THE YUGOSLAV RETROSPECTIVE CASE

Thomas S. Szayna and Michele Zanini

INTRODUCTION

This chapter applies the "process" model for anticipating the incidence of ethnic conflict to the case of the collapse of the federal Yugoslav state in 1991. It examines the case of Yugoslavia from the perspective of what an analyst might have concluded about Yugoslavia's propensity toward ethnic violence had she used the "process" model to examine the situation in Yugoslavia in late 1989 or early 1990.

In essence, this chapter examines the ethnic mobilization of Serbs in Yugoslavia under the leadership of Slobodan Milosevic and this group's attempt to alter the federal setup of Yugoslavia in favor of the ethnic Serbs. As such, the conflict in question is between the mobilized ethnic Serbs and the federal Yugoslav state. The primary time frame of interest is the period 1986–1989. The orientation is in line with the focus of the "process" model on one particular kind of ethnic conflict, namely, the rise of an ethnic group challenging the state.

The choice of the date stems from two reasons. One, for purposes of retroactive validation of the model, the cutoff date offers enough data on the strength of ethnic Serbian mobilization. An earlier cutoff date, for example mid-1987, would not have led to different results but would have prevented the inclusion of several factors that aided the mobilization process. Two, the time frame is realistic in that the fate of Yugoslavia (collapse into violent civil war) still was not preordained in late 1989. Many factors, internal and external, still might have headed off the conflict. By early 1991, the writing was on the

wall, but even by January 1990, there was nothing inevitable about the breakup.

The retrospective application of the model that is presented in this chapter is far from a trivial exercise that goes over ground already well covered in the numerous analyses of the Yugoslav breakup. We attempt here to walk the reader back to the late 1980s and the euphoria over the end of the Cold War and the wave of democratization sweeping central and southeastern Europe. At the time, U.S. intelligence estimates warned that a breakup of Yugoslavia was likely to be violent, but the likelihood of lengthy, widespread, and brutal internecine armed strife within Yugoslavia still seemed far-fetched to most observers and analysts. Yugoslavia had survived for decades, and it made little sense that one of the most prosperous and free of the European communist states would go down the path of spiraling violence and self-destruction. Fitting in with the general perception of post-Tito Yugoslavia as a loose and unwieldy entity, most observers expected even a greater loosening of the federal setup, rancorous negotiations between the various entities of the federal state, and a "muddling through" the economic and political problems. Could we have done better in forecasting the collapse of Yugoslavia? This chapter takes on that question.

As presented in the model, the group-versus-state conflict is the simplest form of ethnic competition and, some may argue, not realistic when applied to the multiethnic conditions of 1980s Yugoslavia. A model focusing on the intergroup ethnic competition in Yugoslavia—for example, between Serbs on the one hand and Slovenes and Croats (in slightly different roles) on the other, with the federal Yugoslav state playing the role of umpire—might provide an alternative tool to examine the situation. But such an analysis seems overly tainted by the benefit of hindsight and focuses more on the situation in 1990–1991 just prior to the outbreak of violence, rather than on the initial challenge to the constitutional setup. The Serb mobilization led to countermobilizations along ethnic lines in some of the other Yugoslav republics and certainly cemented the demise of federal Yugoslavia, but the Serb mobilization was the first and most important cause of the destruction. The various ethnic groups inhabiting Yugoslavia had numerous grievances against the federal government, but none of the major ethnic groups or republics had mobilized on a secessionist platform until the rise of militant Serbian

nationalism destroyed the federation and caused them to opt out of the federal setup. Even in early 1991, the Croat leadership still thought in terms of an accommodation within the bounds of a looser—but still united—Yugoslavia. In that sense, ethnic mobilization of the Serbs against the existing federal structure was the prime cause for the breakup of the country.

Following this introduction, the chapter has four sections. First, it examines the structure of closure according to the questions outlined in the model. That section provides an analysis of which ethnic groups were privileged and which were dominated (the demographic characteristics of Yugoslavia in the 1980s, on which the analysis is based, is appended at the end of the chapter). Then it examines the strength of the challenging ethnic group—the ethnic Serbs of Yugoslavia—by looking at its mobilization process within the categories outlined by the model. An analyst looking at Yugoslavia in the late 1980s would have been wise to examine all of the major ethnic groups in Yugoslavia from such a perspective, but for reasons of space, the desire to avoid duplication, as well as *ex post facto* knowledge, this examination is limited to the Serbs. The second section looks at the capabilities the state—federal Yugoslavia—could have brought to bear in dealing with the challenging group. The third section examines the strategic choices, arrived at on the basis of the assessments in earlier sections, that the state and the group were likely to pursue vis-à-vis each other, given their resource base group. The fourth—and final—section contains some observations on the applicability of the model. All the data used here come from publicly available sources and would have been accessible to analysts in the late 1980s. Wherever data are unavailable, an educated guess is postulated and the reasoning behind it explained.

ASSESSING THE POTENTIAL FOR STRIFE

Closure in the Political and Security Realms

In terms of closure in the political realm, centers of political power in Yugoslavia were located at both the federal and republican levels in an elaborate system of shared governance and checks and balances, primarily by the republics upon the federal government. The principle of strict balancing of top political authorities (akin to quotas) by

republic was present at all levels of Yugoslav institutions, most visible at the highest levels of political power. Rotating or short-term chairmanships (often apportioned on the basis of observing ethnic and republican balance) of all top bodies was the norm.

The ethnic and republican criteria for representation on all governmental bodies prevented any group from dominating the Yugoslav political realm. However, an ethnic Serb usually held one of the top posts in Yugoslav federal political institutions. The phenomenon stemmed more from the fact that ethnic Serbs from a variety of republics (Serbia proper, Croatia, Bosnia-Herzegovina) or provinces (Kosovo, Vojvodina) could be representatives of that region to the specific federal body. Unlike the Serbs, few members of other ethnic groups lived outside their eponymous republics, causing their ethnic representation at the Yugoslav level to occur almost exclusively within their republican quota. The quota system was based on Article 242 of the 1974 constitution, which endorsed this "nationality key" policy but did so on the basis of "republican" rather than "national" proportional representation. However, with the exception of the Serbs, republican and national representation were functional equivalents.

These patterns are evident from a more detailed look at the composition of personnel at the upper levels of the political apparatus in Yugoslavia. In terms of the highest-ranking individuals, the Yugoslav Presidency, the Federal Executive Council, the Federal Assembly, and the League of Communists of Yugoslavia (or LCY, the name of the communist party of Yugoslavia) were the most influential institutions at the federal level. Due to rotating short-term chairmanships, the larger membership of the bodies (as opposed to the official serving as leader at any particular time) is shown in summary tables below, along with each group's ethnic composition.

The Presidency was the collective head of state. The 1974 constitution provided for the Presidency having nine members, consisting of one representative from each of the republics and autonomous provinces and the chairman of the Presidium of the LCY. The composition of the Presidency changed in 1989, with the number lowered to eight through the removal of LCY representation. The president and a vice president were appointed from the presidency group for a term of one year. The president of the Presidency rotated yearly to

provide even distribution among the republican and provincial representatives.[1] Table 3.1 summarizes the specific division of posts within the presidency at the beginning of 1990 by ethnicity.

The Federal Executive Council (FEC) was the executive body of the Federal Assembly (parliament). It included a prime minister (FEC president), two deputy prime ministers and twelve secretaries in charge of an equal number of secretariats (equivalent to ministries). In the 1980s, the single most important political post in the federal Yugoslav government was probably that of prime minister. Although the practice was not always followed to the letter, the FEC maintained an affirmative action scheme based on "nationality" as a way to allocate its senior posts. It also added ministers without portfolio from those republics that were underrepresented in ministerial posts. Table 3.2 shows the breakdown of important postholders by ethnicity in early 1990. While specific snapshots of this type may be deceiving, the political deals that underpinned the distribution of ministerial posts remained relatively constant. Thus, throughout the

Table 3.1

Yugoslav State Presidency, January 1990

Position	Name	Ethnicity
President	Janez Drnovsek	Slovene
Vice President	Borisav Jovic	Serb
Members		
Bosnia-Herzegovina	Bogic Bogicevic	Serb
Croatia	Stipe Suvar	Croat
Kosovo	Riza Sapundziju	Albanian
Macedonia	Milan Pancevski	Macedonian
Montenegro	Nenad Bucin	Montenegrin
Serbia	Borisav Jovic	Serb
Slovenia	Janez Drnovsek	Slovene
Vojvodina	Dragutin Zelenovic	Serb

SOURCE: CIA, *Directory of Yugoslav Officials,* March 1990.

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[1]Beginning with the 1989 president, Janez Drnovsek of Slovenia, the presidency of the Presidency was to rotate among the republics and provinces in the following order: Serbia, Croatia, Montenegro, Vojvodina, Kosovo, Macedonia, and Bosnia-Herzegovina, through 1997.

Table 3.2

Federal Executive Council, January 1990

Position	Name	Ethnicity
President	Ante Markovic	Croat
Vice Presidents	Aleksandar Mitrovic	Serb
	Zivko Pregl	Slovene
Ministry		
Internal Affairs	Petar Gracanin	Serb
National Defense	Veljko Kadijevic	Serb
Justice	Vlado Kambovski	Macedonian
Foreign Affairs	Budimir Loncar	Croat
Finance	Branko Zekan	Croat

SOURCE: CIA, *Directory of Yugoslav Officials,* March 1990.

1980s, at any one time, several Serbs were on the FEC and a Serb was one of the vice presidents (Croats occupied the post of president of the FEC in the period leading up to the breakup).

The 1974 constitution divided the Federal Assembly into two chambers, the Federal Chamber (220 delegates, with each republic and province having 30 and 20 delegates, respectively) and the Chamber of Republics and Provinces (88 delegates, with each republic and province having 12 and 8 delegates, respectively). Table 3.3 displays the ethnic composition of the Federal Assembly presidency and commissions at the beginning of 1990.

Table 3.3

Yugoslav Federal Assembly, January 1990

Position	Name	Ethnicity
President	Slobodan Gligorijevic	Serb
Vice President	Suada Muminagic	Muslim*
Secretary General	Ljubomir Bulatovic	Bosnia (Serb)*

*Probable ethnicity, though reliable data are unavailable.
SOURCE: CIA, *Directory of Yugoslav Officials,* March 1990.

While the Federal Chamber's function was to ensure representation of grassroots organizations at the federal level, its delegates would typically follow instructions from their republican governments. Table 3.4 shows the distribution of top posts within the body at the beginning of 1990.

The LCY Presidium (equivalent to the Politburo in other communist states) had the function of a steering body for the Central Committee of LCY and provided leadership for the party between its congresses. The Presidium included a host of commissions to monitor and implement party policy. Like other Yugoslav institutions, the LCY adopted an elaborate quota system: for instance, the chairmanship of the Presidium followed a "nationality key" that ensured periodic rotation of the post among the six republics and the two autonomous provinces. Table 3.5 presents the top posts within the party by ethnicity in January 1990 (the Slovene representative is not listed in the table, since the Slovene party delegation withdrew from the LCY during the January 1990 party congress).

The institutional setup at the level of the republics and the autonomous provinces mirrored the federal one. In multiethnic republics such as Bosnia-Herzegovina, affirmative action schemes (bordering on quotas) were in place to ensure a balanced representation of different nationalities.

The information presented above focuses on the highest-level individuals. Less information is available on the ethnic breakdown of the

Table 3.4

Yugoslav Federal Chamber, January 1990

Position	Name	Ethnicity
President	Bogdana Glumac-Levakov	Serb* (Vojvodina)
Vice President	Lazo Tesla	Croat*
Secretary	Aleksandar Vujn	Serb*

*Probable ethnicity, though reliable data are unavailable.
SOURCE: CIA, *Directory of Yugoslav Officials,* March 1990.

