

# Macedonian Foreign Policy



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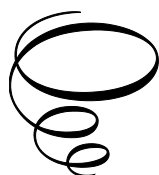
*From Disintegration  
to Integration*

By

Dejan Marolov

and Aneta Stojanovska-Stefanova

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Macedonian Foreign Policy: From Disintegration to Integration

By Dejan Marolov and Aneta Stojanovska-Stefanova

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# CONTENTS

Preface .....	vii
Chapter 1 .....	1
The Disintegration of SFRY	
1.1. The 1974 Constitution and the Transformation of the SFRY .....	1
1.2. Tito's Death and Internal Turmoil .....	3
1.3. Beginning of End .....	5
1.3.1. Crisis in Yugoslavia within 1990 – 1991 and the Disintegration of the Federal Bodies and Organs .....	5
1.4. Reasons for Disintegration .....	14
1.4.1. Conspiracy Theories .....	19
Chapter 2 .....	25
Independence of the Republic of Macedonia	
2.1. The Process of Independence .....	25
2.1.1. The Creation of Independent Republic of Macedonia .....	27
2.2. Security Issues and Dealing with the Danger of Possible Spillover of the Yugoslav Crises in Macedonia .....	29
2.2.1. Referendum on Independence and Possible Destabilizing Factors .....	29
2.3. The Process of Securing Complete Independence and Sovereignty: Withdrawal of YNA from Macedonia .....	35
2.3.1. External Destabilizing Factors for Macedonia's Security .....	42
2.3.2. Overcoming Security Issues .....	45
Chapter 3 .....	47
Constitutional and Legal Aspects of the Macedonian Foreign Policy	
3.1. The constitutional establishment of the Republic of Macedonia ..	47
3.1.1. General Considerations for the constitutional establishment ..	47
3.1.2. The Constitution as a basic act of constitutional structure ..	47
3.1.3. Types of constitutions .....	48
3.1.4. Development of the constitutional structure of the Republic of Macedonia .....	49
3.1.5. Conception of the Constitution of the Republic of Macedonia .....	50

3.1.6. Structure of the Constitution of the Republic of Macedonia .....	52
3.1.7. The fundamental values of the constitutional structure of the Republic of Macedonia.....	56
3.1.8. Competences in the area of the foreign policy in accordance with the Constitution of the Republic of Macedonia from 1991 ...	57
3.2. Competences in the field of foreign policy in accordance with the Constitution from 1991.....	59
Chapter 4 .....	61
Legal Aspects of the Macedonian Foreign Policy	
4.1. Law of Foreign Affairs from 2006.....	61
4.2. President of the Republic of Macedonia and foreign policy .....	62
4.2.1. Personal impacts of the former presidents of the Republic of Macedonia in the area of foreign policy .....	63
4.3. Assembly of the Republic of Macedonia and foreign policy .....	65
4.4. Government of the Republic of Macedonia and foreign policy ..	66
4.5. Ministry of Foreign Affairs and foreign policy.....	67
4.5.1. The Minister of Foreign affairs and foreign policy .....	68
4.5.2. State administration authorities and local self-government and foreign policy .....	69
4.6. Law on negotiation, ratification and enforcement of the international agreements .....	69
4.7. International relations as a constitutional matter.....	72
Chapter 5 .....	75
Political Aspects of the Macedonian Foreign Policy	
5.1. General Considerations of the terms policy and foreign policy ...	75
5.2. International recognition in the foreign policy.....	79
5.2.1. Recognition of the states in the international law.....	79
5.2.2. Recognition of Macedonia and Admission to the UN.....	80
5.3. International Recognition of the Republic of Macedonia .....	81
5.4. Foreign policy and Diplomacy 1991-1993.....	92
5.5. Membership of the Republic of Macedonia in the UN .....	98
5.6. The name dispute in the UN .....	110
5.7. Foreign policy and Diplomacy 1993-1995.....	116
5.8. Precedent in the international recognition of countries-the case of Republic of Macedonia .....	121
References .....	126

## PREFACE

*Dear reader,*

*The process of creating the independent Republic of Macedonia is parallel to the all of the global processes of disintegration of the former East European one party systems, including the former SFR Yugoslavia and the promotion of political pluralism and democracy as basic constituents of the modern societies. The Macedonian independence was established with the referendum of September 8, 1991. After this, the period of internal consolidation and the diplomatic fight for international recognition followed. The diplomatic initiatives, as well as overall relations with the EC and the USA, resulted with the membership of Republic of Macedonia (under the temporary reference of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia) in United Nations.*

*In the period that followed, as a result of the wider international intervention in former Yugoslavia and the blockade from Greece, Macedonia was in a very difficult and complex situation. Due to the so called Name Issue, Greece imposed onside trade embargo and blockade for further integration in other international organizations and initiatives. The status quo situation was changed with Interim accord, after which the period of stabilization and establishing of relation with USA and most of EU countries followed.*

*The thematic content of this book is an attempt for a more comprehensive analysis of the events in the period of the late 1980s and early 1990s that led to the creation of an independent Republic of Macedonia. The focus of this research and analysis will be on the period from the declaration of independence on September 8, 1991, until the signing of the Interim Accord on September 13, 1995, both from the point of view of internal and external relations and alliances.*

*The process of independence of the Republic of Macedonia is a very important segment of the history of the Macedonian people. The attempts and the desire of the Macedonian people for an independent state finally became a reality at the end of the 20th century. The events that took place on the territory of the former Yugoslavia in the late 1980s and early 1990s*

*strongly influenced the Macedonian state and the Macedonian people. Finally, after nearly five decades of existence as an integral part of the common SFRY state, in the early 1990s the Macedonian people and the political elite in Macedonia had to decide about the direction the state would move. During this period, many events occurred that left a mark on the history of the Macedonian people and contributed greatly to the future of the Republic of Macedonia. The research of the legal-political events aims to give a clearer picture of how the Republic of Macedonia was prepared for the events that took place not only in the former Yugoslavia, but throughout Eastern Europe, in which the socialist mode of governance was decaying. The analysis will also attempt to determine the role of the Macedonian political elite in the creation of an independent Republic of Macedonia. A special segment of this book will be the foreign policy and diplomacy, which is very important for all the events that took place in relation to the Republic of Macedonia internationally.*

*The subject of this book is to review the constitutional powers and political preconditions that determine the conduct of the foreign policy of the Republic of Macedonia.*

