

## WHY DID YUGOSLAVIA COLLAPSE?

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### ABSTRACT

Yugoslavia had been an oasis of political stability under the authoritarian rule of its former leader president Josip Broz Tito who held the reins of governance for a long time in the country. His successor, Slobodan Milosevic equally tried to exercise an authoritarian management style over the territory, but as it turned out, he was not as successful as Tito. The hitherto passive ethnic nationalities in Yugoslavia soon became active triggering off a nationalistic wave which led to an effective challenge to the central authoritarian governance in Belgrade and eventually caused the collapse of Yugoslavia.

This article seeks to investigate the main dynamics of the Yugoslavia's collapse by mainly focusing on the terms of Josip Broz Tito and Slobodan Milosevic.

**Key Words:** Socialist Yugoslavia, Josip Broz Tito, Slobodan Milosevic

### YUGOSLAVYA NEDEN DAĞILDI?

#### ÖZET

Yugoslavya, uzun yıllar Josip Broz Tito'nun otoriter idaresi altında siyasal istikrarın merkezlerinden biri olmuştur. Tito'nun halefi Slobodan Milosevic de Tito benzeri otoriter bir yönetim anlayışını uygulamak istemiş; ancak bu girişim başarısızlıkla sonuçlanmıştır. Ülkedeki durgun etnik milliyetçilikler yeniden canlanmış ve bu etnik uyanış Belgrad'daki merkezi yönetime karşı bir meydana okumaya dönüşmüş ve sonunda ise Yugoslavya'nın çözülmesine neden olmuştur.

Bu makale Yugoslavya'nın çöküşüne neden olan dinamikleri Josip Broz Tito ve Slobodan Milosevic dönemleri bağlamında analiz etmeyi amaçlamaktadır.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Sosyalist Yugoslavya, Josip Broz Tito, Slobodan Milosevic

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## Introduction

After the end of Cold War, people had expected a more peaceable world order. However, the wars of 1990s and local conflicts showed us the reality that world was still far away from a permanent peace atmosphere. Ideological problems, ethnic and religious conflicts started to appear one more time after the end of the Cold War period. Thus, the 20th century entered to historiographic literature as an era of ethnic and religious conflicts, coming as it were, on the heels of the formation of nation states in Europe and later signified by the post-colonial development of new political and ethnic identities in the developing world.<sup>1</sup>

To my way of thinking, before starting to analyse the term of Josip Broz Tito, the foundation dynamics of Yugoslavia have to be introduced in order to comprehend the Yugoslavia system on more perceptible ground.

AVNOJ standing for "Anti-Fascist Council of National Liberation of Yugoslavia", was the "political umbrella" organization for the people's liberation committees which was established on 26 November 1942 in order to administer territories under their control. It was under the political leadership of the main resistance forces of Yugoslavia, during the Axis occupation of World War 2<sup>2</sup>

German troops in Yugoslavia had resigned on 2 May 1945 after the fall of Berlin. 1945 elections which were held according to the communist doctrines just led the participation of the communist candidates who were appointed by the Communist Party. On 31 January 1946, the new constitution of Federal People's Republic of Yugoslavia (FPRY) which models the Soviet Union, established the 6 republics, an autonomous province, and an autonomous district as new founders of FPRY. Despite of the fact that, in the beginning of the AVNOJ meetings, Muslims were not accepted as an individual millets; after some long negotiations between the Serbian and Bosnian delegates (Muslim and Catholic components), Bah is given a founder nation status on the understanding that the country was not containing any recognized founder nation. Yugoslavia tried to solve the *national issue* by giving the same rights to all the nations and nationalities.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> E.Kenan Rasidagic, Conflict Resolution Theories in Practice: Cases of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Lebanon Examined, Rabic Press, Sarajevo, 2002, p.19

<sup>2</sup> <http://en.academic.ru/dic.nsf/enwiki/356495>, consulted 26/09/2010

<sup>3</sup> İrfan Kaya Ülger, Yugoslavya Neden Parçalandı?(Why Yugoslavia Collapsed?), Seçkin Press, Ankara, 2003, p.53.