Table 3.5

LCY Presidium, January 1990

Position	Name	Ethnicity
President	Milan Pancevski	Macedonian
Secretary	Petar Skundric	Serb
Members		
Bosnia-Herzegovina	Ivan Brigic	Croat
Croatia	Marko Lolic	Serb
Montenegro	Miomir Grbovic	Montenegrin*
Macedonia	Milan Pancevski	Macedonian
Serbia	Petar Skundric	Serb
Bosnia-Herzegovina	Ugljesa Uzelac	Muslim*
Macedonia	Ljubomir Varoslija	Macedonian*

*Probable ethnicity, though reliable data are unavailable.
SOURCE: CIA, *Directory of Yugoslav Officials,* March 1990.

upper staff of the bureaucracies led by these individuals. Nevertheless, by law and custom, the patterns of republic and ethnic balancing in all federal institutions and bodies were present in the apportionment of managerial spots. Available information points to enforced ethnic and republican "affirmative action" in selection of personnel. Thus, it is unlikely that any major deviations from the rule of strict ethnic balancing were present through the late 1980s.

The replication of the ethnic balancing took place also in institutions at the republican level, leading to patterns of representation roughly similar to the ethnic balance in the republic. However, Serbs were often overrepresented in both republican and federal institutions, especially in the LCY. By the early 1980s, 47 percent of all LCY members were Serbs; Serbs were also overrepresented in the ranks of the communist party in Croatia (around 35 percent of total membership) and Bosnia-Herzegovina (47 percent).[2]

In terms of closure in the security realm, federal laws called for a system of representation within the armed forces similar to that in

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[2]V. P. Gagnon, "Ethnic Nationalism and International Conflict: The Case of Serbia," *International Security,* Vol. 19, No. 3, Winter 1994–95, p. 149.

the country as a whole. In practice, however, these guidelines were not observed and Serbs served in a dominant role in the military and police apparati. The phenomenon may have stemmed as much from self-selection as from ingrained institutional favoritism toward one ethnic group. But members of other ethnic groups aspiring for careers in the military or security bureaucracies seem to have had "reserved" slots in secondary career paths within these bureaucracies. A more detailed look at the ethnic composition of security apparatus personnel follows.

At the federal level, the Secretariat for National Defense and the Secretariat for Internal Affairs were the prime centers of influence in security matters. The armed forces consisted of the Yugoslav People's Army (JNA) and the Territorial Defense Forces (or TDF, a large militia force with territorially organized units throughout the country). While the Presidency was entrusted with command of the armed forces, the secretary for national defense held operational control over the JNA. The chief of the JNA General Staff served as a deputy to the secretary for national defense; often, chiefs of the General Staff would be promoted to secretaries for national defense. Tables 3.6 and 3.7 provide the ethnic background of the top defense and military leaders in early 1990. The minister of defense, General Kadijevic, had a Croat-Serb background but self-identified as a pro-Yugoslav Serb.[3]

Table 3.6

The Federal Secretariat for National Defense, January 1990

Position	Name	Ethnicity
Federal Secretary	Veljko Dusan Kadijevic	Serb
Deputy Secretary	Stane Brovet	Slovene

SOURCE: CIA, *Directory of Yugoslav Officials,* March 1990.

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[3]General Veljko Kadijevic, *Moje Vidanje Raspada: Vojska bez Drsave* (My View of the Breakup: Army Without a State), Belgrade: Politika, 1993.

Table 3.7

Yugoslav People's Army, January 1990

Position	Name	Ethnicity
Chief of Staff	Blagoje Adzic	Serb
Deputy Chiefs		
Air Force	Nikola Maravic	Croat*
Ground Forces	Dragisa Drljevic	Montenegrin*
Intelligence	Djordje Mirazic	Slovene
Navy	Vjekoslav Culci	Serb*
TDF	Ilija Boric	Croat*

*Probable ethnicity, though reliable data are unavailable.
SOURCE: CIA, *Directory of Yugoslav Officials,* March 1990.

The Federal Secretariat for Internal Affairs regulated the work of republican and provincial secretariats for internal affairs, including certain aspects of the judicial system (such as the work of public prosecutors). The secretariat often played a key role in ensuring public order, and it availed itself of the State Security Service (SDB) and the People's Militia. The SDB was a secret police network tasked with the neutralization of "enemies of the constitutional order"; the People's Militia was a well-trained and equipped paramilitary force. Secretaries for internal affairs at the republican and provincial level controlled their own police forces. Table 3.8 provides the ethnic background of the top internal affairs officials in early 1990.

The ethnic makeup among the individuals who formed the upper levels of the security and armed forces apparati appears to have been skewed in favor of Serbs and Montenegrins. The pattern was evident in the armed forces, and we assume it was replicated in the federal police apparatus. The predominant Serb presence in the armed forces happened despite the constitutionally mandated proportional representation of JNA enlisted and officer ranks according to nationality. The "nationality key" affirmative action system was supposed to be binding in the armed forces, from the rank of colonel and above, just as in the case of other federal institutions.

By 1983, Serbs constituted almost 60 percent of the officer corps, with an even greater presence in the high command positions.

Table 3.8

Secretariat for Internal Affairs, January 1990

Position	Name	Ethnicity
Federal Secretary	Petar Gracanin	Serb
Deputy Secretary	Slobodan Tradijan	Serb*
Under Secretary	Zdravko Mustac	Croat
SDB Chief	Zdravko Mustac	Croat

*Probable ethnicity, though reliable data are unavailable.

SOURCE: CIA, *Directory of Yugoslav Officials,* March 1990.

Nearly every national defense secretary was a Serb (or Croats from a Partisan background). Montenegrins were also overrepresented at the officer corps level, making up 10 percent of its ranks (Montenegrins constituted 3 percent of the Yugoslav population). Croats and Slovenes were the most underrepresented in the JNA officer corps, making up 15 percent and 5 percent, respectively, of its ranks. Muslims, Albanians, Macedonians, and Hungarians made up only a small percentage of the officer corps. The domination of Serbs in the JNA was not uniform across services. While Serbs were disproportionately represented in the ground forces (the dominant branch of the JNA), the air force and navy had substantially more officers from other ethnic groups in their leadership.[4]

The underrepresentation of Croats and Albanians in the JNA may have stemmed from informal restrictions. For example, the reduced Croat presence was in part due to the purge of alleged Croat separatist officers from the JNA in the early 1970s. Distrust of ethnic Croats seems to have remained among Serb officers, and the representation of Croats in the JNA never recovered to their previous levels.

Assessment of closure in the political and security realms. The static "snapshot" presented above portrays vividly the effect of the whole system of rules and customs set up to ensure that no single ethnic group would be able to "capture" all (or even the majority) of

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[4]David Isby, "Yugoslavia 1991—Armed Forces in Conflict," *Jane's Intelligence Review,* September 1991, p. 397.

the top political posts at the federal level. Similar systems of rules and customs operated at the republican level in the multiethnic republics, such as Bosnia-Herzegovina. Despite the presence of a balancing system, Serbs appear to have been overrepresented in the lower levels of the federal bureaucracies and especially in the LCY— the gateway to all positions of political power.

The overrepresentation of Serbs in Yugoslav political structures was not necessarily caused by a deliberate attempt to exclude members of other ethnic groups. Other significant factors may have played a role, including the fact that federal jobs were not considered as prestigious and were not sought after by residents outside Serbia as within Serbia or among Serbs in general.[5] Moreover, constitutional provisions mandated that quotas be determined not by ethnicity but by republic. Thus, Serbs were overrepresented at the federal level in part because they were overrepresented in republican institutions in Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina. The overrepresentation at the republican level in turn was partly caused by the fact that Serbs made up a disproportionate amount of the LCY membership.

There were some differences between the political and security realms. Most of the federal political institutions maintained a rough ethnic balance at the elite and director level at the beginning of 1990. Other than the oligarchic function of the LCY in limiting access to top political posts, there appears not to have been any major noticeable patterns that would point to closure along ethnic lines in the political realm. The extensive rules on republican and ethnic representation in all federal bodies were largely observed.

The rank-and-file membership of the military and security apparati differed little from the general patterns within Yugoslavia. However, discrepancies appeared at the mid-to-high levels. Within the confines of this pattern, Serbs and Montenegrins were overrepresented, and most of the other ethnic groups were underrepresented (especially Croats, Slovenes, and Albanians). At the highest levels, it was politically important to fill the most prestigious seats of power in a representative fashion along ethnic lines.

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[5]Susan L. Woodward, *Balkan Tragedy: Chaos and Dissolution After the Cold War,* Washington, D.C.: The Brookings Institution, 1995, p. 109.

Was there a mechanism that allowed for change of the "snapshot" presented above? Theoretically, no formal restrictions on access to political power existed, and the government built an elaborate system of rules to prevent such restrictions. However, membership in the LCY was formally necessary for promotion beyond a certain level of responsibility. The LCY jealously guarded its special role as the only channel to political power, and it never hesitated to crack down on any signs of a challenge or dissent. The attractiveness of the LCY primarily to Serbs (and Montenegrins) on the one hand, and its relative lack of attractiveness to Croats and Slovenes on the other hand, acted as an indirect filter of personnel.

The flip side of the emphasis on ethnic representation and balancing was that, due to imbalances in candidate availability and quality by ethnic group, merit sometimes became secondary to ethnic criteria for advancement. The result was that both minority groups and any major group that was already overrepresented in the federal bureaucracy (especially the Serbs) sometimes were disadvantaged. To illustrate this point and to put it in terms of a simple matrix, each candidate for a promotion could be defined as either majority/minority and high/low quality. Sometimes a majority candidate of high quality was passed over for promotion in favor of a minority candidate of high quality. But in other cases a majority candidate of high quality might have been passed over in favor of a minority candidate of low quality (because of the ethnic balancing principle). In both cases, the majority candidate who did not receive the promotion might have become resentful, blaming only her majority status for losing out on advancement (though she would have been fully correct only in the second instance). The inverse of the above was also problematic. For example, a minority candidate of low quality might have been passed over in the promotion process in favor of a majority candidate of high quality. In other cases, a minority candidate of low quality might have been passed over in favor of a majority candidate of low quality (for example, due to a specific political deal or because of the winner's personal connections and influence with the decisionmakers). In both cases, the minority candidate who lost out might have become resentful, blaming only her minority status for not advancing (though she may have been correct only in the second instance). Such dynamics can be worrisome in conditions of only two ethnic groups. But in Yugoslavia, with its eight major ethnic

groups, a dozen minor groups, and different interrepublican and interprovince population characteristics (and with the ethnic balancing schemes applied both at the federal level and the republic and province levels), using ethnic criteria as a major consideration for promotion and advancement was potentially highly divisive.

Those overrepresented in the pool of candidates (LCY), most of all the Serbs, faced relatively greater competition (among themselves) for fewer seats than, for example, Croats, whose pool of qualified candidates was smaller (because of lower LCY membership). Whereas ten Serbs may have been eligible for one high-level security position, only three Croats may have been eligible for a similar position. But if one Croat and one Serb were chosen from the pools of different size, the Serbs not chosen might have been resentful of the "lower-qualified" Croat being promoted over them.

However, the true losers of the ethnic balancing process were the small ethnic groups (smaller than the eight main groups) who did not "matter enough" in the larger political deals. With top spots virtually reserved for members of the major ethnic groups (in order to adhere to the principles of ethnic proportionality), members of the smaller groups faced an informal ceiling on how far they could advance. For example, with the top positions apportioned on the basis of ethnicity and candidates for these positions judged more on ethnicity than on the basis of merit, it was difficult for, say, a Bulgarian from southeastern Serbia to be appointed to the spot reserved for Serbs, for which Serbs believed they already had a pool of qualified Serb candidates. Perhaps most paradoxically, those who self-identified as "Yugoslavs" (usually the offspring of ethnically mixed marriages) also faced difficulties in advancement, since the categorization scheme in place in Yugoslavia did not envision any quotas for those who considered themselves "Yugoslavs." In any event, in the political realm an informal hierarchy developed, with Serbs at the top of the hierarchy (most numerous and eligible to represent several republics or provinces), then the other groups having a republic status, then the groups having a province status, and then the others.