*The book will review the constitutional powers which the holders of functions have in the area of the foreign policy, foreign political priorities of the Republic of Macedonia as well as the precedents in the conduct of the foreign policy of the Republic of Macedonia in the international recognition of other countries.*

*In order to recapture the essence and justification of the book, the source of this theoretical review we found it in the definition of statehood. After the end of the thirty years of civil war in Europe and the signing of the peace treaty of Westphalia in 1648, the creation and development of the country began to the form that we know today.*

*In terms of increasing interdependence between the countries, the question of their mutual cooperation is essential. For the states equally important segment with internally arranged relations is the manner on which they concern and regulate the international relations.*

*Republic of Macedonia, has raised the issue of the international relations high. Confirmation of the said is the chapter VI of the Constitution, which is dedicated to this issue.*



*Except the Constitution, the area of the international relations is stipulated by the Law on Foreign Affairs and the Law of signing, ratification and execution of the international contracts.*

*The Law on Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Macedonia, precisely defines the concepts of "Foreign Affairs" and "foreign policy".*

*The book will also make a review of the constitutional and legal aspects of the foreign policy of the Republic of Macedonia. The authors are analyzing the Constitution of the Republic of Macedonia since 1991 and the manner on which it regulates the area of the foreign affairs and foreign policy of the Republic of Macedonia. In addition, it will be reviewed the relevant legal acts by which the area of foreign policy is regulated, as well as the Authorities conducting foreign affairs in the state.*

*The fact that the Macedonian political system rests on the principle of separation of powers, where the executive power is concentrated in the hands of the Government and the President of the Republic, i.e. it is a two-headed (bicephalous), leads to the conclusion that the organization of the state power in the Republic of Macedonia is positioned between the virtual world of the parliament and the mixed system.*

*The authors also make review of the political aspects of the Macedonian foreign policy, giving a light on the institute of international recognition in the foreign policy and its impact on the conduct of the foreign policy. The book will explain the bilateral and multilateral aspects by presenting the Euro-Atlantic aspirations of the Republic of Macedonia for EU and NATO membership and in this context we will consider the implications of the foreign policy of the Republic of Macedonia related with the dispute that Republic of Greece has with the constitutional name in the UN, as well as the Interim Accord, the events of the NATO Summit in Bucharest from 2008, the complaint of the Republic of Macedonia to the International Court of Justice in Hague and the Prespa Agreement.*

*In regard to the bilateral dispute that Republic of Greece has with the Republic of Macedonia, the Government of the Republic of Macedonia maintains its consistent position for actively and constructively participations in the negotiations under the auspices of UN and the mediator Matthew Nimetz. Republic of Macedonia is committed to building good neighborly relations, which will be based on cooperation, trust and mutual respect, without blackmail and threats in the process of resolving of the difference of the name of our country. After the acceptance impediment of the Republic*

*of Macedonia in NATO on the Summit in Bucharest in April 2008 by the Republic of Greece, in continuity activities are undertaken to protect the interests of the country and in this context to protect the Interim Agreement with Greece from 13 September 1995, which directly commits Greece not to object to the membership of the Republic of Macedonia in international organizations and institutions. The solution of the dispute is a complex procedure for which finalization a longer period is required, especially if taken into consideration the desire of the government to hold a referendum.*

*For that purpose, on 17 November 2008, on behalf of the Republic of Macedonia, Application against Greece is submitted to the International Court of Justice for violation of the Article 11 paragraph 1 of the Interim Agreement.*

*On 20 July 2009, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, on behalf of the Republic of Macedonia, submitted to the Court the Memorandum in support of the submitted Application against Greece. The memorandum is contained the extensive legal argumentation and are enclosed numerous compelling evidences that Greece with its activities before, and on the NATO Summit in Bucharest, grossly violated its obligations stipulated under the Interim Agreement.*

*In its judgment, the Court accepted the argument of the Republic of Macedonia that Greece had violated the Article 11, paragraph 1 of the Interim Agreement from 1995 when it objected the membership of the Republic of Macedonia to NATO in April 2008.*

*This historic judgment of the Court means that Greece cannot legally oppose to the membership of the Republic of Macedonia in NATO. In addition, with the judgment of the Court a major hurdle for future negotiations of the Republic of Macedonia for EU membership is clarified.*

*At the end, considering the analyzes in the separate chapters the reader could make a general conclusion about the competencies and conditions that determine the nature of the foreign policy of the Republic of Macedonia, the manner on which the institute of international recognition impacts on the conduct of the foreign policy, as well as the level of efficiency of the institutions in the way of leading of the foreign policy in accordance with the manner of the organization of the authority.*

*Through a systematic analysis of the historical facts and events in this initial period of the creation of an independent state, by systematically studying the testimonies of the direct participants in these processes and comparing*

*their stories and attitudes from a distance of about two decades, we will try to determine the number of actions taken that were systematically and longtime prepared with some prior analysis. We will also focus on what they would bring in the future and to what extent the actions of the Macedonian statesmen were stymied and brought under the influence of external pressure.*

*Foreign policy and diplomacy will also play an important role in this book. The above mentioned period is an integral part of all the events that took place on the international stage, both bilaterally with a particular state and multilaterally within the organizations in which the state aspired to become a member state. An attempt will also be made to analyze how successful is the Macedonian young diplomacy in the international promotion of the country and its role in the process of gaining independence. In this context, special attention is paid to the US and EU policies towards the disintegration of Yugoslavia, with particular reference to Macedonia.*

*This book retrospectively offers an opportunity to review the situation in the Republic of Macedonia in the process of its gaining independence. The book will also contribute to the systematization of data and the essential analysis of the more important legal, political, and international aspects of this process.*

*We are hoping that this book will arouse the interest of the public scientifically, i.e., it will provide the basis for other scientific research related to this topic from another or similar perspective, analyzing processes from a time distance that is sufficient for the analysis of the specific period and events that occurred at that time. Considering that the direct participants in these events have published their papers and memoirs during that period, in direct correlation with the existing documents, they will offer a clearer picture of everything that has happened, with direct consequences and repercussions to the present moment. It would be interesting to study the decisions of the political elite in that period, the internal events, the foreign policy and diplomacy set up, and the skillful maneuvers or omissions that have brought either direct or indirect consequences or benefits to the state and the Macedonian people.*

**October 5, 2021**  
**The authors**



# CHAPTER 1

## THE DISINTEGRATION OF SFRY

### **1.1. The 1974 Constitution and the Transformation of the SFRY**

The transition from the 1960s to the 1970s in SFR Yugoslavia raised the issue of constitutional changes in the Federation, under the slogan "Equality of People and Nationalities". During this period, the tendencies for decentralization of the Federation and strengthening of the functions and autonomy of the republics and provinces were noticeable. The constitutional amendments adopted in 1971 are the basis for constitutional reformation in 1974. They were fully incorporated in the Constitution of Yugoslavia, and, of course, in the Constitution of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. Hence, this contributes to the political stability of the Federation and the stabilization of international relations in a short term.

