbs settled at the invitation of the Habsburg rulers in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, and that also were under direct Austrian rule (by the war ministry), Serbs were allowed to retain their religious and linguistic identity while serving as border guards and members of the army. As a result, Serbs in Krajina were among the most loyal subjects of the empire. Slovene nationalists jealously guarded what they considered their cultural distinctiveness, above all the language that differentiated them from other south Slav nations. In the first years after independence, Slovenia was sufficiently inhospitable to non-Slovenes that persons with Serbian or Croatian surnames who could find another family name, such as that of a German relative, sought safety against discrimination in a name change. Nonetheless, Slovene citizenship was available to all those who met the residence requirements. The recognized status of a minority, with cultural rights, was granted only to so-called autochthonous populations, specifically Italians and Hungarians whose governments had agreed to reciprocal guarantees for the rights of Slovenes living in Italy and Hungary. By contrast, the core area of Croatia before the founding of Yugoslavia, that is, "civil Croatia-Slavonia," had been under Hungarian rule. There an organic, integralist concept of the nation had defined entrance into the political elite. Serving in state office and the top ranks of the military was possible only if one rejected one's national background and adopted the official language and political nationality of the Hungarian state.⁶⁵ Whereas in 1989 both the Croatian and the Macedonian parliaments amended their constitutions to declare their republics the state of their majority nation (Croats and Macedonians, respectively), the two governments elected in 1990 did

not adopt the same policies because their concepts of citizenship were not the same. In contemporary Croatia, Tudjman's regime institutionalized an exclusionary, *jus sanguinis*, ethnic concept of the Croatian nation, and made it clear that Serbs, in particular, were no longer welcome, even in their ancestral homes. The government coalition formed under President Kiro Gligorov after the elections in Macedonia in December 1990 chose instead to work toward a civic concept of Macedonian nationality and to make welcome all those with citizenship in the republic.⁶⁶

In addition to the political decisions made by new nationalizing governments about whether Serbs were welcome, the choice to accept minority status or to fight to join Serbia was influenced by social background and community context. A second difference between Slovenia and Croatia, and between Serbs in different areas of Croatia and of Bosnia and Herzegovina, is that Serbs faced different kinds of choices depending on where they lived. Where populations are territorially concentrated, they can more easily imagine succeeding at autonomy or even secession, whereas populations that are in urban areas and disbursed as individuals or households in multiethnic environments must think in terms of minority or individual rights rather than sovereignty. The latter focus on the right to equal treatment before the law and against discrimination as well as social rights and cultural rights of freedom of expression, including in protecting one's language, religious practices, and traditions. Nowhere in Slovenia were Serbs, and for that matter other south Slav nationalities such as Croats and Montenegrins, in territorial concentrations. The choice in Croatia between Croatian citizenship and fighting to unify with Serbia differentiated those tellingly called "urban Serbs" from the landowning or land-serving rural population of the border areas. The exceptions were those urban Serbs whose anger or fear at losing their jobs and other forms of mistreatment because they were Serbs led them to move from Croatian cities to the Krajina area, or those who found themselves literally trapped in that area when the fighting began, had no way to cross the confrontation lines, and were refused Croatian documents and their pensions if they did. Similarly in Bosnia and Herzegovina, where the circumstances of Serbs differ substantially in many respects from the situation in Croatia, fighting was most intense in border areas—along the border with Serbia, Croatia, and Montenegro, and near the new, internal borders being drawn by the three constituent nations of Bosnia and Herzegovina—where a military reality had some hope of being recognized eventually with border changes. But even within these areas, there was a difference in the kind of violence—between military operations of armies in strategic areas

and the atrocities against neighbors and individualized expulsions of people by their ethnicity, which came to be called "ethnic cleansing" by foreign observers. In both Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina, ethnic cleansing occurred primarily in communities that were ethnically mixed in more or less even proportion⁶⁷ so that the political fate of that community was uncertain, the national stake in the land had to be established demographically in order to affect external decisions about whose territory it was, and conditions existed that are necessary to make credible a nationalist argument—that one's community is at risk from another.

