

Nationalism and Globalization

East and West

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Nationalism and Globalization

East and West

Edited by Leo Suryadinata

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Contents

<i>Contributors</i>	<i>vii</i>
<i>Preface</i>	<i>ix</i>
1 “Yugoslav” Nationalism at the End of the Twentieth Century <i>Trond Gilberg</i>	1
2 Nation-Building and Nation-Destroying: The Challenge of Globalization in Indonesia <i>Leo Suryadinata</i>	38
3 Globalization and Singapore’s Search for Nationhood <i>Jon S. T. Quah</i>	71
4 Globalization and Nationalism in the United States: A Historical Perspective <i>Joel Hodson</i>	102
5 Globalization and the Challenges to Malay Nationalism as the Essence of Malaysian Nationalism <i>Halim Salleh</i>	132

6	Nationalism and Globalization in Australia <i>Michael Wesley</i>	175
7	Nation, Nationalism and Globalization in France <i>Laurent Metzger</i>	200
8	National Identity and Adapting to Integration: Nationalism and Globalization in Japan <i>Takashi Inoguchi</i>	216
9	Globalization, Nationalism, and the Modernization of the United Kingdom of Great Britain <i>David Martin Jones</i>	234
10	Nationalities, Nationalism, and Globalization: The Case of China <i>Chang Pao-min</i>	258
11	Grasping the Nettle: Indian Nationalism and Globalization <i>Kripa Sridharan</i>	294
12	Nationalism and Globalization in the Russian Federation at the Millennium <i>Frank Cibulka</i>	319
13	Conclusion <i>Leo Suryadinata</i>	344
	<i>Index</i>	356

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≈ Preface ≈

After the end of the Cold War, nationalism re-emerged as a challenge to world order. Many countries have disintegrated as a result of ethnic and religious conflicts, which have been interpreted as a clash of different types of nationalism. The former Soviet Union and Yugoslavia are two examples. The situation in the Balkans is often cited as an example of national disintegration. Some have cited nationalism and religion as two important factors that have disrupted the Balkans, but others have attributed it to globalization as the major culprit. What have been the factors contributing to conflict and national disunity? Is the situation in the Balkans unique? Why do some countries remain intact? Is it only a matter of time before other multi-ethnic countries will disintegrate?

It was the challenge of nationalism and globalization that led to the undertaking of this project. Apparently, the roles that these two forces play and the impact of globalization on the countries differ. A comparative study was initiated to find the answers to questions raised. This was not an easy task but we felt that the project was a worthwhile one.

The first hurdle was the definition of the terms themselves. There is no general agreement on the definitions of both nationalism and globalization as they are interpreted in accordance with the concept and theory used by each individual scholar. However, if there is no basic agreement on the key terms and concepts, a comparative study or any

generalizations will not be possible. For this project, it was suggested that the paper-writers adopt working definitions of the key words, or at least, to use some of the definitions in their study. The definitions have been taken from well-known writers but their selection reflects my understanding and perhaps bias on the subject matter. For instance, I view nationalism as a concept which is related to nation or nationhood, but I do not argue which one comes first. I also assume that nationalism is related to the concept of *ethnie* or ethnicity, but they are not identical. They are also different from the concepts of race, state, citizen or citizenship.

Key Terms Used

Below are the suggested definitions of the key terms used in the project:

- *Ethnie* or ethnic group is linked to assumed common descendant. Max Weber and many sociologists use it to refer to a group of people who share a common ancestry — real or imagined — and a common culture. However, the second component should be considered as secondary, because not all ethnic groups share an identical culture. I would like to suggest that *ethnie* is used primarily for a group of people who believe that they share a common ancestry;
- Nation is a socio-cultural and political concept. I would like to suggest that Rupert Emerson's definition of nation be adopted. It is defined in terms of a sense of belonging to a community of people who share the same heritage and would like to share the same future. It commands the "supreme loyalty" of the people who are prepared to die for it. A common language is an important component of a nation.
- There are at least two kinds of nation: ethnic-nation and social nation. The former is a nation based on one ethnic group; the latter is a nation based on multi-ethnic groups.
- Nationalism is hence defined as an expression of "national" feelings. It often takes the form of a movement to glorify the "nation" which is either in existence or in the making.
- Race is used to refer to physical characteristics, for instance, physical features and skin colour.
- State is a political entity where there are three major components — a sovereign government, a people, and a territory.
- Citizen or citizenship is linked to a state. It is a political and legal concept rather than a socio-cultural one. Therefore, citizenship should be differentiated from nationhood. Ideally, citizenship should

also be differentiated from nationality, but many continue to use them interchangeably as if the citizen is a member of a nation.

- Globalization is used to mean a process of globalizing but it is used here to refer to the following: “the intensification of worldwide relations which link distant localities in such a way that local happenings are shaped by events occurring miles away and vice versa” (Anthony Giddens).

The Proposed Study

Scholars of nationalism often point to Western Europe, especially France, Germany and Italy, as the first countries where nationalism was born during the late eighteenth century. Since then, nationalism has spread all over the world. However, some scholars argue that quite a few Asian nations are older than those of the West. Others maintain that nations in East Asia are unique — the concept of Western nationalism cannot be compared with Asian experiences. How valid are these claims? Is it just a matter of different definitions or the existence of different historical experiences?

However, there is no doubt that both Western and Asian nations have faced the challenges of globalization in recent decades, and they have become more intense since the 1990s. The decline of communism and socialism as ideologies, the decreasing importance of national boundaries for capital, companies, and even labour, have had profound implications for national identity. Nevertheless, the impact of globalization on the states is not identical. It has been greater on some compared to others. What have been the effects? Did it lead to stronger nationalism or national disintegration? What happened to national identity? Is the concept of nation still relevant in the era of globalization?

To answer the questions raised above, we selected twelve countries — six from the West and six from Asia — for study. The selection of these countries was based on the availability of experts that we could mobilize, but the countries ultimately chosen represent a wide range of national experiences. In Europe, France is an example of the first Western modern nation, assumed to be homogeneous. The United Kingdom is a modern multi-ethnic nation. Yugoslavia is an example of nation-building that failed. Both the United States and Australia are immigrant states, one of which has arguably achieved “nationhood”, while the other is still searching for it.

In Asia, Japan is an example of a homogeneous nation. Both India and China are examples of multi-ethnic nations, but the former does not have a dominant ethnic group while the latter does. Indonesia is an

example of a nation based on a lingua franca. Malaysia is a multi-ethnic nation with an indigenous majority. Singapore is an immigrant country in search of nationhood.

Elements to be Included in each Case Study

We are aware that each country has unique features that cannot be subsumed in a general framework. Nevertheless, to make the studies comparable, each paper-writer was urged to include the following elements:

1. Origins of nation: the role of ethnicity, race and religion; a brief discussion on the nation and their major components.
2. Concepts of citizen, nation and ethnic; state-defined and community-defined ethnic and nation.
3. Presence and absence of “national indicators” or “national markers” (for example, national symbols, national language, national education, “national religion”, national institutions, etc).
4. Nation-building/nation preserving and ethnic groups: strategies and process. State policy to promote nation-building and preservation of the nation should be discussed. Although a historical account is needed, the emphasis should be more on recent/current periods.
5. Any separatist movement or major ethnic riots or ethnic war?
6. Challenges to nationhood, including globalization and immigration.
7. Is nationalism a force leading to integration or disintegration in the respective country? What are the problems and prospects of nationalism and globalization.

Of course, the above served only as a guideline. Some writers have developed their own themes, but they have addressed some, if not all, of the issues outlined in the above framework. The findings of the project are summarized in the conclusion.