The new federation was based on 5 fundamental principles. Before all else, Tito was the heroic monument of the Yugoslavia who embraced a fair minded approach to all the founder nations and minorities of the state. The 5 essential principles of the federation were respectively: **socialist market economy, self-government, federalism, non-aligned foreign policy, the club of 1941**. The Club of 1941's name was the previous name of Partisan Movement. After 1945, the members of the group are located to key positions by Tito. The period between 1945-1980 was the golden age of the federation. Besides the Serbians; Croats, Slovenians Bosnians, Macedonians and Montenegrins were given republic status.<sup>4</sup>

In his eternal battle to keep the nations in an equal footing, Tito ruthlessly suppressed and expression of resurgent nationalism. Enforcing his doctrine "*Brotherhood and Unity*", he carried out purges of Serbians, Croats and Bosnians, as well as Slovenians, Macedonians and Albanians, balancing his repression of any one nation against that of the others. Nationalists were forced into exile where they nurtured their resentment in expatriate communities that proved fertile breeding ground for extreme nationalism; or they were jailed.<sup>5</sup>

Federalism which was seen the best solution recipe for the *nations issue* was forming separated markets from the federal economy within the republics. This situation was inspiring the ethnic nationalism. In my judgement, it is possible to say that the seeds of the Yugoslavia's collapse are planted at the time of Tito. Nevertheless, this situation does not change the fact that Yugoslavia enjoyed its best period under the leadership of Josip Broz Tito.

During its first 35 years, Yugoslavia had the most liberal economy and the liberalistic political system in the socialist world. At the same time, it tried to tolerate the ethnic and religious differences. Through reforms, the state encouraged private enterprise and greatly relaxed restrictions on freedom of speech and religious expression.<sup>6</sup>

On 7 April 1963, the country changed its official name as Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (SFRY) and Tito is named as president for life. In the Yugoslavia, each republic and province had its own constitution, supreme court, parliament, president and prime minister.

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<sup>4</sup> Nesrin Kenar, *Yugoslavya Sorununun Ulusal ve Uluslararası Boyutu* (National and International Dimension of Yugoslavia Question), Palme Press, Ankara, 2005, p.70-72.

<sup>5</sup> Laura Silber and Allan Little, *Yugoslavia: Death of a Nation*, Penguin Press, London, 1996, p.29.

<sup>6</sup> <http://kosova.ihh.org.tr/tarihisurec/yugoslavya/yugoslavya.html>, consulted 30/09/2010

Yugoslavia's market socialism gained a great profit to the national economy until 1968; however after 1968, Yugoslavia came face to face with the market socialism's unpleasant results. Rising inflation rates gave a birth to unemployment problem. State's profit and rationality based economic policies transformed this problem into a chronic scale. In fact, Yugoslav styled market economy's applications were offering a quite different face from the western market economy. In Yugoslavia, economy policy makers were consistently intervening the markets rather than leave them to their natural course.<sup>7</sup>

Between the communist states, Yugoslavia was the only country which exports workforce. Beginning from 1973, Yugoslavia's 1.000.000 countrymen were working in Europe. Yugoslavian tourism sector, which hosts millions of foreign tourist in opposition to the other communist countries, systematically syringed the western consumption culture within the Yugoslav society. These consumption norms substituted the Yugoslav egalitarian sharing tradition/policy. This uber-class egoism damaged the basis of the Yugoslav economy with the unproductive and illogical enterprises. Doubtless, great decentralization was speeding the economic depression. Well known Yugoslav Marxist economist Svetozar Stojanovic renamed this situation as "market anarchy".<sup>8</sup>

In fact, from the beginning the main factor which threatens the constancy of the country was the different development levels of the different regions within the federation. Opposite way around, *equal distribution of the income* was deepening the difference between the republics. However, developed countries of the federation such as Slovenia and Croatia were producing the respectable amount of the national economy. Yet in the beginning of 1958, Slovenia's addition to the federal budget was %37,2. Spending big sum of money for the improvements of the underdeveloped regions were not only causing economic problems but also kindling the ethnic/politic "awakening".<sup>9</sup>