By adopting constitutional changes, the Federation started losing its original organs and functions. All federal bodies, legislative, executive and judicial, in the way of their constitution and functioning, became joint bodies of the republics and provinces. Consequently, all federal laws and regulations were enforced independently in the republics and provinces, and this allows eight different interpretations and applications. A fundamental feature of the new constitution was the class determination. This is because, according to it, the working class and all working people needs to develop socialist self-governing democracy, which is a special form of dictatorship of the proletariat. At the same time, the new Constitution proclaimed the so-called delegate system (Jančeva, 2012, p.54).

The main feature of the Constitution strengthened the constitutional position of the republics and provinces. Relations in the Federation were set up in a manner that working people and citizens in their home republics and provinces can directly exercise their sovereign rights. However, within the Federation, they were exercising all those rights which, according to the Constitution, were exercised with a prior consent of all the republics and

provinces. The precise functioning of the Federation was practically carried out through the republics and provinces. The federation, in accordance with the constitutional amendments, was deprived of the ability to decide and act independently by itself. Any republic could veto against any federal decision by effectively blocking the central government. It required at the federal level none independent power structure that could be set up as a separate functional entity, independent from the republics.

The state centralism with the new Constitution has become a historical category. The federation, informally, has increasingly acquired the characteristics of a confederation. The adoption of the constitutional amendments demanded neutralizing existing sources of inter-ethnic misunderstanding, thus enabling the republics and provinces to independently exercise their rights. This, in turn, made the obligations towards the Federation declarative only (Veljanovski, 2012, p.264-265). Much of the Federation's authority had been transferred to the republican or provincial framework. The changes were made to strengthen the responsibility of the republics and provinces in the area of their socio-economic development and responsibility for certain issues of interest to the Federation. Also, the amendments should overcome the extremely electrified situation in the Federation, which is mainly caused by international intolerance. The resolution of certain issues of common interest was carried out by consensus. The defense continued to exist in the domain of the federal authorities. Therefore, the new Constitution provided for the territorial defense an equal component of the armed forces, in addition to the YNA, which practically paved the way to arm the republics.

The Federal Assembly became a tool for the unification and functioning of the Federation. With the constitutional changes, the Federal Assembly as well as the Federal Executive Council were transformed into bodies of republics and provinces. The Federal Assembly was composed of two councils - the Federal Council and the Council of the Republics and Provinces - which form the basis of delegate principle. The constitutional changes also provided for the formation of a collective governing body - the Presidency of the SFRY - headed by a president. Tito held the presidency, and the president was elected from the republics in a prior-established order after his death. The constitutional changes led to formation of collective governing bodies, presidencies in both republics and provinces. A Presidency of the SRM had been established, and it had a protocol role. A new benefit of the Constitution is the established delegate system that is conceived as democratic. It should have strengthened the links between the delegates and the base that delegates them. It was a new form of direct

participation of the working people, the working class in the management of social affairs, and a new form of political system. Delegation is a way of exercising the power of the working class, in all segments, directly or through elected delegates.

With the constitutional reforms in the practice of the Macedonian statehood, the upward movement of the position as a republic and people was evident. Equal representation was possible in the republican bodies of the Federation, as well as the CUY (Communist Union of Yugoslavia) Central Committee. For the first time, Macedonia got a Vice Presidential position in the earlier Federal Executive Council. Greater representation is evident in the distribution of ambassadorial and consular positions, as well as the promotion of Macedonian officers within the YNA. It had also enabled greater influence in the formulation of domestic policy, as well as participation in the formulation of the foreign policy of the Federation, especially in relation to the neighboring states of SR Macedonia.

The adoption of the Constitution in 1974 is considered the beginning of the end of SFRY. Although greater autonomy of the republics and provinces was foreseen so as to reduce the existing dissatisfaction with a view of strengthening the Federation, this is not the case. On the contrary, nationalism was becoming more and more apparent, and inter-ethnic intolerance was becoming increasingly evident. This situation came to light after Tito's death, when internal turmoil with the federal authorities was most pronounced. Certain republics sought to keep the common management mechanisms of the Federation in their hands in order to use them for the benefit of their national interests and purposes. The constitutional amendments in particular would be used by the republics in the 1990s, when some proclaimed independence precisely on the basis of the 1974 Constitution. Some republics were also skillfully exploiting territorial defense in order to oppose the YNA to defend their intentions to gain sovereignty and independence.

## **1.2. Tito's Death and Internal Turmoil**

The problems that the SFRY was facing in the period following Tito's death deepened. In the decade from 1981 to 1990, all anomalies that were more or less successfully managed by the Supreme Commander and his subordinate state apparatus appeared on the surface. Postwar Yugoslavia's history is unthinkable without the name and deed of Josip Broz Tito. His character and work can be said to be a charismatic, a cult person, a person with strong leadership abilities, a person who plays a key role in rebuilding and building

the country, and one of the creators of workers' self-management (Jančeva, 2012, p.73).

Tito's role and his authority in the NOB (national Liberian struggle), as a supreme commander and leader of the KPY-SKY, played a huge role in the creation of the SFR Yugoslavia and its several decades' maintenance on the world stage. Under the slogan "brotherhood, unity and equality of all Yugoslav people and nationalities", Tito played a key role in the creation of the common state - Yugoslavia. Apart from the respect he enjoyed among the people of Yugoslavia, he was a respectful person throughout the world. He was one of the initiators for the creation of the Non-Aligned Organization.

Tito was especially respected in Macedonia. It is difficult to give a precise explanation about the reasons for that strong belief in brotherhood and unity among nations. The fact is that Yugoslav was highly valued in Macedonia, and Yugoslav awareness was manifested far more than other nations and republics. One of the reasons for this, perhaps, was the final creation of its own national state, even though it was within the Federation. Macedonians believe that Tito's role was enormous. Also, the proclamation of brotherhood and unity was unconditionally accepted by the Macedonian people who had previously only witnessed divisions and foreign rule.