Leo Suryadinata

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“Yugoslav” Nationalism at the End of the Twentieth Century

TROND GILBERG

Balkan Nationalism and the “Curse of History”

The tragic events occurring in Kosovo in 1999 represent the culmination of a long process which may be considered as the emergence of full-blown “ethnochauvinism” in this part of the Balkans. As such, Kosovo represents perhaps the most advanced (or most degenerate) form of a problem which is common to much of the Balkan area. This widespread phenomenon is the result of historical developments, geographical peculiarities, demographic trends, and the existence and development of various myths in the entire region. In Kosovo, personality factors and the idiosyncratic characteristics of individual leaders add to the general aspects found elsewhere in the region. Finally, actions by outside forces influence the manifestations of regional and specific examples of ethnochauvinism in the area, as will be shown below.¹

Scholars have discussed a number of concepts relevant for a systematic examination of nationalism in the Balkans. In so doing, they have examined phenomena which are variously called nationalism, “ethnonationalism”, and “ethnochauvinism”. In the process of this discussion, they have also launched concepts such as “ethnie”, ethnicity, and ethnic mobilization. Furthermore, some scholars have argued that nationalism as a practical manifestation is only possible if there are discoverers, myth-makers, and mobilizers who can find, conceptualize,

and operationalize the various forms of nationalism present in a region. Let us now proceed to examine this plethora of concepts, attempting in the process to establish a set of conceptual tools which can be used to examine nationalism in present-day Yugoslavia.²

Let us start with the simplest of these concepts, and work towards the more complex. "Ethnie" is seen as a group of people who have some characteristics in common, such as a common ethnic background. Normally, no other characteristics are attached to this concept; it does not connote a particular kind of political preference, nor does it assume any special form of organization. It is simply a marker which distinguishes this group from others. But students of "ethnies" also point out that there are frequently associated characteristics which produce additional markers, thereby enlarging the distance between this group and others. Such additional characteristics may include a language which is different from that of surrounding groups, and perhaps also religion; furthermore, a group of long standing and existence is likely to have developed its own historiography and iconography, which includes myths, heroes, and villains. As the group develops an awareness of its peculiarities and becomes convinced that it is special, it becomes an *ethnic group*, with ethnic consciousness. It comes as no surprise to students of history that many of the recorded events of previous generations, as well as our own, are replete with evidence of armed conflict between groups; thus, much of the mythology (as well as recorded factual evidence) shows conflict with "the others", with the resulting demonization of "ethnies" which are different from one's own. Depending upon the number of accumulative characteristics described above that are present in an "ethnie", that group may or may not be primed for political action of various kinds in relations with other "ethnies" surrounding it.³

A number of eminent students of nationalism argue that characteristics of "ethnies" are not enough to produce political action; it is necessary to have individuals who can *mobilize* the group for such purposes. Further-more, even prior to mobilization, it is necessary to have individuals who can "discover", conceptualize, and popularize the historical legacy of the group, and also disseminators, who can spread the message of historical commonality to the masses. There is an argument among these scholars about the times in history when the mobilization of "ethnies" could have been undertaken. Some argue that antiquity is replete with examples of such mobilizations (as, for example, Greeks vs. Persians), while others insist that the function of mass mobilization is only feasible under conditions of "modernity", when technological capabilities, such as the printing and mass distribution of books and pamphlets assist in spreading the word. Scholars who focus

on the emergence of the state as an organization in Italy a thousand years ago may also have a few words to add to this debate (see, for example, the magnificent history of Venice by Sir Julius Norwood).⁴ Fortunately, it is not necessary to enter this debate here, for nationalism in its various forms was alive and "well" (alive and sick may be more appropriate today) in the nineteenth century in the Balkans, and has developed further since then. Thus, it is not vital for the present argument to take sides in the debate on the issue of the birth of nationalism in European history. Suffice it to say that in the Balkans, *specific* forms of nationalism have been around for a long time, and they have shown themselves remarkably resistant to other political "isms", such as globalism and the development of civil society. More on this later.

Who are the discoverers and myth-makers of nationalism? In European history, they can generally be identified as writers, poets, painters, scholars, teachers, and religious leaders. These are the people who are literate, who have the capability of reading manuscripts, and of producing a written record of the often confusing past in such a way that it could make sense to the illiterate masses. Furthermore, as the Renaissance swept Europe, it was individuals such as these who "rediscovered" the glories of antiquity, and thus could begin the process of tying the present day with the great days of the past. This, in turn, induced efforts to develop a myth concerning the relations between the contemporary ethnic group and its glorious heritage, originating from ancient Greece or Rome. In addition, the historical record *did* reveal actual instances of past greatness (which will be discussed later), and such past glories necessitated an explanation of what had befallen the group in the meantime. In Europe, the great powers of the nineteenth century could confidently point to their contemporary standing, with a tradition of considerable achievements going back several centuries at least, but in the Balkans, the various ethnic groups could only make reference to a more distant past, before the arrival of the Ottomans, sometimes even before the establishment of Byzantine power in the region. In the Balkans, then, national awakening meant not only a rediscovery of distant glories but also necessitated an explanation of why such great times had been superseded by the misery of foreign occupation. More often than not, the explanation for this bleak state of affairs focuses on the evil deeds of "others" and the need to take revenge for such injustices. The resurrection of the glorious past, therefore, was only possible by punishing those responsible for the present condition. This is a driving force in Serb nationalism today, as we shall see below.⁵

The Renaissance "rediscovered" antiquity, with two important political consequences in Europe. In the western part, studies of the ancient Greeks and Romans revealed an emphasis on the individual and his role in the

collectivity of the city-state, in Athens and elsewhere in Greece, while the Roman contribution was a system of law and advanced forms of administrative development. This part of the discovery, in turn, led to a brand of political thought that gradually evolved into “contract theory” in the West, especially manifested in the writings of John Locke and Thomas Hobbes. This, it has been argued, is an important prerequisite for the development of representative systems and the evolution of the citizenship concept, which in turn is an integral part of Western political thought and practice. It certainly had an important impact on the Italian city-states, which developed complex systems of checks and balances, representation by various groups in the arenas of decision-making, and accountability for expenditure of public funds. The impact of Locke and Hobbes on modern European and American democracies is well established and needs no further elaboration here. Most important for our purposes is the fact that this aspect of the Renaissance, prevalent in the West, facilitated the role of artists, writers, scholars, and theorists as discoverers of nationalism. In the Balkans, however, the Renaissance was only a fleeting image in the minds of a few individuals; most of the discoverers here were religious leaders. And religious leaders were capable of tying the present with the glorious past, but they were most reluctant to worship the ideas of pagan antiquity in the fields of human interaction and political authority. For them, the nation must rally around Christ against Mohammed, holding high the cross as opposed to the crescent. This provided for very different symbols emitted in the name of the nation in the Balkans, as we shall see.⁶

The role of religious leaders as discoverers of nationalism in the Balkans had a pronounced effect on the “package” that emerged. Firstly, in the nineteenth century, the predominant religion in Romania, Bulgaria, and Serbia was Orthodox Christianity; in Croatia and Slovenia it was Catholicism, and in Albania, Islam. Romanian, Bulgarian, and Serbian nationalism is therefore closely associated with Orthodoxy, while the emergence of national consciousness in the northwestern corner of the Balkans was closely tied in with Catholicism. Albanian nationalism cannot be understood without reference to Islam; in Bosnia, all three religious manifestations were present (and this helped to produce and aggravate the Bosnian conflict, which is closely related in this sense to the present tragedy in Kosovo). Furthermore, national discovery focusing on religion clearly helped to establish who “we” were and who “they” represented, because the dominant political force in much of the Balkans until the late nineteenth century was the Ottoman Empire, which represented the confluence of religious and political authority, according to the traditions of Islam. Thus, their religious enemy was also their

political enemy; the Prophet and the Sultan represented the same system, and it was an alien system. This was true all over the Balkans, in the southern part because this region was under Turkish occupation, and in Croatia and Slovenia because of the fear of Turkish incursions, the memory of the past, and the fact that the political superiors of Zagreb and Ljubljana, the Austro-Hungarians, were in constant conflict with the Porte in Balkan affairs. The discoverers of nationalism in the region that was to become Yugoslavia thus focused on religious affiliation and solidarity, and combined this with animosity towards the religious infidels who were also the secular oppressors. Nationalism as religious fundamentalism emphasizes the Old Testament values of "an eye for an eye", but pays scant attention to the New Testament ideas of love and forgiveness.⁷