In fact, what had been an urban intellectual and political movement for republican or national sovereignty within Yugoslavia became, once war began, a conflict among rural populations—not because they are more inclined to violence, but because the wars were about territory, which, in concrete terms, meant people's homes and farms.⁶⁸ Rural populations in the Balkans have a tradition of territorial defense and gun ownership, tend to retain a patriarchal culture of male heroism, are the bearers of national memory and consciousness, tend to be more religious and elderly, and as a rule are less educated and more vulnerable to the media terror and propaganda that were emanating from both the nationalizing states and the Serbian capital. Primarily individual householders in the private sector, they were second-class citizens in the socialist system, while they also suffered more than any group, other than pensioners, in the collapse of the protective policies that had included domestic agriculture. Although this was true of all groups who fought, Serbs in border areas of Croatia and in Bosnia and Herzegovina—the new diaspora—were disproportionately farmers and rural dwellers.⁶⁹

Finally, the fact that violence occurred more in ethnically mixed areas points to another characteristic of the Yugoslav wars: The violence intensified over time. In other words, violence was not an automatic response or a universal one. Serbs who found themselves minorities in the new nationalizing states attempted at first to negotiate political rights, including territorial autonomy; only upon being repeatedly rebuffed did they pick up the gun. This was particularly graphic in Croatia, where the Croatian leadership refused the many efforts in the border areas by Serb leaders, particularly Jovan Rašković, beginning in May 1990, to find a political solution for Serbs within Croatia.⁷⁰ The Bosnian Serb leaders negotiated the future of the republic throughout 1991 and into the spring of 1992. Second, violence was not natural. Once Bosnian Serb wartime leader Radovan Karadžić led his party to war, on the grounds—to justify separate statehood—that the peoples of Bosnia

could no longer live together, he faced a defiant reality. Violence would not have been necessary, had people already lived in relatively homogeneous national communities, as in Slovenia, or if people had wanted to separate voluntarily. To separate people with generations of common life, violence was necessary. And then, as was true of all communities at war, the more tired populations became of war and thus the more willing they were to criticize their leaders and question the purpose of the destruction and fear, the more loyalties had to be renewed and reinforced with violence.

THE ROLE OF FOREIGN POWERS

Violence in the former Yugoslavia, from whatever party, was aimed at changing borders. Because the borders of states are a matter of international recognition, any explanation of that violence must include the decisions taken by the major powers. External commitment to the territorial integrity of Yugoslavia would have preempted early attempts at creating new states and the serious violence that followed in Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Kosovo. Diplomatic management of the breakup and recognition of new borders for the successor states could have aimed at minimizing violence. Assertive support for the rights of people who found themselves in a minority in new nationalizing states, including enforcement of those rights, would have provided these new minorities a necessary measure of protection and reduced the credibility of the nationalist argument that only in a state of their own nation would they be safe and fully citizens. None of these policies was followed. Foreign involvement in the breakup of Yugoslavia was extensive, competitive, and decisive, as it was in previous moments of critical political definition in the Balkans, such as 1878, 1908, 1918, 1941, and 1943 to 1945.

The lack of support for Yugoslavia completed the domestic process of decentralization and political purge that delegitimized the two strands of Serbian national ideology that could have prevented violence—the liberal strand that accepted Serbia's republican borders and emphasized political democracy and a market economy and the Yugoslav strand that viewed a south Slav state as an alternative, even a preferable alternative, to a Greater Serbia for uniting all Serbs in one state. Only with the end of the Yugoslav state did Serbs have to seek a new state and an ideology that would legitimize it.

The European decision to recognize Slovenia and Croatia as independent states, and in some cases such as Austria and Germany even to encourage secession, was based on the Slovene and Croat claims to the

right of national self-determination. Not only did the EC members thereby violate the territorial integrity of Yugoslavia, they also declared the internal borders of the republics as inviolable. Referendums for independence in Slovenia and Croatia, and then by Croats and Muslims in Bosnia and Herzegovina, were recognized as legitimate; as with the Serb boycott of the Bosnian referendum of February 28–March 1, 1992, the referendums among Serbs within those two states for their own autonomy or statehood were declared illegitimate. Yet because the national populations were not contiguous with republican borders, the recognition of national states out of multinational Yugoslavia on the basis of the right to self-determination would seem to have required a willingness to redraw borders. The Dutch proposed just that to EC member states in July 1991 when the Netherlands took over the EC presidency but were refused.

