Partners into Competitors: Divisive Democracy and Conflicting Conceptions of Citizenship

In his book *States and Power in Africa: Comparative Lessons in Authority and Control*, Jeffrey Herbst describes the conflicts between the Zulu and early Dutch settlers over their opposing conceptions of sovereignty over territory and people. The Zulu believed that their political authority extended wherever people had pledged obedience to their king regardless of the territory where they happened to be. Also, 'the Zulu believed that they could let the whites settle on land without giving up ownership', whereas for the European whites, occupation over a certain territory also meant the ownership of that territory and control of the people that happened to be there (2000: 40–41). Extrapolated from its colonial context in which the Dutch colonizers wanted to absolutely dominate the colonized and take their land, the story could be interpreted as a clash between the conception of a political community based on ethnic, cultural, hereditary or maybe also declaratory loyalty and solidarity, regardless of existing political boundaries and polities in which the members of this community live, and a political community based on loyalty to the authorities governing a territory where one lives and, ideally, on solidarity with all those who happen to be on that territory under the same authorities. Modern states in reality often combine these two principles in a particular way: they often claim that their citizens or their ethnic kin abroad are bound to their polity and thus expect a loyalty and sometimes exercise an influence on diaspora members (who, in turn, are often interested in meddling in political affairs of the 'old country'), but, internally, they always insist on undivided loyalty of the population they govern. Even further from its original South African situation, the clash between what we can generally call civic and ethnic solidarity, as well as different understandings of whom should be loyal to whom and who belonged together, turned crucial during the last years of Yugoslavia and decisive at the moment when the multi-party majority democracy was introduced in its republics.

Democracy and nationalism

In socialist multinational federations, Bunce argues, 'the very concept of citizenship […] became dual' (1999: 49). On the one hand, according to her it implied membership in the ideological-political community attached to the 'socialist regime-state', and, on the other, membership in a national community. Nevertheless this notion of the *duality* of citizenship in socialist federations needs to be refined. This was the case in the USSR and in Czechoslovakia (before 1969). But in both Yugoslavia after 1945 and Czechoslovakia after 1969, membership in the 'ideological-political community' was *bifurcated* into federal-level and republican-level membership. Therefore, citizenship became not only formally *dual* but *triadic*: on the one hand, there was a *dual* legal citizenship – federal and republic-level citizenship – and, on the other, membership in a given ethnonational community; with no obligation, at least in the Yugoslav case, to declare ethnic belonging and with the option of even declaring Yugoslav 'ethnicity'. Since one of the crucial tasks of post-communist democratization consisted in 'identifying the community in which democratic rights and responsibilities are to be vested' (Skalnik Leff 1999: 205), democratic participation and political belonging clashed in Yugoslavia at the junction of Yugoslav citizenship, republican citizenship and ethnic membership.

One way of understanding Yugoslavia's initial democratization – a democratization that eventually exacerbated inter-ethnic conflicts which had been meticulously nurtured and controlled by those nationalist elites who were attempting to, by multi-party elections, accede to power or stay in power – is to examine furthermore the nature of Yugoslavia's confederal citizenship. As described in the preceding chapters, Yugoslav citizenship was not only *legally* ambiguous but was becoming *politically* less important owing to the progressive confederalization of Yugoslavia since the mid-1960s. Hence, given that political decision-making had been taking place at the republican level and that the federal level mostly served – since the early 1970s – as a platform for inter-republican, or almost inter-state bargaining, democracy could only have been introduced from the bottom-up, from the republics themselves as clearly identified 'communities'. In the Yugoslav case, the problem was that democratization occurred only at the 'bottom' without ever reaching the 'top'. Since Yugoslavia was *de facto* a confederation, republican citizenship was the natural answer to the question of how and where democracy should be exercised. After the break-up of the LCY, the

republican elites did not hesitate to call for democratic elections *only* at the republican level in order to legitimize their power and, having attained a democratic mandate, proceeded to negotiate Yugoslavia's future.

In the confusing situation surrounding the introduction of liberal democracy in the Yugoslav republics, an ordinary citizen was obliged initially to play three mutually non-exclusive roles. First, he or she was invited to vote as a citizen and/or resident of his or her republic and to express his or her political preferences through multi-party republican elections. At the same time, nationalist elites and politicians targeted him or her as a member of their ethnic group, a group that usually stretched across republican boundaries. And, finally, during this whole period he or she was still a citizen of Yugoslavia where there were still functioning federal institutions in place, including the Yugoslav People's army and he or she was recognized in the international arena uniquely as Yugoslav. These three identities remained compatible only so long as citizens could perform all of them simultaneously, in other words, only insofar as the Federation provided a solid framework within which Yugoslavs could be at the same time members of their civic (republican) people, their ethnic nation and remain in a position of mutual loyalty, unity and solidarity within the general Yugoslav 'community of citizens'.

However, the progressive disappearance and the weakening of the federal framework immediately caused severe difficulties for those living in a republic that was not dominated numerically by their ethnic group. When it became distinctly possible that Yugoslav federal protection would be lost along with the dissolution of the supra-republican and supranational community of citizens, they realized that they would simultaneously acquire an unwanted status of ethnic minority in a new state and lose any supra-republican institutional protection and connection with their kin-state and other members of their ethnic nation. This created an atmosphere of mutual suspicion among groups as well as – in the context of Yugoslavia's imminent dissolution – an urgent need to establish new states – preferably ethnically homogeneous and territorially enlarged – that would guarantee to their future citizens their full equality and democratic rights as well as protection. It became increasingly clear that the creation of such states in the context of conflicting territorial claims could not be achieved without violence.

Consequently, the debate on the sovereignty of nations and of republics turned into a debate about membership and a given citizen's loyalty to democratic states about to be created on the basis of Yugoslavia's internal organization. Slobodan Milošević's double measure is instructive here. In a nutshell, when it

comes to Serbia, only republics are sovereign and *unitary*. By contrast, when it comes to other republics, the badge of sovereignty belongs to ethnic nations. It is not surprising then that Serbia contradicted the principle of ethnic sovereignty and solidarity in its new constitution adopted in September 1990. Serbia defined itself as the 'state of its citizens', therefore as *civic* and republican – strategically a wise move if we compare it to Croatia's constitutional self-definition as an exclusively ethnic Croat state. It also meant that no internal secession is possible in a civically bound community of citizens of Serbia that as such at least rhetorically guaranteed all rights to all citizens, which also legitimized the reduction of regional autonomies. At the same time, Serbia insisted on the sovereignty of ethnic groups, portrayed itself as the protector of Serbs in Bosnia and Croatia and demanded their separation from the seceding republics and, preferably, their union with a constitutionally *civic* Serbia!

Federalism formally creates a *national demos* at the national level and *subnational demoi* at the regional level. However, in mono-national and monolingual federations this necessary product of every federal system does not entail parallel and often competing nation-building projects at the sub-federal level that could result in distinct national *demoi* living under the same federal roof. In multinational federations *nations* are usually organized territorially. The federal identity and membership is thus in constant competition with the ethnonational sub-federal identities and memberships. Centrifugal and centripetal forces continually oppose one another and the equilibrium depends, among other things, on the institutional setting in place, historical legacies and experiences, citizens' perceptions and use of the *dual* nature of their citizenship, the interaction between their multi-level citizenship status, legally codified or not, and their ethnocultural membership and also on the practical solutions to political and economic disputes and crises taken by regional and federal political elites. The socialist policies in Yugoslavia worked towards the disabling of the federal Yugoslav *demos* in favour of sub-federal *demoi* that should have had a civic component, although difficult to uphold in the context of ethnic imbalances. Only Bosnia corresponded to this ideal of civic republican citizenship that acknowledged informally its multiethnic composition as well as its high degree of inter-ethnic mixing.

Nonetheless, the introduction of liberal democracy offered, perhaps, the last opportunity for creating a Yugoslav *demos* through the means of representative democracy had the rules of the electoral game been different. Some observers believe that a majority vote at supranational level would have created such a demos (Jović 2001a: 30). Linz and Stepan (2001 [1992]) also argue that the initial

democratic elections should have been organized at the federal level (see below). According to these authors, this would have legitimated the federation and reinforced federal citizenship. However, the experience of Czechoslovakia – where the first elections were organized simultaneously at both federal and republican level – demonstrates that this was not a safe bet either.

It is interesting to note that at a certain point it was Milošević who proposed nationwide elections, hoping to capitalize on his position as the leader not only of Serbia but of all the Serbs and so of Yugoslavia's most numerous nation (see Jović 2001a). He was obviously interested in profiting from the double role he played as both Serbian nationalist and the 'saviour' of a multinational Yugoslavia – rhetoric that, at least initially, had a certain appeal even for some non-Serbs and many non-nationalist Serbs as well. This initiative, however, stoked fears of the kind of ethnic imbalances characteristic of multinational polities. Obviously, the classic model of representative democracy (one citizen – one vote) at the supranational level would never have been acceptable for smaller nations (Slovenes, Croatians, Bosniaks, Albanians and Macedonians). Only Serbs and Montenegrins were interested in this kind of power sharing, but only to a certain extent. All Serbs and Montenegrins taken together were still in a minority position in Yugoslavia as a whole and thus were fearful of a potential 'anti-Serb' coalition. In the absence of an institutional counterweight that could have guaranteed separate national/republican interests, the idea eventually turned out to be unacceptable for everyone. The first democratic elections made federal citizenship politically redundant. It was *de jure* existing but only as a derivative: democratization laid bare its true confederal nature. From these elections organized between early Spring 1990 and late Autumn of 1990 to the final disintegration of Yugoslavia in 1992, federal citizenship was only relevant if citizens travelled or fled abroad and was thus limited to passports, which were themselves issued by the republics.

The moment the Yugoslav leadership decided to introduce liberal democracy and organize multi-party elections, a certain number of questions immediately arose, the answers to which would critically determine future events. Let us just enumerate the most pressing questions that anyone wishing to play the game of liberal democracy – especially if the game is played in a democratizing socialist multinational (con)federation – must tackle head on: what is the institutional and territorial framework for democracy or, in other words, where exactly, for whom and by whom, is liberal democracy to be introduced? In the Yugoslav case, is it in the Federation, in the republics or, maybe, in the ethnic groups? Democracy should be the rule of people by the people, but who is 'the people'

in Yugoslavia? Is it the citizens of Yugoslavia? Citizens of Yugoslav republics? Members of constitutive nations? Or, perhaps, 'the working class and all working people', as stated in the existing Constitution? If a citizen is asked to perform his or her duty, to elect and be elected, now in multi-party elections as opposed to his or her previous socialist experience with elections at the commune level and delegate system, and to take a part at a new emerging *agora*, then where is this agora and who are his or her co-citizens? And since every agora has its limits, who will be excluded? If elections are to be called, *where* should he or she cast their vote and for *whom* can they vote? Since representative democracy usually entails majority rule, who is likely to be in the majority and who in the minority? And what relationship should be built between these two camps, the tyranny of the majority or consociational cooperation? After all, who is *sovereign* in Yugoslavia or, in other words, who is capable of making and implementing political decisions?