The regional differentiation alluded to above had a pronounced effect on the "discovery" of nationalism in the Balkans in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The whole region was under the control of multi-ethnic empires, with the Ottomans prevailing in the southern and eastern part of the peninsula, and the Habsburgs in charge in the northern and western parts. Yugoslavia, as we came to know it after World War I, was split between these two major powers, with Serbia under Turkish rule, and Slovenia and Croatia under Vienna and Budapest; Bosnia-Herzegovina was Turkish territory for most of this period, but was annexed by the Habsburgs early in this century, while Kosovo, Montenegro, and Albania were in the Turkish zone. Macedonia was Turkish but subsequently hotly contested, politically and sometimes militarily, by Serbia, Bulgaria, and Greece. For our purposes, the main division to be discussed is that between the Habsburg Empire and the Porte. Briefly put, under the Habsburgs, Slovenia and Croatia developed much faster economically, socially, and educationally than their counterparts in Serbia and elsewhere under Turkish control. Thus, Western ideas of civil society, the role of the individual, and the notion of responsive government began to have a considerable impact in these areas, and educational development as well as the development of a Westernized intelligentsia firmly anchored these areas in "Europe" (or more accurately, in the traditions and idea world of *Mitteleuropa*). Nationalism in these areas, therefore, had certain characteristics found elsewhere in Central and Western Europe, with a considerable amount of secular thought included. Serbian nationalism (as well as the emerging consciousness of the other groups discussed here), on the other hand, was profoundly influenced by the struggle against foreign invaders, who were also alien in the religious sphere. Serbian nationalism is, therefore, more strongly influenced by the struggle against infidels and the need to restore past glory, which is both religious and

national (and, indeed, the two are inextricably intertwined). The recovery and safeguarding of holy places, such as shrines found in present-day Kosovo, become a mission for which élites and the masses alike will lay down their lives, if necessary. Compromise is possible on some secular issues, but hardly on religious ones. Serbian nationalism is thus fundamentalist, millenarian, and uncompromising in nature. This is worth remembering today, because “Yugoslav” nationalism, for all practical purposes, is the Serb variety. It is this variety that will be discussed in detail below.⁸

Historians and Myth-makers: The Case of Serbia

The history of Serbia, as presented by academics, teachers, many writers, artists, film-makers, and purveyors of popular culture, is a mixture of fact, fiction, and myth-making. The focus is usually on the ancient origins of the Serb nation; and some scholars have argued that the Serbs are among the original inhabitants of the Balkan peninsula (thus competing with the Albanians, who claim ancestry from the Illyrians, who in turn are said to have preceded even the Greeks in the area). This may be myth or fiction, because no definitive historical record exists (but it should be pointed out that fiction widely believed to be true becomes concretized and thus may serve as a source of present action). Furthermore, it is emphasized that Serbia was once a mighty empire with enlightened rulers who established one of the most progressive courts in Europe at that time (at least partly true). An important fact of the historical record was the role of the Serbs as a bastion against the Ottomans in the Balkans (true, but this glory, if glory it be, must be shared with others, for example, the Moldovan and Wallachian princes of Stephen the Great and Michael the Brave, who have hallowed places in Romanian iconography). A fundamentally important fact, with crucial contemporary relevance, is the event of the Battle of Kosovo Polje (“Field of Blackbirds”) in 1389, when Serb armies were allegedly defeated by Turkish troops, thereby setting the stage for a long period of Turkish overlordship. That the battle was fierce is true, and it is likewise historical fact that the Serbs struggled heroically, and that the result of the battle was Turkish domination and subjugation; but it is not so clear that the Serbs lost (some historians see it as a draw, with the Turkish commander losing his life on the field). It is also a myth that all Serbs fought the good fight on Kosovo Polje, because the record shows that some Serb noblemen, undoubtedly in pursuit of personal gain and fortune, joined the ranks of the Ottomans on this occasion. The most important point

here is that the combination of fact and myth is believed in toto in present-day Serbia. Thus, Kosovo Polje is sacred, as are the monuments commemorating the event; the struggle between Orthodox Christians and Muslims is seen as a crusade of good against evil; the idea that all Serbs fought together reinforces the notion of national unity; the tragedy of defeat at the hands of the infidel has raised the cry of "never again" — never again will Serbia succumb to outside forces, never again will it yield to alien religions, and never again will it drop the banner of the Cross. In this day and age of rational thought, the Internet, and the fact that the greatest personal danger facing most people is a virus named "Melissa", it is hard for non-Serbs to understand the fervour with which a mediaeval event has become a rallying point which is mystical, emotional, and sacred, a symbol for which many Serbs are undoubtedly willing to lay down their lives. Some may call it primitive nationalism, while others may see it as strangely alien in the twenty-first century, the age of globalism. Perhaps it should also be seen as one manifestation of the search for a collective entity other than multinational corporations and global communications in this era of globalism — but more on this later.⁹

Other mixtures of myth and fact in Serb historiography include the idea that Serbia was in the forefront of protection of the Christians in the Balkans (only partly true), that Serbs and Russians have a special relationship as part of a wider Slavic "brotherhood", expressed through the notion of pan-Slavism and Slavophilism (certainly true in the sense that many Russians, among the mass public as well as the political élites, clearly believe this and make this belief a decisive part of contemporary Russian foreign policy); and that Serbia was always "picked on" by Western powers (only true as far as Austria-Hungary was concerned). This latter belief is of considerable importance in the development and nurturing of the Serb sense of victimization, which essentially assumed that most of what has happened in Serbian history is the result of others, often very powerful nations, conspiring to deprive Serbia of its rightful place in Europe. Given this mindset, present-day events can be easily explained and understood by the mass public. But this emotional reaction to the policy of others will also make compromise very difficult to achieve.¹⁰

Another set of truths mixed with fiction and mythology is the history of the Serbs during World War II. One of the unfortunate truths of that conflict in Yugoslavia is the ethnic warfare between Serbs and Croats, which in brutality rivalled anything perpetrated in Kosovo. It is certainly true that many Croats were fascists (after all, there was an avowedly fascist state on Croat soil), and many Serbs did engage in the struggle

against fascism. But it is not true that all Serbs did this; for example, the so-called Chetniks, who were mostly Serb nationalists, often joined hands with German occupation forces to fight Tito's Partisans. Tito had a mixture of support for his cause, only some of which came from the Serbs (and Tito himself was not a Serb, a fact which was to figure prominently in the rise to power of Slobodan Milosevic, which will be discussed below). Thus, the notion that the Serbs represented "progressive" and "democratic" forces in the Balkans, in a brotherhood of arms with Western democracies, is only partly true, but it is an important feature of the sense of outrage now expressed by Serbs, who see the North Atlantic Treaty Organization's (NATO's) attacks as yet another betrayal of Serbia and a denial of the brotherhood gained through blood and common struggle.¹¹

The final element in this blend of fact and myth is the current version of the history of the Serbs in Tito's Yugoslavia. As is well known, Tito tried to keep a balance between the various ethnic groups in this multi-ethnic state, and this policy involved considerable autonomy for the republics and regions of the country — in fact, establishing a confederal system. This became particularly important after Tito's death; the various republics achieved such wide-ranging autonomy that they began to establish their own security forces, and this, in turn, resulted in a vicious struggle during the war that started in 1991 and culminated with the independence of Slovenia and Croatia and the eventual construction of multi-ethnic Bosnia under international supervision and protection. One of the most potent rallying points for the Serbs in the 1980s and 1990s was the notion that Tito had discriminated against the Serbs, and that this policy had deprived Serbia of its heritage and its place in the federation. There was some truth in this, but that truth was inflamed by passionate rhetoric and tainted scholarship from sources within the Academy of Sciences in Belgrade. This resulted in the civil war, as has been described above. It also catapulted Slobodan Milosevic, a hitherto rather colourless apparatchik, to national prominence when he travelled to Kosovo and assured the Serbs there that they would no longer be "beaten" by others (the clear target of this was the Albanian majority in Kosovo).¹²