Moreover, as a result of skillful public relations campaigns for independence and of historical preferences among Western states, international actors differentiated among good nationalist assertiveness and bad, putting the Serbs and their leaders in the latter category, even before there was violence. With each new condemnation and punishment, making Serbia into a pariah state, the Serbs who wanted to argue for a liberal nationalist position or against all nationalisms had a more difficult task of persuasion. Thus the decision on the location of borders not only ignored Serb rights, but the rhetoric justifying decisions on the location of borders gave credibility to the arguments made by Slobodan Milošević and nationalists to his right: that Serbs needed a Serbian state, leaders, and army to defend them. Providing no international support or protection to Serbs, the major powers did not oppose but strengthened those elements of the third, historicist strand of Serbian national ideology that was becoming dominant in the 1980s, such as Serbs' historical willingness to fight against injustice to their people at the hands of outsiders and to fight for their land.

In areas of the world historically subject to imperial contest, border areas will be nationally mixed. When a state is allowed or even encouraged to disintegrate and new states are formed, the defense of those new borders will be a priority for new leaders. Nationalizing states are likely to view the national loyalty of those border populations as a strategic imperative. Had the international community allowed negotiation about the ex-Yugoslav borders, or had it insisted that each republic seeking independence "give demonstrable proof of minority rights" to its Serbs, the claim that Serbs were vulnerable and victims of injustice could not have been sustained. Given his tendency to favor state interests over national interests, Milošević might even have claimed a

political victory within the republican borders of an independent Serbian state. Instead, the decisions of the Arbitration (Badinter) Commission in January 1992 that Croatia did not yet meet this condition for recognition were ignored by Germany, the Vatican, Ukraine, and, as a result, the rest of the European Union (EU) and the United States. Similarly, the EU decision that recognition of Bosnia and Herzegovina must follow an internal agreement among the three national communities on its constitutional order was overruled by American insistence on (and EU acceptance of) immediate recognition.

The role of foreign powers in the Yugoslav tragedy says as much or more about the inadequacy of international regimes for borders and for international supervision of minority rights than about any "Serb model" or the role of diaspora in the postcommunist era of Eastern Europe. Inflexibility on borders without a willingness to go to war to defend international decisions or to be zealously assertive about protections for minorities within new states, as the Croatian case particularly illustrates, is a simple recipe for violence and forced migration.

Conclusion

To apply the model of the Third Reich and Hitler to Serbia and Milošević is to assume that national states already existed in the space of the former Yugoslavia. The violence of its breakup must direct attention to the process of creating new national states in a multinational and supranational environment. To fight for a particular set of borders requires an ideology that takes a position on borders and evokes an obligation to take up arms. The fact that a minority of Serbs did fight demonstrates that decisions on the location of borders did matter and that the historical, ethnic strand of Serbian national ideology had to be credible to those individuals, who had to choose between the uncertain fate of citizenship in the new states or resistance against becoming an "endangered" member of a diaspora so close to their homeland. The Brubaker triad is useful in the Serb case as it calls attention to the fact that fears and choices are not historically given but occur in a political context, one in which leaders and their interactions send, reinforce, or counteract signals about security and citizenship. The Serb model cannot be understood without reference to the actions of leaders in the other republics of the former Yugoslavia, particularly of Croatia, which set the tone for diaspora Serbs, and the poisonous interaction among three distinct groups: the "homeland state," the national minority, and the "nationalizing state." But the Brubaker triad also takes much for granted that should not be: that there were multiple possible outcomes in the 1980s, that the

choices were not given, and that each Yugoslav nation has an ideology with many elements that also got selected in a complex political interaction among Serbs and between some Serbs and non-Serbs in the region. The Brubaker triad also ignores the influence of foreign powers, which in the case of the Serbs tended to reinforce repeatedly the strand of Serb history and ideology that would lead some to fight, view themselves victims of injustice and forces outside their control that they could right.