Indeed, the question of sovereignty was immediately posed, coupled with the unavoidable issue of the right to self-determination. Confusing definitions of Yugoslav sovereignty – contained both in its various constitutions and in the speeches of its leaders – did not make the task easy for Yugoslavs and turned the process of democratization itself into an open constitution making and thus heavily contested process. Suddenly, the previous rules were open for debate and, unsurprisingly in an atmosphere of complete liberalization, many had different, opposing and often mutually exclusive visions of the future.

The 1974 Constitution declares in its first article that Yugoslavia is 'based on the power and self-management of the working class and all working people'. The working class is complemented with 'all working people' (thus those outside the leading class as well) as the bearer of sovereign power. Since this alliance of working people is almost all-encompassing when it comes to working adults in Yugoslavia, could we read it simply as the 'people', and, furthermore, as the Yugoslav people? But, alas, this interpretation would have been contrary to the Yugoslav solution to the national question, a solution that gave all sovereignty and the right of self-determination to the constituent nations. By this reasoning, and in the context of the introduction of liberal democracy, i.e. voluntary abandonment of the socialist heritage by that very socialist elite in power and at the moment when the de-legitimization of socialist heritage was in full swing, 'the working class and all working people' and, more generally, the Yugoslav people as such were excluded as potential bearers of sovereignty. With self-management rejected and put in question as an economic and political model, it was hard to imagine how the working class and the working people could have constituted themselves as major political subjects.

Therefore, Yugoslavs essentially faced two alternatives as to who (or what) could be sovereign: ethnic nations or the republics and their citizens? Serbia and Serbia's junior partner Montenegro argued that the former was sovereign; all other republics insisted on the latter. Furthermore, the question was related to the even more explosive issue of the constitutionally guaranteed right to self-determination and secession. Into this volatile debate, Milošević launched an argument that resonated heavily among ethnic Serbs. It could be summarized as follows: if the republics have the right to secede from Yugoslavia, then ethnic Serbs as a whole have the same right to secede from everybody else (see Budding 2008: 92; also Dimitrijević 1995: 58).

Milošević used the sovereignty of ethnic nations argument against Slovenia, Croatia and Bosnia, but he insisted on it only when it concerned ethnic Serbs outside Serbia. However, at the same time Serbia expected loyalty from all of its citizens, despite the fact that up to 35 per cent of them were not ethnically Serbs. The Serbian leadership was not ready to apply the ethnic principle within Serbia and acknowledge an equivalent right of secession for ethnic Albanians in Kosovo and Magyars in Vojvodina (as 'national minorities' they were not seen as bearers of the right to self-determination), or ethnic Muslims in the Sandžak (who due to smaller number and the lack of separatism were not seen as threatening). The sovereignty of ethnic nations, regardless of actual administrative divisions, was unacceptable as a principle of Yugoslavia's disintegration both to the other republics and, later, to the international community. The general principle of the disintegration of socialist federations was – until the recent Western recognition of Kosovo's independence and Russia's recognition of Georgia's breakaway provinces – anchored in respect for their internal republican borders.

But what would the final result of the extreme application of ethnic sovereignty in Yugoslavia have been? Most probably Slovenia would have remained in its present shape alongside a series of strange state creatures: a Croatia without at least 20 per cent of its territory but with Western Herzegovina and tiny parts of Bosnia; a Greater Serbia with Serb-populated Croatian and Bosnian territories, possibly with Montenegro, but without Kosovo, Serbian and Montenegrin Sandžak and parts of Vojvodina; a Greater Albania with Kosovo and Western Macedonia attached, a smaller Macedonia; and, finally, an ethnic Muslim state comprising the patchwork of Bosnian territories and most of the Serbian and Montenegrin Sandžak. Faced with the choice of breaking up Yugoslavia along either republican or ethnic lines, nationalist politicians in Yugoslavia opted for a combination of the two in accordance with their interests at the time. Hence, Milošević's Serbia insisted on the inviolability of its own borders but demanded control over Montenegro and the Serb majority territories in

Figure 6.1 Ethnic map of Yugoslavia in 1991 (Source: Wikimedia Commons).

Bosnia and Croatia. Similarly, Tudjman's Croatia insisted on a republican form of sovereignty – though interpreted as the sovereignty of ethnic Croats – inviolability of its republican 'AVNOJ' borders, and on the right to secede from Yugoslavia, but nevertheless challenged Bosnian sovereignty in and sometimes beyond Croat-populated areas.

Citizens as voters: Democratize and divide

In socialist Yugoslavia, there was, constitutionally, no minority and no majority, but only equal nations and nationalities. The old federal framework made it, therefore, possible for any individual to move to another 'ethnic' republic

without becoming a minority member in that republic; the common citizenship guaranteed equal rights throughout Yugoslavia. Nonetheless, demographic data, including ethnic group membership, competing percentages and the territorial distribution of these groups became a major concern at the end of the *ancien régime* (Stokes 2013). In a multiethnic state, the transition from self-management socialism, implying in principle widespread democratic decision-making at the workplace level and the no-majority-no-minority rule, to a liberal democracy formed exclusively around political parties and where everything hinges on the constitution of the majority and minority easily created turbulences and highlighted inter-ethnic competition. Many citizens were suddenly placed before the choice of being a member of a minority in a large state or being in the majority in a smaller one. Vladimir Gligorov's famous aphorism captures the nature of ethnic rivalry in the Balkans: 'Why should I be a minority in your country when you can be a minority in my country?' The principle of majority rule at the federal level was rejected for the above-mentioned reasons – ultimately no one would have a majority – but the majority principle was applied within the republics and that inevitably created a 'fear of becoming a minority' (Jović 2001a).

Rogers Brubaker reveals the striking historic parallels between the post-First World War context and the post-communist situation regarding the triadic relation between national minorities, nationalizing states and national homelands (1996). There was an internal triadic relation between ethnocentric republics, ethnic minorities and external homelands (republics). The federal centre was a strong guarantor of the equality of all groups and was therefore a necessary counterweight to ethnic imbalances in the republics. Nevertheless, the internal 'triadic configuration' was occasionally discussed – as testified by the debates on the position of Croatian Serbs during the Croatian Spring movement – but the federal roof and all the rights attached to federal citizenship made the question of borders, ethnic republics, national homelands and ethnic minorities politically less salient.

Early democratization in ethnically diverse societies can easily lead 'from voting to violence' (Snyder 2000). 'Naively pressuring ethnically divided authoritarian states to hold instant elections, argues Jack Snyder, can lead to disastrous results' (2000: 16). In ethnically diverse societies, democratization more often divides than unites. As Michael Mann warns in his book *The Dark Side of Democracy*, 'democracy has always carried with it a possibility that the majority might tyrannize minorities, and this possibility carries more ominous consequences in certain types of multiethnic environments' (2005: 2). This does not mean that ethnic diversity must ineluctably lead to a failed or conflictual

democratization. However, it does suggest that pushing for a rapid introduction of classic democratic rules in a context where ethnic differences can be used for political mobilization – and then legitimized and reinforced through the popular vote – will more often than not contribute to and cement ethnic fragmentation. In the former socialist federations that were mostly divided into ethnonational territories, the lines of fragmentation were already clearly demarcated. Moreover, since citizens often declared their ethnic belonging in addition to their republican identity – as a rule in the USSR and less so in Yugoslavia – ethnonational lines of fragmentation were already present within republican societies as well. Katherine Verdery observes that

> Western purveyors of 'democracy' (etymologically, 'rule by the people') therefore brought it into an environment predisposed to ethnicize it. As external observers came to ratify that elections were free and fair, they failed to ask who 'the people' were who would be allowed into the social contract creating citizens and rights. (1998: 297)

As in many other post-communist countries, the first democratic elections in Yugoslavia demonstrated the 'ethno-national cartelization of opinion and electoral competition' (Skalnik Leff 1999: 214). Civic membership was soon eclipsed by ethnic belonging as the most important marker of a citizen's identity. Vojin Dimitrijević describes the mechanism of ethnic identification:

> individuals are pushed not to act primarily as citizens but as members of the ethnic group. They are induced not to recognise any social, economic, professional and other interests and to behave as if all members of the ethnic group were in the same social position. (1998: 147–154)

To illustrate the rejection of civic identity – by a great number of individuals but not by everyone! – Dimitrijević quotes Miroslav Toholj, one of the leaders of Bosnian Serbs: 'Serbs have been finally deprived of their Serb name, they have been made citizens, which they will not accept.' Toholj here basically describes a certain conception of citizenship which is based on political community brought together by 'blood' and ethnoreligious belonging as opposed to 'citizens' brought together only by neutral civic status. Thus becoming 'citizens', i.e. accepting the legal fact as the basis for political community was seen as superseding or potentially subjugating ethnic groups. Unsurprisingly, Serb nationalists in Bosnia put in practice their vision of ethnic citizenship – and even voted a law on 'Serb citizenship' to that effect – applied in ethnically cleansed territories. And they were not alone in this kind of enterprise.

I agree with Jack Snyder who dismisses explanations centred on the supposedly long-term popular nationalist rivalries that precede democratization – often a very important feature of the 'ethnic hatred' argument. Snyder claims that 'before democratization begins, nationalism is usually weak or absent among the broad masses of the population. Popular nationalism typically arises during the earliest stages of democratization, when elites use nationalist appeals to compete for popular support' (2000: 32). He argues that 'nationalist conflicts arise as a by-product of elites' efforts to persuade the people to accept divisive nationalist ideas' (32). In this sense, his position is similar to that of V. P. Gagnon who claims that the responsibility for igniting nationalism lies solely with the political elites who channel nationalist sentiments for their own political and economic benefits (2004). Skalnik Leff points out that democratization may segment rather than pluralize and liberalization may easily result in authoritarianism and intolerance (1999: 211). On the other hand, the veteran scholar of ethnic conflict Donald Horowitz notes that divisions and conflicts caused by electoral competition in ethnically diverse societies 'can often be averted by prudent planning of elections and territorial arrangements' (1985: 682).

Neither of these were present in Yugoslavia in 1990. Elections were definitely not planned prudently to avoid conflicts. They were organized hastily by the republics and with significant time gaps between them, which had serious consequences for the political dynamic in Yugoslavia's final hours. As for the territorial arrangements, the internal borders were well established. Nevertheless, they began to be openly challenged, first of all by Serbia's demands for a revision of existing 'AVNOJ' borders, judged to be 'artificial' by mostly Serb, but also many Croatian nationalists. Any eventual change of borders, naturally, was supposed to happen at the expense of others.