As a matter of fact that one of the most important aim of the 1965 reforms was minimizing the development difference between the republics. To this end, in 1965 Regional Development Fund is established. The fund's resources are considered to be used in order to close the gap between Slovenia, Croatia, Vojvodina and the other republics. Other than that the gap

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<sup>7</sup> Tanıl, Bora, *Yugoslavya: Milliyetçiliğin Provokasyonu* ( Yugoslavia: The provocation of Nationalism), Birikim Press, Istanbul, 1991, p.71

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.,

<sup>9</sup> Ibid., p.68-71

between the republics was not consisting of the economical difference. Besides, in respect to health services, education and social criteria; indicators were very scary for the federation. From my point of view, the deadlock of Yugoslavia was stemming from the insistence to maintain the present principles of the country (federalism, socialism and decentralization) under a single party rule. On the other hand, after the 1965 reforms another development occurred. Within the federation independent economies which are sufficient by itself came up. This was coming to mean that in practice a self-moving freedom was given to these economies. As natural result of this development, nationalist tendencies started to appear within the republics.<sup>10</sup>

As i mentioned above, besides of the economic problems the real threat was coming from nationalism against the existence of Yugoslavia. Because, the unique socialist system of Yugoslavia was reserving some serious ethnic problems. So that the admired political/economical regime of Yugoslavia came face to face with fatal challenges after the death of Josip Broz Tito in 1980.

The Communist Party was meant to establish a non-unitary/national transnational system. However the ignored point was Yugoslavia were the output of the Serbian dominated nationalism during pre-war period and the resultant of the challenge between the Partisan chauvinism and Chetnik fascism. The transition period to federalism was quite easy for Yugoslavia because as from the mid of 1930's, Yugoslavia was embraced the federalist system. Nevertheless, the national problem was still an "open sore" for the future of the country. Except Slovenia, none of the republics were based on the national intrinsic. Doubtless, the present structure of the republic was supplying the transnational formation; nevermore the imagined superior Yugoslav identity by the transnationalists never built in depth.<sup>11</sup>

Other than that, even the single national identities were far from contenting its holders. While, Serbians, Croatians, Slovenians, Macedonians and Montenegrins were the national constituents of Yugoslavia; Albanians and Bosnians Muslims were taken into account as founder nations. Even this single handed situation was injurious for the founder nations of Yugoslavia. Moreover, the non-Slavic founders of the Yugoslavia (Hungarians, Wallachians, Turks, Germans and Romany) were already convinced that they are not the "real owners" of Yugoslavia. As a result of a constitution modification in 1968, Bosnian Muslims are recognized as an independent

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<sup>10</sup> Ülger, *Yugoslavya Neden Parçalandı? (Why Yugoslavia Collapsed?)*, p.63-64.

<sup>11</sup> Bora, *Yugoslavya: Milliyetçiliğin Provokasyonu ( Yugoslavia: The Provocation of Nationalism)*, p.72.

Slav nation. However the situation of Albanians which will be analysed shortly after, was creating a real challenge against the Yugoslavia. On the upshot every single republic were obviously experiencing the Serbian domination threat.<sup>12</sup>

Especially, Albania's suspicions were founded on a reasonable background. During the Balkan Wars, Serbia's way of behaving against the Muslim Albanian population in Kosovo, transferred to the rule of State of Slovenes, Croats and Serbs in 1918, were argumentative. As a respond to this situation, in the course of the World War 2, Albania supported the fascist Italian occupation. Over and above after the Italy's defeat, Albanian government supported the Nazi army against the Tito's and Enver Hodja's partisans. In the light of this information, In February 1945, an uprising broke out in Kosovo against the central government. While this uprising was beaten down by the security forces; 65.000-70.000 Albanians lost their life. Doubtless because of the negative influence of this incident, Albanians could not protect their "own republic" in spite of having a concentrated population there. Furthermore, Albanians were not even mentioned at the Tito's victory discourse in 1945 along with Serbians, Croatians, Slovenians, Macedonians, Montenegrins and Muslims. However during the Yugoslav People's Liberation War. Obviously, the number of the Albanians who fought with the partisan forces was substantially much.<sup>13</sup>