Afterword

This chapter was written before the NATO bombing campaign against Yugoslavia in March–June 1999, which was based on and publicly justified by the model it intended to refute. For the first time in the Yugoslav conflicts, one part of the international community did go to war, although no declaration of war occurred. The cause was said to be the defense of Albanian human rights in Kosovo and of universal humanitarian principles, although the issue between Kosovo Albanians and the Serbian government was one of borders. And although the subsequent exodus of most of the Serb minority from Kosovo, in the summer of 1999, appears at this writing to have created, de facto, a new Serb diaspora, the international military and civilian presence deployed after the withdrawal of Yugoslav security forces from Kosovo—the international security force called KFOR and the U.N. transitional administration called UNMIK—were authorized by a U.N. Security Council Resolution declaring the continuing territorial integrity of Yugoslavia, including Kosovo. The exodus of this new Serb diaspora, although its status as a diaspora was not yet recognized, occurred largely through fear, not means or threats from the Albanian majority. Whatever the final status of Kosovo and resolution of the Albanian national question, the role of foreign powers thus had not changed. They had not yet found an adequate regime to determine borders or to supervise minorities, and they continued to reinforce the strand of Serb history and ideology which stood accused. Whether this would be the last in a series of historical reversals for Kosovo and for Serbs or that strand would find new defenders, it was too soon to say.

Notes

Anatol Lieven, *Chechnya: Tombstone of Russian Power* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998), analyzes Russian policy toward Chechnya as the failure of what he calls the "Serbian option": "the move by major sections

of the Communist ruling elite to radical nationalist positions in an effort to preserve their own power, with resulting attempts by state forces to whip up national fear and terror, especially among members of a given nationality living beyond the state borders; the mobilisation of local ethnic groups, above all from such diasporas, partly as a result of 'manipulation' and partly on the basis of real historically based fears and hatreds and local fighting traditions; and the exploitation of the resulting conflicts by criminal gangs and warlords posing more or less sincerely as nationalist militias" (p. 219). See chapters 6 and 7, pages 219–68.

2. "It Could Do the Most Harm to Vojvodina Hungarians," *Népszabadság*, July 9, 1991, cited in Foreign Broadcast Information Service (FBIS), *Daily Report: East Europe*, July 11, 1991, p. 40.
3. That is, who registered as Serbs in the 1991 census. National identity in socialist Yugoslavia was an individual choice, expressed in the decennial censuses, which also included the choice "Yugoslav" and "nationally undetermined." The census figures themselves do not give much clue about the salience of that chosen identity for an individual nor the extent to which it reflects a nationally mixed background, which in many areas of the country could be as high as half the population, if several generations are taken into account.
4. For the Hungarian story, see chapter 1.
5. For the Albanian story, see chapter 4.
6. For the ironic position this created for Serbian Jews, see the illuminating essay by Marko Živković, "The Wish to Be a Jew: Or the Struggle Over Appropriating the Symbolic Power of 'Being a Jew' in the Yugoslav Conflict," ms., March 1994.
7. For more on the relationship during the election campaign, see Laura Silber and Alan Little, *Yugoslavia: Death of a Nation* (New York: Penguin, 1997, rev. and updated), pp. 85–87.
8. Veljko Vujčić, "Historical Legacies, Nationalist Mobilization, and Political Outcomes in Russia and Serbia: A Weberian View," *Theory and Society* 25, no. 6 (1996): 780.
9. See Ivo J. Lederer, *Yugoslavia at the Paris Peace Conference: A Study in Frontierrmaking* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1963).
10. In the 1991 census, 6.8 percent of the Serb population in Yugoslavia lived in Croatia; another 16 percent lived in Bosnia and Herzegovina; 13.4 percent (about 1,200,000) lived in Vojvodina (an autonomous province within Serbia), 2.3 percent (around 200,000) in Kosovo (the other autonomous province in Serbia), and 0.5 percent (about 12,000) in Macedonia—totaling 39 percent of Serbs outside Serbia proper. This does not include the proportion of the population in Montenegro, generally considered about 50 percent who identify ethnationally as Serbs.

Vladimir Gligorov, a Belgrade political scientist of Macedonian origin, summed up the conflicts that led to violence with the collapse of Yugoslavia into "national states" with the aphorism, now widely quoted, that represents this contingent character of borders, subject to a different outcome: "Why should I be a minority in your state when you could be a minority in mine?"