After his death, political and state leadership were caught up and existing uncertainty and disorientation were on the rise. Unable to come to terms with his own authority, his successors often invoked Tito's name and deed. Thus, the SFRY Presidency was increasingly reduced to a protocol body. In the early 1980s, the political structure tied to Tito was left without a real program. When analyzing the reasons for deepening of the crisis in Yugoslavia and its collapse, one of the key points was exactly Tito's death. He, with his authority, was a statesman of respect. However, he was remarked as a person who had not left a good and efficient system of preserving established equality and the idea of Yugoslavia (Veljanovski, 2002, p.332-333).

After Tito's death, nationalism was on the rise. In his lifetime, he had opted for a federation with a resilient form that would not diminish any "state people". He stood for Yugoslavian determination and deftly proclaimed it. After his death, all the anomalies and weaknesses of the system that had been built for decades came to the fore. Some republics were pushing to become dominant within the Federation, delegating their representatives to the federal authorities, through which they needed to exert greater influence



in making decisions for their own benefit and interest. In addition, some of the republics felt marginalized, causing new conflicts and discontent. The national question was becoming a dominant political issue. The question of the demolition, dismantling or reshuffling of Yugoslavia was becoming more and more frequent. In an attempt to establish the reasons for the breakup of Yugoslavia, one concludes that Tito's death was just a segment of the whole process. The reasons for the breakup of SFRY were caused by economic, political, internal and external factors.

### **1.3. Beginning of End**

The disintegration of any state in the world is always conditioned by appropriate historical, economic, political, and cultural conditions, regardless of whether the factors directly supporting this process are internal, external, or a combination of the two. The disintegration of Yugoslavia is not the only example of the disintegration of a multinational and multi-confessional state. On the contrary, there are numerous examples of processes leading to the disintegration of a particular state, and many of those disintegrations are followed by numerous human and material casualties. However, the characteristic of Yugoslavia and its disintegration is the existence of enormous violence which is the characteristics of the process of disintegration of the state. The participation of the Federal State Army and the territorial defense forces of individual republics, followed by paramilitary formations and the participation of foreign armies, resulted in the achievement of an infamous record consisting of the largest destruction, human and material loss in Europe's territory after the second World War.

#### **1.3.1. Crisis in Yugoslavia within 1990 – 1991 and the Disintegration of the Federal Bodies and Organs**

It is very difficult to say and determine the time when the breakup of Yugoslavia began. Some of the main reasons are the constitutional amendments and especially the 1974 Constitution. The Yugoslav crisis intensified and escalated after 1986 in the field of economic, political, international, and inter-republic relations. The economic and political crisis in the SFRY had been present for a long time. On the one hand, Tito's death aggravated the crisis but opened up opportunities, on the other hand, to discuss the weaknesses, omissions, and unsustainability of the political system of socialist self-government (Veljanovski, 2002, p.346-347). International intolerance in the face of strong division between the republics, which was felt in all spheres of social life, was the ideal ground

for escalating nationalism. The republics were increasingly turning to themselves, putting their own interests at the forefront, with a tendency to strengthen their own position within the Federation. Distrust was growing, and confrontations on a national basis were increasing. The national question was becoming a dominant political issue. The scenario of Yugoslavia's overthrow, dismantling, or reshaping of Yugoslavia as a centralist and unitary state, with the supremacy of one or more nationalities, or as a confederation in which everyone would be imprisoned nationally was increasingly advocated (Jančeva, 2012, p.76-77).

The transition process in the 80s and 90s covered the countries of Eastern Europe as well as Yugoslavia. The transition in Yugoslavia was accompanied by a crisis affecting the Federation, manifested by malfunctioning of the political system of socialist self-government. The distrust of the federal authorities was growing and it was a matter of time when they would stop functioning. SKY was facing the greatest crisis period of its existence. Faced with internal disunity, it ceased to be the leader of the working class and offered no solutions to the crisis. At the same time, the economic crisis inside the Federation was escalating. Yugoslavia ceased to exist as a single economic space. Economic instability was manifested through the high level of indebtedness of the economy at home and abroad. The country's debt, previously resolved by external borrowing, busted into the surface. Also, debts were due to be repaid, and there were no funds available. The economic system was in the process of disintegration. In such difficult and complex circumstances, the crisis reached its climax during 1990-1991. One of the reforms on the table was the issue of political pluralism. The possibility of forming parties and introducing a multi-party system enabled the holding of the first multi-party elections in all republics. Electoral victories in all republics were carried by parties with a national flag and in their programs advocate secession from Yugoslavia. Thus, democratization in the SFRY accelerated the process of its disintegration.

The process that leads to the disintegration of a particular state usually begins with the paralysis and malfunctioning of high state institutions. In the case of Yugoslavia, we can claim the same.

The place where Yugoslav leadership regularly had meetings was the Congress of the Communist League of Yugoslavia - SKY. SKY was of great importance in a place where the unity of all the republics of the Federation was demonstrated and the unity of spirit was promoted through a common ideology. The crucial date for the existence of the Congress was January 20, 1990. The 14th and last congress of the Alliance of Communists of

Yugoslavia was convened on this day. The Congress ended with the departure of the delegations, first by Slovenia and later by Croatia, making its further maintenance simply lose additional meaning.

We have another example of a particularly important institution in Yugoslavia, the Presidency of Yugoslavia. It was made up of members of all six republics and representatives of the two autonomous provinces. This body had an authority to issue orders to the Yugoslav People's Army - YNA. In the Presidency, all the republics had one vote, and the decision to act on the Army required 5 positive votes out of a total of 8 votes (together with the votes of provincial representatives). The decisive day for the end of the functionality of this body was March 12, 1991, when an impromptu session was scheduled. Seven representatives attended this extraordinary session, but the eighth representative, from the Republic of Slovenia, was absent. This is certainly a major blow to the Presidency, as the absence of a representative could conceal a message and danger of rejecting the decisions of the body. However, Slovenia was not to be blame for the end of the existence of that federal body. Thus, the day after the extraordinary session, the President of Serbia, Slobodan Milosevic, made a statement in which he compared the Yugoslav Presidency with a dead and non-functional body. He also announced that Serbia would no longer send its representatives to this "dead" body. This puts a definitive end to the supreme authority which has the authority to issue orders to the Army. After the factual denial of this federal authority by two republics, its legitimacy was definitely at stake.

Thus, we can conclude that the process of Yugoslavia's disintegration is traced to the creation of dysfunctional bodies and state bodies that were no longer able to cope with the existing challenges. This situation is soon mirrored in other federal bodies as well and, finally, there is a unilateral declaration of independence by Slovenia and Croatia<sup>1</sup>. Their declarations of independence were formalized after gaining international recognition for them, which was the definitive end of Yugoslavia. We find it useful to consider the events and processes that had led to a situation in which federal bodies and authorities became dysfunctional. Let us first consider the moves of Serbia and then President Slobodan Milošević.