In the same way, in 1955/56 some mass protests which demanded autonomy for Kosovo broke out at the same territory. Yet the protests are suppressed in a very harsh way by Aleksandar Rankovic who was head of the Yugoslav Security Service. According to the Rankovic's point of view Albanians were the biggest threat against the existence of Yugoslavia. After 1956, a lot of Albanians changed his/her national identity into Turkish citizenship in order to benefit from the emigration agreement between Albania and Turkey.<sup>14</sup>

In 1968, protests which were held in Belgrade were first mass protests after the World War 2. After youth protests broke out in Belgrade on the night of 2 July 1968; Belgrade University students went into a seven days strike. Security forces intervened the students harshly and banned all public gatherings. Students then gathered at the Belgrade University's Faculty of Philosophy, held debates and speeches on the social justice, and handed out copies of the banned magazines. Students also protested against economic

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<sup>12</sup> Ibid., p.74.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid.,

<sup>14</sup> Ibid., p.75.

reforms, which caused the high unemployment and forced a lot of workers to leave the country.<sup>15</sup>

On the other hand, in the following years, Rankovic dealt with the leaders of the protests by sacking them from universities and Communist Party posts. The protests were supported by well-known public personalities, including film director Dusan Makavejev, stage actor Stevo Zigon, poet Desanka Maksimovic and university professors, whose careers ran into problems because of their links to the protests. Protests also broke out in other capitals of Yugoslav republics such as in Sarajevo, Zagreb and Ljubljana. In short, "The 68 Generation" was looking to substitute the current socialism with freedom and democratic socialism.<sup>16</sup>

Croatia was the centre of the nationalist movements between 1968 and 1971. In 1971, the alliance of the Croatian Communist Leadership, notably Miko Tripalo and Dr. Savka Dabcevic Kucar, with nationalist non-party groups led to Croatian Spring when large numbers of Croats claimed that Yugoslavia remained under a Serb hegemony and demanded that Serbia's power has to be reduced. Tito, whose homeland is Croatia, responded with a dual action approach. In this context, Yugoslav authorities arrested large numbers of the Croatian protesters who were accused of provoking ethnic nationalism. At the same time Tito began an agenda to initiate some of those reforms in order to avert new crises. Ustase sympathizers outside Yugoslavia tried to create a separatist momentum through terrorism and guerrilla but they were largely unsuccessful, sometimes even getting the antipathy of fellow Roman Catholic Yugoslavs.<sup>17</sup>

According to the 1974 Constitution, Yugoslavia was formed to 6 federate republics and 2 autonomous districts. Yet, during the early of 1960s, Tito, who ended the monarchy in Yugoslavia, was thinking to come over from the just started ethnical crises with giving extensive rights to the current 6 republics and carrying the 2 autonomous districts where Hungarian and Albanian population was located almost to same level with the other 6 federate republics. These autonomous provinces held the same voting power as the republics but unlike the republics, they could not legally separate from Yugoslavia. These arrangements satisfied Croatia and Slovenia, but in Serbia and in the new autonomous province of Kosovo, reactions were offering a different face. Serbians were considering the new constitution as a

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<sup>15</sup> <http://worldhistory.com/event/52187/Student-Protests-at-Belgrade.html>, consulted 05/10/2010

<sup>16</sup> Bora, Yugoslavya: Milliyetçiliğin Provokasyonu (Yugoslavia: The Provocation of Nationalism), p.80.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid., p.83

submission against the Croatian and Albanian nationalists. Ethnic Albanians in Kosovo were considering the creation of an autonomous province as not being enough, and were demanding the modification of Kosovo's status as a constituent republic with the right of separation from Yugoslavia.<sup>18</sup>