As usual, there are elements of truth in this rendition of history. Tito's policies *did* entail considerable autonomy for Kosovo, and there is little doubt that the Albanians in charge of the province discriminated against the Serb minority there. This kind of policy led to considerable out-migration of Serbs from the province. Still, Albanian-dominated political organs did not engage in ethnic cleansing, and thus there can be no historical excuse for Milosevic's policies today. At the same time, we

need to understand that ethnic cleansing is but the most vicious and brutal manifestation of one of the most important features of European nationalism in general, which is the quest for nations to acquire their own land and establish upon it a sovereign state structure. This had largely been achieved in Western Europe early in the twentieth century, in part because these areas had relatively homogeneous nations and fairly clearly established boundaries. In Eastern Europe, circumstances have not been so fortunate, and in the Balkans they have been the most difficult of all. Thus, history is playing itself out in the Balkans in the most disturbing manner, giving credence to the famous definition of history as just "one damned thing after another".

Globalization, Globalism, and Universal Values

The main features of Balkan and Serb nationalism, as discussed above, stand in sharp contrast to a process which is now known as globalization. Globalization is, presumably, a process which produces a confluence of political and economic trends in a world increasingly tied together by instant communication. Such instant communication allegedly also helps to establish similarities in values, attitudes, and behavioural patterns. Thus, these new values would most likely stand in contrast to other, "older", ideas such as traditional nationalism. Furthermore, it is assumed that the values of the modern, global world would lend themselves to "rationalism" and the acceptance of certain basic features of human interaction and coexistence, as exemplified by notions of universal human rights. Thus, the globalization process would produce globalism, and one aspect of this globalism would be the emergence and spread of certain values, perhaps "human rights", perhaps something else, but the assumption certainly is that the kind of ethnochauvinism found in Milosevic's Serbia is outmoded and destined for the "dustbin" of history.¹³

The concepts of "globalism" and "globalization" are not new in scholarly discourse. Some economic historians will inform us that there have been other times in human history when trade proceeded virtually unimpeded between various parts of the world. In the late nineteenth century, it was still possible to travel around Europe without a passport, and skilled workers and artisans could readily find work in countries other than their own, often through the assistance of their fraternal organizations in other places. To such analysts, the present internationalization of economic interaction is simply a step away from the extreme nationalism that has characterized much of world history since the first "great war". Other analysts, however, argue that the

present era is the first in which instant communications produce a quest for the universalization of *values* and rules of *interpersonal behaviour* outside the economic realm. Whatever one's view of this controversy, the Kosovo conflict represents an important landmark for one aspect of "globalism", namely, the willingness of a number of major powers to go to war to uphold certain values and rules of conduct. In doing so, these states essentially asserted, by word and by actions, that certain kinds of activities are not permitted, even if they are carried out inside the hitherto sacrosanct confines of "national sovereignty", and that the so-called "international community" has the right and the duty to undertake any and all actions necessary to stop them. Should this precedent lead to further actions along such lines, a situation new to the twentieth century has arisen (even though some historians may argue that mediaeval religious wars represent examples of struggles conducted on behalf of such universalistic notions in previous centuries).¹⁴

Another noteworthy aspect of this "globalism" is the fact that it is defined in large measure by leaders in the United States and its allies who represent a *Weltanschauung* quite different from the mindset that tended to pervade international relations in the past. As indicated above, national sovereignty is no longer considered sacrosanct in matters that pertain to perceived "universal" human rights. A new (or at least newfangled) moralism has invaded international relations. In addition, this drive is led by the United States, which is now the sole superpower of the world. This fact certainly worries many political leaders elsewhere (and not just dictators such as Slobodan Milosevic), and it has already sparked off a debate inside NATO and the European Union about the need for a more concerted effort to fashion a common European foreign and security policy. This debate is further fuelled by the fact that U.S. military superiority is now so vast that even limited wars like that in Kosovo cannot be conducted without American participation unless other NATO states are willing to wage a ground war and thereby incur losses of manpower that may be unacceptable in democracies. Thus, the new strategic "globalism" is becoming a factor of major importance in international relations, with potentially enormous consequences for states, nations, and nationalism as a political phenomenon.¹⁵

It should be pointed out that the assertions concerning "universal" values and behavioural norms emanating from Washington, London, and other places do not really lead to universalism in *implementation*; for example, the history of Africa during much of the decade of the 1990s is one of fearful ethnic strife, genocide, and systematic mutilation of individuals for political ends, without Western intervention to stop it. The war in Kosovo was about the implementation of goals based on

values that may have universal validity, but pertain most clearly to Europe and North America in practical terms; in other words, genocide, ethnic cleansing, or other reprehensible acts will not be tolerated in present-day *Europe*. Thus, the doctrine of globalism in this field is universal, but its implementation is regional. This brings forth interesting and difficult questions of definition (where does Europe end?), and also of capability and political will (is the strategic reach of the implementors sufficient to be universal rather than regional, and do the definers of the doctrine have the will to engage in such broad implementation?). For now, strategic globalism in terms of enforced implementation of common values and behaviour is limited to parts such as Europe. It is in Europe that such acts will not be tolerated, at least as it now stands. Unfortunately for people like Milosevic, Serbia and Kosovo are in Europe by anybody's definition (including Milosevic's own), and thus Serbian nationalism is unacceptable. In this sense, Kosovo, Milosevic, and Serbian nationalism represent more than an interesting and horrifying example of human atrocities and the thought packages that give rise to them; they represent the clash of *Weltanschauungen* at the beginning of the new millennium.

Slobodan Milosevic found himself in the midst of this clash of value systems when he refused to implement the Rambouillet Agreement. Until that time, he had successfully manoeuvred the Western powers in various ways, because the leaders of those powers were reluctant to finally reject national sovereignty as the dominant principle of international relations. Having backed themselves into a corner by their posturing, which Milosevic took as mere bluff, they had little choice but to act. But once they did take action, the doctrine of universal values for Europe became a matter of faith, a gospel which was repeated with increasing intensity during the weeks of the conflict. Slobodan Milosevic, in turn, found that he had been transformed from a brutal but clever Balkan manipulator to a violator of fundamental values. He may have been bewildered by this change in his fortunes, yet it can be seen as a logical result of his own policies. It now behoves us to examine his journey towards vilification, and Serbia's descent to the status of pariah state. Specifically, we must examine the basic features of Serb nationalism as it now stands and determine the historical roots of the widely held beliefs and prejudices found among the mass public and societal élites alike. Furthermore, we must explain why the experiment conducted by Tito, designed to produce a different form of nationalism, which we may call Yugoslavism, failed. The most conspicuous of these failures was the inability of Tito and his close associates to produce a real civil society in this multifaceted state. In addition, it is necessary to examine that

external threat, known as the danger of Islam and “Greater Albania”, which became a catalyst for attitudes, values, and ultimately political and military action. Most important of all is an analysis of the crucial role of the *mobilizers* of Serb nationalism, as these individuals represent the link between attitudes and values, on the one hand, and political action, on the other. These themes will be examined in turn.¹⁶

The Mobilizable Nation: Serbia After Tito

Let us now return to Serbia. In the 1980s, the following factors were dominant:

After Tito's death, Serb nationalism, always present in some form among the mass public as well as the cultural, socio-economic, and political élites, represented a mobilizable mass (for concepts of “atomization” and “mobilizability”, see, among others, William Kornhauser [1959]¹⁷). The Serbs were clearly a distinguishable *ethnie*; felt a strong communality with each other as an ethnic group; had a strong sense of the origin of the nation (even if this sense was based on partial myth and fallacy); associated their ethnic group with religious identity and a strong sense that their religion was also part of the vanguard of Christianity in the perceived struggle against Islam; and allowed for little or no deviation from the sum of all these markers of nationhood (in other words, as a Serb you were expected to be Orthodox, be convinced of the mission of the Serbs, and believe that a glorious future was ahead for your nation). Thus, national indicators and national markers were multifaceted and strongly integrated. The nation was, furthermore, characterized by its language (Serbo-Croatian to the Serbs, Croato-Serbian to the Croats, with Serb linguists struggling to show that the Serb language was indeed quite different from the Croatian version, which is only true if one accepts that the Cyrillic alphabet is fundamentally different from the Latin script, even if the meaning of the words written in either alphabet is very close or identical). National education in Serb schools hammered home the mixture of historical fact and myth discussed above. National symbols included the Serb coat of arms (with an eagle in the middle), the Serb three-finger salute, and the Orthodox cross (which is carried prominently by the ethnic cleansers of Kosovo today, and especially displayed by Arkhan and his infamous “Tigers”).¹⁸

It is of course true that the Serb nation had been mobilized for political purposes long before the advent of Slobodan Milosevic. Serb mobilizers had galvanized the nation into action in the nineteenth

century, when the Serbs joined in the struggle for independence from the Turks and then proceeded to participate in two Balkan wars against their neighbours in the years immediately preceding World War I. Serb politics was one of the causes of the outbreak of the war. The establishment of Yugoslavia as a sovereign state after World War I represented state-building but not nation-building, because the new state was dominated by the Serbs, at the expense of the other ethnic groups in the country. Tito attempted to build a Yugoslav nation, but clearly failed in this effort. Instead, the various ethnic groups in the so-called federation built their own mini-states, based primarily on ethnicity, language, and religion. While the focus of this essay has been on Serb nationalism, it is fair to say that the other ethnic groups in Yugoslavia constructed their own nationalism around a similar complex of ethnicity, language, religion, and history, but, in the case of Croatia and Slovenia, with important "Western" aspects of secularism included, as discussed above. The main point here is that, despite these national markers and emotional baggage which each nation carried with it, in the era of Tito Serbs, Croats, Slovenes, Macedonians, Montenegrins, and Albanians on the whole lived side by side and even occasionally married each other. This was partly due to the fact that the Yugoslav communists, despite their hankering for decentralization and relative autonomy, refused to allow ethnic strife, because they rightly saw it as the beginning of the end of the state and thus the end of their power and privileges. In part, it was due to Tito himself who, for all his faults, became a person who somehow stood above parochial considerations and could therefore be seen as representing all of Yugoslavia and not merely its constituent parts. Yugoslavia under Tito is an important example of attempted nation-building undertaken by a dominant and charismatic figure; the case of Yugoslavia is also an important example of what may happen if institutional anchors for a nation are not constructed when the personal nation-builder leaves the scene. Perhaps there is material here for a comparative study of this issue in some future project; for now, let us examine what is left of Yugoslavia, which, for present purposes, is primarily Serbia and Serb nationalism.¹⁹

The Tito era must be seen as an interregnum in the history of nationalism in Yugoslavia. It was a period when the various ethnic groups and nations of the country could live together because of specific and personal factors, as discussed above. What has happened after the death of Tito is the re-emergence of the various types of nationalism in the country in their original form, now urged forward by mobilizers who have as their agenda the intensification of each group's nationalism and the settling of scores based on history, both ancient and fairly recent. In

this sense, the Serb nation (as well as others) became “remobilized” in a fashion which has produced two vicious civil wars and a campaign of barbaric ethnic cleansing, in the process drawing in the international community and threatening a new cold war in Europe. Why did this happen in Yugoslavia? What are the reasons behind the intensity and ferocity of Serb nationalism today?

The Missing Link: The Lack of “Civility” in Yugoslav “Civil” Society

The process of developing a national identity in the area that became Yugoslavia included the fusion of religion and politics, of secular themes and religious iconography, of foreign policy conflicts with demonization of “others”, as discussed above. This was true in Croatia as well as Serbia, even though it reached a higher pitch in the latter case. Slovenia may well be *sui generis* in the Balkan context and will not be discussed here. Montenegrin and Macedonian nationalism seems to be rather underdeveloped as yet. As for Albanian nationalism, it is clearly a relatively mature phenomenon which will be discussed primarily as one source of conflict in the region today, but will not be a major focus; besides, it is not yet clear that the separatism of the Kosovar Albanians includes a complete embrace of the ideas, aspirations, and passions of the Albanians in Albania proper (Albania today is divided into clearly separate regions, dominated by old tribal associations, such as the Ghegs and Tosks, and the political system has become severely infected with “Mafiaism”, so that it is difficult to determine what Albanian nationalism is). Thus, if the focus here is to be contemporary Yugoslavia, it must be on Serbia, for Serbia today is Yugoslavia, for all practical purposes. On this basis, it can be asserted that Serbia’s political culture includes some aspects of a civil society, but no civility for “others”, which means non-Serbs. Therein lies the crux of the matter in terms of Yugoslav nationalism.

“Civil society” is one of the most frequently used (and occasionally misused) buzzwords of contemporary social science. For the purpose of this discussion, it is defined as a society in which there are autonomous groups and organizations in society (“subgroup autonomy”) which interpose themselves between political rulers and the ruled, and then act as the conduits for the expression of political views, preferences, and likes and dislikes of the mass public, or at least the politically aware public. The main point is that the groups involved are autonomous, that they can (and will) express the views held by the mass public (even as

they help form those views), and that they therefore act as input mechanisms for political leaders.

There are times when analysts confuse civil society with pluralist democracy, because some of the basic building blocs of the latter system are present in the former. For example, subsystem autonomy presumes freedom of speech and perhaps also freedom of association. But a civil society, as described, can be profoundly at variance with the usual definitions of pluralist democracy, because freedom of speech and assembly *per se* do not assure civility, or tolerance of others. For example, if freedom of speech is used to preach hatred, violence, and the need to destroy people of different faiths and ethnicity, this freedom can be profoundly destructive of law and order, of other presumed democratic rights, such as the expectation of personal safety and access to economic goods, and of the very fabric of society itself. Freedom of assembly could see the massing of thugs whose goal it is to destroy others' right to assemble. European history has many examples of this, east or west. The lesson is this: civil society *forms* and *formal* democratic freedoms do not produce democracy by themselves. They may do so, if the underlying political culture is conducive to it. If this is not the case, democratic and civil society freedom and rights will merely speed the capture of power by undemocratic forces. The discussion below will argue in more detail that this is the case in post-Tito Yugoslavia, particularly Serbia.²⁰

The argument above can be developed further. Essential elements of civil society and democracy may speed the dissemination of "undemocratic" ideas in the mass public by means of modern communications technology; conversely, it can propel to the level of political action profoundly "undemocratic" values held by the mass public, without any countervailing forces (one such force would be the willingness of communist leaders to partly curb these expressions for fear of their own political survival). Under the first scenario above, an undemocratic mobilizer can gain power by means of appeals to the "dark" side of public opinion; in the second case, demagogues of the street may rise to the top of the pyramid because they have captured a main aspect of the public's likes and dislikes, loves and hatreds. Sometimes, an obscure political leader can grasp the dynamic between the masses and the élite in the context of such emotions, and can then use them to rise to power, thereafter employing them to stay at the top and to implement major features of those ideologies. Slobodan Milosevic represents the category of the mid-level apparatchik with the skills of the street orator and the conviction of a real Serb nationalist. He has climbed to power on extreme Serb nationalism; he cannot climb down, because this would be treason to the cause that brought him to the top

of the heap in the first place. The implications of this are frightening. His rise to power was associated with a profound economic crisis in Yugoslavia, a crisis which had fundamentally deleterious effects upon the very class which could have provided a counterweight to populist and emotional nationalism, namely, the emerging middle class, and a “rational” technical and managerial intelligentsia. This confluence of factors proved to be decisive.²¹