There was little potential for peaceful change of the informal ethnic constraints on access to political power. The collectivist principle of equal rights for all ethnic groups was subordinated to the general communist political system of rule in the country. Throughout the

post–World War II period, elite positions in government were reserved for LCY members. Socialization within the LCY was meant to ensure acceptance of the overall political setup. Suppression of dissent to the principle of LCY leadership was a consistent feature of the Yugoslav regime. Under the authoritarian aspects of the political system as a whole, ethnicity per se was not a bar to advancement, though the way that ethnicity crept in as a criterion for promotion affected different groups in different ways.

Within the constraints imposed by LCY stewardship over access to political power, there were no formal rules restricting political advancement along ethnic lines. But at the informal level, because of the quota system in place, advancement based on merit was curtailed. This produced two types of problems. One, the smaller ethnic groups faced the barrier of being able to advance only up to a certain level. Since the top posts were carefully apportioned by ethnicity and/or republic, a Serb or a Croat would be guaranteed the possibility of access to high posts. But the less numerous ethnic groups, especially those without an eponymous republic (e.g., the Albanians) and even the non-ethnically-defined "Yugoslavs," faced bigger hurdles. Their rise to the top posts could only be a result of political tradeoffs between the Serbs and Croats. In practice, members of ethnic groups without any administrative region faced a low ceiling on advancement in institutions of political power, even if they had substantial merit. Two, the other side of the coin was that members of the larger groups who were already overrepresented in political and security apparati (most of all the Serbs) had grievances of their own, based on the claim that they had to meet higher standards for promotion than those from other groups.

Closure in the Economic Realm

The distribution of wealth in Yugoslavia was regionally unbalanced, with a relatively rich North and a poor South. Differences in the economic strategies and in the level of infrastructure of republics also followed a North-South pattern. While Slovenia, Croatia, Vojvodina, and parts of Serbia relied on attracting foreign investment and on building advanced production capacity, southern republics (Macedonia and Montenegro) depended on low-paying and labor-intensive activities and agriculture.

There is little information about the wealthiest individuals in Yugoslavia. In general, the wealthiest individuals appear to have been concentrated in the wealthiest republics, with Slovenes and Croats especially overrepresented. The tourist industry in those republics provided access to hard currency, the two republics were the most urban and industrialized, and a relatively much greater proportion of Slovenes and Croats had access to higher education than did the other ethnic groups in Yugoslavia.

At the general population level, net average pay was considerably higher in Slovenia—about $330 per month—than in Serbia, where workers on average took home about $260 monthly in net income. The figure was lowest in the autonomous province of Kosovo, averaging approximately $127 monthly. The regional disparity in wealth becomes even more obvious when comparing republic contributions to the gross social product (GSP),[6] shown in Table 3.9.

Data for 1989 indicate that the per-capita GSP of Slovenia was 2.5 times the per-capita GSP of Serbia and the autonomous provinces. Separate figures for Kosovo (unavailable) probably would indicate an even greater gap between the richest and the poorest parts of Yugoslavia.

Comparing the 1981 and 1989 figures points to a widening of the North-South divide during the 1980s. While the overall employment situation was not very favorable by the late 1980s (unemployment reached about 17 percent),[7] employment patterns varied substantially by republic, with Slovenia enjoying a relatively buoyant labor market and Kosovo suffering from serious unemployment.

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[6]Yugoslav output was measured using gross social product (GSP), thought to be approximately 15 percent lower than GNP on average. Calculations for average take-home pay were roughly converted at 1990 exchange rates for purposes of comparison. See *Business International Forecasting Service: Yugoslavia,* Economist Intelligence Unit, March 1, 1991. Gross social (or material) product was equivalent to net material product (the normal CMEA measure) plus capital consumption. Like NMP, GSP excluded "nonproductive" services—such as education, health, defense, professional services, and public administration—and was thus not comparable to the Western concept of gross domestic product. National income represented the value of goods and productive services (including turnover taxes) relating to physical production, transport and distribution.

[7]*Country Profile: Yugoslavia,* Economist Intelligence Unit, August 27, 1991.

Table 3.9

Per-Capita Gross Social Product (GSP)

	1981			1989		
	GSP	Population (thousands)	Per-Capita GSP	GSP	Population (thousands)	Per-Capita GSP
Serbia, including Kosovo and Vojvodina	148.42	9,279	15,995.8	144.7	9,815	14,741.9
Croatia	101.18	4,578	22,101.6	101.2	4,726	21,422.9
Slovenia	64.57	1,884	34,271.1	72.5	1,924	37,705.4
Bosnia-Herzegovina	48.43	4,116	11,765.1	49.8	4,795	10,391
Macedonia	23.23	1,914	12,136	22.7	2,193	10,360
Montenegro	7.87	583	13,506	7.9	664	12,006
Total	393.70	22,354	17,612.1	398.8	24,117	16,544.2

NOTE: Per-capita GSP is given in thousands of YuD (Yugoslav dinars).

SOURCES: *Country Profile: Yugoslavia,* Economist Intelligence Unit, August 27, 1991. GSP data obtained from EIU Yugoslavia Country Profile, 1991.

Assessment of closure in the economic realm. One can confidently posit that Slovenes and Croats were disproportionately represented in the upper end of the income distribution, while Albanians, Macedonians, and rural Serbs comprised the low end of the distribution. However, it is likely that—controlling for relevant variables such as employment and education—the major determinant of income was not one's ethnic background but rather one's home republic or province. While there is a correlation between ethnic background and home republic, it is unlikely that ethnicity per se was a major cause of income disparities. The local economic climate and development strategies pursued by the various republics and autonomous provinces were the significant factors.

Was there a mechanism that allowed for a change of the "snapshot" presented above? As in any communist country, the state controlled the industry and placed severe restrictions on the type and size of private economic activity. The Yugoslav modification of the communist model was based on the self-management principle: a

decentralized economy based on independent enterprises, some of which were privately owned. At the same time, self-management still placed far-reaching limits on personal wealth accumulation, and it did not remove the inefficiencies built into communist economies. With only a few exceptions, Yugoslav enterprises were not internationally competitive. Private economic activity was largely limited to small industry, agriculture, and services.

The federal government attempted to mitigate the economic differences between the North and South through a system of federal transfers of funds from northern to less efficient southern firms, informal subsidies, and the burden-sharing quotas established by the Federal Fund. These practices had secondary ethnic ramifications, for they meant an outflow of resources from the North to the South.[8] As Table 3.10 shows, Slovenia's share of the burden

Table 3.10

Percentage of Contributions and Disbursements from the Federal Fund

Contributions	Croatia	Slovenia	Serbia	Vojvodina
1971–1975	34.52	22.62	29.53	13.33
1976–1990	34.27	22.02	30.28	13.23
1981–1985	33.60	20.73	32.55	13.12
1986–1988	31.80	25.63	31.20	11.37
Disbursements	Bosnia-Herzegovina	Macedonia	Montenegro	Kosovo
1971–1975	25.6	22.1	12.2	40.1
1976–1990	23.1	20.6	11.3	45.0
1981–1985	16.5	20.9	9.6	53.0
1986–1988	12.3	14.5	7.9	65.3

SOURCE: Statistical Yearbook of Yugoslavia, 1989. Adapted from Joseph T. Bombelles, "Federal Aid to the Less Developed Areas of Yugoslavia," *East European Politics and Societies,* Vol. 5, No. 3, Fall 1991.

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[8]Joseph T. Bombelles, "Federal Aid to the Less Developed Areas of Yugoslavia," *East European Politics and Societies,* Vol. 5, No. 3, Fall 1991, p. 445. From a Yugoslav perspective, Federal Fund transfers from the more developed to the less developed parts of the state were simply regional development policies to benefit the country as a whole. But to many Slovenes and Croats, the federal transfers were little more than "forced loans."

increased steadily from 20.7 percent to 25.6 percent of the total Federal Fund over the 1981–1988 period; at the same time, contributions of Serbia, Croatia, and Vojvodina decreased slightly. The utility of the fund was limited; throughout the 1970s and 1980s, inequality between republics grew steadily despite the redistribution of resources at the federal level (in any given year, the fund would redistribute approximately 2 percent of gross social product). In ethnic terms, the wealth redistribution amounted to subsidies that penalized the Slovenes and Croats especially and rewarded the Albanians and Macedonians. Without the ethnic perspective, the wealth redistribution amounted to central reallocation of funds within the country, away from the wealthy to the poorer regions.

Closure in the Social Realm

Status distinctions in Yugoslavia were clear and important. While the state took pains to ensure "equality" of ethnic representation, the very terminology used to describe and distinguish between the various ethnic groups only reinforced the different status accorded to them. Status at the national level stemmed from several sources, including the perceived "compatibility" of ethnic groups to the Yugoslav idea. A status stratification map for Yugoslavia in the late 1980s might have run along the lines presented in Table 3.11.

Status was based on a variety of distinctions, including Slav/non-Slav dichotomy, religion, level of development, and longevity as an "established nation." Yugoslav groups often perceived each other through an orientalist symbolic framework, which created a dichotomy between "civilized" and democratic groups on the one hand, and backward and authoritarian groups on the other. Such dichotomy was expressed in terms of "North versus South," "West versus East," or a combination of the two. Within the orientalist paradigm for determining national status, there were three major cleavages, determined by history of past rule, religion, and the "quality" of a people's nationalism.[9]

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[9]Milica Bakic-Hayden and Robert M. Hayden, "Orientalist Variations on the Theme 'Balkans': Symbolic Geography in Recent Yugoslav Politics," *Slavic Review,* Vol. 51, No. 1, Spring 1992, p. 3; Milica Bakic-Hayden, "Nesting Orientalisms and Their Reversals in the Former Yugoslavia," *Slavic Review,* No. 54, No. 4, Winter 1995, pp. 917–931.

Table 3.11

Status Stratification

Ethnic Group	Status
Slovenes	+ +
Croats	+ +
Serbs	+
Montenegrins	+
Macedonians	–
Muslims	– –
Hungarians	– –
Albanians	– –

+ + = high status; – – = low status
(compiled on the basis of data
presented earlier).