In this distressed period, on 4 May 1980, Tito passed away. After the President Tito's death, Yugoslavia found itself in the most depressing period of its history. In addition the year 1980 was the mile stone for rising nationalist movements as the result of deep economic and political problems. As a result of interaction with the western countries; important percent of the population which could not be digested by the country, immigrated to the western countries. On the other hand, this population returned back to Yugoslavia because of the agitations at the western economies, such as in Germany. This situation forced the Yugoslavia to barrow large amount of credits from the western banks.<sup>19</sup> Connected with it, the difference on the economic development levels between the republics started to appear. But the worst point for the Yugoslavia was the rising Serbian nationalism, which was controlled successfully under the Yugoslav superior identity and this rising nationalism started to threat the other nations within the federation structure.

Counter to all efforts which tried to create a national solidarity and brotherhood within the Yugoslavia, Yugoslavia's *founder nationalism* turned into a *destructive nationalism*. Herein, it is fair to argue that the interaction between communism and federalism also had a key role in the course of Yugoslavia's collapse. On the grounds that, in the meantime, the idea of federalism also lost prestige likewise socialism.<sup>20</sup>

"*Only unity saves the Serbs*" is the famous call for unity in the Serbs nationalist doctrine. On the other hand, despite of the fact that this doctrine was ideologically adhered by majority of the Serb leaders in Croatia and Bosnia, disunity characterized Serb politics during the Yugoslav disintegration after the death of Tito. Sharp disagreements between the

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<sup>18</sup> Ibid., p.86.

<sup>19</sup> Misha Glenny, *Balkanlar 1804-1999, Milliyetçilik, Savaş ve Büyük Güçler*, (The Balkans 1804-1999 Nationalism, War and Great Powers) version of Mehmet Harmancı, Ayhan Press, İstanbul, 2002, p.470.

<sup>20</sup> Diana Johnstone, , *Ahmakların Seferi: Yugoslavya, Nato ve Batının Aldatmacaları* (Fool's Crusade: Yugoslavia, Nato and Western Delusions), version of Emre Ergüven, Bağlam Press, İstanbul, 2004, p.57.

leaders and competing Serb parties were the most observable evidence of this disunity.<sup>21</sup>

According to a population census which was applied in 1981, between 22.400.000 inhabitants, just 1.200.000 of them was accepting the Yugoslav superior identity. Moreover, majority of these 1.200.000 people were party, army and bureaucracy employees. Doubtless, according to the local and foreign observers, the result of the census was offering a very dangerous nature. Because, this situation was proving the increase on the ethnic, historic and national sentiments. Unfortunately, for Yugoslavia, the first half of the 1980s became a transition period into radical nationalism.<sup>22</sup>

Just in the beginning of 1980, workers' actual strikes and protests were a warning signal, both for the Federal Party and the other communist unions within the republics. When the economic depression got sharpen, the difference between the republics started to be perceived as injustice. For example, the wealthy north western part of the country was uncomfortable from taking on the economical responsibility of the impoverished north eastern republics; on the other hand, these destitute republics were feeling the exploitation feeling by the western republics. In the long run, because of this situation, north western republics started to see their selves as a part of the western world.<sup>23</sup>

Upon to these entire negative going, in March 1986, Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts published an extremely nationalist memorandum. The memorandum was suggesting much more speaking right for Serbian nation who are the "real owners" of Yugoslavia. The same manifest was defining the Serbians as a "suppressed nation" within the Yugoslavia. Moreover, the memorandum was generating the spine of the Serbia's "historical enemies" rhetoric. According to this manifest, the Yugoslav system was a model which is based on "anti-Serbian" doctrines.<sup>24</sup>

We can say that beginning from the 1980's, the line of the Communist Party is transformed from Ivan Stambolic's pragmatic nationalism into Slobodan Milosevic's radical chauvinism. Ivan Stambolic, who was the first name of the Communist Party between 1984-1986, was trying to consolidate Serbia's hegemonic position within the whole Yugoslavia. Especially in 1987, the

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<sup>21</sup> Nina Caspersen, *Contested Nationalism, Serb Elite Rivalry in Croatia and Bosnia in the 1990s*, Berghahn Press, New York, 2010, p.1.