If we proceed from the discussion of the basic features included in Serb nationalism, we can see that civility, in the sense of tolerance for “others” to exist, to assemble, to organize, and to compete for political and socio-economic power, is in very short supply in Serb nationalism. The strongly religious nature of this nationalism precludes compromise and lends itself to crusades. Historians can enlighten us on the atrocities committed by crusaders throughout the centuries, including those which were sanctioned by the Pope for the purpose of recapturing the holy city of Jerusalem, in the name of Christ. There may be limited tolerance in other areas, but not in the question of what the Serb nation is, what its mission will be, and how holy its quest has been and will remain. When religion invades nationalism, nationalism becomes intolerant. When religious-based nationalism becomes the main political feature of a state, great trouble will follow for those who are outside the “nation”. In other places, nationalism has been separated from the state, and the state has separated itself from religion; the public is capable of functioning in two dimensions, a secularized polity and a confessional spiritual sphere. If this is done, “citizenship” can be detached from ethnicity and religion, and “political nationalism” can be achieved (thus, you may be Polish, Italian, Norwegian, or whatever, and still be an American citizen); if religion and ethnicity become the defining aspects of the nation *per se*, we have “cultural nationalism” (to be a citizen of Serbia means that you are first and foremost an ethnic Serb and an Orthodox Christian; if you are not, technically, you may be a citizen, but you are still suspect). In the latter case, the nation has hijacked the state, and uses the state to further its nationalism, at the expense of others. This is ethnochauvinism, and ethnochauvinism is a form of mobilized nationalism.²²

The result of the discussion above is that there is no real civil society in present-day Serbia. Civil society, as defined by most scholars, includes the crucial element of civility, which in turn means the recognition that others have the right to develop their own organizations in order to express their views and preferences and actually attempt to gain power to implement them.²³ What Serbia has can be characterized as the *infrastructure* of a civil society, in the form of organizations that can be used for the purposes of political mobilization. The nature of the political

system will then crucially depend upon the characteristics, goals, and objectives of the mobilizers. Let us now turn to an examination of these individuals in contemporary Serbia.

Mobilizers and Crusaders: Leaders of Yugoslav and Serb Nationalism

The recently departed and much missed student of nationalism, Ernest Gellner, maintained that nationalism was a form of political mobilization, whereby a group of people with certain commonalities sufficient to make them feel like a nation is mobilized for two main purposes, namely, to achieve certain goals, as defined and accepted by the masses of the nation, and secondly, to prevent others from doing harm to the nation in the course of *their* mobilization. Gellner firmly maintained that nationalism must be "concretized" in this way. Similarly, Benedict Anderson speaks of nations as "imagined communities", because members of a nation do not know each other personally (except for a few cases of friends or close associates), but see themselves as part of something else, the nation, which is partly reified (for example, ethnicity), partly learned (language, values, myths, history), but also imagined (in the sense that people of a perceived nation imagine that they have something in common with other co-nationals, even though much also divides them, particularly socio-economic class). Walker Connor states flatly that it is the imagined and perceived aspects of nationalism that are most intense as mobilization devices, and that "given" characteristics, such as ethnicity, are less important. In all of these examples, the need for someone to remember, conceptualize, agitate, disseminate, and mobilize the symbols of nationalism is clear. In short, nationalism as discussed above is inconceivable as a political phenomenon and a guide to action without the mobilizer, the political leader of nationalism.²⁴

When modern nationalism arose in the Balkans in the nineteenth century, the mobilizers were primarily members of the nobility, with scholars, writers, poets, and other intellectuals as important auxiliaries. As pointed out above, however, Balkan nationalism was also heavily influenced by clergymen; such individuals, in fact, acted as both discoverers, myth-makers, and also catalysts for political action. That this should be so is not surprising, given the conditions that prevailed in the Balkans at the time. The mass of the population lived and toiled on the land, most were illiterate, and the vast majority survived in a world of superstition, fear of the landlord, and with a psychological horizon which did not stretch much beyond the village. For such a peasant, the church

was his only area of assembly, and the priest his only spiritual and material guide; the priest, therefore, also had the unique opportunity to act as a force to bring the village dwellers together for collective action. Thus, an unusually large number of the mobilizers in this region were clergy, and this fact had important ramifications for the message of nationalism as well as its practical manifestations in this region. Specifically, religious mobilizers ensured that religion would be a major organizing device for the identification and implementation of the nation's goals; religion for the peasant masses in the Balkans meant Christianity, either Orthodox or Catholic (occasionally Protestant). With the political and economic system mostly in the hands of the Turks, the Balkan nations were therefore mobilized in the name of Christ, as juxtaposed to Mohammed. As indicated above, the message of Balkan nationalism, especially its Serb variety, was nation *and* Christ, sceptre *and* orb. The non-negotiable nature of religious nationalism has been discussed above. For the Turks, too, the problems experienced by the Porte in the Balkans were a combination of religion and politics, a fact which hardened Turkish rule as well.²⁵

Paradoxically, the form of administration established by Istanbul in the Balkans furthered the cause of political organization among the Christian masses. The Ottomans divided the area into millets, which were religion-based territorial units, with considerable local autonomy. Essentially, the Porte allowed the Balkan Christians to run their own local affairs, as long as taxes and other levies were paid. This decentralization gave the mobilizers of Balkan nationalism relatively free rein to develop the mechanisms necessary to force Istanbul out of Europe later.

The importance of religious personnel as mobilizers of Balkan nationalism was further enhanced by the fact that other leaders were held in low regard by the peasant masses, so that the priest-discoverers and mobilizers became important by default. Once the Turks had been compelled to grant autonomy to many areas of the Balkans, it became clear to the peasants that their own co-nationals were no better as rulers than the Ottomans had been, and the level of legitimacy for secular national leaders in the region was low. This in turn forced those leaders to take on an even more nationalistic stance, in order to salvage some of their political support. Thus, the anti-Muslim priest and the power-seeking nobleman vied with each other for the laurels of ethnonationalism, religious exclusives, and chauvinism. This combination culminated in several armed conflicts, which eventually drove the Ottomans out of Europe (except for a small sliver of land west of the Bosphorus, which is still Turkish today).

After the departure of the Turks from European soil, it was not long before the various successor states in the region confronted each other

over territory. Old claims and counter-claims were resurrected, old history was dredged up and became holy myths, and in the end, these states fought two wars (the first and second Balkan wars), which, in turn, produced so-called "satiated" and "dissatisfied" powers. Among the former can be found Romania (which was further enhanced by the political settlement after World War I), and Greece. On the other hand, Serbia, which had been one of the most important successor states in the first round after the Turkish departure, now found itself with territorial settlements which were much less favourable than Serb valour on the battlefield would seem to warrant. Another dissatisfied power was Bulgaria, which will not be discussed here, except as it emerges as a contender with Yugoslavia for Macedonia, another recent state construct much in the news. The main point here is the fact that the Serb political leaders now felt that they had been cheated of the spoils of war by a political settlement which deprived them of territory rightfully won on the field. The villains were the victorious states in the Balkan wars but especially one major power, which was perceived as Serbia's nemesis: Austria-Hungary. It was Vienna and Budapest which had worked most assiduously to limit Serbia's power, or so it seemed in Belgrade. The fact that church leaders represented an important element among the political mobilizers in Serbia further exacerbated the problem with the Habsburgs, because the latter were staunch Catholics, and the Serbs, as mentioned earlier, were fervent Orthodox believers. In this conflict with Vienna and Budapest lay the immediate causes of World War I and also the political and eventually military struggles between Orthodox Serbs and Catholic Croats and Slovenes.²⁶