A common perception among Slovenes and Croats was that their history of Hapsburg rule reinforced their higher level of political and economic attainment. Conversely, they attributed the poor economic and political performance of the "Balkan" republics to centuries of Ottoman rule. Many Slovenes and Croats also believed that their adherence to Catholicism kept their cultures firmly within the civilizational boundaries of "Europe," while Orthodoxy and Islam consigned their believers (Serbs, Muslims, Albanians, Macedonians, Montenegrins) to the "Byzantine" culture of the Balkans.[10] Moreover, nationalists in the northern republics often perceived their political agenda as being more sophisticated and "civilized" than those of nationalists in other republics. This was a view that distinguished

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[10]The close correlation between religion, intensity of ethnic attachments, and rural status produced the most militant nationalists among farmers, whose traditional lifestyle and beliefs seemingly had not kept in line with the shifts among the urban population of the modernizing Yugoslav state. Empirical studies show a clear relationship between intensity of religious beliefs and ethnic intolerance in Yugoslavia. Randy Hodson, Dusko Sekulic, and Garth Massey, "National Tolerance in the Former Yugoslavia," *American Journal of Sociology,* Vol. 99, No. 6, May 1994, pp. 1534–1558. For a lengthier elaboration on the role of religious attachments in Yugoslavia, see Gerard E. Powers, "Religion, Conflict, and Prospects for Reconciliation in Bosnia, Croatia and Yugoslavia," *Journal of International Affairs,* Vol. 50, No. 1, Summer 1996, pp. 221–252.

between the supposedly "good" Western variant of nationalism in Yugoslavia and the "bad" eastern ones.[11]

The whole edifice of the orientalist set of prejudices and biases complemented the inherent status differences based on the structure of Yugoslavia. The very name of the state—translated as "South Slav land"—established a reference point for a sense of belonging and identity for people in Yugoslavia, and it reinforced a hierarchy of ethnic groups. The main south Slavic ethnic groups (Serbs, Croats, Slovenes, Montenegrins) were at the highest level. Each was a constituent "nation" of the first Yugoslavia that emerged after World War I.[12] National myths traced the continuity of each "nation" with previous states much further back in history. Although they were south Slavs, the Macedonians, as an Orthodox and a relatively new "nation" (post–World War II creation and previously considered to be either Bulgarians or Serbs), were lower than the other groups in status hierarchy.[13] Muslims were south Slavs too, but their non-Christian background and recognition in official nomenclature as a distinct "nation" only in 1968 placed them even lower in the hierarchy of Yugoslavia's ethnic groups. The Muslims' origins as Slavic converts to Islam during the Ottoman rule and their role in helping govern the territories for the Ottoman empire gave them a negative image of erstwhile "traitors" (a perception especially strong among Serbs, whose pejorative name for the Muslims was "Turks"). In any event, the less developed and more "Balkan" an ethnic group (Orthodox or Muslim, further south), the lower status it was accorded. By definition, neither Albanians nor Hungarians (as well as many smaller ethnic groups) were south Slavs, and their identification with a state called "South Slav land" rather than a neighboring state of co-ethnics was suspect in the eyes of the main Slavic groups.

All of these distinctions were informal and vehemently denied by officials, but they were implicit in the laws of the state. Formally,

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[11]Hayden and Hayden, "Orientalist Variations on the Theme 'Balkans,'" pp. 5–12.

[12]The first Yugoslav state was called the "Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes." The Montenegrins were considered little more than "mountain Serbs" and were included in the name of the country in that fashion.

[13]Pedro Ramet, "Religion and Nationalism in Yugoslavia," in Pedro Ramet (ed.), *Religion and Nationalism in Soviet and East European Politics,* Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1989, p. 300.

specific provisions in the Yugoslav constitution prohibited any status classification based on nationality. But to implement this ideal, an elaborate official vocabulary to describe ethnicity only reinforced the status differences. For example, *narod* (nation) was used exclusively in reference to the Slavic ethnic groups having only Yugoslavia as their constituent state: Slovenes, Croats, Muslims, Serbs, Macedonians, and Montenegrins. *Narodnost* (national minority) included those groups with a "mother state" outside the Yugoslav borders, such as Albanians and Hungarians (and dozens of numerically smaller groups, such as Turks or Italians) as well as those that had neither a state nor a Yugoslav republic (the Roma and Ruthenians were the most numerous of these).

The association of Serbs with the establishment of Yugoslavia and the "Yugoslav idea" (based on historical myths) led to the view held by many Serbs that their group had a right to leadership in Yugoslavia. Indeed, such views contributed to the initial development of a chasm in interwar Yugoslavia between Croats and Serbs. Much of the post–World War II history of Yugoslavia revolved around setting up sufficient checks and balances to prevent Serbs from assuming a formal and full leadership role in the country. But as the single most numerous ethnic group in Yugoslavia and with the same city serving as the capital of both Yugoslavia and Serbia, the view of Serbia and Yugoslavia as nearly synonymous was ever-present. This view was pernicious to the other ethnic groups, for it had the effect of elevating the status of Serbs as the primary ethnic group in Yugoslavia with a "natural" right to rule.

What kind of implications did the status distribution have? The decision by the drafters of the 1974 constitution to define Serbo-Croatian, Slovenian, and Macedonian as official languages was based on the status distinction between the *narod* and *narodnost,* as only those groups recognized as Yugoslav nations were entitled to have their language adopted for official use (though the constitution also guaranteed other ethnic groups the right to use their own language and alphabet). Status-based language restrictions were also found in the JNA, which did not implement constitutional provisions for language diversity and adopted Serbo-Croatian (with Latin script) as its only language of command, administration, and communication

with outside parties.[14] Especially for non-Slavic groups, the language hurdle was a significant obstacle to overcome in order to function in the Yugoslav society.

Informally, a whole range of biases and perceptions arose around the status hierarchy, with the non-Slavic and Muslim ethnic groups perceived as the most backward and "foreign" elements, and even the Orthodox Slavic groups (Montenegrins, rural Serbs, or Macedonians) were seen as less sophisticated and talented than the Croats and Slovenes. The biases tended to be self-reinforcing and undoubtedly affected myriad everyday decisions.

Was there a mechanism to change the status stratification map? Status was tied closely to ethnicity, and there was very little potential for movement between ethnic groups. One's ethnicity was determined by birth and it was seen in ascriptive terms as something inherent. One's ethnic background was generally recognized through first and last names, and sometimes through distinguishing dress and/or physical characteristics. The political system implicitly used an understanding of ethnicity as something predetermined. Only generational-type movement between ethnic groups (intermarriage and consequent ethnic identification of offspring with the ethnic identity of one parent) was possible. The political system created an elaborate way of managing the ethnic relations, based on quotas, but it never transcended the problem of ethnicity being treated as a fundamental building block and a given. The quota system sharpened the importance of ethnicity and the status differences and biases based on ethnic distinctions. The ethnic quotas only illustrated the basic collectivist outlook upheld by the state; in essence, Yugoslavia was a federation of ethnic groups (rather than individuals associated on an administrative-territorial basis), held together and legitimated by a modified communist system.

The potential alternative to ethnicity as a defining building block came in 1971 in the form of a census category of "Yugoslav."[15] Five

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[14]Anton Bebler, "The Military and the Yugoslav Crisis," *Südost-Europa,* No. 3, Vol. 40, 1991, pp. 127–144.

[15]Survey data (from 1985 and 1989) show interesting reasons for why some citizens of Yugoslavia chose to reidentify ethnically as "Yugoslav." There appear to have been four main routes: (1) young urban residents, (2) those whose parents came from

percent of Yugoslav citizens registered as "Yugoslav" in the 1981 census (this category dropped to 3 percent in the more ethnically tense conditions at the time of the 1991 census) but the category was not treated seriously in the quota-like system of apportionment of positions. Thus, in practice, the salience of ethnicity—and the attendant status differences based on ethnicity—was upheld by state policy.

The main obstacle to change in status distribution was the overall context of extremely limited mobility (only generational change) among ethnic groups. Other than that, no group was specifically targeted by state policy to inhibit further its mobility.

Overall Assessment of Closure

Based on the information presented above, Table 3.12 summarizes the degree of closure (in an overall sense as well as in the political, economic, and social realms) experienced by Yugoslavia's main ethnic groups at the end of 1989. To reiterate, closure in Weberian terms refers to the "process of subordination whereby one group monopolizes advantages by closing off opportunities to another group." In the table, a group experiencing a "low" degree of closure has the most opportunities open to it. A group experiencing a "high" degree of closure has opportunities largely closed off.

As noted earlier, closure patterns in the political realm were related to the overrepresentation of Serbs and Montenegrins in the LCY and the armed forces relative to other groups such as Slovenes and Croats, as opposed to any ethnically specific policies to keep some groups out of power. The closure pattern in the economic realm was tied to the north-south development divide that favored the northern republics of Slovenia and Croatia. At the social level, the rigid status

different ethnic backgrounds, (3) Communist party members, and (4) persons from ethnic minorities. The third route is important in its indication of similarity of identity between communist and Yugoslav, but the fourth route is most telling, because of the seeming shame and sense of inferiority aroused by being a member of one of the small *narodnost* ethnic groups. But perhaps the most revealing evidence of the attitude toward "Yugoslav" identity was the census itself: the "Yugoslav" choice was subscripted with the explanation "having no identifiable nationality." Dusko Sekulic, Garth Massey, and Randy Hodson, "Who Were the Yugoslavs? Failed Sources of a Common Identity in the Former Yugoslavia," *American Sociological Review,* Vol. 59, February 1994, pp. 83–97.

Table 3.12

Patterns of Closure by Ethnicity in Yugoslavia

	Political	Economic	Social	Overall
Serbs	Low	Moderate	Moderate/Low	Moderate/Low
Montenegrins	Low	Moderate	Moderate/Low	Moderate/Low
Croats	Moderate	Low	Low	Low
Slovenes	Moderate	Low	Low	Low
Muslims	Moderate	Moderate	High	Moderate
Macedonians	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate
Albanians	Moderate	High	High	High
Hungarians	Moderate	Low	High	Moderate

differences were tied to the determinants of status (Slav/non-Slav background, relationship to the Yugoslav idea, and religion).

The "founding nations" of Yugoslavia—Serbs/Montenegrins, Croats, Slovenes—were the most privileged in the political, economic, and social realms. Serbs and Montenegrins faced some economic and social closure. But there is much to be said for the argument that many Serbs were predisposed to believe they faced much greater social closure than they actually did because of Serb mythologies (self-perception as an oppressed people, along with a martyr complex).[16] In fact, Serbs and Montenegrins were clearly in a dominant position in the most important realm—the political. Slovenes and Croats faced some closure in the political realm because of past events (purges in Croatia) and largely self-generated group-level disincentives to participate actively in Yugoslav LCY-oriented institutions.

The Albanians show a clear and consistent pattern of facing a high degree of closure; when compared to the Serbs and Montenegrins, the Albanians are the only major group that is worse off in each of the

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[16]Marko Zivkovic, "Stories Serbs Tell Themselves: Discourses on Identity and Destiny in Serbia Since the Mid-1980s," *Problems of Post-Communism,* Vol. 44, No. 4, July–August 1997, pp. 22–29; Wolfgang Hoepken, "War, Memory, and Education in a Fragmented Society: The Case of Yugoslavia," *East European Politics and Societies,* Vol. 13, No. 1, Winter 1999, pp. 190–227.

three realms. Muslims, Macedonians, and Hungarians also faced some closure, but not to the same extent as the Albanians. Because of limited potential for change in the stratification patterns (in all three realms), the closure pattern was rigid.

A final ranking of groups along the lines of privileged to dominated—in relative terms—is seen in Table 3.13.

Table 3.13

Ranking of Ethnic Groups in Yugoslavia

Privileged	Slovenes
	Croats
	Serbs
	Montenegrins
	Macedonians
	Hungarians
↓	Muslims
Dominated	Albanians

The specific placement of ethnic groups on the privileged-dominated scale is not evenly spaced. In other words, the range of difference between the top four groups was small relative to the wide gap separating the Muslims and especially the Albanians from the privileged groups.

Based only on relative deprivation, the Albanians seem to have had the biggest grievances and the most reasons for seeking to change the status quo. The Serbs were relatively privileged, though not as much as the Slovenes and Croats. The complicating factor was that an Albanian attempt to change the status quo would have to come at the expense of the Serbs (since the Albanians inhabited a part of Serbia and lived primarily in proximity to Serbs). On the other hand, as the main "founding nation" of Yugoslavia, the Serbs were relatively deprived in comparison to the Slovenes and Croats (primarily for reasons of self-perception and due to differences in levels of development). Further usurpation of their power and standing (by the Albanians) would have placed the Serbs at an even greater disadvantage vis-à-vis the most privileged groups. In this sense, the ethnic setup of Yugoslavia and the mechanisms in place to prevent ethnic

tensions implied that the allocation of power and status followed a zero-sum game. Each group perceived its status relative to other groups, and could only improve its position by making other groups worse off. This, of course, sowed the seeds of instability and rivalry along ethnic lines.

TRANSFORMING POTENTIAL STRIFE INTO LIKELY STRIFE

This section focuses on the process of Serb mobilization in the late 1980s by addressing the five aspects of mobilization: incipient changes, galvanizing "tipping" events, leadership, resources and organization, and the foreign element. Since this chapter is a retrospective look at a mobilization that already occurred, there is no ambiguity about which group was mobilized. However, an analyst looking at Yugoslavia in the late 1980s would have been wise to scrutinize all of the major groups in Yugoslavia from the perspective of what kind of events might lead each one to mobilize for political ends.