<sup>22</sup> Bora, *Yugoslavya: Milliyetçiliğin Provokasyonu (Yugoslavia: The Provocation of Nationalism)*, p.90.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, p.90-91.

<sup>24</sup> <http://chnm.gmu.edu/1989/items/show/674>, consulted 07/10/2010

disagreement between the reformists and nationalists within the Serbian Communist Party was in evidence. Stambolic was the leader of the reformist side; on the other hand Slobodan Milosevic who was brought into politics by Stambolic was the conductor of the nationalist wing.<sup>25</sup>

The reformist wing was very disturbed from the nationalism's uncontrolled course. On that account, Stambolic was suggesting to the radical nationalist wing to abandon the Communist Party's dominant totalitarian role. In contrast, Slobodan Milosevic's doctrines/group mind was based on the state-party identicalness which was lengthening on monolithic totalitarianism. According to the thoughts of the Yugoslav critical Marxists, the way of Slobodan Milosevic was "Neo-Stalinism". Nevertheless, Slobodan Milosevic's posture and charisma were very favourable to convince the bureaucratic positions. Because, in these days, bureaucratic positions were holding very advantageous positions while the citizens was suffering under the pressure of the economic difficulties. Slobodan Milosevic who was a son of an Orthodox priest was 45 years old in 1987. With his bright technocrat career and very ambitious personality; he entered to politics.<sup>26</sup>

Slobodan Milosevic who became one of the most popular political leader after the death of Tito, promised to carry out these modifications at the manifest and he took the management of the Serbian Communist Party with a local clash in December 1987. Milosevic was trying to reshape the Tito's heritage by using the villager class. After a short while, city-dweller and villager classes came face to face. However, Milosevic was ignoring the possible risks to cut the cord of the Yugoslav society which was offering a very sensitive ethnic structure.<sup>27</sup>

On 27 April 1987, Milosevic delivered a very enthusiastic speech intended for the Serbians and Montenegrins in Polje where, a township of Kosovo. During his speech Milosevic was just directed to the Slav society and not only he spoke for the party sympathizers but also his speech was for all the Yugoslavia Serbians. Milosevic's Polje speech precisely located the 1986 Memorandum's mentality in the middle of the official party and state ideology. Therefore according to most of the politics experts, Milosevic's

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<sup>25</sup> Ibid., p.106.

<sup>26</sup> V.P. Jr. Gagnon, "Serbia's Road To War", Journal of Democracy, vol 5, no. 2, 1994, p.119-121.

<sup>27</sup> Oral Sander, Siyasi Tarih 1918-1994,(Diplomatic History 1918-1994), Imge Press, Istanbul, 2003, p.577.

Polje speech was a breaking point to locate the nationalism into party's official line.<sup>28</sup>

As well at the federal level, the conservatives faced with the reformists' opposition. The fall of 1988 witnessed an unsuccessful attempt by Slobodan Milosevic to take over the presidency of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia. Indeed, the central committee voted to unseat the one member of that body who was clearly Milosevic's "man". By March 1989, reformist forces had successfully raised Ante Markovic to the federal premiership who was projecting some market based economic reforms and a pluralistic political system. His economic policies soon showed positive results, decreasing the inflation rate, increasing the economic growth and attracting the foreign investments. Markovic's profitable policies enjoyed much support within Serbia and in May 1990 a poll showed that Serbians gave to Markovic a %61 approval rating while Milosevic's remained at %50.<sup>29</sup>

A strategy based on to a xenophobic and authoritarian version of Serbian nationalism was not only insufficient to maintain power in Yugoslavia Federation where only %39 of the population was Serbian; but in fact it was a good recipe for electoral defeat. While Slobodan Milosevic could have a chance to dominate the Bosnian and Croatian party organizations where Serbians were forming the %47 and %50 of the party organizations respectively; his chance of gaining support of the majority of the population in other republics was quite weak. The electoral victory of non-communists in Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) and Macedonia came to mean that Serbia would not be able to rule the whole federal structure where Slobodan Milosevic gained only four of the eight votes needed (Serbia, Kosovo, Vojvodina and Montenegro used their choice in support of Milosevic). After this effective reformist challenge, Serbian communists and their allies in Yugoslav People's Army (JNA) had the choice of either recentralizing the country by force of arms or destroying the Federal Yugoslavia and reconstructing an expanded Serbia based on its hostile principles. Unfortunately, conservatives combined both of these approaches against the democratic opposition in Serbia and in other republics.<sup>30</sup>