Much of the existing literature supports that President Slobodan Milošević stood behind the shootings that took place on October 5, 1988, in Vojvodina and January 10, 1989, in Montenegro. These coups consist of organizing mass protests and demands for resignation by the authorities. Through these

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<sup>1</sup> On June 25, 1991.

coups, President Milošević succeeded in replacing the old leaders with new ones and this was made up of "his people". President Milošević did not forget Kosovo, for which the Serbian people have a collective memory and cherish the cult for a sacred place<sup>2</sup>.

Knowing and taking advantage of this, President Milošević had triggered events in Kosovo that represented his pure triumph. Thus, Azem Vlasi, the leader of the Communist Alliance of Kosovo, was accused of counter-revolutionary activities and brought to court, and the Kosovo parliament "voluntarily" transferred its powers to central Serbia. With these moves, President Milošević started to become an increasingly popular and powerful political figure in Serbia. However, by installing "his people" in Kosovo, Vojvodina, and Montenegro, he was also increasing his power within Yugoslavia. Certainly, these developments did not get approval in other republics, and especially not in Slovenia, which saw the danger of shifting the balance of power within Yugoslavia with Serbia's overwhelming strengthening. This was why Slovenia supported Kosovo. An additional motive for taking concrete action by Slovenia was the talk of the presidents of Serbia and Slovenia, Milošević and Kučan, in which Milošević reportedly made it clear that Serbian interests must be respected even at the cost of being unconstitutional (The Death of Yugoslavia, 1995<sup>3</sup>). All of this was the reason why President Kučan and the Slovenian leadership had publicly come out from a position of support for Kosovo, or for the defense of the autonomous status, justifying their position by arguing that it was in fact defending the AVNOY structure of Yugoslavia. Through the use of AVNOY Yugoslavia, Slovenia actually called for respect for the internal balance of power that had been disrupted in favor of Serbia, which had already controlled half of Yugoslavia with Kosovo, Vojvodina, and Montenegro.

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<sup>2</sup> One of the major reasons for the existence of this cult in Kosovo is due to the events that took place in 1389, namely the battle between the Serbian and the Ottoman army. In the same battle, the Serbian army was defeated, but a cult of rebellious and heroic Serbian people was built, which saw itself as the defender of all Christian Europe, namely Kosovo Pole. Apart from this, there is another reason why Kosovo is considered a sacred place of Serbia. Namely, it was in Kosovo that the Serbian Orthodox Church was founded in the town of Pedz in 1346.

<sup>3</sup> British Broadcasting Corporation. (1995). *The Death of Yugoslavia* [Video]. YouTube. Retrieved January 24, 2019, from [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M\\_PzsfXbyAw&list=PLqD5Su3ZJjjbCsgVC E90msl9d4nHdV4Pu](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M_PzsfXbyAw&list=PLqD5Su3ZJjjbCsgVC E90msl9d4nHdV4Pu)

Consequently, in Slovenia, some things were happening that could be seen as provocation used by Serbia, and also by the YNA, which was a sort of guarantor of the Federation's survival, as a cover for their possible actions. Therefore, Socialist Slovenia as part of Socialist Yugoslavia tolerated something that could, at some point, be a provocation for the YNA. There was a newspaper, Mladina, which came out in Slovenia and it contained a series of articles against the YNA as well as articles calling for change of the one-party regime and thus promoting the introduction of a kind of democracy in Yugoslavia. The YNA responded by arresting those responsible for Mladina daily. In order not to repeat this in the future and reduce the possibility of further interference by Belgrade in Slovenia's internal affairs, President Kučan announced changes to the Slovenian Constitution. President Milosevic's counter intelligence continued organizing mass protests in Slovenia with the help of Kosovo Serbians, to "discipline" the Slovenian leadership. In this situation, Croatia played a decisive role in preventing more protests and possible greater unrest. The Croatian Republic refused to allow protesters coming from Serbia to cross its territory. The final result of this situation was only an increase in the Slovenians' fear of a possible "Kosovo scenario" in Slovenia, that is, pressure from the YNA in Slovenia, which in itself accelerated the process of Slovenian withdrawal from Yugoslavia.

Earlier events led to the convening of the 14th extraordinary and final congress of the Alliance of Communists of Yugoslavia (SKY) on January 20, 1990. This Congress was considered as the official beginning of the end of Yugoslavia. During the course of this congress, "the cards were played" on the national basis, and any amendments proposed to the Slovenians were rejected. During the break, according to President Momir Bulatović, a compromising solution was offered by the President of Slovenia, which consisted of, at least, some of the key Slovenian amendments being adopted, and in return the Slovenes did not realize their threat of possible rejection of the Congress (The Death of Yugoslavia, 1995<sup>4</sup>). Once it became clear that there was nothing of the proposed compromise, the Slovenian delegation realized its threat. The news was announced by a Slovenian delegate - Kiril Ribiči. However, Slovenian delegates were not the only ones leaving the SKY extraordinary Congress. Soon after, Croatian delegates did the same thing. This put an end to the common Yugoslav leadership that

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<sup>4</sup> British Broadcasting Corporation. (1995). *The Death of Yugoslavia* [Video]. YouTube. Retrieved January 24, 2019, from [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M\\_PzsfXbyAw&list=PLqD5Su3ZJjbcsgVC E90msl9d4nHdV4Pu](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M_PzsfXbyAw&list=PLqD5Su3ZJjbcsgVC E90msl9d4nHdV4Pu)

was restored after this event. We can conclude that the conflict between the largest and the second smallest republic in Yugoslavia erupted because the change in the balance of power traced the one-way road from which the SFRY never returned.