Incipient Changes

There were at least four influential changes that, over time, shifted the demographic, economic, and political balance of power in 1980s Yugoslavia.[17]

Shift in federal-republican power balance. The decentralization process in Yugoslavia had proceeded in fits and starts since the mid-1960s. The 1974 constitution was simply an expression of a long-term trend of decentralization and the shift of real power centers toward the republics. Over the course of two decades (mid-1960s to mid-1980s), Yugoslavia moved from a strong federation to a loose confederation. As long as Tito was alive, the decentralization and power shift was more in form than in substance, and Tito's authority

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[17]The factors described here were interpreted by many ethnic Serbs as part of a conspiracy aiming to "weaken Serbia." Although analysts generally do not subscribe to the view that there was any conscious ethnically based anti-Serb intent behind them, the four trends did weaken the Serb position in Yugoslavia. Mojmir Krizan, "New Serbian Nationalism and the Third Balkan War," *Studies in East European Thought,* Vol. 46, 1994, pp. 47–68.

and—when necessary—use of repression ensured a meaningful federal policy. But with Tito's death in 1980, it became clear that the institutional arrangements he set up could not function without him. The rotating presidency and an extensive system of checks and balances led to a paralysis, a weakening of federal authority, and, eventually, an absence of any meaningful federal policy. Consequently, the republics took on a greater role in formulating and implementing policies that used to be the domain of the federal structures (such as foreign trade and foreign exchange policies). In other words, the republics truly implemented the far-reaching decentralization promulgated in the 1974 constitution. By the mid-1980s, the only federal structures with substantial influence were the LCY (and even the party was split up among republican lines), the secret police, the federal army (JNA), and—to a lesser extent—the Federal Executive Council's economic secretariats. The diminished role of federal structures implied a diminished Serbian role within Yugoslavia. It also meant that ethnic Serbs outside of Serbia proper were increasingly exposed to policies formulated by republican-level political structures controlled by other ethnic groups.

Erosion of Serbian political-administrative ethnic unity. Coupled with the changing federal-republican power balance, there was an increasing tendency toward the dispersion of ethnic Serbs among a variety of subfederal administrative units and the consequent dissipation of Serb power (in terms of the Serb ethnic group). The trend dated back to the early post–World War II period, with the drawing of republican borders that made Serbs the only ethnic group dispersed in several republics. The new interrepublican borders were even less favorable to Serbs; the war years witnessed substantial demographic changes, but the redrawing was also an attempt to diffuse Serb demographic power in the federation (to allay some of the fears of non-Serbs about Serb political power). The Serb dispersion caused by the new administrative borders was accompanied by the creation of a new "nation," the Macedonians, with their own republic, even though most Serbs previously considered Macedonians to be "southern Serbs." In addition, Montenegro attained the status of a republic, even though many Serbs considered Montenegrins to be "mountain Serbs." When Bosnia-Herzegovina reached republican status, another substantial portion of ethnic Serbs fell under the administration of a republic other than Serbia proper. Moreover, the

elevation of Muslims to a status of an official "nation" in the 1960s and their increased influence in Bosnia-Herzegovina's power structures diminished the Serbs' position within that republic. Finally, the 1974 constitution elevated two regions in Serbia—Kosovo and Vojvodina—to the status of autonomous provinces and gave them political powers approaching in many ways those of republics. The administrative change in 1974 amounted to a de facto loss of sovereignty by Serbia over 36 percent of its territory. Of all the republics, only Serbia was affected in such a fashion (in other words, all the autonomous provinces in Yugoslavia had been carved out of Serbia).

Demographic shift in Kosovo. The different population growth rates among Serbs and Albanians in Kosovo (much higher among Albanians), combined with the province's autonomy and the quota-like system of ethnic representation, amounted to a long-term displacement of Serbs from positions of political influence in Kosovo. The demographic shift was accompanied by gradual but increasing signs of greater political assertiveness among the ethnic Albanians, which culminated in the request to transform Kosovo from an autonomous province within Serbia to a full-fledged republic of Yugoslavia. Kosovo occupied a special place in Serb mythology, as the "cradle of Serbia" and a host of Serb nationalist and religious (Serb Orthodox) symbols continued to be associated with Kosovo, making Albanian demands anathema to many Serbs with a predominantly ethnic view of Yugoslavia.

Systemic economic malaise. After an initial encouraging start, the self-management system failed to deliver the economic benefits promised by Yugoslav economic planners and increasingly came to be seen as a dead end. The economic inefficiencies of the system were aggravated by the oil shocks in the 1970s and the debt problems in the 1970s and 1980s. The lack of a coordinated macroeconomic policy (leading to a spiraling inflation) and the widening economic differentiation between the northern and southern republics showed the rigidity of the system and highlighted the need for its fundamental overhaul. In the Yugoslav context, the economic problems had an ethnic dimension because of the north-south split in terms of development and the transfer of resources from the richer north to the poorer south.

In addition to the four incipient changes, there was one major unexpected event that upset the balance of power in Yugoslavia in the late 1980s.

The fall of communism. Besides allowing open questioning of the systemic fundamentals that underpinned the country (and, thus, the principles holding the country together), the fall and delegitimization of communism was also interpreted in Yugoslavia as a defeat for the Serbs, since the Serbs were most numerous in the LCY and identified most closely with the communist Yugoslav ideology. Moreover, the fall of communism was accompanied at once by serious discussions about changes in state borders (German unification) and the elaboration of plans for rapid systemic change (the Polish "shock therapy" plan). The former probably spurred the northern republics toward greater independence, while the latter opened up for them the possibility of a true evolution toward a free market system.

Tipping Events

Three main tipping events elicited and propelled Serb mobilization.

Two public memoranda by Serbian intellectuals in support of Serbian nationalist causes. The first document was a petition entitled "Against the Persecutions of Serbs in Kosovo," signed in January 1986 by 212 prominent Serbian intellectuals (associated with the Serbian Academy of Arts and Sciences and the Serbian Writers Union). The second document was a memorandum circulated in September 1986 that linked the fundamental problems of Yugoslavia with the alleged attempt to splinter and weaken the "Serbian people." It was authored by 23 members of the Serbian Academy of Arts and Sciences and was originally intended to be the product of a year-long effort to analyze the problems facing Yugoslavia. In effect, the memorandum was a call to arms for Serbs in defense of the "Serbian people."[18] Both documents gave the militant and paranoid form of Serbian nationalism legitimacy through their open acceptance and

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[18]For the development of these views and their rise to prominence among an influential portion of Serbian intellectuals, see Nicholas J. Miller, "The Nonconformists: Dobrica Cosic and Mica Popovic Envision Serbia," *Slavic Review,* Vol. 58, No. 3, Fall 1999, pp. 515–536.

promulgation of chauvinist ideas, supported by some of Serbia's best-known and respected intellectuals.

Two Kosovo appearances by Milosevic. The Serbian LCY leader, Slobodan Milosevic, made two crucial public appearances at Kosovo Polje (in the province of Kosovo), the first in April 1987 and the second in June 1989. The former established the cause of Serbian nationalism (and the alleged discrimination faced by Serbs in Kosovo) firmly in the Serbian political discourse. The latter demonstrated the appeal of the cause of Serbian nationalism to Serbs, as nearly 10 percent of all Serbs in Yugoslavia gathered in Kosovo for a show of strength. Moreover, the speech delivered by Milosevic in 1989 took place in front of the Yugoslav state President Drnovsek and Prime Minister Markovic, and it contained clear allusions to the use of force by the Serbs.[19] The rural Serbs of Kosovo had attempted to make their grievances known to the Belgrade authorities since the early 1980s,[20] but Milosevic's adoption of the cause was crucial in the mobilization process. The strong association between Kosovo Polje and Serbian mythology (site of a battle in 1389 between southern Slavs and Ottomans) gave Milosevic's appearances a powerful symbolic appeal.

The "Yogurt Revolution" in Vojvodina in October 1988. As a result of Serb mass demonstrations in the capital city of Vojvodina on October 5, 1988, the party leadership in the province was replaced with Serbian nationalists loyal to Milosevic. The demonstrators surrounded the Vojvodina assembly building and cowed the whole leadership into resigning. The example of a successful and quick ouster of a provincial leadership as a result of extralegal street-level pressure was quickly followed by a similar ouster of the leadership in Montenegro and then in Kosovo. The elite replacements with Milosevic supporters paved the way for changes to the Serbian constitution in November 1988 that, in effect, abolished the autonomy of Vojvodina and Kosovo in March 1989. The mass demonstrations in

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[19]Misha Glenny, *The Fall of Yugoslavia,* New York: Penguin Books, 1992, pp. 34–35.

[20]Sabrina Petra Ramet, "Nationalism and the 'Idiocy' of the Countryside: The Case of Serbia," *Ethnic and Racial Studies,* Vol. 19, No. 1, January 1996, p. 77; and Woodward, p. 88.

Vojvodina symbolically launched the drive to make "Serbia whole again."

Leadership

The undisputed leader of Serbian mobilization was Slobodan Milo-sevic, an able bureaucrat but little-known until 1984. There is little in Milosevic's background to suggest any strong ambition for power, though his intelligence and effectiveness in organization were evident in his early years.[21]

Milosevic came from a poor family (of Montenegrin parents) in eastern Serbia; he joined the communist party while still in high school and, being a very good student, went on to law school in Bel-grade. An effective organizer, Milosevic had a number of party posts in the Belgrade party organization early in his career before moving on to managerial positions in the state economy (including a stint as president of a large bank in Belgrade). He began to have an impact on Serbian politics after being promoted to head the Belgrade City LCY committee in 1984. Through the influence of mentors and by building a solid base of allies, Milosevic became the head of the Serbian party organization in 1986. He showed Machiavellian ruthless-ness (deposing his erstwhile mentor and patron, Ivan Stambolic, in late 1987), good political instincts, and an extreme adaptability of principles (evident in his switching back and forth from orthodox communism to populist antibureaucratic sloganeering to Serbian nationalism). He reached the apex of his power in November 1989, when he was confirmed handily as the president of Serbia in a referendum-style election. Although ethnic Albanians boycotted the election, his widespread support among Serbs was genuine and undeniable.

The crucial factor behind Milosevic's success consisted in his ability to appeal to different powerful constituencies at once. He promised communist orthodoxy to LCY conservatives, free market reforms to liberals, the safeguarding of their rights to Kosovo Serbs, and the new

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[21]For more background on Milosevic, see Veljko Vujacic, "Serbian Nationalism, Slobodan Milosevic and the Origins of the Yugoslav War," *The Harriman Review,* Vol. 8, No. 4, December 1995, pp. 25–34, and Aleksa Djilas, "A Profile of Slobodan Milose-vic," *Foreign Affairs,* Vol. 72, No. 3, Summer 1993.

rise of Serbia to Serb nationalists. He even won the initial support of Croat and Slovene republican leaders by promoting himself as an antisecessionist, pro-Yugoslav federation figure intent on clearing the path for reforms.

By all accounts, Milosevic seems to have been genuinely surprised by his meteoric rise as charismatic leader (in the Weberian sense) after his speech in Kosovo in April 1987. However, he quickly became single-minded in his devotion to the cause of Serbian nationalism and channeled his considerable organizational and intellectual skills to furthering that cause and especially to establishing himself as the unrivaled leader of the new Serbian nationalist movement.

Resources and Organization

The mobilized Serb movement was able to control and use the state machinery in the republic for its own ends. In effect, control of the Serbian state and party apparatus meant that the usual mechanisms for extraction of resources in the republic (i.e., taxes) could be harnessed to support the mobilization process and/or deny resources to those opposing it. Although Serbia had a lower per-capita level of wealth relative to Slovenia and Croatia, its large size gave it a substantial resource base at an absolute level. And, in a relative sense, no potential opponents of the mobilization within Serbia stood a chance in terms of access to resources.