Similar to Horowitz, in their widely quoted 1992 article on 'political identities and electoral sequencing' Stepan and Linz diagnosed the decisive impact of the first democratic elections – their organization (at the national and/or regional level), timing and sequencing – on the survival of non-democratic multinational polities such as Spain, the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia. They claim, in short, that the 'sequence of elections *per se* can help construct or dissolve identities' (2001: 202). The very fact that democratic elections did not take place at the federal level in Yugoslavia and the Soviet Union prevented their legitimatization as states and contributed to their disintegration into democratized sub-units. The Spanish case was clearly different. The first democratic elections there were organized at the national level and this alone,

by virtue of the consequent national electoral competition, consolidated all-national parties and the Spanish state in spite of its ethnonational and regional diversity. Although electoral sequencing heavily influenced the political dynamic in Yugoslavia – we will never know, however, if all-Yugoslav elections would have saved Yugoslavia as a state – one should not overlook some important differences between Stepan and Linz's various cases, especially between highly centralized and unitary post-Franco Spain[1] and federalized, to different degrees, Yugoslavia and Soviet Union where elections came after an initial period of liberalization in the 1980s that allowed republican and local elites to capture advantageous positions. It is true that 'no significant polity wide parties emerged' (Stepan 2004b: 348) in Yugoslavia. One needs to add that this happened precisely because the political space, unlike in Spain, was institutionally already fragmented. The Yugoslav communists did not *pluralize* their polity, only their own party. The League of Communists of Yugoslavia was indeed a *league* of six parties – or eight parties if we count the independent parties from Vojvodina and Kosovo – based in their republics. It easily turned regional communist elites into the representatives of their *nations* in the federal arena. The only polity-wide, all-Yugoslav and pro-Yugoslav party in Yugoslavia's history was thus a federalized 'league' that disintegrated even before the first democratic elections (January 1990). There was a dearth of politically significant actors, standing neutrally above ethnonational cleavages that could have eventually given rise to new polity-wide parties. The republican political elites decided to organize the first democratic elections separately in order to ensure their legitimacy and reinforce their positions in anticipation of future bargaining over the preservation or disintegration of the Yugoslav federation, bargaining that eventually took place in a highly volatile context.

Nevertheless, the *timing* and *sequencing* of republican democratic elections did play an important role in the electoral preferences of citizens. Slovenia held elections only three months after the failed Fourteenth Congress of the LCY. These elections brought victory to the centre-right pro-independence coalition, but Milan Kučan, a reformed communist, was elected president. Croatia completed the electoral process soon after in May 1990. Ivica Račan's reformed communists got 35 per cent of votes but lost heavily – largely due to their poor electoral calculation and poorly designed electoral rules – to Tudjman's nationalists who with 42 per cent won an absolute majority in the Parliament. The Parliament later elected Franjo Tudjman as President. Then followed a huge gap (for such turbulent times) between the elections in the northwestern republics and subsequent elections in the southeastern republics, which were

finally called in late Autumn 1990. In brief, the democratically elected, mostly right-wing republican governments of Slovenia and Croatia co-existed for half a year with the old socialist governments in Bosnia, Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia, the latter two being nationalistic as well.

Already in August 1990 local Serbs in, as it would be proclaimed later, the *Krajina* region of Croatia blocked the roads between two major Croatian cities, Zagreb and Split, in open defiance of the new Croatian authorities. A month later Serbia adopted a new Constitution confirming the abolition of Vojvodina's and Kosovo's autonomy but retaining their two seats in the Yugoslav Presidency. If Milošević's bullying clearly handed the advantage to nationalist and separatist forces in Slovenia and Croatia, inter-ethnic conflicts in Croatia, in turn, had a strong impact on the electoral preferences of Bosnian, Montenegrin and Serbian citizens. The nationalist reformed Communists won in Serbia and Montenegro, whereas in Bosnia nationalist anti-Communists (Serb, Croat and Muslim ethnic parties) formed a coalition with disastrous results for the country's future. Milošević's Socialist Party of Serbia largely won the elections and at the presidential elections Milošević won 65 per cent of the votes. Finally, in Macedonia nationalists won in November of 1990 but reformed communist Kiro Gligorov was elected president. In sum, conservative nationalist political forces triumphed almost everywhere in Yugoslavia even in the guise of 'socialist parties' such as Milošević's.

No true left-leaning pan-Yugoslav party made a strong showing at the elections. In a belated attempt to fill the vacant spot left by the Yugoslav Communists as the only all-Yugoslav supranational political force, the federal Prime Minister Ante Marković founded the Alliance of Reform Forces (SRS) in July 1990. In spite of his all-Yugoslav popularity for some successful economic policies such as the introduction of the convertible dinar and stabilization of the prices in early 1990, he entered the political game too late. In addition to rampant nationalism, some social costs of his own liberal economic policies and austerity measures, as dictated by IMF, could also explain his political defeat: a huge number of the unemployed,[2] especially outside Slovenia and Croatia, and tens of thousands on strike were more likely to look for solutions in their own republic and to listen to nationalist arguments that blamed him and his federal government or other republics and other ethnic groups for their miserable conditions. His party predictably performed well only in highly mixed Bosnian urban centres and in Macedonia, two republics whose citizens were well aware that they would be the ones to pay a heavy price in the case of Yugoslavia's disintegration.

A secret handshake between nationalism and electoral democracy

In the words of Linz and Stepan, 'agreements about stateness are *prior* to agreements about democracy'. 'A "stateness" problem, they argue, may be said to exist when a significant proportion of the population does not accept the boundaries of the territorial state (whether constituted democratically or not) as a legitimate political unit to which they owe obedience' (Linz and Stepan 2001 [1992]: 200). This definition, however, needs to be amended. The stateness problem can also occur when one or more countries question a particular country's or each other's stateness and territorial shape. One can also argue that the imperative of nation-state building, as the condition for successful integration of post-communist states into the democratic family of nations, could produce extreme conflicts in states that perceive or create a perception that their stateness (in terms of their sheer existence or their borders) is disputed from within or/ and without. There is an apparent conflict between conceptions of a consolidated nation-state – which in Eastern Europe usually means an ethnically defined and homogenized nation-state – and a state that should provide equal treatment to its citizens regardless of their origins and eventually, preferably in diversified countries, promote a pluralized democracy and effective minority rights.

Messages sent from the West underscoring the importance of solid stateness for successful democratization did not pressure regional actors to redefine or reform their ethnically heterogeneous states towards greater pluralism. On the contrary, they reinforced the idea that a truly functional state could only be an ethnically homogenized nation-state. After all, it is argued, only solid nation-states successfully democratized and exited communism without violence, whereas multinational federations and countries with a significant proportion of minorities experienced serious problems, conflicts, violence and a delayed democratization. In other words – and this message resonated well among local nationalist elites – the issue of minorities could prevent the consolidation of the state and even endanger its borders and ultimately its very existence.

As Will Kymlicka points out, the West often sends contradictory demands to Eastern Europe by pushing equally hard for the adoption of state models developed in monolingual nation-states and for a series of minority rights characteristic of multilingual and multination states (Kymlicka 2001a: xiv). This ambiguous message presents local leaders with a crucial choice: either they continue to build an ethnically *consolidated* nation-state or they adopt multiple

measures to reform their states on a civic and even multinational basis (which might include the 'threat' of federalization), which they do only under external pressure or when facing serious internal rebellion and almost always reluctantly. The post-communist states often argue that they need to construct themselves as solid nation-states through the process of *transition* before they can pluralize and implement high standard minority rights protections. The false belief that under communist rule nation-building was frozen and thus should be *defrosted* as part of the democratic transition is overwhelmingly accepted both on the ground and in the West. Hence, a toleration of many controversial policies by nationalist democratizing elites such as, for instance, the massive deprivation of citizenship of the former Soviet citizens on the grounds of their non-Baltic origins in Estonia and Latvia.

But the question remains as to whether *democratization* can be achieved without *pluralization*. Kymlicka sees a clear correlation between democratization and minority nationalism (2001b: 369). The Eastern and Central European countries without minorities democratized successfully, he concludes, whereas a slow and painful democratization results from the inability to accommodate minority nationalism. However, the example he cites as evidence for his claim could, contrary to his intentions, support the opposite conclusion. We have here another ambiguous message from the West because, once again, the successful democratization of an ethnically homogenous country could be perceived by other states with minority difficulties as an example to emulate in their own attempt to consolidate and democratize. Minorities, therefore, are not seen as allowing an opportunity to achieve full democratization through a joint effort, as Kymlicka advocates, but rather are considered an obstacle on this path. Since almost all countries with minorities have experienced 'difficulties' in democratization, this simply reinforces the powerful and dangerous stereotype that ethnic diversity itself is to blame for the failure. The accommodation of minorities' requests, especially if followed by consociational arrangements, veto powers and territorial autonomy, is thus seen as a threat to the functioning and even the cohesion of the state. In short, why should they bother to democratize by accommodating minorities' demands, when they can just as easily 'get rid' of them – either literally or by simply restricting access to citizenship – and thereby *democratize* successfully like the others.

Observers of democratization in countries with a high degree of ethnonational plurality often quote (often uncritically) the classic liberal authority John Stuart Mill, who claims in his *Considerations on Representative Government* (1861) that 'free institutions are next to impossible in a country

made up of different nationalities' (296) and that 'it is in general a necessary condition of free institutions, that the boundaries of governments should coincide in the main with those of nationalities' (298–299). According to Philip Roeder, the post-communist experience demonstrates that 'democracy is unlikely to survive in ethnically plural societies' (1999: 855). Roeder is among those scholars worried about the 'third wave of democracy' and claims to have statistical evidence that 'successful democratic transitions are improbable when national revolutions are incomplete' (1999: 856). Democracy promoters thus very often encourage nationalist politicians – although sometimes they worry about their human rights records – through their own claims that democracy is possible only with a solid ethnic majority, or failing this, a peaceful and complacent minority. To insist on ethnic homogeneity as a pre-condition for liberal democracy in Eastern Europe is essentially to advocate a system of ethnically 'pure' and separated territories. But to achieve such ethnic 'purity', or at least to reduce ethnic plurality, as demonstrated in the former Yugoslavia and in some post-Soviet regions, requires the massive employment of *non-democratic* methods involving statelessness, discrimination, human rights violations, violence against civilians, expulsions and, ultimately, mass killings. After all, this is exactly how the countries of 'old Europe' achieved their ethnonational homogeneity and a 'democratic peace'. This 'advice', unfortunately, resonated well in post-socialist 'new Europe'. In multinational socialist federations, it promoted ethnically based political communities in opposition to the existing civic-legal political communities at the republican level as a basis for democracy. This ethnocentric vision of citizenship challenged social realities and institutional settings, put in question the existing borders and helped to open the door for violence and war.

Where is My State? Citizenship as a Factor in Yugoslavia's Disintegration

So, why did it happen?

The former Yugoslavia was one of those places that openly defied the 'Clinton happy years' and the superficial triumphalism of the capitalist West after 1989. Naturally, the media, politicians and the public at large required an immediate explanation for both Yugoslavia's disintegration and the ensuing violence. An enormous number of articles and books mostly focused on the period between Milošević's accession to power in Serbia in 1987 and 1988, the democratization of Yugoslavia in 1990 and the wars in Croatia, Bosnia and Kosovo. Scholars competed with journalists in providing explanations, analyses of the conflicts and predictions.[1] Naturally, journalists had the ear of the general public and, sometimes, the governments. As for scholars, they often competed with one another to provide an original thesis to explain the Yugoslav disaster and often neglected alternative approaches in order to underline the novelty of their own interpretation and position themselves securely in the scholarly debate (for critical reviews of the literature on Yugoslavia's disintegration and wars, see Dragović-Soso 2008; Jović 2001b; Ramet 2005b).

I fully agree with Dejan Jović (2001b) and Sabrina Ramet (2005b) on the necessity of a multifactor analysis in order to understand Yugoslavia's 'disintegrative synergies' (Cohen 2008). Obviously, only a multifactor analysis or a combination of approaches could yield satisfactory results in explaining such a complex process that involved changes in the international order, the disintegration of a state, the creation of new states and dramatic political, social and economic mutations which were often followed by large-scale violence. In this chapter, I do not present an exhaustive literature review but concentrate instead on describing, commenting and criticizing some of the most important arguments, and especially those related to my own research on citizenship in Yugoslavia and its successor states. I therefore pay special attention to studies

dealing with institutional design, constitutional redefinitions of Yugoslav republics, socio-economic processes and the role of political elites. Finally, I present my own addition of the thus far neglected factor of citizenship to the list of multiple causes of Yugoslavia's disintegration.