The post-World War I settlement represented a considerable victory for Serbia and its nationalist leaders, for their quest for a Southern Slav state was now implemented in the form of Yugoslavia. Yugoslavia was, presumably, a state for Serbs, Croats, Slovenes, and other ethnic groups, but it soon became clear that the political and religious leaders in Belgrade intended to run the system with political control firmly in the hands of the first of these groups. Thus, the new state became more and more nationalistic throughout the 1920s and 1930s. The nationalism expressed was that of the predominant Serb mobilizers. Underneath the political surface, the old conflicts between ethnic groups remained, now fuelled by the clearly discriminatory policies introduced by Belgrade on behalf of the Serb nation, Serb nationals, and the wishes of the Orthodox Church. In reality, the leaders and mobilizers of the inter-war period acted very much in conformity with the policies established in old Serbia prior to World War I. Such policies also helped to harden the nationalism

of the Croats and Slovenes. Here, too, religion played an important part, thus further reducing the possibility of establishing a secular nation and political nationalism. The stage was set for ethnochauvinism to become a predominant force in World War II.²⁷

Very few commentators examining the current conflict in Kosovo seem to remember the events of World War II, when atrocities perpetrated by Serbs on Croats and vice versa represented far greater loss of life than is the case in Bosnia and Kosovo today. During the 1941–45 war, hundreds of thousands of Serbs and Croats died at the hands of each other; the carnage inflicted by these two supposed co-nations in Yugoslavia exceeded the losses perpetrated by Hitler's armies in the field. The leaders of these unsavoury activities were Ante Pavelic in Croatia, who headed a fascist state firmly supported by the Catholic Church in Croatia and, on the Serb side, the so-called Chetniks were led by Draza Mihailovic, with similar support from the Orthodox hierarchy. A favourite tactic of mass murder was practised by Croat troops in Serb villages; they would simply herd the Serbs into the local Orthodox church and burn them alive; the favour was returned by Serb forces in Croat villages, where Catholic churches were similarly used as crematoria. Ethnochauvinism with a strong religious component thus represented a temporary culmination of the ethnic and religious strife so prevalent in the Balkans. The respite provided by the policies of Marshall Tito was only temporary, and these destructive forces reasserted themselves after the interregnum of Titoism and the failed attempt at producing "Yugoslavism" and political nationalism. The failure of that interregnum must be analysed and explained, for therein lies the key to understanding the tragedy of Serb nationalism in the 1990s.

Tito, "Yugoslavism" and the Quest for a Civil Society

The story of Joseph Broz Tito and his efforts to create a stable Yugoslav federation has been told in considerable detail by many scholars and will not be examined in full here, except to highlight those aspects of Tito's policies that are crucial for an understanding of nationalism in Yugoslavia today. Briefly, Tito's policies focused on the following main goals:

1. To establish a true federal system, in which each major ethnic group would have a political foundation in its own territory (republic or autonomous region) but where a fairly strong federal authority would ensure the fulfilment of basic political and economic goals;

2. The development of a civil society which could bridge the gap between ethnic and religious groups and safeguard civil peace through overlapping memberships in non-governmental organizations (assuming, therefore, that Serb, Croat, Slovene, and Albanian engineers, for example, would have more in common with each other as professionals than what they shared with their ethnic brethren and co-religionists);
3. Through the process described above, to develop a society of civility and tolerance and thereby move towards a secularization of the political order;
4. By a combination of the first three goals above, to produce a sense of Yugoslavism ("unity in diversity") which could begin to move cultural nationalism towards political nationalism.

Tito sought to implement these political goals by introducing a set of social and economic policies which are well known and therefore will be summarized here in a few sentences. In brief, he instituted a policy to transfer economic resources from the more developed regions to the underdeveloped parts of the federation; he attempted to balance appointments to the civil service and the military so that no ethnic group became predominant; and he tried to produce an educational system that would become a catalyst for national integration. From the point of view of the analyst, this is enlightened policy indeed, but it was not implemented without conflict.

The biggest challenge to Tito's approach (and to his power) came from Alexander Rankovic, the most important leader of the Serb party at the time (1960s), and then, later, from the Croat nationalists (1970s). Tito succeeded in destroying Rankovic's power base, and he controlled Croat nationalism as well, but it was a close call in both cases. Tito was greatly helped by the external pressure exerted by the Soviet Union until the death of Stalin, because that threat tended to pull the various groups and factions together within Yugoslavia itself, and after this period, his position as the "father of the country" helped him weather various crises.

Nevertheless, as pointed out above, there are risks when the nation-building effort is closely associated with a charismatic leader, a freedom fighter who rids a multi-ethnic and multireligious society of foreign overlords. When such a leader leaves the scene, the system will come under enormous pressure. If the underlying divisions in society have not been bridged, if the political system has not been institutionalized and depersonalized, if the development of civil society has not meant the creation of a culture of civility, then the death of such a leader will

engender problems. Tito's death almost immediately resulted in diverging policies among his successors. Briefly put, the Yugoslav federation became a confederacy; the confederacy became a loose grouping of armed political entities, some of which increasingly fell under the spell of virulent nationalists as political mobilizers; and finally, these loosely connected entities fell out among themselves. The result was the Bosnian conflict and its settlement (which may be only temporary), and later the conflict in Kosovo.²⁸

The conflict in Bosnia was one of several conflicts which erupted in Yugoslavia at the beginning of the 1990s, but it represented a fundamental issue of "us" versus "them", with staying power way beyond the war between Serbs and Slovenes, and Serbs and Croats. The reason for this is fairly clear. In Bosnia, the fight was between Christian Slavs and Muslims, and the fact that the Croats made temporary alliances with the Muslims against the Serbs reflected a combination of outside pressure and temporary expediency and did not conceal the fundamental fact that the Croats and Serbs harboured well-developed notions of dividing Bosnia between themselves and thus reducing the Muslims to insignificance. Behind that design was the age-old fear of Islam in the Balkans and the notion that the Muslims in Bosnia, albeit ethnic Slavs, were in fact a Trojan horse for the ethnic Albanians and their designs, real or perceived, for a "Greater Albania".²⁹ The nationalism represented and nurtured by Slobodan Milosevic in Serbia cannot be explained without an understanding of this fear and loathing of the Albanians — a set of feelings and attitudes which are common to all Slavs in the Balkans (but fortunately only expressed in such extreme forms by the Serbs at this stage of history). What, then, is the role of the Albanians in this region, and what lies behind this fear, loathing, and hatred of them exhibited by others?

The Albanians in Balkan History

Throughout the turbulent century and a half which we can associate with modern Balkan nationalism, the Albanians of the region played a special part. By the time the Ottoman Empire began to falter as a political mechanism, thereby giving encouragement to various nationalist movements in the region (as discussed above), the overwhelming majority of the ethnic Albanians were Muslim. They represented the only ethnic group in the Balkans of any size that had converted to Islam *en masse*; among other groups, such conversions were relatively rare and represented individual choices, which in turn may have been based on

careerist considerations rather than religious conviction, at least in some cases. The Albanians, however, converted as a group, and this fact has been greatly resented by other ethnies in the area. In a region in which historical memories are long and myths are particularly gory, the "betrayal" by the Albanians of the Christian cause has been endlessly discussed and condemned (it was even worse in Bosnia, where many of the Muslims are, in fact, ethnic Slavs whose ancestors converted under Ottoman rule). The resentment of the Albanians is particularly pronounced among the Serbs, for reasons which have been discussed before, but it is also widespread among the Croat population (and to some extent also among the Slovenes). This resentment is based on widely held prejudices of long standing, which still pervade large elements of Europe's Christian populations, including certain segments of ruling élites, giving rise to what Edward Said has called "Orientalism" as a mindset.³⁰