Milosevic's position as the head of the Serbian party organization was crucial, as no other organization in Serbia came close to the Serbian LCY in terms of its knowledge of the resource base, the machinery to extract the resources, and the personnel to use for such ends. In addition, Milosevic was able to use his position to influence the executive and legislative branches of the republic. With access to these institutions came the ability to push legislation and other measures to extract resources (monetary, status, and positions of power) and distribute them to groups of crucial importance to the mobilization. Throughout the 1986–1989 period, Milosevic employed his bureaucratic power to support an elaborate pro-Serbian nationalist movement—aptly named the "antibureaucratic revolution."

One example of the use of state extractive machinery to support the mobilization process was the creation of "demo" networks—groups

of disgruntled young men (often unemployed) paid to participate in nationalist gatherings throughout Serbia, Kosovo, and Vojvodina. Support for demo networks was obtained from commercial enterprises, which were either encouraged or forced to contribute to the costs of organizing rallies.[22]

The control and use of LCY and state machinery in Serbia for the mobilization provided a highly developed bureaucracy to support the process. The bureaucracy included party and state administrative cells throughout Serbia. Because of Milosevic's top party position, swift purges of dissenters ensured compliance and effectiveness within the bureaucracy. The control of the Serbian LCY also led to the quick harnessing of the central media (such as the mass-circulation *Politika* newspaper and Belgrade radio and television) for the purposes of mobilization.

In a step to build an even more loyal organization to support the mobilization, Milosevic created in 1988 the "Committee for the Defense of Kosovo Serbs and Montenegrins." The committee, with branches throughout Serbia and Montenegro, overlapped the LCY but was distinct from it. At the local level, branches of the committee acted as the vanguard of the mobilization—often using the contacts and resources of the LCY or the republic. The committees organized public demonstrations or shows of support, called "meetings of truth" or "solidarity" with Serbs from Kosovo. In 1988–1989, the committees organized more than sixty such meetings in Serbia, Montenegro, Kosovo, Vojvodina, Bosnia-Herzegovina, and Croatia, with a cumulative attendance in excess of 3.5 million people. Such meetings precipitated or contributed to the collapse of the Vojvodina, Kosovo, and Montenegro leaderships.

In addition, the Serbian Orthodox Church was co-opted to support the process of mobilization. The church hierarchy supported the mobilization, in part due to its inherent anti-Catholic (anti-Croat) and anti-Islamic (anti-Albanian and anti-Muslim) positions. Specific perks that Milosevic promised the church, such as allowances to build more shrines, probably also played a part in securing the support of religious leaders. The church's network of parishes provided

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[22]Glenny, p. 34.

another organizational link to support the mobilization, allowing the process to reach elements that might otherwise have been hostile toward the communist and/or state apparatus, and, more important, it provided the organizational vehicle to reach ethnic Serbs living outside of Serbia (Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina).

In short, the Serbian ethnic mobilization between 1987 and 1989 was the best-organized political movement in Yugoslavia in the late 1980s. By taking over the Serbian LCY and state apparati, it obtained a complete hold on Serbia's political resources and institutions. Its reliance on both bureaucratic authority and traditional Serb symbolism allowed the movement to increase its ability to command resources, widen its support base, and avail itself of a pool of zealous Serb activists. By the end of 1989, the leader of the movement, Milosevic, was president of a stronger, centralized Serbia and could count on a friendly Montenegro.

Foreign Element

There is little evidence to support the claim that ethnic Serbs living outside Yugoslavia were important in the mobilization of Serbs living in Yugoslavia. Nor is there any evidence that the Serbian ethnic mobilization was supported in any significant fashion from abroad.

Overall Assessment of Mobilization

The long-term centrifugal trends in Yugoslavia (accelerating after Tito's death), the sudden demise of communism that delegitimized the political foundation of Yugoslavia, and, most important, the co-opting of the Serbian nationalist cause by a skillful and opportunistic communist leader combined to produce a powerful movement. The control and manipulation of the communist and state apparatus within Serbia to support the mobilization gave the movement access to tremendous organizational and resource bases, making it virtually unstoppable within Serbia and a powerful force within Yugoslavia as a whole.

ASSESSING THE STATE

Accommodative Capability

How inclusive and responsive were the Yugoslav political structures to popular will? The 1974 constitution established a set of ethnically inclusive federal institutions, with a multitude of guarantees of equitable and ethnically proportional access to power. However, the importance of LCY membership established indirect constraints on access to power because most ethnic groups were less attracted to LCY than were Serbs and Montenegrins. The high level of Serb involvement in the LCY organization meant that this group was over-represented in the pool of party activists and potential candidates for office, state bureaucracy, and the armed forces. The system also remained essentially authoritarian, with LCY the only legitimate political party, a heavy reliance by state institutions on the LCY for staffing, and a lack of free elections. Thus, the system was only partially accountable and was inclusive only to the extent that it was open to those who accepted a communist federal state.

What kind of potential for change in political structures existed in Yugoslavia in the late 1980s? The State Presidency, the LCY Central Committee, and the Federal Executive Council often acted as power brokers in settling disputes among regional interests. The post-Tito federal system was unwieldy and prone to paralysis and gridlock. For example, federal constitutional amendments needed to be ratified by the federal parliament and by the eight republican and provincial units before entering into force. The consensus rule meant that republics had veto power over any initiative that threatened their interests. The need to take into account so many administrative units made the process of institutional reform on any fundamental issue next to impossible. Finally, the whole edifice of communist party control (or at least oversight) of all significant political structures was rigid and not amenable to meaningful reform. The potential for fundamental change in central political structures was low, since the system was designed to prevent any strong central rule. The possibilities for change and reform at the republican or provincial level had their bounds set by the basic requirement of LCY oversight of the process.

In short, the Yugoslav system aimed at a high level of ethnic inclusiveness within the bounds of some important filters, especially the LCY as the vehicle to political access and power. The system was inflexible in that it protected LCY's monopoly role and made the federal bodies so weak as to prevent any central-level responsiveness, channeling responsiveness to republican- or provincial-level bodies.

Overall, the assessment is difficult. The decentralized Yugoslav system was far more responsive and accountable than orthodox Soviet-style communist systems, but it remained less responsive than a system with the access to power open to a wide range of views and interests. Ultimately, the best that can be said is that the Yugoslav system was the most responsive among communist systems. Once communism became delegitimized, the frame of reference changed (when it was compared to other communist systems, the Yugoslav system looked relatively responsive, but compared to prevailing liberal systems in Europe it did not fare so well).

What were the prevailing norms of governance? Since the 1974 constitution, the Yugoslav political process relied on consensus for most of its decisionmaking. This applied at both the federal and republican levels. The system tolerated considerable range of differences at the republican and provincial levels, but it guarded the LCY monopoly on power and did not hesitate to use force to prevent any challenges to that monopoly. The norms of tolerance extended only to the acceptance of dissent and a range of views within the structure of a federal communist Yugoslavia. No groups were purposely excluded from governing the country, but they had to go through the filter of LCY membership. The Yugoslav authorities expended considerable effort trying to make the LCY more attractive to members of some of the less represented ethnic groups, such as the Albanians. But the association of Serbs with the LCY and the existence of group-level antipathies between Albanians and Serbs as well as some group-level distrust between Croats and Serbs limited the LCY's attractiveness to many non-Serb or Montenegrin Yugoslav citizens. Polling data on intergroup antipathies were proscribed in Yugoslavia, but secondary evidence (clearest in the delineation of social status) suggests the persistence of residual distrust between groups and, in some cases, even hostility. Finally, collectivist norms (ethnically based) were clearly superior to individual rights, underpinned the whole structure of governance, and conditioned individual

responses. In other words, the ethnically based manner of classify-
ing individuals was a pillar of Yugoslavia, upheld by all Yugoslav
institutions.

What was the level of cohesion among the ruling elites? At the fed-
eral level, the Yugoslav officials were divided substantially in their
outlooks and deadlocked on the direction of the future evolution of
the state. The veto power awarded to all republics made consensus
necessary for decisions, and the different policy outlooks of the
republics made consensus next to impossible to achieve. To varying
degrees, all republican governments had plans to reform Yugoslav
institutions at the end of the 1980s. The blueprints varied from fur-
ther decentralization (proposed by the Slovenes) to strengthening of
the federal organs (proposed by the Serbs under Milosevic). Eco-
nomically based evaluations of the costs and benefits of a changed
federal structure (with the southern republics having the most to lose
from further decentralization) also affected the outlooks. The grow-
ing economic malaise made consensus even more difficult, with
many republics protesting against the austerity measures proposed
by prime ministers Mikulic (who resigned when the Federal Assem-
bly failed to adopt his 1989 budget) and Markovic. The lack of cohe-
sion among the ruling elites precluded any change in the way conflict
was mediated at the federal level and contributed to the gridlock.

In conclusion, the accommodative capability of the Yugoslav state
was low, as it was principally a function of the accommodative pre-
dispositions of the republics, channeled through a federal body. No
Yugoslav institution was truly above the republics, a situation that
made the federal state almost powerless in its attempt to forge or to
force consensus on crucial reform decisions.[23] The consensus-based
approach to policymaking was suited for a period in which different
interests maintained reconcilable political agendas. Such agendas—
at least in theory—remained compatible as long as there was a
common acceptance of communist ideology and a decentralized
federal structure as the guiding principles in Yugoslav politics.
Milosevic's ethnic mobilization of the Serbs and his attempt to
recentralize Yugoslavia (with the Serbs playing a much greater role in
such a state) subverted the state from within, paralyzing its already

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[23]Woodward, pp. 84–85.

low ability to adapt and to change. A paradoxical situation ensued, in that the leaders of the Serbian ethnic mobilization against the state also attained important posts at the state and federal levels.

Fiscal and Economic Capability

The fiscal health of Yugoslavia was precarious at best throughout the 1980s, with several macroeconomic indicators registering economic stagnation. Deficit spending reached alarming levels by the mid-1980s. Moreover, the decentralized Yugoslav state had little power to increase its revenues or implement radical economic reform, as the republics had control over many macroeconomic tools and trade instruments.

While the 1953–1981 period saw Yugoslav gross social product (GSP) average an annual growth of 6.7 percent, in the 1980s GSP growth slowed considerably, principally as a result of the 1979–1980 rise in oil prices and the increased burden of interest payments and principal repayment on accumulated debt. The economic crisis at the end of the 1980s caused a steady decline in GSP in 1987 and 1988, with a slight increase in 1989 (see Table 3.14).[24]

Table 3.14

Trends in Yugoslav Gross Social Product

	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989
Total					
At current prices (YuD bn)	1.1	2.2	4.9	14.9	221.4
At 1972 prices (YuD bn)	393.7	407.8	403.1	397.1	398.6
Real change (%)	0.5	3.6	−1.2	−1.5	0.4
Per capita					
At current prices (YuD)	47.6	94.5	209.0	632.2	9,345.7
At 1972 prices (YuD)	17,029	17,525	17,212	16,848	16,826
Real change (%)		2.9	−1.8	−2.1	−0.1

YuD = new Yugoslavian dinars.

SOURCES: Indeks; National Bank of Yugoslavia, adapted from the EIU Yugoslavia Country Profile, 1991.

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[24]*Country Profile: Yugoslavia,* Economist Intelligence Unit, August 27, 1991.

Inflation continued to spiral upward, reaching 150 percent in 1987 and 1,950 percent in 1989. In 1989, the total Yugoslav debt was over US$20 billion. In per-capita terms, Yugoslavia had one of the highest foreign debt levels in Europe (see Table 3.15).