Rogers Brubaker, "National Minorities, Nationalizing States, and External National Homelands in the New Europe," in Brubaker, ed., *Nationalism Reframed: Nationhood and the National Question in the New Europe* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996), pp. 55–76.

According to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) register in September 1997, there were 617,728 refugees and other victims of the Bosnian war who had found haven in Yugoslavia, of which 60 percent said they wished to remain in Yugoslavia and only 10 percent said they wished to return home. "Federal Republic of Yugoslavia: BETA Views Status of Refugees," BETA, September 4, 1997, transcribed by the Foreign Broadcast Information Service (FBIS-EEU-97-247).

By late 1998, UNHCR officials were speaking openly of these Serb refugees in Yugoslavia as "the forgotten group of refugees." See, for example, the statement of Nicholas Morris, regional director for UNHCR, in the transcript of the biweekly press conference in Sarajevo, November 24, 1998, Coalition Press Information Center, Tito Barracks: "one of the things that has been highlighted, perhaps paradoxically, by the Kosovo crisis, is the fact that the largest number of refugees, by far, remain those in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia—over half a million—and they have tended to be neglected, between the focus, this year, on Kosovo on the one hand, and all the emphasis on Dayton implementation that's Bosnia-centric on the other. But, some of these people are starting their seventh year in collective centers . . . a breakthrough in minority return would be key, but not just that; many of them may decide to stay in the FRY . . . this forgotten group of refugees."

The following analysis draws heavily on the author's *Balkan Tragedy: Chaos and Dissolution after the Cold War* (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution Press, 1995), particularly chapters 2–5.

See Lenard Cohen and Paul Warwick, *Political Cohesion in a Fragile Mosaic: The Yugoslav Experience* (Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 1983).

Despite the consensus that this was a Stalinist constitution, which it was not, the parallel between this aspect and the Union Treaty adopted in the Soviet Union in August 1991 and that provoked an attempted putsch is clear.

At the time of the new state, in 1945; this number outside Serbia had declined as a result of migration to Serbia and national differences in demographic rates of increase (Serbs having nearly zero reproduction rates for a long time) to about 25 percent by 1991.