However, it is important first to highlight the argument that should be rejected entirely. The famous 'ethnic hatred' argument, coupled with the now infamous 'clash of civilizations' that influenced the media, the general (and generally uninformed) public but also officials in international organizations and national governments, is generally dismissed as academically irrelevant and intellectually shallow. Nonetheless, it was probably, like in so many other cases, the most influential argument in the media and the favourite explanation of all those unfamiliar with the history of Yugoslavia but still determined to have a stance. It is said that one book in particular – *Balkan Ghosts* by journalist Robert D. Kaplan published in 1994 – had wide appeal and even convinced Bill Clinton not to intervene during the first phase of the Yugoslav war. The argument is simple: the Balkan peoples have hated each other throughout history but large empires and Tito's dictatorship kept these sentiments in check. Upon Tito's death these ethnic hatreds came to the surface. Moreover, the argument continues, the outcome is not surprising since this is a region of constant 'clashes' between Roman Catholicism, Orthodoxy and Islam. Furthermore, there is something embedded in the character and the behaviour patterns of these peoples that cause them to cut each other's throats whenever they can.

Scholars spilled a lot of ink in rebuking this argument and in some instances the media's oversimplification of the Balkan conflict served as the primary motivation for them to write their studies (see, for instance, Gagnon 2004). In short, the 'ethnic hatred' argument only blurs the real causes of the conflict and more often than not serves the participants in the conflict by providing a justification or rationale for their violence. If ethnic hatred really governs these peoples' minds and actions, then everything is a matter of survival; if the war is just one episode in the centuries-long game of survival, then no one can be blamed for pulling the trigger first (after all, in history the 'other side' did the same).

One has to mention here that nationalists used one more argument that found many receptive ears in the West or created an even bigger confusion. During the 1990s the recognition of collective identities and of communities' rights to preserve their cultural specificity and self-govern themselves was understood as a basic human right. Mix it with democratization after the years of 'totalitarianism' in the East that allegedly was not allowing for full expression of ethnocultural

identities and you can be sure to gain some sympathies in the West (after all the 'West' is the only audience to which you actually speak and from which you expect recognition). I would suggest that nationalist arguments centred on identity politics played quite well with the proliferation of multiculturalist discourses and a general shift towards policies of recognition of specific cultural identities and their subsequent empowerment through various forms of autonomy. Add territorial claim to this in an ethnically mixed environment and you will soon have conflict and violence. In this regard, as Valerie Bunce observes, the exit from socialism was not only a matter of regime change or state rejection but also of national liberation (1999: 132). Democracy itself thus turned out to be one of the crucial tools for mobilizing ethnic populations around an agenda of final national emancipation.

Relevant factors of Yugoslavia's disintegration

It's the economy, stupid!

Putting Yugoslavia in the perspective of global economic changes since the late 1970s seems necessary. The economic argument, coupled with an argument emphasizing the role of the international community, was strongly presented by Susan Woodward in her widely quoted book *Balkan Tragedy* (1995a). For Woodward the violent disintegration of Yugoslavia was 'the result of the politics of transforming a socialist society into a market economy and democracy' (1995a: 15). Woodward locates the causes in the economy in general and in the foreign-debt crisis in particular. For her, 'a critical element of this failure was economic decline, caused largely by a program intended to resolve a foreign debt crisis' (1995a: 15). John Allcock similarly sees a failure of Yugoslavia as a failure of a modernization process (2000). For Woodward, the conflict was only exacerbated by an inadequate Western response to the crisis and the general international context (1995a: 379).

By highlighting economic factors, Woodward and Allcock underline an important element in understanding Yugoslavia's disintegration. Although this was one of the crucial elements that affected the general political and social crisis in Yugoslavia in the late 1980s, it is not, in my opinion, the direct cause of the state's disintegration and violence. Woodward's insistence on the role of the international community, particularly Germany, in igniting the war is less convincing but consistent with her interpretation of Yugoslavia's disintegration

as mostly managed by foreign actors (little surprise then that her argument was widely praised by nationalists, especially in Serbia, since it shifted the culpability towards the international arena or at least to other actors such as economically 'egoistical' Slovenes). Concentrating only on the international community simply fails to grasp how local elites, those in power or eager to grab it, responded to the profound socio-economic changes and the announced incorporation into the global capitalist order. In other words, how existing elites attempted to use their political capital inherited from socialism for gaining the economic rewards and how rising elites understood the democratic process as political empowerment that could be easily translated into economic gains as well.

Although both the changes in international order and inadequate and incoherent Western responses influenced and sometimes exacerbated the conflict, they could not have put Yugoslavia on the road to war. Nor could they explain the course of the war itself or the extreme violence against the civilian population employed for control of the territory and its resources. A bad economy, induced by foreign debt and inadequate austerity measures championed by the IMF, as Woodward rightly argues, coupled with tectonic changes in the international order, and conflicting signals coming from world powers would shake any country, especially one like Yugoslavia, but they would not be sufficient to bring it to the brink of collapse and, a step further, into a bloody war. For that, people had to make concrete decisions and prepare a civil war by heavy employment of organized violence.

… but also the federal institutions

There *was* also something in Yugoslavia's socialist institutions themselves that made it difficult, though not impossible, to guarantee Yugoslavia's political existence after socialism. Valerie Bunce in *Subversive Institutions* (1999) describes their 'design and destruction' in the Soviet Union, Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia. As for the last, Yugoslavia's centrifugal federalism produced a confederal system of quasi-independent states that was hardly suitable for liberal democratic procedures for the reasons I enumerated in the previous chapter. Bunce sees a clear correlation between the collapse of regime (socialism) and the subsequent disappearance of the state in the USSR, the CSSR and the SFRY (1999: 5). But in this regard it must be said that the subtitle of her book – 'the design and the destruction of socialism and the state' – is misleading. What was actually destroyed was not the *state* – a strong unitary model of nation-state actually triumphed – but the *federations* of these states. The political space of

'really existing socialism' was fragmented according to nation-states that were intentionally created as such by socialist regimes. States that were already there got rid of the federal system they had been part of and through which they had been consolidated as states. The collapse of the regime was followed by the *national* unification of two Germanys, the democratization of mono-national unitary states and the disintegration – between 1991 and 1993 – of multinational federations into mostly unitary national states dominated by their ethnic majorities. We can thus conclude that the acceptable model for post-socialist democratic times was the unitary mono-national state. It is exactly what the former Yugoslavs tried and mostly succeeded in achieving in the 1990s and early 2000s. There where we can still find multinational states such as Bosnia-Herzegovina, the ethnocentric model has been transferred to the sub-state level.

There is also an important difference between, on one hand, the Soviet Union – whose very name designated it as an a-national ideological union of ethnonational states – and, on the other, Yugoslavia and Czechoslovakia that were – as their names suggest – created as the 'national homes' of the culturally related South Slavs and Czechs and Slovaks respectively. The disintegration of Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia could also be seen as a failure of bi-national and multinational integration respectively. But were these really failures? Were citizens completely disenchanted with these federations at the moment of the regime's collapse? Democratizing a (con)federal system entailed the empowerment of the republican elites who were to negotiate the end of these federations often in spite of popular will. The Czechoslovak 'peaceful divorce' was staged by political elites in spite of the fact that a huge number of Czechs and Slovaks were in favour of maintaining a common state. One could say the same for Yugoslavia before 1990 (not anymore after that year), although Yugoslavs were divided as to what form their union should take. However, they did not have a political platform from which to express this shared desire to live in a common state and this possibility definitely vanished with the first violent clashes breaking out, organized and instigated by republican or local political elites (for a graphic illustration of organized violence see the BBC documentary *The Death of Yugoslavia* from 1995).

The federal institutions already in place were another critical element. Stepan claims that the 'activation of federalist structures in a context where they had previously been *latent* rapidly creates "political opportunity structures" and new forms of "resources mobilization" possibilities' (2004b: 347). However, by putting all of these federations into the same category, Stepan overlooks the fact that in Yugoslavia republics were not autonomous only 'on paper', but were

already experienced 'institutional veto players'. One could even adopt Stepan's expression 'moribund federal institutions' (2004b: 348) to describe, not facade federalism but a centrifugal federal system that empowered constituent units to the point where it began losing its own autonomy.

When it comes to the differences between these three federations one also needs to state the obvious: the Soviet Union was composed of fifteen republics with the Russian Federation being territorially, politically, economically and culturally dominant within a largely centralized federation; Czechoslovakia was after 1969 a bi-national federation of a senior partner (Czechs) and a junior partner (Slovaks); Yugoslavia, on the other hand, was composed of six institutionally equal units. This created completely different internal political dynamics. It is not surprising then that the Soviet republics united against the federal centre and got rid of it. Yugoslavia's republics turned against each other or formed opposing coalitions between the republics, whereas Czechoslovakia's survival was played out in negotiations between two partners.

Yugoslavia's internal structure and the relations among the republics as defined by its system of centrifugal federalism, as well as its position outside the Soviet bloc, made it a unique case among socialist federations. As mentioned before, Sabrina Ramet described socialist Yugoslavia as a balance of power system (1992: 4). The fundamental principle of the balance of power system is that no single actor has sufficient power to dictate terms unilaterally to the others and that no unit, regardless of its size, is deprived of equal status. This theory is compatible with Henry Hale's claim that the absence of a 'core ethnic region' guarantees equilibrium, equality and stability of ethnofederations (2004: 165–193). Hale argues that the collapse of a multinational polity is more likely if it has a 'core ethnic region' and less likely if the dominant group is territorially divided. According to Hale's criteria of what constitutes a core ethnic region – in which either the unit constitutes a majority of the whole population or it makes up at least 20 per cent more of the whole population than the second largest group – the USSR (Russia), Czechoslovakia (Czech Republic) and Yugoslavia (Serbia) also had core ethnic regions (2004: 169–170).

However, until 1989, Yugoslavia was, in my view, a country without a 'core ethnic region' capable of precipitating 'ethnofederal state collapse' since the only region capable of acting as a core ethnic region (Serbia) was *de iure* divided internally into Serbia proper (which could not qualify as a core ethnic region), autonomous Vojvodina and autonomous Kosovo. However, it was divided *de facto* after the constitutional reforms carried out between 1967 and 1974. Serbia was *re-unified* under Slobodan Milošević after the abolition of the provincial

autonomies in 1989, and this is what transformed Serbia into the core ethnic region in Yugoslavia during the crucial 1989–1991 period. Re-centralisation of Serbia consequently radically altered the existing balance of power. In addition, the dependence of Montenegrin elites on Belgrade reinforced Serbia's position as the core ethnic region of Yugoslavia.[2] When he consolidated Serbia's position within Yugoslavia, Milošević was attempting to re-centralize Yugoslavia as well. Faced with resistance from other republics, the core (ethnic) region abandoned the project of re-centralizing Yugoslavia altogether and focused instead on the ethnonational unification of Serbia, Montenegro and ethnic Serbs in neighbouring republics. This, in turn, gave a strong impetus to secessionist movements in Slovenia and Croatia. Nevertheless, the core ethnic region would have never had the same leverage over the others without the tacit and later overt support of the federal army (JNA), the majority of whose personnel had an ethnic Serb background or was originally from Serbia itself.