From 1987 onward, the Yugoslav federal government engaged in substantial deficit spending. In 1987, revenues contributed less than half to federal spending; the deficit situation remained serious but improved in 1988 and 1989. The 1980s also saw the rapid depreciation of the dinar, which eventually raised import prices and contributed to a slowdown in import growth and low rates of consumer and investment expenditure.[25]

By the late 1980s, the resource extraction potential of the federal government was limited at best. The slowdown in domestic consumption and economic reform decreased the federal revenue base. This problem was compounded by the fact that republics were entitled to the same taxable resources as the federal government (mainly turnover taxes and assessments by local and federal self-management communities) in addition to income and personal property taxes. The 1974 constitution virtually eliminated direct federal expenditures on investment—partly for this reason, in 1990 the federal government accounted for only 25 percent of total government

Table 3.15

Yugoslav Debt Data, 1984–1988 (in US$ million)

	1984	1986	1988
Gross national product	44,274	64,664	49,782
International reserves	1,732	2,189	3,074
External debt, excluding IMF	17,691	19,414	20,373
Principal repayments	1,567	1,540	1,773
Net flows	–120	–886	52
Interest payments	2,338	1,777	1,401

SOURCE: World Bank, World Debt Tables, 1989–1990.

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[25]*International Economic Appraisal: Yugoslavia,* Economist Intelligence Unit, February 29, 1988.

spending in Yugoslavia. The impotence of federal structures on fiscal matters was aggravated by the inability to set a strong monetary policy. In fact, reforms in the 1970s limited the control of the National Bank of Yugoslavia over commercial banks and made it almost powerless to carry out national monetary policy.[26]

In all, by 1989, the Yugoslav state was not backed by a readily identifiable ruling elite—the six republics formed a loose core constituency that supported the federal structure. The fact that the wealthiest republics in Yugoslavia were unwilling to increase their financial contributions to the central authorities in Belgrade (given their own revenue problems resulting from the general economic contraction) made the cash-strapped federal government even weaker.

In conclusion, all indicators show that by the late 1980s, the fiscal and economic resources and capabilities available to the Yugoslav federal ruling bodies were extremely low.

Coercive Capability

Yugoslavia in the 1980s had four major security institutions, each with a separate command and control arrangement: The Yugoslav People's Army (or the JNA, the regular armed forces of Yugoslavia); the Territorial Defense Forces (TDF); forces controlled by the Secretariat for Internal Affairs; and Republican and provincial police forces.

The 1974 constitution named the Presidency as "supreme body in charge of administration and command of the armed forces." However, the 1974 constitution also limited the scope of JNA interventions in internal affairs. In addition, the JNA's mission to protect the constitutional order was under the authority of the federal presidency and therefore subject to a majority vote among the republic chiefs. Within the constitutional framework, the JNA would not have been able to turn legitimately against a republican government.

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[26]Because the credit policies of commercial banks were relatively unchecked and because they were organized on a republic basis, the banks were powerful in maintaining the serious imbalance of investment and development among the regions of Yugoslavia.

Operational command of the armed forces rested with the minister of national defense.

The TDF were formed in 1968 as an integral part of the Total National Defense Doctrine (aimed at denying the use of territory to the enemy through a total war of all citizens, using guerrilla tactics if necessary). The TDF were mobilizable forces set up to prevent control of territory by an invader, and they were characterized by a high degree of decentralization and independence. While responsible to JNA commands, TDF units were funded by local LCY bodies and were commanded by local TDF officials. This mixed command arrangement was a source of friction between the republics and the JNA, and led to a centralization drive by the JNA to consolidate its control over the TDF (since the republics were still required to provide infrastructure and logistical units operating on their territory). The Kosovo TDF was dismantled after the Albanian riots in 1981.[27]

The Secretariat for Internal Affairs controlled the State Security Service (SDB) and the People's Militia. The People's Militia, which numbered more than 15,000 troops, operated numerous armored vehicles equipped with machine guns, water cannons, smoke and tear gas launchers for crowd control and riot situations, armored personnel carriers, and helicopters.[28] These internal security troops were well paid, heavily indoctrinated, experienced, and reliable. They could be deployed in times of political unrest or disorder when the local police were expected to side with the populace against federal authorities.[29]

The substantial republican role in securing internal order was granted by the National Defense Act of 1974. In addition to its militia (police) forces and intelligence agencies, each republic had its own Secretariat of Internal Affairs, which maintained control over special forces with specific riot-control capabilities.[30] After the Serb takeover in Kosovo, large numbers of special units from Serbia's Sec-

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[27]Bebler, p. 137.

[28]Isby, p. 395.

[29]The Secretariat for Internal Affairs also controlled 15,000 troops in border guard units and a coast guard (part of the border guard) comprising sixteen patrol boats in 1990.

[30]Isby, p. 397.

retariat for Internal Affairs were deployed in the province. The Kosovo and Vojvodina militia and internal affairs forces came under the direct control of Serbian authorities after the takeover. While the federal Secretariat for Internal Affairs maintained nominal control over republican counterparts, events in Serbia demonstrated that the latter enjoyed significant operational autonomy and, in fact, was more responsive to the republican than to the federal authorities.

Who served in the apparati of violence? Serbs and Montenegrins were overrepresented in the officer corps of the armed forces, and especially in the ground forces. At the conscript level, however, every JNA unit included soldiers of each of the main ethnic groups. With the exception of the Serbs, conscripts usually were not trained or stationed in their home republics or provinces. This practice in theory ensured troop loyalty during internal security actions by the army.[31]

Although composition data of the TDF and republican internal security forces are not available, it is safe to assume that membership of these units roughly reflected the ethnic composition of their home republic or province. Given the general overrepresentation of Serbs in the federal bureaucracy, one would also expect the SDB and the People's Militia to have been predominantly staffed by ethnic Serbs.

What kinds of norms were there in place toward the use of violence domestically? Until Milosevic's rise in the middle and late 1980s, the state had used force against a number of attempts at ethnic mobilization, whether the mobilization took place through LCY channels or outside of them. It had a reputation for guarding jealously the monopoly role of the LCY in Yugoslav politics and dealing harshly with any opponents.

Internal deployments of security forces occurred in Kosovo throughout the 1980s. Small-scale disorders were quelled by units from the federal and Serbian Secretariats for Internal Affairs, the People's Militia, the SDB, and the local militia. The JNA became involved in

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[31]This principle was used also in other communist countries, including the USSR. The concept was that, for example, Macedonian soldiers would likely have fewer reservations about using force to restore order among the population of Croatia than against their fellow Macedonians.

Kosovo when the riots escalated to general unrest in 1981. Under a declaration of national emergency, the army intervened to stop demonstrations by ethnic Albanians beyond the control of the People's Militia and local militia. Hundreds of citizens were injured, and some were killed during the JNA's suppression of the demonstrations. Up to one-fourth of the JNA's total manpower remained in Kosovo to maintain order throughout the 1980s.

More important, the armed forces maintained different norms toward domestic use (or threatened use) of force depending on the republic. The JNA showed willingness to intervene and uphold orthodox communist and pro-Yugoslav values in Slovenia in 1988–1989. On the other hand, the rise of Milosevic to power and the takeover of the Kosovo and Vojvodina governments was either applauded or not opposed by a wide segment of the officer corps.[32] JNA support for Milosevic seems to have been based on ideological affinity rather than on ethnic support for his nationalist program. However, Serb overrepresentation in the armed forces may have inhibited the possibility of armed intervention against Serbian ethnic mobilization.

Was the force suitable for domestic use? The apparati of violence had limited preparation to handle low-level domestic conflict. The federal military, committed to its Total National Defense doctrine, was a modern conventional force, lacking the capabilities or training to effectively handle internal conflict. The TDF had a defensive regional focus and were neither suitable for nor relied upon by federal authorities for internal security. The People's Militia constituted a well-armed and trained force able to quell even large riots. The special riot control units of republic-level internal security forces also could handle some domestic unrest. However, no security organ in Yugoslavia had a rapid-reaction force for the prevention of serious, large-scale uprisings and conflicts. The lack of military units earmarked for controlling serious disorder had negative repercussions in Kosovo. Ethnic Albanian rebellions that could not be handled by Internal Affairs forces were suppressed by heavy-handed JNA interventions.

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[32]Laura Silber and Allan Little, *Yugoslavia: Death of a Nation,* New York: Penguin Books, 1997, pp. 58–69.

In conclusion, the coercive means of the Yugoslav state against internal opponents were substantial in terms of riot suppression and the number of potential apparati that could be used. But these apparati lacked the capabilities to tackle low-intensity conflict (security threats that were more serious than riots but stopped short of war). In addition, some key internal security organs, such as the republican secret police and militia, often disregarded the formal supervisory role of the federal Secretariat for Internal Affairs and answered to the republican authorities.

The most important limitation on the apparati of violence in late-1980s Yugoslavia were the constraints on their use against a constituent part of the Yugoslav state. Because deployment against a republic or province relied on consensus, it was likely that the given republic or province would veto the deployment. Against such objections, deployment of federal forces would amount to the breaking of specific provisions of the constitution. Complicating the matter, the TDF were regionally focused and provided readily available sources of military expertise and assets that could be exploited by republics. In case of a supraconstitutional deployment of the federal forces, the TDF could serve as the core of the republican armed forces, raising the specter of a civil war.

STRATEGIC BARGAINING

All the assessments so far regarding the mobilization of ethnic Serbs and the capabilities of the Yugoslav federal state to deal with such a mobilization provide the points of reference for thinking about the interaction between them while using the categories and matrices of the framework presented in Chapter Two. This section categorizes the group and state types on the basis of their capacities. The matrices provide a way to think conceptually about their interaction.

Measuring the Group's Capacities

Concerning the leadership of the mobilized Serbs, all of the observations compiled imply that Milosevic was confident and secure in his position by early 1990. His victory in a popular referendum in late 1989 consolidated his standing and gave him prestige that no other Yugoslav leader could approach. Milosevic took risks and gambled

(usually with success) throughout his meteoric rise to power. He appealed to all constituencies when he needed to but did not hesitate to paint as adversaries any number of groups. Although seemingly surprised by the rapid and widespread support his nationalist rhetoric provoked among ethnic Serbs, he seized upon the issue with determination and single-mindedness. Thus, the assessment of leadership is "strong."

As for the resource support of the mobilized Serbs, all of the earlier observations imply that the coalition Milosevic orchestrated had good resource support, in both an absolute and relative sense. The mobilized ethnic Serbs had sufficient support to meet all near-term objectives (reaching all ethnic Serbs so as to include them in the mobilization process) as well as prospects of even greater support (from Montenegro and the ethnic Serbs of Bosnia-Herzegovina and Croatia) as the movement gained momentum. The available support was suited to the goal of recentralizing Yugoslavia under a more dominant Serbian leadership. Thus, the assessment of resource support is "good."

Regarding popular support for Serb mobilization, Milosevic and his allies had substantial support among ethnic Serbs. Group mobilization had proceeded to focus on the ethnic Serbs inhabiting Serbia, but the ethnic Serbs in other republics provided an expandable base of support. Moreover, sympathy or potential for coerced support for the mobilization existed among other ethnic groups (Montenegrins and Macedonians, respectively). Thus, the assessment of popular support is "broad."

Based on these assessments, the mobilized Serbs are a type A group. The capacities of such a group are as follows:

    Accommodative: high;

    Sustainment: high;

    Cohesiveness: high.

Measuring the State's Capacities

Concerning the leadership of the state, all the observations compiled paint a picture of the Yugoslav federal structure having an extremely

weak leadership capacity. Indeed, an independent federal leadership was difficult to identify because it was so constrained by the will of the republics. Many federal institutions were chaired by republican-level elites, more loyal to the republic than to the federal structures. The collective federal leadership was intimidated by Milosevic and conscious of his popular base of power. It was neither willing nor able to make decisions, let alone take risks. The institutionalized conflict-defusing consensus rule meant that any republic had veto power and could prevent actions hostile to its interests. Thus, the assessment of leadership is "weak."