As we have already mentioned, Croatia, like Slovenia, decided to leave the extraordinary Congress of the Communist League of Yugoslavia. The reasons for this decision by Croatian delegates were not only of solidarity with their Slovenian counterparts. On the contrary, Croatia also had its problems. While Serbia was headed by nationalist Milošević, nationalist Franjo Tuđman took office in Croatia in 1990. The president Tuđman announced changes in Croatia, including changes to the Croatian Constitution. This particularly affected Serbs living in Croatia, because in the new constitution their status was reduced to the status of a national minority. Soon there was a backlash from local police and residents in the Croatian town of Knin, where local Serbs refused to acknowledge not only the authority of the newly elected Croatian president, but also the Croatian government in general. President Tuđman decided to send government officials to investigate the Knin situation. The mayor of Knin at the time was Milan Babič. Knowing that government officials were heading to his municipality, Babič was organizing a protest that posed a kind of security threat to government officials who had to meet with the rebellious local police (The Death of Yugoslavia, 1995<sup>5</sup>). After the meeting, it became clear that the Croatian government no longer had authority in Knin. Faced with a newly emerging situation in which part of Croatian territory virtually did not recognize Croatian sovereignty, President Tuđman ordered two police special-purpose helicopters to rebel Knin in order to regain control. However, YNA aviation located the helicopters and ordered them to return, threatening to be shot down. The helicopters had no choice but return to Zagreb. President Tuđman's official response to the incident, more precisely his remark that the legal action by Croatian police ordered by legally elected officials was deliberately obstructed by the YNA, received an official response from the YNA that helicopters had, in fact, not been prevented from doing their job, but they had to go back for their own safety due to overcrowding in air traffic (The Death of Yugoslavia, 1995<sup>6</sup>). The

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<sup>5</sup> British Broadcasting Corporation. (1995). *The Death of Yugoslavia* [Video]. YouTube. Retrieved January 24, 2019, from [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M\\_PzsfXbyAw&list=PLqD5Su3ZJjbcSgVC E90msl9d4nHdV4Pu](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M_PzsfXbyAw&list=PLqD5Su3ZJjbcSgVC E90msl9d4nHdV4Pu)

<sup>6</sup> British Broadcasting Corporation. (1995). *The Death of Yugoslavia* [Video]. YouTube. Retrieved January 24, 2019, from

analysis of that event shows us two things. Firstly, it is a humiliation for a Croatian president who simply does not have control of his entire republic. Secondly, it becomes crystal clear at the moment that what happened in Knin is much more than a local problem and has its backing in Belgrade.

Along with these events, but also before them, there were some considerations in official Croatian circles that Croatian police should not be left to the goodwill of Belgrade and that it was necessary to start arming itself. According to existing literature, General Spiegel was the main proponent and implementer of this idea. Such views had been accepted by President Tudjman. Soon the practical realization of that plan was approaching. According to General Spiegel, an agreement was made with Hungary on the purchase of weapons loaded in two tracks. Purchased weapons were illegally imported into Yugoslav (Croatian) territory across the Yugoslav-Hungarian border (The Death of Yugoslavia, 1995<sup>7</sup>). However, this secret action by the Croatian authorities did not remain unnoticed by the YNA intelligence, who had set up their own agents and monitored the entire process. Official Croatian executives had dismissed the event as an event that never happened. The first to openly admit to arms trafficking was the Croatian member of the Yugoslav Presidency, Stipe Mesić. In a speech in Croatia, he said, "Gentlemen, do you think that when certain police stations and municipalities cancel the loyalty of the Republic of Croatia, we will buy two trailers of pens to write 'Please, do not attack us'" (The Death of Yugoslavia, 1995<sup>8</sup>). This statement shows that Stipe Mesić clearly alludes to the purchase of two trailers of guns in response to municipalities and police stations that renounce loyalty to the Croatian government.

There is another thing that official Croatian authorities claim is not true. It is a publicly broadcast footage showing Croatian General Spiegelj and two JNA soldiers. In the same footage, General Spiegelj explains that Croatia is at war with the YNA. This footage has been denied by official Croatia as a photo montage. Nevertheless, from today's point of view, it is clear that this is a real recording. Presently, General Spiegel admits that the recording was not a forgery (The Death of Yugoslavia, 1995<sup>9</sup>).

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[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M\\_PzsfXbyAw&list=PLqD5Su3ZJjbcsgVC E90msl9d4nHdV4Pu](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M_PzsfXbyAw&list=PLqD5Su3ZJjbcsgVC E90msl9d4nHdV4Pu)

<sup>7</sup> ibid

<sup>8</sup> ibid

<sup>9</sup> ibid

In a situation where it was clear that Croatia was arming itself illegally, the Yugoslav defense minister was in doubt about further steps. There was no such dilemma for his adviser, Admiral Mamula, who believed that this was a clear case of illegal smuggling of weapons and must be acted upon because the weapon was intended to rebel against an internationally recognized state (The Death of Yugoslavia, 1995<sup>10</sup>). However, things were further complicated by the fact that those "smugglers" were legally elected representatives of the Croatian people and it was politically dangerous to arrest them. However, a counter-affidavit followed, which included a 10-day ultimatum to the Croatian authorities in which they had to surrender all illegal weapons. Croatia's response to the ultimatum to hand over illegal weapons had been conveyed to Presidency Chairman, Borisav Jovič. The answer consisted of three points. Firstly, if there was an attempt to force Croatia to disarm, then Croatia would declare independence. Secondly, it would ask the Security Council for protection from Yugoslavia by sending peacekeepers. Thirdly, this would be followed by the withdrawal of all Croatian representatives from the federal authorities of Yugoslavia. Here we would focus on the Presidency of Yugoslavia. In this situation, the only body that could order YNA to take action was the Presidency of Yugoslavia, where each republic had one vote. A meeting was scheduled and President Tudjman was also invited to attend, in a situation where it was clear that Croatia was arming itself illegally and in the presence of a recording of one of the Croatian generals saying that Croatia was at war with the YNA, having no choice but promise to allow the YNA arrest anyone involved in the smuggling of weapons. However, nothing remained of this promise after Tudjman's return to Croatia and the passage of a new law on the immunity of his ministers.

In the context of many open issues in Yugoslavia and a situation that could erupt at any moment, an extraordinary session of the Presidency of Yugoslavia was convened on March 12, 1991. All envoys, except that of Slovenian, were coming. Yugoslav Defense Minister, General Kadijevič, addressed first. He presented to the audience what he called a perfidious concept made by foreign forces, which aimed to break the SFRY into three successive stages (The Death of Yugoslavia, 1995<sup>11</sup>). The first phase was the start of a civil war that allowed for the creation of conditions for foreign intervention on the territory of Yugoslavia, which was, in fact, the second phase, and the final phase would be aimed at creating a puppet regime on the territory of Yugoslavia. He proposed introducing a state of emergency as the only response to SFRY's rescue. This required five out of eight

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<sup>10</sup> *ibid*

<sup>11</sup> *ibid*



Presidency members to vote. Presidency members: Kostič, Covič, Bučin and Sapunđiu voted in favor, while Mesič and Tupurkovski voted against. This, in fact, means that the voice of the BIH representative - Bogić - was a decisive one. Bogić, although a Serbian by nationality, was nonetheless quite Yugoslav. After a long hesitation, he voted against. The day after this President's meeting, President Milošević declared that federal body as dead and dysfunctional and announced the withdrawal of Serbian officials accordingly. So, with the absence of the representative from Slovenia and the cancellation of future presence of representatives from Serbia, one of the most important organs of the Yugoslav federation lost its legitimacy and ceased to exist as such.