… with a help of constitutional engineering

Even before the final disintegration of the federation, the Yugoslav republics rushed to reinforce their statehood by introducing significant constitutional changes. This sometimes involved the constitutional redefinition of the republics as the national states of their ethnic majority, a practice that Robert Hayden called 'constitutional nationalism' (1992). In fact, all of them with the exception of Bosnia had already been defined as the national states of their titular nation. However, there were some important qualifications. Croatia, for example, was defined as the state of the Croatian people and the state of the Serbian people in Croatia. Constitutional changes emphasized the ownership of the state by the titular nation, except in the curious case of the Serbian new constitution. 'A system of constitutional nationalism thus institutionalizes a division between those who are of the sovereign nation, ethnically defined, and those who are not. The latter may hold citizenship but cannot aspire to equality' (Hayden 1999:15). Hayden also sees 'constitutions as configurative of conflict' (1999: 11). New citizenship policies are inseparable from 'constitutional nationalism', which had been the prominent feature of democratization in post-communist Europe.

   Hayden claims that Slovenian constitutional amendments from November 1989 'destroyed the federal structure of Yugoslavia'. I agree that Slovenia's 'unilateral' (as I called it above) attempt at decentralization was a blow to Yugoslavia as defined by the 1974 Constitution. However, to claim that this 'destroyed' the Yugoslav federation is an exaggeration. It ignores the fact that Serbia's earlier

unilateral abolition of the autonomy of Vojvodina and Kosovo in March 1989 was an equally serious attack on the SFRY constitution and, moreover, Tito's legacy, and that Slovenian attempts at reinforcing their sovereignty were directly related to Milošević's aggressive attempts at re-centralizing Yugoslavia. A number of constitutional amendments had limited the autonomy of Vojvodina and Kosovo resulting in a centralized Serbia. By the same token, the Serbian government challenged the federal system by appointing its own foreign minister (Malešević 2000: 157).

Interestingly, Hayden sees Serbia's new 1990 constitution as an example of constitutional nationalism but reduces it to a platform for the one-man rule of Slobodan Milošević (Hayden 1999: 73) rather than seeing it as an attempt to consolidate an ethnocentric Serbian nation-state. Even if we grant that the new constitution helped Milošević strengthen his power, this was hardly the only reason behind the constitutional re-design of Serbia. The most important feature of the new constitution was the confirmation of the abolition of the provincial autonomy of Vojvodina and Kosovo. This move suited the political goals of nascent Serbian political parties – no major party would ever oppose Milošević's re-centralization of Serbia – at the very moment Serb nationalism was reaching its peak. Belgrade's intention to abolish the autonomy of these provinces, to codify this change in the new constitution and to suppress any opposition, primarily in Kosovo, by the massive deployment of the police and army was also perceived by ethnic Serbs and non-Serbs alike as a first step towards realizing the nationalist objective of bringing 'all Serbs into one state'. If we take into account the general political context and subsequent events within Yugoslavia at the time, as well as the suppression of the provincial autonomies which had guaranteed equality within Serbia to ethnic Albanians in Kosovo and to the multiethnic population of Vojvodina, the very wording of the constitution could be seen as a move to enhance the position of the Serb majority within a unified and ethnically heterogeneous Serbia and by doing so strengthen Serbia's own position within a failing Yugoslavia.

… and under the control of political elites

The constitutions are important but the scrutiny of concrete events shows that politicians were the primary players in the Yugoslav drama. Among them, Slobodan Milošević reserved the central part for himself with supporting (though crucial roles) played by, in order of importance, Franjo Tudjman, Milan Kučan and Alija Izetbegović. In this respect, it is not surprising that Milošević

is the subject of the majority of journalistic and scholarly works dealing with Yugoslav political elites (see Gordy 2008). After the first democratic elections, these elites firmly established a monopoly over the political arena, the economy, the media and the security apparatus of their republics and, in the case of Milošević, over the federal army as well. The future of Yugoslavia was to be decided thereafter among the leaders of the republics. The Yugoslav public watched helplessly as the leaders were meeting at various places throughout Yugoslavia in 1990–1991, failing each time to reach an agreement. In the meantime, violence broke out, very often orchestrated by those same political elites as a tool in the power struggles between them and within their republics. That the political leaders undoubtedly held the political destiny of Yugoslavia in their hands was later confirmed by reports on several secret agreements that were made at this time (see Little and Silber 1995). In January 1991, for example, Milan Kučan met Slobodan Milošević at his presidential villa in Karadjordjevo (Vojvodina). At this meeting, Milošević allegedly agreed that Slovenes had the right to an independent state, while in turn Kučan agreed that Serbs too had the right to live in one state. Two months later, Tudjman joined Milošević again at Karadjordjevo. There, they supposedly agreed on the partition of Bosnia, a deal that was never officially confirmed, unless we count what happened on the ground in Bosnia subsequently as proof.

V. P. Gagnon claims that conservative elites in Croatia and Serbia employed violence and images of a threatening enemy in order to *demobilize* those pushing for political, economic and structural changes that would have endangered the elites' position and power. By creating political homogeneity in their republics, these elites also managed to keep control over the existing structures and to convert by various means previously socially owned property into private wealth that was to serve as the basis of their power within a newly introduced free market economy. Gagnon further argues that war and violence were not the expression of a population's sentiments. Rather they were imposed from outside on plural communities by political and military forces (Gagnon 2004: xv).

Although I do agree with Gagnon's general argument concerning the crucial role played by elites in managing Yugoslavia's disintegration and violent ethnic conflicts, I find the demobilization argument more problematic. Gagnon, in my opinion, does not pay sufficient attention to the strategies of both mobilization and demobilization. It was important to *mobilize* the population around an ethnonationalist agenda; strategies that had been employed by elites in Croatia in 1990 and 1991 and in Serbia between 1987 and 1991, but also to *demobilize* the political opposition in Croatia and in Serbia starting already in 1991. In

Gagnon's analysis, there is a tendency to mirror the events in Milošević's Serbia (1987–2000) against those in Tudjman's Croatia (1990–1999) and to blur some important differences both in the sequence of events and in their respective elites' strategies within their particular context.

Furthermore, these strategies cannot be understood without bringing into the picture other interconnected players in the Yugoslav drama, namely the Slovenian leadership, the JNA, the federal Prime Minister Ante Marković and the separate nationalist elites in Bosnia. Gagnon thus overlooks the fact that even before the first democratic elections that legitimized Milošević's power and brought Franjo Tudjman to office, both the incumbent elites and up and coming nationalist elites used nationalist rhetoric to effectively *mobilize* their populations.

In the case of Croatia, they continued to do so both prior to and during the war in order to secure strong support for Croatian independence and national unity. A large political *demobilization* of the population in Croatia was carried out successfully during the war years and Tudjman's party managed to consolidate power and used similar methods of demobilization again when opposition to his reign started to show signs of political recovery after the war in 1996. In Milošević's case, it could be said that he played the ethnonationalist card before the outbreak of war to *mobilize* Serbs around his programme for the recentralization of both Serbia and Yugoslavia and to portray himself as the only one capable of building a Greater Serbia on the ruins of Yugoslavia. By doing so, he effectively tried to *demobilize* a strong nationalist opposition that seriously threatened his power in March 1991. Being a symbol of the old communist regime, the conservative nationalist opposition perceived Milošević as, at best, a tool to be used for implementing the nationalist agenda. In 1996 and 1997, massive anti-Milošević protests erupted at which he was accused, not only of being authoritarian and 'communist' but also of losing wars fought for the unification of Serbs. In other words, at that point Milošević had become an obstacle rather than an asset for the achievement of nationalist goals.

The citizenship factor

In the previous passages, I have underlined the factors I consider crucial to Yugoslavia's disintegration. The socio-economic situation in the second half of the 1980s is the key to understand why the Yugoslav self-managing socialism faced a rapid and widespread delegitimization as both a political and

socio-economic model. Foreign debt, inflation, IMF standby arrangements, austerity measures applied to unprofitable industries and public sector resulting in rising unemployment and massive workers' strikes in the 1980s (see Lowinger 2009; Woodward 1995a, 1995b), all contributing to open conflicts among republics over economic issues (culminating in mutually imposed economic sanctions between Serbia and Slovenia in late 1989), were among elements that corroded the Yugoslav socialist system and openly put in question the two precious wartime promises: national and social emancipation that were conditional upon one another. The economic crisis of socialism that was incapable of providing a certain socio-economic standard inevitably meant not only that a different economic model was needed but that such a model might need another political framework as well, a view strengthened by the paralysis of the federal institutions. The economic crisis itself was translated into inter-republican and inter-ethnic competition and growing mutually exclusive demands were undermining further Yugoslav self-management as a system incapable of delivering both higher standards of living and a solution to national aspirations acceptable for all. The existing institutions of centrifugal federalism were crucial in this process of both republican leaderships' internal quest for legitimacy and the inter-republican relations reassembling inter-state relations even before the first elections. In 1989 and 1990, the major republics (Slovenia, Croatia and Serbia) engaged in constitutional engineering to secure the internal legitimacy and a more independent position within the federation (even when this went against its Constitution). The democratization process was further entirely manipulated by these political elites, composed of either old or, mostly, a mixture of old and new political actors.

In this situation, competing visions of citizenship, I would argue, were one of the crucial factors that pushed the country towards disintegration and conflict. By late 1989 and definitely in 1990, it became clear that the republican centres had abandoned the Yugoslav federal citizenship as the framework of existing political community. However, they did not clearly opt, like in the Soviet sub-units, for the republican political communities. Instead, they positioned themselves as representatives of both their ethnic communities regardless of the republican borders and at the same time as representatives of their civic communities within their borders (that would not tolerate the disloyalty that they encouraged their ethnic kin to display in other republics). In other words, they acted as both the Zulu kings and the Dutch settlers and required the control of both their territory and of all members of the community that they saw themselves entitled to represent and to whom, often, these external members

pledged loyalty. However, if the Zulu kings were more interested in governing people than the territory, in Yugoslavia controlling external members meant aspiring to control the territory they inhabited as well. A glance over the ethnic map of the former Yugoslavia in 1991 is enough to understand that that was a recipe for an open conflict.

Therefore, the citizenship factor must be added to the multifactor synergy that sealed the fate of Yugoslavia. I claim that the fundamental questions of citizenship related to the very definition of membership in a political community as well as to citizenship contract by which a citizen exchanges his or her loyalty and duties for the rights and protection by his or her political community and its institutions (state) influenced critically the democratization process and Yugoslavia's disintegration. At the crucial junction, in the context of imminent redefinition and possible collapse of federal Yugoslavia, between early 1990 and early 1992, citizens were asking themselves these basic questions: *To what political community do I belong?*, or, *to whom do I owe my loyalty?* And, finally, *who (what state?) guarantees, or promises to guarantee my rights – starting with human, civic and political rights, employment and property… – and, last but not the least, protection?* If Yugoslav citizens were asking these basic citizenship questions, the answers to which determined the collective political outcomes and their personal destinies as well, one has to ask: how did they come to the answers to these questions? Did they ever have a choice, or did they have to deal with suggested answers (as during the various referendum and plebiscite practices) and, finally, *faits accomplis*? How did they make themselves heard or how they were silenced? To whom were political channels open and to whom were they closed? Citizenship thus turns into an explanatory prism through which we can understand an enormous political, social and economic transformation that wiped out Yugoslavia.