As for the fiscal position of the state, the federal regime was in a precarious and extremely weak situation. The state had engaged in deep deficit spending. With an eroding tax base and limited control over raising revenue, the federal machinery was in no position to spend more nor reallocate any significant funds. Opposition from several republics to any recentralization of economic power as well as a heavy foreign debt burden closed off any options for increased revenue generation. Thus, the assessment of fiscal position is "weak."

Regarding the regime type of the state, this capacity is not as clear-cut as the others. The fundamental problem is that the regime was inclusive once past the "filter" of the LCY. Elections were not fully competitive, since the LCY had a monopoly on power. At the same time, the LCY "filter" was little more than a pledge of acceptance of a unified Yugoslavia with a modified state socialist system. A broad range of opinions existed in the sphere of how reformist the state socialist system should be (spanning the ideological space from a regulated market economy to orthodox communist views emphasizing the need for greater state control). The 1974 constitution also allowed for a relatively high degree of grass-roots representation at the federal legislative level. The media remained under some constraints, primarily to prevent ethnic nationalists from having a mouthpiece for their views (until Milosevic subverted the system from within). Limits on executive power were so far-reaching that they virtually stripped away most of the executive's usual powers and gave them to the republics. There were limits to the norms of tolerance of dissent, primarily centering on the idea of accepting LCY role and prevention of ethnic sloganeering. However, it is also clear that wide-ranging regional differentiation and devolution of power to the republics was accepted, and individual (republic-based) determina-

tion of economic developmental paths was recognized. Thus, despite some exclusion of non-LCY forces in the federal political process, the institutional arrangements in Yugoslavia remained more inclusive than not. The state expended considerable efforts to ensure that political access was proportionally distributed among ethnic groups, and it attempted to include citizens of all ethnic backgrounds in the political process. Finally, the analysis needs to take into account the nature of the challenging group. Since the filter of LCY actually heightened Serb influence in the state, it would make little sense to code the state as exclusive when thinking of how it might deal with Serb ethnic mobilization. If the challenge to the state came from mobilized Croats or Slovenes, there would have been more justification to code the state as exclusive. Thus, the assessment of regime type is "inclusive."

Based on these assessments, the federal Yugoslav state is a type E state. The capacities of such a state are as follows:

Accommodative: high;

Sustainment: low;

Coercive: low.

Outcome of Bargaining and Preferences for Violence

Based on the matrix showing the preferences of the mobilized group, a type A group has the following preferences toward a type E state: (1) negotiate, (2) exploit, and (3) intimidate. Based on the matrix showing the preferences of the state toward a mobilized group, a type E state has the following preferences toward a type A group: (1) negotiate, (2) exploit, and (3) surrender.

Comparing group and state preferences leads to the striking conclusion that the potential for violence in the dyadic encounter between a strong mobilized ethnic Serb group and the federal state of Yugoslavia was low. The preferred Serb strategy was "negotiate," with a hedging strategy of exploitation or perhaps even outright intimidation in order to achieve its goals. The preferred federal Yugoslav strategy was "negotiate," with a hedging strategy of exploitation or outright surrender. Quite simply, in real-world terms, the federal Yugoslav state did not have the capacity to resist a

determined Serb effort—especially based on republican authority—to subvert the state.

The choices of strategy bear out the options available to the two sides. If the preferred peaceful negotiations to recentralize the federation under Serbian direction had failed, the Serbs had the option of being more forceful in the bargaining process. They had the resources to do so, though they would have preferred a cheaper—peaceful—takeover of the federal structures. On the other hand, the federal state could only hope that the peaceful bargaining would succeed. A more forceful bargaining posture, exploitation, was more risky, for it was essentially a bluffing strategy. Against a strong mobilized group like the ethnic Serbs under Milosevic, the strategy risked that the bluff might be called. The surrender option as a third choice only illustrates that the range of choices for federal Yugoslavia was between peaceful or more forceful bargaining. The option of the use of force was not really available to federal Yugoslavia in that dyadic encounter. The state probably would capitulate in the face of more determined Serb moves.

What is telling about the choice of strategies is that the Serbs dealt from a position of strength. They could up the ante and escalate their threats in the bargaining process and back them up if necessary. In response, federal Yugoslavia could not counter the Serbs. It was unable to deal with the challenge and was likely to back down if the Serbs increased the pressure.

The Course of Events

The strategic choices outlined above approximate closely the course of events. Serb goals became abundantly clear in 1990: either the federation would be amended to assure the protection of ethnic Serbs throughout the state, or the federation would be dissolved, with republican boundaries altered to create one single enlarged Serbian state.[33] The Serb goals were neither palatable nor acceptable to the other republics (save the Serbian ally Montenegro). The relatively wealthy Slovenia and Croatia had the most to lose, and they

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[33]Steven L. Burg, "Why Yugoslavia Fell Apart," *Current History,* November 1993, pp. 357–363.

moved toward independence. Since the Slovenes recognized that their republic was of little interest to Serbia, they moved the fastest. The Serbs threatened force to elicit compliance from the other republics on a number of occasions and came close (one vote short in the federal Presidency) to succeeding. The behavior illustrates the "exploit" secondary strategy. The federal structures could neither prevent the Serbs from using force outside the constitutional framework (which they did from March 1991 onward, in a turn to an "intimidation" strategy) nor force them to back down. Indeed, by mid-1991, the state effectively chose the "surrender" option when it fell apart. In fact, state collapse was the final outcome of the bargaining process.

To be sure, the administrative machinery within the republics continued to function, though the republican role now increased to that of independent state actors because of the collapse of the federal state. And the inability of the federal state to deter ethnic Serb mobilization implied that other republics had to resort to their own means to resist the gradual increase of Serbian influence within the federation. Thus, the very low likelihood of conflict between mobilized ethnic Serbs and the federal authorities actually increased the likelihood of unmediated conflict between the various republics, eventually tearing down the constitutional fabric and splitting federal institutions along ethnic lines.

The republics and provinces where ethnic Serb mobilization was successful (Serbia, Kosovo, Vojvodina, Montenegro) formed a successor entity, still named Yugoslavia. The other four republics became independent. Whereas the absence of any significant ethnic Serb population in Slovenia made that republic of little interest to Milosevic, Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina soon plunged into lengthy strife consisting of a mixture of civil war and overt and/or covert intervention by Serbia on behalf of the ethnic Serbs in these two republics. Macedonia had few ethnic Serbs and rated low in the Serb mobilization scheme; the preventive deployment of outside forces on Macedonian territory also may have helped to keep that republic out of the wars of Yugoslav succession.

Had an analyst, at the end of 1989, used a framework similar to the one presented here to examine the situation in Yugoslavia, the following intelligence needs would have become apparent:

- The interrelationship and coordination between the channels of ethnic Serb mobilization (Serbian communist party and administrative apparatus, Orthodox Church, and the "committees for the defense of Serbian people");

- The influence of Milosevic's supporters in the Yugoslav apparati of violence;

- Countermobilization strategies in republics outside of Serbia;

- The means of control by Milosevic over provincial and/or republican leaders allied to him or installed by him;

- The potential appeal of non-ethnically-driven postcommunist evolution in Serbia and Montenegro;

- The non-Serb republics' willingness to increase the strength and resources of the federation.

Greater attention to these topics might have allowed a better preparation for the breakup, or the formulation of policies that might have prevented a violent breakup.

FINAL OBSERVATIONS

The framework presented here deals only with the dyad of the mobilized ethnic Serbian group and the federal Yugoslav state. The model was applied to analyze the initial steps of ethnic mobilization and rivalry that eventually led to the disintegration of Yugoslavia. The model is not suitable for examining the events immediately preceding the outbreak of the wars of succession in the final stages of Yugoslavia's unraveling (early 1991), as those conflicts have more to do with interstate wars in highly fluid conditions than with bargaining processes internal to one state. Deterrence theory may be more fruitful for modeling the strategic choices open to the various republics in Yugoslavia in late 1990 and early 1991. The case examined here is interesting in the sense that a strong leader appealing to ethnic attachments rose within the governing structure of Serbia and, consequently, used the political institutions in Serbia against the Yugoslav state.

Use of the model in reference to the breakup of Yugoslavia illustrates the following main points:

- Long-term trends of diminishing Serb influence within Yu-goslavia and a zero-sum competition between the ethnic Albani-ans and Serbs in Kosovo propelled ethnic mobilization of Serbs in the middle and late 1980s;

- The hijacking of the Serbian communist party and republican apparatus by the leaders of the Serbian ethnic mobilization made the movement a virtually unstoppable force within Serbia and an extremely potent force within Yugoslavia as a whole;

- The federal Yugoslav state was too weak to deal with a deter-mined challenge from its strongest constituent part;

- The preferred strategy of the mobilized ethnic Serbs vis-à-vis the federal state was peaceful renegotiation of the arrangements governing the federation, but the secondary and hedging strate-gies of the movement relied on force;

- The preferred strategy of the federal state vis-à-vis the mobilized ethnic Serbs was peaceful negotiation, since it lacked the means to back up more forceful strategies;

- The potential for violence in the dyadic encounter between a strong mobilized ethnic Serb group and the federal state of Yugoslavia was low;

- The very low likelihood of conflict between mobilized ethnic Serbs and the federal authorities actually increased the likeli-hood of unmediated conflict between the various republics, eventually tearing down the constitutional fabric and splitting federal institutions along ethnic lines.

In retrospect, the strategic choices identified for each side were fol-lowed closely as events unfolded in 1990–1991. In that sense, the model's accuracy was validated with respect to the breakup of Yugoslavia. The model captured well the strategic preferences of the two actors. And although the analysis undertaken here used January 1990 as the cutoff date for data gathering, the same analysis could have been undertaken in mid-1987, with a similar outcome. While 1987 was an early point in the mobilization of the ethnic Serbs, most of the crucial mobilization factors were already in place and should have appeared as important elements of an intelligence assessment at that time. In addition, the capacity of the federal state did not

change substantially between 1987 and 1989–1990. Thus, the model might have been a useful and accurate tool for analysts thinking about the potential for ethnically based conflict in Yugoslavia.

There is a potential built-in bias in using the model to evaluate a retrospective case, in that in hindsight it is easy to identify the crucial events in the evolution of the ethnic conflict in Yugoslavia. However, the model specifies strict and objective guidelines about the data to be evaluated. There is room for an individual analyst to make judgments and assessments, but only within the constraints delineated by the model. As such, the above analysis is far from an exercise in retelling a now-familiar story. The framework points to what the analyst should have been looking for, and the parsimony of the approach is one of its assets. So even though the story of the Yugoslav breakup is now well-known, and most specialists subscribe to the notion that Milosevic's harnessing of Serbian nationalism brought about the end of Yugoslavia,[34] the framework applied here allows us to see how the course of events might have been anticipated better.

Perhaps the best use of the model and the analysis contained herein is the clear linkage between specific goals, the resources amassed, and the strategies and choices open to both the mobilized group and the state. There was nothing irrational about the strategies pursued by the federal Presidency or by Milosevic as Yugoslavia slid into collapse. The state's breakdown was tied to the logic of ethnic mobilization, a leader who chose to exploit ethnic attachments by hijacking the administrative machinery of a strong constituent member of the federal state, and the economic, organizational, and coercive resources available to each side. The resource base determined the range of choices between accommodation and strife. The fact that Milosevic used an aggressive set of strategies (including the threat of force) stemmed from the resources he amassed vis-à-vis the federal state. Similarly, the ineffective and weak federal attempts to deal with Milosevic illustrated the fundamental lack of resources available to the state vis-à-vis a militant mobilized ethnic Serbian group.

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[34]Sabrina P. Ramet, *Balkan Babel: The Disintegration of Yugoslavia from the Death of Tito to Ethnic War,* 2nd edition, Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1996; see also Silber and Little, op. cit.