Resentment of Albanians among Serbs is understandable up to a point (but does not condone ethnic cleansing). After all, the Albanians did rule Kosovo under the Tito regime, when real autonomy existed in the region. The Albanian leadership's policies were discriminatory towards the Serbs, resulting in considerable out-migration by the latter group (also discussed above). It is also clear that Albanian nationalism became an important political factor in Albania proper in the 1980s, while a strong sense of exclusivity resulted from Enver Hoxha's insistence on ideological righteousness and Tirana's special position as the sole upholder of the true Marxist faith, a development which dates back to the 1960s. The split between Albania and Yugoslavia, engineered under the auspices of Marxism-Leninism in the 1940s, in fact had strong overtones of ethnic rivalries and perceived personal snubs, much of which dates back to the very formation of Albania itself shortly before World War I. It is this volatile historical legacy that is now playing itself out in Kosovo. It may be a sign of the political development of much of Europe and North America that mostly Christian powers now are waging war on Serbia on behalf of a Muslim population; this may be an indicator that Europeans and Americans now value humanitarian concerns above sovereignty — a development which will have considerable ramifications for the future in many parts of the world. In the Balkans, however, and particularly on the ethnic, religious, and historical faultlines between Serbia and "the rest", no such humanitarianism is forthcoming. Here, the "old" forms of nationalism are being implemented in a horrifying manner.³¹

The resentment of Albanians among the Serbs is widespread, and it is based on a number of stereotypes, myths, and prejudices of long

standing. This set of mass attitudes and values represents a solid base from which political mobilizers can build their programmes and consolidate their power.

The chief mobilizer and implementor of this kind of policy is Slobodan Milosevic.

Slobodan Milosevic: Myth-maker, Careerist, Manipulator, and Thug

Slobodan Milosevic is the primary mobilizer of Yugoslav (that is, Serb) nationalism today. His rise to power is well known and will only be summarized here. Milosevic was a party apparatchik in the Yugoslav League of Communists. He rose in the ranks on the coat-tails of important leaders, who saw him as a protégé and helped him along the path to greater power and influence. It is an indication of Milosevic's ruthlessness as a leader that he has abandoned most of his erstwhile benefactors since capturing the political pinnacle. Milosevic's rise is closely associated with Serb nationalism, as discussed above, and also with Kosovo; it was in the latter province that he uttered his famous words that Serbs would no longer be "beaten" by others, and it was in this province that he began the process of implementing the practical features of Serb nationalism by removing Kosovo's autonomy and then firmly enclosing it in the grasp of central power emanating from Belgrade. Finally, it was in this place that the ultimate test of Milosevic and Serb nationalism was joined. The outcome of the struggle will tell us much about the Serb version of nationalism, Slobodan Milosevic as a politician, and the future of Albanians and many others in the Balkans. It may also tell us a great deal about Western democracies and what they are willing to fight for (and how long and hard they will fight). Furthermore, on this small and poor province hinges the fate of post-Cold War *détente* in Europe, and possibly also the future of peace or war in the Balkans itself. Certainly, the outcome of the conflict will settle the political (perhaps also personal) future of this leader himself. If ever anyone had a "rendezvous with destiny", it is Slobodan Milosevic.

In several respects, Milosevic became a top political leader in Serbia at an opportune time. In the mid-1980s, Yugoslavia was experiencing a massive economic crisis which, to some extent, foreshadowed the crises and eventual collapse of the Soviet Union. Productivity was low, inflation was on the rise, unemployment, hitherto essentially "hidden", now came out in the open and revealed how weak the economy really was. In the political field, the efforts directed towards creating a form of political

nationalism under Tito had failed; there was increasing decentralization in decision-making and even in security matters, so that each republic began to develop its own armed forces (albeit mostly in the form of police troops and paramilitary units). Serb dissatisfaction with the relations between the various republics in the federation was at a high level, because the Serbs felt that the previous system under Tito had favoured the non-Serb units, and also because the process of decentralization clearly ran counter to the wishes of many Serbs, who hankered after a more centralized system under Belgrade's control. The increasing nationalism among the Albanians in Kosovo resulted in low-level intimidation of Serbs and produced considerable out-migration from the province by all non-Albanian groups, but primarily members of the Serb ethnic minority in the province. On the memorable occasion mentioned above, when Milosevic made the famous statement about Serbs no longer being victims in their own land, this hitherto obscure politician captured the moment and provided the spark that ignited long-standing grievances, and he thereby rekindled suppressed but not forgotten dreams and remembrances of past injustices, real or imagined. Slobodan Milosevic became the mobilizer of Serb nationalism under propitious circumstances, but, given the mobilizability of Serb political culture at the time, it is hard to avoid the conclusion that, in the absence of Slobodan, there would have been other Milosevics just waiting for the opportune time to turn the dangerous mix of myth and reality into political action.³²

It is possible to see Slobodan Milosevic as a real Serb nationalist who is simply attempting to realize the old dream of a Greater Serbia. As such, his policy can be considered as a logical outcome of the activities of discoverers from the nineteenth century to the 1980s, when Serb nationalism was "rediscovered" in its full force, and then mobilized by a true believer like Milosevic. The scenario in the middle of the 1980s seemed eerily familiar to students of Balkan nationalism. A severe economic and political crisis helped fuel aggressive nationalism; academics, writers and other presumed opinion-makers and opinion-leaders became very vocal in their expression of their major national goal (witness the now infamous "manifesto" of the Serb Academy of Sciences on the rights and duties of the Serb nation). A leader emerged to either implement the "holy" ideals of popular emotions or, conversely, the masses "cast up" someone who could reflect the needs of the masses (I am reminded here of Isaac Deutscher's statement that "the mantle of history" fell on Stalin's shoulders in the late 1920s and that if it had not been Stalin, history would have deposited its garment of destiny on someone else). In any case, Milosevic has expressed the main ideas of Serb nationalism, as discussed above, frequently and eloquently. If, as

suggested by some, he is a mere careerist (see below) he certainly knows how to use widely held fears, prejudices, hopes and preferences, in the most skilful manner, to reach his goals. Chances are that his frequent reference to Serb history and destiny reflect some measure of conviction on his part; in any case, his rise to power and his present unquestioned support among virtually all Serbs may also have convinced him of his special place in the annals of his people, which certainly requires adherence to hallowed principles. Political leaders frequently associate themselves with “manifest destiny” and their place in history. Occasionally, this identification leads to a protracted journey on the dangerous path towards full-blown dictatorship and even megalomania (for example, Nicolae Ceausescu in Romania). There is much to suggest that Slobodan Milosevic has also embarked on this trip, with dangerous consequences not only for Serbia and the Balkans, but perhaps the very peace of Europe itself.³³

Some scholars reject the notion that Milosevic is a true nationalist. They see him instead as a cynical careerist, who cleverly uses Serb nationalism (and the Serb nation in the bargain) for his relentless quest for power. There is much to be said for this interpretation as well. Milosevic has been ruthless in his climb to power; many are the close associates and mentors of his who are now in the political wilderness, without any opportunity to influence Serb politics. Frequent purges have marked the period of Milosevic's ascendancy; 1999 saw several of these, all of which further strengthened his grasp on power. Having consolidated his position in this fashion, Milosevic then proceeded to implement a carefully thought-out plan of ethnic cleansing, and the establishment of a form of “Greater Serbia” — a process which will finally lead to the complete convergence of the nation, the land, and the state, a process which is described by Ernest Gellner as the very essence of nationalism. This approach of cold, calculating realpolitik has banked on the inability or unwillingness of democracies (perhaps both) to clearly define their primary, secondary, and tertiary goals in the world. It is also a policy that assumes that the principle of national sovereignty will continue to hold sway in European politics in the twenty-first century, as it did in the twentieth. The confrontation between NATO and Milosevic is therefore more than the struggle between democracy and tyranny; it may be the starting point of a new way of defining human communities away from the nation to more “universal” principles, such as human rights. If this is indeed the case, the spokesmen of universal rights will have their work cut out for them, especially in the Balkans.³⁴

There have been increasingly frequent suggestions that Milosevic is profoundly influenced by his wife, and that the latter is the real power