Generally, the democratization of Yugoslavia reinforced the factor of ethnicity, i.e. the citizen's identification with his or her ethnic group. The democratic elections confirmed the conflict (in case of minorities) or complementarity (in case of majorities) between the citizens' civic/republican and ethnic identities. The very fact that almost all republics were defined as the 'national homes' of their core ethnic group only underlined the primacy of ethnic identity even when the citizens themselves, regardless of their ethnic origins, rejected ethnonationalism and expressed a purely *civic* patriotism or loyalty to the institutions of their republics and of the Federation. These two political identities could only be easily reconciled if a citizen resided in his or her own ethnic republic and therefore belonged to its ethnic majority. However,

this was not the case for the considerable number of individuals who lived outside the 'national homes' of their ethnic groups, in republics to which they had historically belonged *civically* (as republican citizens), or simply as long-term residents, but not *ethnically*.

With the disintegration of Yugoslavia looming after the break-up of the LCY in January 1990, citizens began to wonder *how*, if at all, Yugoslavia would disintegrate. The obvious lines of separation were the republican borders, but the signal sent from the republican leaders and nationalist politicians suggested ethnic separation was the aim: the break-up of Yugoslavia presented an opportunity to redraw 'artificial' republican borders. In this context, constant communication via the republican-controlled media between the nationalist leaders and their ethnic bodies is essential for understanding the political dynamic of Yugoslavia's dissolution. The first democratic elections took place in an atmosphere of conflicting nationalist aspirations. It is not surprising, then, that the elections revealed strong backing for ethnic leaders and their parties whose message of ethnic solidarity traversed republican borders. They promised to 'protect' and guard the interests of their ethnically defined electorate[3] in the inter-republic and inter-ethnic conflicts and in the case of Yugoslavia's disappearance.

I argue that the ethnonational conception of citizenship finally prevailed and fuelled conflicts over the redefinition of borders within which the ethnonational states were to be formed on the basis of absolute majorities of the core ethnonational groups. Democracy, on this view, was seen as workable only if it was essentially ethnonational. In other words, majority rule should not entail a division between an ethnic majority and an ethnic minority but rather should be practised *within* the core ethnonational group with the majority/minority division formed on the basis of ideological preferences. In this sense, a projected ethnonational state, territorially expanded in order to include most if not all members of the ethnic group, could be truly democratic *only* if the core ethnic group had an absolute majority and ethnic minorities were reduced to an insignificant percentage of the population. This conception of citizenship, coupled with the new democratic order, in the context of the rapid delegitimization of the Yugoslav socialist heritage, only gave boost to extreme nationalism as well as to revisionist rehabilitation of right-wing nationalist and fascist political programmes from the period of the Second World War.

Needless to say, not every Yugoslav succumbed to a programme of ethnic homogenization and territorial redefinition of Yugoslavia's successor states. However, those who did oppose it – and who advocated instead either the continued existence of the federation or its peaceful dissolution into civic and

ethnically heterogeneous states – did not have a political platform from which they could articulate their views and discontent or engage in concrete political action.

With the progressive disappearance of the federal state, citizens were left with only their republican citizenship. In the context of the federation's immanent dissolution, many simply refused to be loyal to their republics, which they perceived as another ethnic group's national home. On the other hand, in these republics, the ethnic majority often succumbed to the temptation to re-define the republic as being exclusively its own state. (The multinational character of the Bosnian state was, in a similar fashion, rejected in favour of ethnic partition.) In both cases, citizens simply switched their loyalties to whatever they considered their ethnic 'state in the making'; a state that would ideally also include their homes within its new borders. If this scenario failed to materialize, an individual was faced with an alternative: either a forced or a (to varying degrees) voluntary migration to their ethnic homeland and, in so many cases, abroad, or the acceptance of minority 'second-class citizen' status.

Nationalist elites attempted to reduce ethnic heterogeneity and to create 'pure' ethnonational states, the territorial shape of which was to be decided either militarily or by mutual agreements between these elites. This was confirmed through the practice of constitutional nationalism and through citizenship legislation (see Chapter 9). This process was intimately related to electoral democracy itself and to the fact that only citizens would be invited to participate in the political arena and, ultimately, allowed to vote. Therefore, the inclusion of the core ethnic group's members, regardless of their places of residence (inside or outside state borders), and the parallel exclusion – as much as possible – of members of other ethnic groups was one of the strategies most crucial to the transformation of Yugoslavia's multinational space into a series of ethnically homogenized democratic states and sub-state territories. The citizenship factor thus played one of the pivotal roles in bringing Yugoslavia, upon its democratization, to the brink of political collapse. Moreover, it was one of the triggers of violence that would seal its fate.

Enemies: Citizenship as a Trigger of Violence

One could safely conclude that there is an intimate historic affinity between citizenship and war. From the antique city-states where full citizenship status was acquired by serving in war (Anderson 1996: 28, 33; Pocock 1998), via the traditional military draft for men (and in some places for women) to contemporary practices that enable immigrants and foreigners serving in the armed forces, such as the US army or in the *Légion étrangère*, an easier access to citizenship. There is a historic relationship between 'blood', either inherited or spilled (one's own or of other people), and citizenship. However, violence related to citizenship is not only physical but often invisible. It is the violence of administrative decisions, hierarchy of different statuses, 'wrong' passports and 'papers' or deprivations of citizenship. In the following chapter, I will also tackle the issue of physically invisible but nonetheless effective violence caused by the post-Yugoslav citizenship regimes. In this chapter though, I will turn to the outbreak of that 'visible' violence that spread across almost all corners of the former Yugoslavia. To examine why and how this violence happened, and what was the role of citizenship, we need to cast the net more widely all over post-socialist post-partition European states.

The dark side of 1989: Violence in post-socialist Europe

The two decades after 1989 in Central and Eastern Europe might be branded *les années 89*. Here I paraphrase what is in France nowadays called *les années 68*, the years of 1968, to underline the long-lasting effect of a historic turning point. The fall of the Berlin Wall heralded sweeping changes in the 'other Europe'. These included the end of decaying state socialist regimes between

1989 and 1991, the end of the Cold War, the re-unification of Germany, the introduction of liberal democracy, the beginning of a hasty 'transition' to a free market economy and, eventually, the unification of most of the European East and West under the administrative umbrella of the European Union. However, from this vantage point, perceptions on the years of 1989 depend on diverse political, social and economic consequences of these profound changes that affected in different ways different parts of the former socialist Eurasia. When the real, political and symbolic walls started to crumble in 1989, it was difficult to predict – nor would the euphoria of those days allow this kind of pessimism – that the change would also bring many unwanted consequences. Not only did these unwanted consequences involve economic hardships, travesties of a new democratic order and painful social shocks, but also – at the moment of Western European unification – disintegrative political trends which swept away three former socialist federations during 1991 and 1992. This process was followed by the outbreaks of violence, destructive and bloody wars, the return of concentration camps in Europe, massacres and ethnic cleansing which culminated with the Srebrenica genocide in 1995, as well as the brutal destruction of cities such as Vukovar, Sarajevo, Mostar and Grozny. This dark side of 1989 found one of its most horrifying manifestations in the almost four-year-long siege of Sarajevo. When asked about the fall of the Berlin Wall, a citizen of besieged Sarajevo allegedly said that, on the one hand, it had been a good thing, but, on the other, the Wall had unfortunately 'crumbled down upon our heads'.

The question of why these federations disintegrated so soon after the collapse of the socialist regimes is followed by more puzzles. Why did violence occur in some places and not in others? Where, under what circumstances, and when was violence most likely to happen? Finally, why was the disintegration of Yugoslavia so uniquely brutal? I start my analysis by asking two crucial questions. The possible answers to these determined the fate of many citizens of the former socialist federations in the context of their imminent disintegration: *Did the federal centre and the incipient states (republics) accept the separation and the existing borders? Did all groups and all regions accept independence and the authorities of the new states?* The analysis of the possible answers to these questions will bring us to what I call three decisive *triggers of violence*: first citizenship, then borders and territories, and, finally in the early 1990s, the role of the military apparatus of defunct federations.

The possible combinations of the answers to the two questions above produce four scenarios:

		Did the federal centre and other incipient states (republics) accept separation and existing borders?	
		YES	NO
Did all groups and all regions accept independence and the authorities of the new states?	YES	Czech Republic, Slovakia (*no violence*)	Slovenia, Lithuania (*limited violence*)
	NO	Georgia (Abkhazia, South Ossetia), Russia (Chechnya), Moldova (Transnistria), Serbia (Kosovo) (*high likelihood of violence*)	Croatia/Bosnia/Serbia/Montenegro; Armenia/Azerbaijan (*inevitable violence*)

If the answer to both questions is positive, then clearly there is little room for conflict, as in the case of Czechoslovakia. The Czechoslovak Federation dissolved by the mutual agreement of the Czech and Slovak political elites on 1 January 1993. There was no interference from the federal centre. Although many citizens were sympathetic to the former federation, there was no significant opposition to the disintegration coming from groups of citizens, regions or ethnic groups. A small percentage of Czechs living in Slovakia and Slovaks living in the Czech Republic – and there were no concentrations in any particular region – did not pose a problem in mutual relations. Slovakia is, however, home to a sizable Magyar minority but the Czech–Slovak divorce was not a concern for them nor did it change much their relationship with the Slovak majority.

The second possible scenario in our matrix can also generate violence, but on a smaller scale. This situation arises when citizens largely obey the authorities of the new state and agree with independence and the borders of the new state. In such a situation, there are no regional or ethnic protests, or, if a minority is not content with independence (as was the case in the Baltic states), it does not act to prevent it or rebel against the new authorities. The federal centre's institutions do however question the decision to separate. The Yugoslav army's (JNA) one-week intervention in Slovenia and the Soviet army's intervention in Lithuania in 1991 are examples. Since both federal centres were politically weak at that point and since other republics did not directly oppose independence of the republics in

question, the violence was ultimately short-lived and resulted in withdrawal of the federal troops.

However, if the answer to both questions is negative, then violence is almost inevitable, as in the former Yugoslavia where war broke out among the republics with Serbia and Montenegro on one side and Croatia and Bosnia on the other from 1991 until 1995. From 1993 to 1994, Croatia was also militarily engaged against the Bosnian government. Violence also erupted between two republics in the former USSR, Armenia and Azerbaijan.

The majority of Croatian and Bosnian Serbs did not accept the independence of Croatia and Bosnia and refused loyalty to the authorities. It is important to note that they did not have any regional autonomy, unlike Nagorno-Karabakh, and were dispersed over Croatian and Bosnian territory. Their rebellion meant conquering territories which they claimed as belonging to Serbs, or which they managed to conquer with their at that time overwhelming military power, with the idea of attaching them to Serbia or the Serbian-Montenegrin state in the making. They were backed by Serbia, Montenegro and the Serb-dominated JNA, who did not accept the independence and existing borders of the neighbouring republics.