19. See Thomas A. Emmert, *Serbian Golgotha: Kosovo, 1389* (New York: East European Monographs, distributed by Columbia University Press, 1990), and Robert Elsie, comp. and ed., *Kosovo: In the Heart of the Powder Keg* (Boulder, Colo.: East European Monographs, distributed by Columbia University Press, 1997).
20. Vesna Pešić, *Serbian Nationalism and the Origins of the Yugoslav Crisis* (Washington, D.C.: United States Institute of Peace, Peaceworks no. 8, April 1996).
21. This phenomenon, whereby intellectuals' arguments precede political change and provide the rhetoric and argumentation for politicians when the moment is ripe, is not limited to former Yugoslavia. Many who lived through the 1980s in Yugoslavia are surprised that the draft memorandum has received so much attention—one might say vituperative accusation—as the source of the collapse of Yugoslavia and Serbian violence after 1990; at the time, it passed almost unnoticed.
22. A fascinating eyewitness account is in Slavko Čuruvija and Ivan Torov, "The March to War (1980–1990)," in Jasminka Udovički and James Ridgeway, eds., *Yugoslavia's Ethnic Nightmare: The Inside Story of Europe's Unfolding Ordeal* (New York: Lawrence Hill Books, 1995), pp. 81–83; see pp. 75–90 for an excellent short analysis of the Kosovo issue. Videotapes of the public face of these events are part of the five-part BBC documentary *The Death of Yugoslavia* (Brian Lapping Associates) and are discussed in Silber and Little, *Yugoslavia*, pp. 37–40, and in Branka Magaš, *The Destruction of Yugoslavia: Tracking the Break-Up 1980–92* (London: Verso, 1993), pp. 179–217.
23. Silber and Little, *Yugoslavia*, p. 38.
24. *Ibid.*, p. 37.
25. See Susan L. Woodward, *Socialist Unemployment: The Political Economy of Yugoslavia, 1945–1990* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1995).
26. Xavier Bougarel, "Bosnia and Hercegovina—State and Communitarianism," in David A. Dyker and Ivan Vejvoda, eds., *Yugoslavia and After: A Study in Fragmentation, Despair and Rebirth* (London: Longman, 1996), p. 99.
27. An excellent example is the analysis of Katherine Verdery, based on the Romanian case but generalizable beyond it. See *What Was Socialism? And What Comes Next?* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1997), especially Part II, "Identities: Gender, Nation, Civil Society," pp. 59–130. On the powerful dynamic pulling toward nationalist forms of expression, see Pamela Ballinger's analysis of the failure of the Istrian movement to avoid nationalism through a focus on regionalism, in "'Authentic' Hybrids in the Balkan Borderlands: The Istrian Regionalist Movement," ms.
28. Their legal authority to do so was questionable, since the constitutional authority lay with the state presidency, but it was temporarily without a chair because of a Serb refusal to accept the Croatian candidate, Stipe Mesić, by normal order the next in line, because he had declared that his task as Yugoslav president was to ensure the independence of Croatia and the end of Yugoslavia.
29. See Silber and Little, *Yugoslavia*, p. 158, and the video footage in the BBC documentary *The Death of Yugoslavia*.
30. See, especially, Misha Glenny, *The Fall of Yugoslavia: The Third Balkan War* (London: Penguin, 1994).
31. See Silber and Little, *Yugoslavia*, pp. 140–44, particularly on the murder of the regional police chief, Josip Reihl-Kir, who tried to stop it.
32. The centerpiece of this tradition and of the oral poetry was the legend of the battle of Kosovo in 1389; see Emmert, *Serbian Golgotha*. The *gusle* and oral poetry were studied by Harvard linguists Milman Parry and Albert Bates Lord; see, for example, Lord's *The Singer of Tales* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1960).
33. As Ivo Banac writes, "Serbian homesteads in the Sandžak of Novi Pazar, Metohia, and Kosovo, which the subsequent generations of Serbs named Old Serbia, as well as in northern Macedonia and Serbia proper, were literally uprooted. . . . Srijemski Karlovci in the Slavonian Military Frontier became the see of Serbian Orthodox metropolitans; and Novi Sad, the principal Serb cultural center." Banac, *The National Question in Yugoslavia: Origins, History, Politics* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1983), p. 38.
34. Dimitrije Djordjević and Stephen Fischer-Galati discuss the interaction among the changing Balkan policies of European powers, the decline of the empires, and the national liberation movements in this period in *The Balkan Revolutionary Tradition* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1981), chapter 6, especially pp. 182–89, 194–99, and 210–14.
35. A secret society of Serbian military officers operating from 1911 to 1917, Black Hand (formally, Union or Death) was led by men from the rural interior who had achieved their status through the military reforms of 1897–1900, had conspired to assassinate the Serbian king in 1903, and sought the creation of a Great Serbian state from western Bosnia to southern Macedonia.
36. The tragic parallels with the 1990s led the president of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, Morton Abramowitz, to decide to reissue the endowment's 1913 inquiry into those wars 80 years later. See *The Other Balkan Wars: A 1913 Carnegie Endowment Inquiry in Retro-*

spect with a New Introduction and Reflections on the Present Conflict by George F. Kennan (Washington, D.C.: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 1993).

37. See Emmert, *Serbian Golgotha*, pp. 126–31, and on the efforts by Austrian and Hungarian authorities to prevent the celebrations from spilling over Serbian borders, such as in neighboring Croatia. This “invention of tradition,” as Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger record, in which national myths are “modified, institutionalized, and ritualized” for new purposes, was taking place at the same time—the 1870s and 1880s—throughout Europe and North America. See Hobsbawm and Ranger, eds., *The Invention of Tradition* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1983).
38. Vujačić, “Historical Legacies,” pp. 774, 781.
39. See Lederer, *Yugoslavia at the Paris Peace Conference*.
40. A “national identity crisis is a crisis of self-understanding by the members of a nation . . . in the case of the Serbian nation, . . . based on a degree of confusion of Serbian identity with a broader Yugoslav identity.” Vojin Rakić, “Politics, Culture and Hegemony: The Failure of Democratic Transition in Serbia,” Ph.D. diss., Rutgers University, Department of Political Science, April 1998, p. 40.
41. Vujačić, “Historical Legacies,” p. 780. On the role of Serbs in the partisan movement, see Ivo Banac, *With Stalin Against Tito: Cominformist Splits in Yugoslav Communism* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1988).
42. George W. Hoffman and Fred W. Neal, *Yugoslavia and the New Communism* (New York: Twentieth Century Fund, 1962), p. 29. The numbers in 1921, when the first Yugoslav census occurred, according to Banac’s reanalysis, were 38.83 percent for Serbs; see *The National Question*, pp. 49–58.
43. Between 1945 and 1965 this area of mixed Serb, Albanian, Turkish, Gypsy (Roma), and other population had the status of an autonomous region, not a full province, and was called Kosovo-Metohija, after the battlefield of Ottoman fame—Kosovo—and the church territories—Metohija—where most of the Byzantine Orthodox churches and monasteries were to be found; when its status was promoted to a province, it was renamed Kosovo; Serbs restored the name Kosovo-Metohija when they denuded its autonomy in 1990; Albanians call it Kosova.
44. Pešić, *Serbian Nationalism*, p. 7.
45. For most of the Yugoslav period, Serbo-Croatian was considered two variants of the same language. Croatian nationalist revivals always began, therefore, with fights against this assumption, such as the 1967 declaration on the Croatian language by politically interested linguists