Attempts to preserve or rearrange the Federation enlightened the republics' disagreements and different interests. There are generally two concepts for future editing: the confederate and the federative. The Confederate concept was promoted by Slovenia and accepted by Croatia as well, providing an asymmetric association. Slovenians proposed this concept at SKY's XIV congress, held from January 20 to 22, 1990. The proposal consisted of a peaceful transition to a multi-party system, civil society autonomy, respect for human rights, and the transformation of SKY. The Slovenian delegation received no support for the proposal while leaving the congress. Croats, Macedonians, and Bosniaks also left the congress, disrupting congressional work. In July 1990, the newly elected governments of Slovenia and Croatia declared their sovereignty and proposed for the Federation to be transformed into a confederation that would consist of sovereign states.

A series of Presidency meetings were held in the first half of 1991 to find solutions to the crisis. However, they were not making progress. Unable to reach concrete solutions, responsibility was shifted to the presidents of the republics. Several meetings were held, from March 28, 1991, to July 22, 1991, also known as YU summits. The international factor was also involved in resolving the crisis. The EC decided to convene a Peace Conference for Yugoslavia in Hague. The Peace Conference began on September 7, 1991.

Slovenia organized a referendum on its independence in December 1990, followed by the Declaration of Independence on 25 June, 1991. While Croatia adopted a constitutional act, on June 25, 1991, it also adopted a Declaration of Independence. Macedonia organized a Referendum on September 8, 1991, demanding sovereignty and independence with the possibility of a future union with the Yugoslav republics. Bosnia and

Herzegovina, despite Serbian opposition, adopted a Resolution on sovereignty, by the Assembly on October 14, 1991 (Jančeva, 2012, p.124).

With these actions, Yugoslavia was in the process of falling apart. The failure of The Hague Conference was increasingly uncertain. For this reason, the Arbitration Commission at its meeting of 16 December 1991 adopted two documents - the Declaration on Yugoslavia and the Recommendation for Recognition of New States from Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union (Georgievski & Dodevski, 2008, p.294-296). Pursuant to the Declaration of Yugoslavia, which stipulated the conditions under which the independence of the Yugoslav republics wishing to be recognized may be recognized, it is necessary that they requested recognition latest December 23, 1991. The Arbitration Panel, led by Robert Badinter, found that all conditions for recognition are met by Slovenia and Macedonia. Nevertheless, Slovenia and Croatia were recognized at the EC ministerial meeting in Lisbon, which definitely confirmed the dissolution of SFRY. The war was raging in Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina. The conflict in the coming period resulted in many human casualties and caused immense material damage. The Hague Peace Conference officially ended in failure in the summer of 1992, concluding that Yugoslavia no longer exists.

#### **1.4. Reasons for Disintegration**

The literature review offers a wide range of explanations for the reasons that led to the breakup of the Yugoslav federation. Certain authors locate the root causes in the disintegration within the economic sphere. Thus, according to Pleština (1992), the reasons for the dissolution of the Federation should be sought in the sensitivity of regional economic differences within the Yugoslav Federation. The area, in fact, divided the Federation into two parts: the north, which was economically developed, and the south, which was rather lagging behind in its economic development. The northern part accommodates the Republic of Slovenia, the Republic of Croatia, and the northern part of the Republic of Serbia<sup>12</sup>. In the "South Yugoslavia", Pleština places the Republic of Macedonia, the Republic of Montenegro, the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina, and the rest of the Republic of Serbia<sup>13</sup>. According to the aforementioned author, the conflict began with the creation of a mutual feeling of exploitation by the system. The northern republics felt that the underdeveloped south was

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<sup>12</sup> Specifically, the city of Belgrade with its surroundings and the autonomous district of Vojvodina.

<sup>13</sup> Emphasizing the Serbian province of Kosovo.

holding back their economic development, while the southern republics complained that the developed north did not do enough for them and is always late in helping. It was precisely that arrangement of economic relations in Yugoslavia that was the main basis and reason for the breakup of Yugoslavia. The work of Prestige was certainly interesting and had its own justified logic of thinking. The economy was the driving force in every society, and it was also a constant issue in federations in the context of the principle of solidarity. Mirčev (2010) agrees with this, in an interview which draws parallels between the EU and Yugoslavia, that there is a policy of two rings in the Union, both developed and less developed, and at two gears in integration. According to him, the biggest challenge for the Union and what Atlantis has done since Yugoslavia is the lack of solidarity. We fully agree with the importance of the principle of solidarity, especially in the federations, but we still do not fully accept the explanation given by Pleština. According to her, the main reason for the breakup of the Federation is the creation of two opposing camps in Yugoslavia. As we have already explained, it puts the republics of Macedonia, Montenegro, BIH, and the province of Kosovo in the "poor" camp. However, an overview of the listed republics tells us that we can hardly speak of a common camp, that is to say, the listed republics are quite vocal in the dissolution of Yugoslavia and seem to wish the Federation a survival. Accordingly, it is quite unrealistic to claim that these are two camps of directly confronting republics, which in turn lead to the breakup of the common state. The earlier points of view of Pleština are supplemented by Woodward (1995), who basically embraces the idea that the main reason for the state's collapse is the economy. Thus, it goes even further and a major economic factor and problem in the SFRY emphasizes unemployment which later results in the creation of nationalism with the disintegration of the Federation. However, the author does not find the reasons for the disintegration of the country exclusively within the country. On the contrary, stating that unemployment is the root cause of the problem and the heart of the problem, it considers that it is not in itself sufficient for the disintegration of the Federation. "The pressure for change in Yugoslav economic policy and political reform in 1980 came, as in the past, not from domestic political forces but from the international system" (Woodward, 1995, p.347). According to this logic, it is claimed that international lenders required change. Reforms had been made in order to meet those requirements.

At the same time, the leaderships of Slovenia and Croatia were demanding that reforms should be characterized by systemic change. Thus, this situation inevitably led to decentralization and finally the disintegration of the Yugoslav Federation.