Although the war between Armenia and Azerbaijan over Nagorno-Karabakh resembles the conflicts in the former Yugoslavia insofar as it involved direct violence between the former republics over borders and territories, there is a significant difference. Nagorno-Karabakh is an Armenian-populated former autonomous region within Azerbaijan. It opted for independence from Azerbaijan with the obvious intention of joining the Armenian state, a goal supported by Armenia itself. The only problem was how to attach the region surrounded by ethnic Azeri territories that Armenia eventually 'solved' by simply occupying these territories. In this case, we can see both an autonomous region populated by an ethnically different group than the rest of the republic rebelling against the republican centre, and the neighbouring republic demanding a change of borders and claiming the region for itself.

If the former republics mostly agree among themselves on their territorial shape but (ethnic) groups and/or regions within the republics either disobey the newly independent authorities or express discontent with independence or with their position within the new state – or even attempt secession, with or without the intention of joining another state – there is a high likelihood of violence occurring. This was the case with Georgia (Abkhazia and South Ossetia), Moldova (Transnistria), Russia (Chechnya), and Serbia (Kosovo). In Georgia and Moldova, the new authorities were unable to quell the rebellion, whereas Russia succeeded after almost a decade to crush the Chechen uprising after a horrible

price was paid in human lives and material destruction. Special attention should be paid to the case of Serbia. In an open expansionist campaign, Serbia militarily questioned the territorial shape of the western neighbouring republics (Croatia and especially Bosnia), but no other republic challenged its own administrative borders. The case of Kosovo appears different from the other cases in this category since Serbia *initially* managed to suppress Albanian demands for autonomy and even independence after Kosovo's autonomy was revoked in 1989. Kosovo Albanians opted for a peaceful rebellion against the Serbian state and built their own parallel institutions until 1998 when the conflict erupted between the Serbian authorities and the Albanian guerrillas. It ended with the NATO intervention and withdrawal of Serbian troops from Kosovo in 1999.

Macedonia deserves a special status in our analysis and therefore it does not find a place in our matrix. It exemplifies a situation in which the ethnic Macedonian majority and the ethnic Albanian minority *initially* – at the moment of Yugoslavia's break-up in 1991 – accepted independence. The state was thus not threatened with external intervention and it secured the loyalty of its ethnic minority. However, over the years – ten years later and under different circumstances – the Albanians' discontent with their position in Macedonia, coupled with political demands and secessionist threats, resulted in an armed rebellion, backed by armed groups from Kosovo, and open defiance of the Macedonian state authorities in 2001.

Although it was not part of the initial implosion of the Yugoslav Federation and it took place fifteen years later, it is necessary to mention here Montenegro's independence from the State Union of Serbia and Montenegro in 2006 as well as Kosovo's independence from Serbia in 2008. Many expected and perceived Montenegro's independence as a final stage of fragmentation along the republican lines of what had been Yugoslavia. First steps towards independence had already been taken in the late 1990s when the Montenegrin leadership – comprising many people such as Montenegrin current Prime Minister Milo Đukanović who enthusiastically supported Milošević and his war campaigns in early 1990s – turned their back on Belgrade (Džankić 2010: 10). By 2003, when the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia was replaced by a malfunctioning State Union, Montenegro was already a semi-independent country. Although it opposed Montenegrin independence, Serbia did not dispute the territorial shape of Montenegro and furthermore decided to respect the outcome of the referendum on independence in 2006. As for the Serbs in Montenegro, they expressed their discontent with independence rather peacefully, and did not rebel against the authorities. However, many Montenegrin Serbs continue to

press for special status and special relations with Serbia. Once again, the case of Montenegro's independence in 2006 must be placed in the context of an entirely different political setting than the one that dominated Yugoslavia's disintegration in the early 1990s. Finally, in February 2008 Kosovo declared independence from Serbia and acquired only partial but significant international recognition: the move was opposed by both Serbia and the ethnic Serb minority. Since Kosovo has been completely separated from Serbia for almost a decade and governed by international bodies (UN), with their strong international military and police presence (NATO, EU, UN), and, since Serbia renounced the use of violence, violence has been limited to an ethnic Serb enclave in North Kosovo.

Only one case does not fit this matrix at all because of the entirely different nature of the conflict. From 1992 to 1997, the Central Asian republic of Tajikistan was plunged into a conflict between the government and an opposition that ranged from liberal-democrats to Islamists. All sides accepted independence and there were no challenges to Tajikistan's borders or the state. Although the war was in some aspects characterized by mostly regional and some ethnic rivalries, Tajikistan clearly constitutes a separate case of civil ideological war for political power.

It is important to add here that in the post-1989 international arena, the international community generally accepted only the former republics as independent states that were therefore entitled to join international organizations such as the United Nations. The only major exception to this unwritten rule came seventeen years later with Kosovo's independence. Both the US and the EU members who recognized Kosovo insisted that it was an *exceptional* case. The move was opposed by some EU members (such as Spain, Slovakia and Romania) and, most staunchly, by Russia. In response, and coming to the conclusion that the rule was irretrievably broken, Russia recognized the independence of the Georgian provinces of Abkhazia and South Ossetia after the war with Georgia in August 2008. The NATO deployment in Kosovo in 1999 was used as justification for Russia's own takeover of the Crimea in 2014.

Triggers of violence: Citizenship, borders and territories, and the role of the federal military

Trigger 1: Citizenship

The first question – *did the incipient states (republics) and the federal centre accept the separation and the existing borders?* – is intimately related to future territorial shapes and thus borders of incipient states and, inevitably, to the role of the

federal military in the initial phase of the break-up. The second question – *did all groups and all regions accept the independence and the authorities of the new states? In other words, did they attempt rebellion, secession or even integration with another state?* – is intrinsically bound with citizenship or, generally, with the relationship between state and individuals and/or groups involving, among other things, political inclusion or exclusion, citizens' loyalty, duties and rights, and personal security.

Another perspective on violence in the post-1989 post-communist space opens up if we look at it through the lenses of citizenship, the struggle over borders and territories, and the role of the federal military that I define as main, though not the sole *triggers of violence*. By the triggers of violence I understand stakes (in this case disagreements on the citizenship issue and the territorial shape of the new states) and actors (in our analysis we focus on partial or full engagement of the federal military during the period of disintegration) that could facilitate or initiate the use of violence by the parties in conflict having opposing political agendas. The role of the federal forces as the major military formation and their active involvement in the events, or their non-involvement, certainly determines the level of violence, although the federal army competed – collaborated or confronted – with less powerful police forces, territorial defence forces in Yugoslav republics and diverse paramilitaries often related to political parties or mafia gangs.

Needless to say, if all three triggers of violence are *pulled*, large-scale violence occurs. An example of this is the war in which five of the six Yugoslav republics participated together with the disintegrating federal army which sided with Serbia and Montenegro and ethnic Serbs' paramilitaries in Croatia and Bosnia in 1991–1992. The war was finally brought to an end by the general peace agreement in 1995 sponsored by the United States and the EU and signed by Croatia, Bosnia-Herzegovina and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro). The Serb rebellion in Croatia failed, but Bosnia was internally divided into the Serb republic and the Croat-Bosniak Federation, which was further divided into mixed and ethnic cantons. Regardless of widespread destruction and the serious loss of human life (as many as 100,000 in Bosnia and around 20,000 in Croatia),[1] the former republican borders were not changed.

The conflict over Nagorno-Karabakh, on the other hand, involved two triggers of violence: citizenship (the rebellion of ethnic Armenian citizens against Azerbaijan as a state) and conflict over disputed territories and new borders among states (the intervention of Armenia with the intention to annex the Azeri territory). Although initially the Soviet army was militarily involved in the conflict – that started already in 1988! – it was played out among two

neighbouring republics and an autonomous province. The final result was a frozen conflict which lasts until this very day: a *de facto* annexation of Nagorno-Karabakh by Armenia together with Armenian control over the regions outside Nagorno-Karabakh linking the region to Armenia.

If you pull the trigger of citizenship involving refusal of loyalty to a new state and if you couple it with the secessionist demands, this inevitably means pulling also the trigger of control over territories and borders, then the result is internal conflicts between the new states and one or more rebellious regions. The outcome is likely to be, as in the case of Nagorno-Karabakh, a frozen conflict. Only internationally supervised Kosovo managed to achieve a partial but significant international recognition. This recognition is not the case for some of the rebellious regions in the former USSR, such as Transnistria, Nagorno-Karabakh, Abkhazia and South Ossetia (the latter two indeed recognized by only Russia, Nicaragua, Venezuela and Nauru), which are *de facto* self-ruled statelets or, for that matter, Chechnya which has been brought under Moscow's control again. In many of these regions, the federal military or its remnants and the Russian army as its successor played a highly controversial role. For example, the former Fourteenth Soviet army generously helped the rebellion in Transnistria, the Soviet army was implicated in the first phase of the Armenian-Azerbaijani war and Russia militarily backed Abkhaz and South Ossetian secessionism.

Macedonia is a special case for the reasons discussed above. It escaped initial violence, but faced an Albanian rebellion in 2001 that pulled *only* the trigger of citizenship and played with the prospect of secession. Albanians perceived themselves as 'second-class' citizens in the state constitutionally defined as ethnic Macedonian state, complained about the discriminatory citizenship law and demanded more autonomy for municipalities with an Albanian majority and some important cultural rights such as higher education in the Albanian language. The uprising started in the area inhabited mostly by Albanians who did not have a previous autonomous region within Macedonia. In this regard, their armed rebellion was similar in some respects to that of Croatian and Bosnian Serbs, or to the one in Transnistria where the Slavic speakers (Ukrainians and Russians) unilaterally declared autonomy and secession from Moldova in the municipalities of the Dniester region. With Albania not interested and Kosovo not a state, and without international sympathies, the armed insurgency was welcomed only in Albanian nationalist circles. The Macedonian case ended in settlement. For their acceptance of citizenship and loyalty, the Macedonian state offered Albanians concessions in citizenship matters, linguistic and educational policy, and internal administrative divisions which consolidated the Albanian

majority in the Western Macedonia. Also included were significant political concessions such as re-definition of the constitution and the larger participation of Albanians in government.

Trigger 2: Territory and borders

The previous paragraphs clearly show how the questions of citizenship, the control of territory and the territorial shape, i.e. the borders of new states, are closely related. The conflict over territories and borders is an infallible trigger for violence both in cases where a region or a group inhabiting a certain territory refuses loyalty to the authorities of a new state and furthermore declares secession, and in cases when the (usually) neighbouring country questions the existing borders claiming more often than not that its minority in neighbouring country should join the 'homeland'. As mentioned above, the arguments for re-arranging political borders are often centred on the argument about the 'artificiality' of the existing territorial divisions. These socialist 'solutions' did not correspond, it was claimed, to 'natural' ethnic territories. Once the communist regimes had imploded the legitimacy of political and territorial arrangements made under their rule was also called into question. However, any separation according to the ethnic lines had to solve the 'problem' of many ethnically mixed regions. Therefore, the physical separation of ethnic communities was to be created in these zones by the use of mass violence, executions, expulsions and 'ethnic cleansing'.