that the Novi Sad declaration of 1954 was wrong. The statement in the text is not intended as a political position but only to indicate that the two variants, or languages, are so similar as to make communication nearly effortless. In contrast, Slovene and Macedonian are distinct languages, although part of the south Slav family, and Albanian and Hungarian are not even Slavic.

46. See the discussion of the Slovene-Serb exchange emanating from Taras Kermanauer’s “Letters to a Serbian Friend,” in Ivo Banac, “The Fearful Asymmetry of War: The Causes and Consequences of Yugoslavia’s Demise,” *Daedalus* 121 (Spring 1992): 160.
47. Audrey Helfant Budding, “Yugoslavs into Serbs: Serbian National Identity, 1961–1971,” *Nationalities Papers* 25, no. 3 (1997): 405.
48. *Ibid.*, p. 409.
49. One aspect of Yugoslav federalism is that the party was also federal, and chains of responsibility and accountability required that republican parties enforce democratic centralism and execute disciplinary actions. Hence the Serbian party had to remove Ranković, even though it was a federal level decision.
50. Budding, “Yugoslavs into Serbs,” p. 410.
51. *Ibid.*, p. 412.
52. Pešić, *Serbian Nationalism*, p. 18.
53. And by the 1990s, pride of place in this conspiracy was held by Germany.
54. This slogan, revived from Serbian historians of the early twentieth century by Dobrica Ćosić in the 1970s, reemerged during the wars of Yugoslav succession after 1991.
55. Pešić, *Serbian Nationalism*, pp. 18–20.
56. James Ridgeway and Jasminka Udovički, “Introduction,” in Udovički and Ridgeway, eds., *Yugoslavia’s Ethnic Nightmare*, pp. 12–13.
57. In terms of the elements of Serbian national ideology regarding borders, the transformation begins in 1990 when Milošević warns Slovene and Croatian leaders that if they choose secession, he will insist on a redrawing of republican borders to give Serbs a nation-state as well; but as for the elements in support of his policies in the 1990s, one cannot speak definitively of a transformation from state interests to national interests; if that had occurred, Milošević would not have survived the loss of what nationalists call “Serb lands” in Croatia and in Bosnia and Herzegovina (and eventually Kosovo) if he had become a true follower of this second strand of the ideology.
58. The political role of cultural associations in authoritarian environments has a legacy on which to draw in the region, beginning under the Habs-