Such claims are in many ways consistent with earlier views on the economic inequality of individual regions in Yugoslavia. So statistics tells us that, for example, in 1986, the situation in Slovenia was such that this republic had almost full employment unlike the other republics, and in particular the province of Kosovo (Woodward, 1995). However, here again we will underline that we do not underestimate the importance of the economic factor, and thus of unemployment, as one of the factors that have an impact on the dissolution of Yugoslavia. We believe that in order to come to the real causes of the breakup of SFRY, we must look at economic factors in parallel with political and legal ones. Such a view is given by the author, Magas (1992), who focuses primarily on the political aspects within the country, and primarily on Serbian-Albanian relations in Kosovo, which he considers crucial for the beginning of the end of Yugoslavia. The author also characterizes the Yugoslav constitution of 1974 as legally and politically unsuccessful for the effective functioning of federal institutions. We consider this view to be particularly important because we consider, as we have already written, that the end of each state begins with the termination of the functioning of certain highest bodies and bodies, and the Constitution as the highest legal act provides the basis for their functioning.

A further review of the literature reveals a completely different view of the issue as to the root causes of the breakup of Yugoslavia. Thus, in contrast to current views that place the economy and political-legal aspects first, there is a view by Vjekoslav (2002) that the multiculturalism of Yugoslavia, that is, religion, played a major, and perhaps most important, role in the breakup of SFRY. There is also the view that the main reasons must be sought in the cultural policy of Yugoslavia. According to Wachtel (1998), the key to the failure of the Yugoslav federation lies in the failure to create a unified Yugoslav culture. "When the elite abandoned political centralism and initiated a program of administrative decentralization, any concept of realizing a unified Yugoslav culture was abandoned" (Wachtel, 1998, p.174).

When talking about Yugoslavia itself and as part of the Balkans, it is inevitable to mention explanations that the reason for the breakup of Yugoslavia lies in history. Such an explanation is offered by Cohen (1995), according to whom there is a historical conditionality for the emergence of nationalism. This view has its justification. If we take a historical look, we will see that the territory on which the SFRY lies is a territory divided between two great empires. It is about the Austro-Hungarian Empire to the north and the Ottoman Empire to the south. The different influences and cultures of these two empires certainly leave a mark on the Yugoslav people.

At the same time, the territory of Yugoslavia is an area where the largest religions clash - Orthodoxy with Catholicism and Islam. While we accept the view that there is a degree of historical determinism and conditionality, we must be careful not to misuse it. We believe that this view should not be the basis for building the view that the Yugoslav wars, primarily the war in BiH, are ascribed to ancient historical causes among the Balkan people, who have historically always fought and that is in their blood. In this respect, we do not justify Kaplan's (1993) thesis that nations in the region are driven by historical and constant intolerance. We found the work of Malcolm (1994) much more acceptable, according to which ethnic conflicts are due to the manipulation of the elites, rather than on the basis of a genetic affinity for the ethnic intolerance of the people of the region.

An interesting point is given by Ramet (2010), who argues that one of the roots of the problem that leads to the breakup of Yugoslavia is the illegitimate political system. Accordingly, a system based on the rule of only one party is not a legitimate system. The former, together with control over the media, though not as much as in other communist states, creates the feeling that the system is illegitimate and the illegitimate system creates dissatisfaction. In the context of a federal system with quite a lot of power deployed in six republics, dissatisfaction flows through these channels.

In this view, it is precisely the illegitimacy of the system. Thus, the existence of a "sense of illegitimacy of the system" is the main reason for the end of the Yugoslav Federation. The foregoing view can be taken for granted, especially in the context of the democratic changes that have begun to take place throughout Eastern Europe. The illegitimacy of the system might have been overcome if direct and free elections for parliament were held at the federal level, as proposed by the federal government of Ante Marković. Nevertheless, this was not due to Serbian-Slavic opposition (Goati, 1996).

In the context of the discussion of the reasons for the breakup of Yugoslavia, we provide an excerpt from a 1978 interview by Marshal Tito. "Yugoslavia has a strong unity, regardless of the multinationals. It can be said that today Yugoslavia has one of the most powerful armies in Europe, so we have a general defense where we have a large number of people and legally everyone has to be capable of defending the country and they are arming ... Yugoslavia in the military field can bring 8 million people, and 8 million is not a joke, especially not for people like Yugoslavs who are used to war."<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> (2000). *Josip Broz Tito, interview 1978. english subtitle Pitanje: "Sta ce biti sa SFRJ posle Vas* [Video]. Youtube. Retrieved March 8, 2021, from

The previously quoted statement is an excerpt from an interview given by Marshal Tito in 1978 in response to a question about the future of Yugoslavia. Although at first glance the Marshall makes a statement with predictions totally wrong from what really happened, a deeper analysis of the earlier interview will prove quite the opposite. Tito simply makes a statement as one might expect from a head of state - optimistic, but there are at least two elements to his statement. The first is the awareness of the multinationalism of Yugoslavia as a potential problem in the future and here, the prevention and solution is given by the existence of "unity" which is not a tangible or real measurable category at all. The second element is the military power of the state - the ability to mobilize over 8 million troops, which is a relative real guarantee of defending the state from any external enemy. Tito back in 1978, when this interview was given, was aware that Yugoslavia could be realistically internalized, meaning that the danger lay within, and a much smaller threat could come from the outside in terms of direct military attack from another state. In reality, the danger did not come from outside but from a change in the international system.

All of the foregoing points of view have their own logic and justification. Although various factors are highlighted in the foreground, which they consider to be the most important reason for the disintegration of SFR Yugoslavia, we still find that the foregoing views do not necessarily contradict each other. In our opinion, the reason for the breakup of Yugoslavia was the existence of great nationalism. However, nationalism did not appear by itself. A number of factors have played a role here, such as those already outlined in previous views. Thus, the combination of economic, cultural, historical, and political factors forms the basis for the development of nationalism, which in turn is the main reason for the end of Yugoslavia. However, not all of these factors should be placed exclusively in the "internal causes" group. The authors also admit it. For example, Woodward (1995) refers to the pressure for change in the Yugoslav economy from the international system. Other authors go even further by directly identifying the reasons for the breakup of the Federation into "external factors". Thus, according to Pond (2006), it is the fall of communism that is the external factor that contributed to the fall of communism inside. Also, it is the loss of the common ideology that managed to unite the state with two alphabets, three religions, four languages, five nationalities, and six republics. The collapse of Communism as an ideology around the world has an impact in Yugoslavia where it is increasingly difficult to maintain it in the new international order to come.