Finally, domestic dynamics forced Serbia to carry out the multiparty elections which was scheduled for December 1990 and the elections faced with anti-communist nationalist opposition parties. Slobodan Milosevic

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<sup>28</sup> Bora, *Yugoslavya: Milliyetçiliğin Provokasyonu* (Yugoslavia: The Provocation of Nationalism), p.106-107.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, p.125-126.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, p.119-124.

defended the economic achievements of socialism upon his anti-Albanian rhetoric on Kosovo. In other words, Tito's policy of suppressing all forms of national sentiments is disregarded by the communist forces. During the political election, the Communist Party argued for the continuation of the socialist system which secured the social security and economic growth and at the same time economic problems are blamed as a result of anti-Serbian policies of Federal Prime Minister Markovic. Moreover, opposition parties' access to media is restricted.<sup>31</sup>

After the Milosevic's party's victory in December 1990 political elections, Communist Party began to provoke armed incidents with weapons that were supplied by the JNA. This military mobilization started from certain territories where Serbs were in the majority and continued through other territories where Serbian population was minority. In other words, JNA was on duty to "separate the two sides". Shortly after non-Serbian components of these regions found themselves driven from their homes. In this manner, armed forces which were loyal to the Serbian conservatives began extending the territory under their control and started ethnic cleansing of non-Serbians. The regime also used the war to try to destroy opposition's physical and mental resistance. Reservists and combat forces were sent to the countries that had voted for opposition parties in the political elections, as well opposition leaders and outspoken anti-war activists were also under the target of the armed forces. Many Serbians who opposed the war were forced to leave the country or they went into hiding. The oppressive regime also did target the Hungarian minority in Vojvodina although Hungarians constitute only %3 of Serbia's population.<sup>32</sup>

By December 1991, incidents which broke out in Yugoslavia started to gain an international dimension. United Nations (UN) and European Community (EC) started to voice their concerns and in this manner, Slobodan Milosevic had reversed his longstanding opposition against the UN peacekeeping forces and he agreed to withdraw the military existence in the Serb-occupied areas of Croatia. Yet, even with the UN's presence, terror against Serbians and non-Serbians continued in different areas of the Yugoslavia.<sup>33</sup>

Just before the 8th Congress of the Communist Party, Pavlovic who was a leading reformist name, repeated the reformist wing's worries in response to the Yugoslavia's current course. According to the thoughts of Pavlovic,

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<sup>31</sup> Ibid., p.129.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid., p.131-138.

<sup>33</sup> Gagnon, , "Serbia's Road To War", p.122-127.

nationalism was the last dogmatic instrument of the Communist Party. Prophylactically, Pavlovic was attracting the attentions to the potential risks of the democratic centralism's nationalist reconstruction in Yugoslavia. In this context, in September 1987, including Stambolic and Pavlovic, reformists are wounded up and Stambolic and Pavlovic are removed from the Communist Party. Both of these two names are accused of making an anti-Serbian and anti-Communist Party propaganda. Such that, Pavlovic could not find a job in Serbia because of the Communist Party's opposition against himself and he immigrated to Slovenia.<sup>34</sup> In other words, we can easily claim that Belgrade's intellectual life, containing a lively and pluralist structure till mid of 1980's, is captured by the monophthong nationalist campaigns. In 1988, some mass manifestations which were emphasizing solidarity with the Kosovo Serbians are organized by the party conduct. At one of his speech during the manifestations, Slobodan Milosevic came up with an extreme slogan: "*Serbia will be united or vanished.*"<sup>35</sup>