Although the post-Soviet states, except in the case of Armenia and Azerbaijan, recognized the existing republican borders as new borders between independent states,[2] the internal borders became the blueprint for fragmentation where autonomous regions rebelled against the republican centre. However, in the former Yugoslavia one witnessed conflicts where there were no previous intra-republican administrative borders, except in the case of Kosovo, and some republics (Serbia and Montenegro) openly challenged the existing inter-republican divisions. In all cases, the project of creating ethnically homogenized independent states on a territory inhabited by co-members of an ethnicity put in question the inherited political geography.

The wars between the Yugoslav republics over territories and borders were the most intensive and destructive ones. Therefore, a closer look is needed to explain the logic behind the wars for territories. Initially, in Yugoslavia, the motivation for the conflict over territory was the position of Serbs outside Serbia (in Croatia and Bosnia). On the other hand, Serbia itself had the largest proportion of

minorities on its soil in Kosovo and Vojvodina. But both Albania and Hungary renounced any claims to Serbian territory inhabited by ethnic Albanians and Magyars, whereas ethnic Muslims from the Sandžak region (divided between Serbia and Montenegro) lacked a kin state in the conventional sense and never formed a political platform to advocate secession or integration with their ethnic kin in Bosnia. As for the Macedonian Albanians, they struggled in the 1990s to have their minority rights and equal position alongside the Slav majority recognized.

In other words, the possibility of violent conflict opened up in the former Yugoslavia when a kin-state supported or engineered the irredentist ambitions of its kin-minority in neighbouring republics with the more or less explicit intention of annexing a certain portion of their territories. In the context of Serbia's expansionist policies, the conflict in Croatia was facilitated, as explained by Rogers Brubaker, by a nationalizing Croatian state that threatened and reduced the political, social and economic rights of local Serbs (downgrading them from a constituent people of Croatia to a minority), and which itself refused to shun its own expansionist policies in neighbouring Bosnia. The war 'was a contingent outcome of the interplay of mutually suspicious, mutually monitoring, mutually misrepresenting political elites in the incipient Croatian nationalizing state, the incipient Serb national minority in that state, and the incipient Serbian "homeland" state' (Brubaker 1996: 76).

But if Croatia represents a textbook example of Brubaker's triadic relationship between a 'nationalizing state', a 'national minority' and a 'national homeland', the devastating war in Bosnia-Herzegovina, as the only true multiethnic country with no titular nationality, defies the model. Indeed, Brubaker admits in his above-mentioned study that he does not intend to deal with the conflict in Bosnia. Nonetheless, since the triadic relationship – though in the case of Bosnia it was more of an *imagined* triadic relationship – is considered a hotbed of ethnic conflicts in Eastern Europe, it is necessary to explain the Bosnian situation in exactly these terms.

Bosnia was not a 'nationalizing state' to start with nor could it later qualify as one. Bosnian Serbs and Croats were not 'national minorities' in this truly multinational country with, regardless of actual percentages, no majorities and no minorities. So far as Brubaker's triangle is concerned, only Serbia and Croatia were perceived as 'external homelands' by nationalist Bosnian Serbs and Croats. The mobilization of Bosnian Serbs for war was mostly motivated by the Greater Serbia project that had already begun in Croatia in 1991 and was territorially inconceivable without the acquisition of Bosnian territories. However, Bosnian

Figure 8.1 The post-Yugoslav States in 1992 (Source: Wikimedia Commons, transferred from en.wikipedia, author: Paweł Goleniowski, SwPawel).

Serbs could have not claimed to be in the same position as the Croatian Serbs, that is to say, a 'national minority' whose rights were threatened by a 'nationalizing' state. Moreover, their representatives shared power with Croat and Muslim ethnonationalist parties. Serb nationalistic propaganda therefore concentrated on portraying Bosnia as an incipient Muslim nationalizing state and in portraying Bosnian Muslim leaders as 'fundamentalist' plotters who wanted to subjugate or eliminate Serbs in a future Islamic state. Eventually, the main political party of Bosnian Serbs, led by Radovan Karadžić and supported by the federal army and Serbia, rejected Bosnia as an independent multinational state, formed 'Serb autonomous regions' brought together into a 'Serb republic' and decided to join Serbia, taking with them as much Bosnian territory as they could conquer.

As for Bosnian Croats, their tactic, in 1991 and 1992, was initially to support Bosnia's statehood. During this period, the reinforcement of Bosnian statehood also entailed the reinforcement of Croatia's bid for independence from Belgrade. However, as the war progressed, in 1993, Bosnian Croats – under direct influence and control from Tudjman's government in Zagreb – adopted a position similar to that of the Bosnian Serbs. They rejected Bosnia as a state, portrayed Bosnian Muslims as fundamentalists, entered into an open conflict with Sarajevo and

tried to get as much territory as possible with the intention of attaching it to Croatia. Again, it is impossible to speak about a *real* triadic relationship. It is only possible to speak of how the triad was *simulated* in order to legitimize Serbs' and Croats' ambitions to join their 'national homelands'.

Finally, what were the results of these devastating wars over territories and borders? The internationally recognized borders are still those that separated the republics within the former socialist federations, except in the case of Kosovo. When it comes to the contested territories the situation on the ground is quite different: Serbs in Croatia lost their short-lived republic, Serbs in Bosnia obtained an autonomous Serb Republic but failed to join Serbia, the Chechen rebellion failed, Kosovo eventually separated from Serbia thanks to international intervention, Transnistria, Abkhazia and South Ossetia are internationally unrecognized quasi-independent territories, as well as Nagorno-Karabakh which is *de facto* attached to Armenia.

Trigger 3: The role of the federal military

Finally, it is necessary to return to the role of the federal military as discussed above. The federal armies, by the simple fact of their 'monopoly on violence', played one of the crucial roles in the violent clashes that occurred during the progressive disappearance of the socialist federations. The federal army stayed in the barracks in Czechoslovakia and, unlike the Yugoslav federal army, was not interested in any kind of intervention into political affairs (Rupnik 2000). Valerie Bunce argues that the bloc provides the answer and that violence was likely to occur in countries such as Yugoslavia, Romania and Albania whose military apparatus was not controlled by Moscow (1999: 71). Although Moscow decided not to use its huge army to keep the Soviet Union together and Russia later accepted the independence of other republics and the often unfavourable position of Russians living outside Russia, the Soviet army was implicated in violent events occurring in the former Soviet space. It *did* intervene in Lithuania in 1991, some of its generals staged a coup against Gorbachev in 1991, it was implicated initially in the conflict in Azerbaijan and its remnants in Moldova helped the rebellion in Transnistria. In addition, Russia, as the sole successor of the Soviet army later on played an important role in the conflicts in Georgia.

I concur with Bunce that an independent and powerful military in Yugoslavia, Albania and Romania succumbed to the temptation to enter into an already volatile political arena in order to defend their own privileges.

However, violence in Albania and Romania resulted from short-term conflicts that ended in democratic changes demanded by citizens themselves. This did not endanger the existence of the state as such. Whereas the intervention of the Soviet army was relatively limited, the Yugoslav People's Army (JNA) fully participated in the inter-republican and inter-ethnic conflicts by choosing not to defend the Yugoslav federation (although in Slovenia it intervened to protect the federation's borders and it portrayed its role there and in Croatia as a defence of Yugoslavia). Instead, its leadership decided to support the Serb nationalist programme of creating – on the ruins of Yugoslavia once it became clear it was about to collapse – a greater Serbian state out of Serbia, Montenegro and the Serb-populated areas of Croatia and Bosnia.

The Serbian member of the Yugoslav Presidency Borisav Jović writes in his memoir about the plan 'to attack Yugoslavia' which was discussed among Serbian leaders as early as March 1990 after the failure of the Fourteenth Congress of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia (LCY). The plan involved a change of internal borders if Slovenia and Croatia decided to defect from the federation (Gordy 2008: 285). The JNA confirmed its close ties with Milošević after the army, on his orders, crushed the Belgrade demonstrations of 9 March 1991. 'At this moment, the JNA ceased to function as the defence force of the Yugoslav federation, and transformed itself into the military wing of a political faction' (Gordy 2008: 285). Numerous reports and testimonies confirm the JNA's submission to Milošević and to the close and secret collaboration and planning of the war between the army's chiefs and Serbian and Montenegrin leaders. Belgrade's lawyer Srđa Popović draws on an enormous number of documents (memoirs, transcripts and testimonies) to show that this was – according to the Yugoslav Constitution and laws still in force at that time – an anti-constitutional conspiracy of the above-mentioned leaders which had as its goal the creation of a Serbia-dominated state on the ruins of the Yugoslav federation (2008).

The JNA and Milošević himself often claimed that they were actually defending Yugoslavia against separatists whether they were Albanian, Croatian or Slovenian. The fact that their 'defence' of Yugoslavia went hand in hand with Serbian nationalist expansion progressively alienated non-Serbs from any idea of a common South-Slavic state. The JNA, therefore, became a key player in the inter-republic strife, not as an independent actor, but rather as 'an army without a state' as it was dubbed by its last military commander Veljko Kadijević in the subtitle of his 1993 memoir 'My View of the Break-up'. Indeed, 'an army without a state' – in search of a state.

Conclusion: The price of war

The consequences of the wide-scale violence that occurred in the former Yugoslavia and USSR are still felt. Croatia ended the Serb rebellion in 1995 with a military takeover that left large portions of Croatia empty of its Serb minority. Bosnia-Herzegovina is internally divided and supervised by international bodies. Although local nationalist leaders often invoke partition of the country, there has been no significant inter-ethnic violence since 1995. Serbia is still a country with no consensus on its borders and is still fighting its nationalist ghosts, the consequences of its engagement in Croatia and Bosnia and the loss of Kosovo as well as Montenegro's departure. The recent fragmentation turned it into a landlocked country much smaller in size than it was before its expansionist campaigns. In the post-Soviet world, meanwhile, one finds a series of self-governed entities and frozen conflicts that erupt from time to time, such as that in Georgia in summer 2008. There is no strong will by local actors or by the international community – which is unprepared to tackle the issues in Russia's immediate zone of interests and engagement – to solve the conflicts in Transnistria, Abkhazia, South Ossetia and Nagorno-Karabakh. Chechnya seems to be forgotten and the brutal Russian governance of the region forgiven in a post-September 11 world. The Ukrainian crisis, the *de facto* annexation of the Crimea by Russia and a conflict in Eastern Ukraine come as a delayed replay of what was already seen elsewhere after the dissolution of socialist multinational federations.

In this chapter, I have suggested that the eruption of violence and its intensity largely depend on questions related to citizenship and individual's citizenship status, his or her rights and security, conflicting interpretations about who should 'own' certain territories and where inter-state borders should be drawn, and, finally, the role of the federal military, its successors or remnants, as the only force possessing the overwhelming means of warfare during the period of dissolution. Obviously, other factors that are closely related to the proposed analysis should be taken into consideration. Any multifactor analysis of each individual case needs to include regional particularities, historical experience, economic concerns, relations between democratic procedures and violence, functioning and forming of political elites, their manipulation of the above-mentioned issues, their armament of loyal formations and paramilitaries, as well as general international context and involvement.

More than twenty years on from that *annus mirabilis*, this analysis has tried to tackle the darker side of the fall of the Wall that has involved the mass destruction of human lives as a consequence of profound changes in the post-socialist world. Finally, a very general lesson from that gloomy side is very simple: when the walls crumble down, no matter where and when, they tend to crumble down on somebody's head. Ironically, the walls sometimes fall down on the heads of the very people who dreamed of tearing them down.