- burgs, and not only among Serbs. Like the repetition of experiences that reinforced elements in Serb national ideology, organizations such as Zadruga, Matica Srpska, Zora, and Prosveta helped to keep alive a national consciousness during periods of statelessness or political repression. For that reason, the organizations were treated with suspicion by overlords, including most recently their abolition in the immediate post-World War II period in Croatia and the Croatian government's views toward their revival in the 1980s.
59. April 6, 1941, was the day that Germany began the bombing of Belgrade and the start of occupation and dismemberment of Yugoslavia by Axis forces. In response to the Serbian officers' coup against Prince Paul, which also restored political party government to Yugoslavia in a cabinet representative of all regions and replaced Paul with the young King Peter, the attack destroyed the first Yugoslavia. See Robert Lee Wolff, *The Balkans in Our Time* (New York: Norton, 1967), pp. 198–201.
 60. Rakić, "Politics, Culture, and Hegemony," p. 154.
 61. *Ibid.*, p. 158.
 62. See Emmert, *Serbian Golgotha*.
 63. Wanted by Interpol for the assassination of a Yugoslav diplomat in Sweden in the 1980s, Raznatović, under the *nom de guerre* Arkan, formed the Serbian Volunteer Guard (also known as the Tigers) to fight in eastern Croatia and eastern Bosnia, using terror to force non-Serbs to leave and rewarding his men with permission to loot. How much Slobodan Milošević explicitly used Arkan, simply allowed him to act, or had influence on him is the subject of much debate, including that on the factual grounds for Milošević's indictment for war crimes at the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia. The fact that the indictment in May 1999 was for actions in Kosovo and not in Croatia or in Bosnia and Herzegovina was due to the difficulty of proving chains of command in the latter two cases. Arkan's accumulated wealth, local popularity, engagement in criminal economic underlife, and elected representation in the Serbian parliament heading a political party of Serbs in Kosovo are also the subject of much journalistic attention.
 64. Brubaker, "National Minorities, Nationalizing States, and External National Homelands in the New Europe," pp. 69–73. For a particularly parsimonious and elegant construction of the argument that Serbs in Croatia acted as they did out of fear, that the nationalist appeal by Milošević to provide them protection had to be credible in order to succeed, and that this credibility came from the rhetoric and actions of Tudjman in his electoral campaign for president and his subsequent actions once in power, see Rui deFigueiredo and Barry R. Weingast, "The Rationality of Fear: Political Opportunism and Ethnic Conflict," in Barbara F. Walter and Jack Snyder, eds., *Civil Wars, Insecurity, and Intervention* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1999), pp. 261–302.
 65. See Robert W. Seton-Watson, *The Southern Slav Question and the Habsburg Monarchy* (New York: H. Fertig, 1969, reprint of 1911 ed.).
 66. In his fascinating analysis of the 1994 internationally financed and monitored census in Macedonia, "Observing the Observers: Language, Ethnicity, and Power in the 1994 Macedonian Census and Beyond," in Barnett R. Rubin, ed., *Toward Comprehensive Peace in Southeast Europe: Conflict Prevention in the South Balkans*, Report of the South Balkans Working Group of the Council on Foreign Relations Center for Preventive Action (New York: Twentieth Century Fund, 1996), pp. 81–105, Victor Friedman shows how far this ideal had deteriorated in only three years and how much of the difficulty came from outsiders, despite their apparent preference for the same ideal. He writes, "By attempting to impose a Western European construct equating language with nationality (and nationality with statehood), ICOM [the International Census Observation Mission] helped force on people the kind of choices that have led to the current conflict" (pp. 97–99).
 67. Paul Shoup provides an analysis of the fighting in Croatia according to the ethnic composition of border communities, in "The Future of Croatia's Border Regions," *RFE/RL Report on Eastern Europe*, November 29, 1991, p. 32, and Xavier Bougarel offers an explanation, by data on the ethnic composition of communities in Bosnia-Herzegovina, for why Muslims were victims far more frequently of ethnic cleansing than Serbs or Croats, in *Bosnie: Anatomie d'un Conflit* (Paris: La Découverte, 1996), p. 144.
 68. See Woodward, *Balkan Tragedy*, pp. 236–46.
 69. The overrepresentation of Serbs in farming activities in Croatia and in Bosnia and Herzegovina has historical origins in the policies of the imperial regimes, both Habsburg and Ottoman, which were reinforced by the policies of economic development in socialist Yugoslavia and by patterns of internal migration, in which the more educated and ambitious members of declining communities left for urban areas and those with fewer opportunities outside subsistence farming remained. On Croatia, see Drago Roksandić, *Srbi u Hrvatskoj* (Serbs in Croatia) (Zagreb: Vjesnik, 1991).
 70. See, for example, Silber and Little, *Yugoslavia*, pp. 94–104. On the tendency toward radicalization in general, see Woodward, *Balkan Tragedy*, pp. 352–63.