In this wise, Slobodan Milosevic is started to call as *new Tito* between the Serbian citizens. This honorific was true that Slobodan Milosevic was the only charismatic leader who appeared after the Tito's death; on the other hand in the sense of Yugoslavia's multinational federal embodiment, Slobodan Milosevic was unquestionable far from Josip Broz Tito's managing skills. Serbian nationalist propaganda was ever so much powerful that it is started to believe that Josip Broz Tito was a *cruel Croatian killer* who already hates from the Serbians. At those days a semi-official newspaper *Politica* wrote that Yugoslavia's boundaries are determined according to Tito's high handed mind. In this sense, many schools removed Josip Broz Tito's portraits. On the other hand, Vatican also got its share from the intensive propaganda activities. It is claimed that Vatican was trying to create the World War 2's fascist-Catholic Croatia state. These theses were occupying a considerable place on the traditionalist peasants' mind that tightly connected to Orthodoxy.<sup>36</sup>

At this juncture, I should mention that Slovenia was engaging an exclusive place on Serbian propaganda. Slovenia, had an obvious liberal governance/tendency, was embodying the communist counter revolution. Gradually, Slovenia's political atmosphere and public opinion is started to call in Serbia as Slovenian ideology. Especially after 1989, Slovenia, had no place in the Slobodan Milosevic's Great Serbia project and systematically

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<sup>34</sup> Bora, *Yugoslavya: Milliyetçiliğin Provokasyonu* (Yugoslavia: The Provocation of Nationalism), p.107.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*, p.108.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, p.113-114.

forced to leave the Yugoslavia rapidly on the grounds that Slovenia's "extreme" liberalism was poisoning the Federation.

Through the late of 1989, Yugoslavian phenomenon completely lost its popularity; no one was wishing to hold the Yugoslavian identity anymore.<sup>37</sup> Parallel to this situation, monarchy government dispute became a current issue in Yugoslavia. Moreover, Slovenia, Croatia and Serbia were reporting that Yugoslavia was causing some serious losses on their national existence. In the light of all these information, it is very possible to say that at that time federal republics were returning back to their national identities and struggling to establish their own national states.

In the beginning of 1991, the leaders of the federate republics came together to discuss a solution recipe which may halt the fall of the Yugoslavia. Slovenia, Croatia, Macedonia and BiH suggested a new model call *the union of independent states* which was the closest model to EC formation. On the other hand, Serbia was opposed to any suggestion which turns Serbians into minority in the other federate republics. After the summit, Slovenia and Croatia decelerated their future route map as an independency decision if a new structure is not obtained to Yugoslavia till 26 June 1991. Meanwhile, as a result of the provocations Serbian population started to declare autonomous districts within the republics and in this respect, In July 1991, Serbia rejected Stipe Mesic's Collective State Leadership who was a Croatian. This incident caused the dissolution of the Federal Presidency and Federal Council. Thus, Josip Broz Tito's inheritance is vanished as a result of ethnic nationalism.<sup>38</sup>

## Conclusion

It must be quite fair to claim that ethnic nationalism is the principal reason which caused the collapse of Yugoslavia. Doubtless, analysing the fall of SFRY only within the framework of ethnic nationalism, narrows the dimension of this political incident. As much as the role of ethnic nationalism, we should include the socioeconomic factors which are fed by the political elites' ethnic nationalism, in particular after the death of Tito. In my point of view, the "invented" unity of Yugoslavia was connected to very sensitive political and socioeconomic conditions of its founder nations. Till 1980, these sensitive socioeconomic dynamics were "covered" by the

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<sup>37</sup> Kenar, Yugoslavya Sorununun Ulusal ve Uluslararası Boyutu (Yugoslavia: The Domestic and International Extend of the Yugoslavia Crises), p.134.

<sup>38</sup> Ülger, Yugoslavya Neden Parçalandı? (Why Yugoslavia Collapsed?), p.95-96.

imagined Yugoslav supra-identity. However, changing economic conditions and more importantly the death of Yugoslavia's heroic leader Tito did "kindle" ethnic awakenings in other republics.

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