

2015

The disintegration of Yugoslavia and football

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THE DISINTEGRATION OF YUGOSLAVIA AND FOOTBALL

An Abstract of a Thesis
Submitted
in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts

Adnan Kajtezović
University of Northern Iowa
December 2015

ABSTRACT

The Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia was a multi-national state, consisting of six republics and two autonomous regions. However in 1991, the country descended into a tragic and bloody civil war, causing over two hundred thousand deaths and the migration of thousands. The disintegration of Yugoslavia produced seven independent countries: Serbia, Croatia, Slovenia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Macedonia, Montenegro and Kosovo.

The disintegration of Yugoslavia has been analyzed from different analytical perspectives. This project utilizes the analytical context of Yugoslavian popular culture, and focuses on the most popular sport in the country, football. Football is analyzed in two historical periods of former Yugoslavia, the rule of Josip Broz Tito (1945-1980) and after the death of Tito (1980-1991). Yugoslavian football once served as an important unifier of Yugoslavia by fostering ideals of “Brotherhood and Unity”. However, once Tito died, football took on a different role, fostering ethnic nationalist sentiments and contributing to the demise of Yugoslavia.

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University of Northern Iowa

December 2015

This Study by: Adnan Kajtezović

Entitled: The Disintegration of Yugoslavia and Football

has been approved as meeting the thesis requirement for the
Degree of Master of Arts, History

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I dedicate this project to the memories of my two uncles, Rasim Kajtezović and Ibrahim Kantarević who lost their lives during the Bosnian War.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I want to thank my advisor Dr. Konrad Sadkowski, for being a great mentor throughout this project and my other Committee Members Dr. Brian Roberts and Dr. Gregory Bruess. I would like to especially thank and acknowledge my friend and librarian Christopher Neuhaus. I want to thank my parents Muhamed and Hajra Kajtezović for their loving support. I would like to acknowledge and thank my close family relatives: Hasan Hašić, Senada Kantarević, Kenan Kantarević, Karley Abel, Manuela Okanović, Nermin Okanović, Fikret Hašić, Senija Hašić, Amela Hašić, Roberto Martinez, Elvedin Hašić, Elvis Hašić, Dženajla Hašić, Lejla Hašić, Arnel Hašić, Nurfik Muhić, Yasko Kajtezovic, Alen Kajtezovic, Sebina and Senad Smlatić for their encouragements and positivity. I would also like to acknowledge and thank the Kajtezović, Kovačević, Šišić, Dolić and Bajrektarević families for being close to my family, since our arrival to the United States in 1998. I want to thank all of my relatives, neighbors and friends back in Bosnia, Austria, Slovenia and Germany for their support. I want to thank and acknowledge my friends: Sultan Tork Al-Harhi, Alexander Guzman and Damir Kapić for their encouragements in times of despair. Overall, I would like to thank all of my family members, professors, close friends and the University of Northern Iowa History Department for their assistance and support.

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Image 1: The Yugoslavian National Team at the 1990 World Cup vs. Germany¹

¹ Soccermond, *Yugoslavia VS. Germany at the World Cup 1990*, accessed October, 12, 2015, http://www.soccermond.com/countries/uefa/serbia/national_team.php.

INTRODUCTION

Yugoslavia was founded at the end of World War I in 1918 as a multinational state. It suffered serious nationality problems in the interwar period, especially between Croats and Serbs. The country was invaded by the Nazis in April 1941. Between the years of 1941 and 1945 Josip Broz Tito, a communist, fought against the Nazis, Croat and Serb nationalists to establish a communist-led country. After the communist victory against the Serb and Croat nationalist groups, Tito hoped to overcome the pre-World War II national divisions and prior to his death in 1980, worked strenuously to instill a "Yugoslav" identity among the various peoples of Yugoslavia--Serbs, Croats, Slovenes, Bosniaks, Montenegrins, Macedonians, and Albanians. Unfortunately, Tito's Yugoslavia collapsed from severe nationality divisions beginning in 1991. Popular culture, in particular sport, was used as a major instrument to integrate the peoples of Yugoslavia after World War II and to foster the "Yugoslav" identity.

The most popular sport in Yugoslavia was football (soccer), and the Yugoslavian national football team had been utilized as an integrative force. How did the team reflect the dream of "Yugoslavism" but, equally, how did it reflect the break-up of Yugoslavia? Were there attempts to utilize the national team as a unifying force as the country began to collapse? If not, why considering its long-term use as a unifying force? If so, how was this done? This research seeks to contribute to the literature on the maintenance and collapse of Yugoslavia, specifically, the place of popular culture (i.e., sport) in these processes, as well as to the broader literature on sport and nationalism

and national identity. To my knowledge there has been little work done regarding the collapse of Yugoslavia and popular culture.

This thesis is divided into an Introduction and three chapters. The introduction explains the research objectives, research challenges, existing historical work regarding the disintegration of Yugoslavia and certain scholarly interpretations regarding football and Yugoslavia. Chapter I examines the background of the Yugoslav region's history. Chapter II examines the early communist period in connection to physical culture, sport and football. Chapter III examines football in the 1980s, after the death of Josip Broz Tito. Chapter II and III attempt to answer the questions set by this project.

Historiographical Studies Regarding the Demise of Yugoslavia

Ever since the disintegration of former Yugoslavia, many scholars have taken up interest in the region and questioned how a great power could fall so rapidly, with so much death and destruction. During the Yugoslavian communist period (1945-1992), historical studies regarding Yugoslavia were shaped by communist beliefs of a historically innate Yugoslavia. In 1979 Momčilo Zečević was the first historian to question the Titoist historical interpretation of an innately unified Yugoslavia. The Yugoslav communist regime failed to ask historically controversial questions, since the establishment of the Yugoslav state.¹

¹ Ivo Banac, "Yugoslavia," *The American Historical Review Published by Oxford University Press on behalf of the American Historical Association* 97, no. 4 (1992): 1085.

The internal and external factors are the two main general methods of analytical approach regarding the collapse of Yugoslavia. Dejan Jović explains several different theoretical approaches regarding the disintegration of Yugoslavia. These approaches include: the economics, ancient ethnic hatreds, nationalism, culture, international politics, personality and the fall of empires.² Mihailo Crnobrnja a former ambassador of Yugoslavia to the European Communities 1989-1992, believed that there was no single factor to the disintegration of Yugoslavia. But instead, Crnobrnja argues that there are variety of components that lead to Yugoslavia's demise.³ Ivo Banac a prominent historian of the Yugoslav region, has compared the demise of Yugoslavia to the fall of other great power structures and the effects of their destructive internal aftermath. Banac has compared the fall of Yugoslavia to the collapse of the Ottoman and Habsburg Empires, due to their similarities in the intensification of local differences during major systemic failures.⁴

Branislav Radeljić questioned the role of European and Western neoliberal economic and political interests in the demise of Yugoslavia. The European Economic Community had an unclear position in its relationship to Yugoslavia and failed to react to critical questions regarding Yugoslavia's future.

² Dejan Jović, "The Disintegration of Yugoslavia: A Critical Review of Explanatory Approaches," *European Journal of Social Theory* 4, no. 1 (2001): 1.

³ Radeljić, Branislav, *Europe and the Collapse of Yugoslavia: Diaspora Pressure and the Failures of European Diplomacy*. London: I.B. Tauris, 2012: 1.

⁴ Ivo Banac, "Fearful Asymmetry of War: The Causes and Consequences of Yugoslavia's Demise," *Published by The MIT Press on behalf of American Academy of Arts & Sciences* 121, no. 2 (1992): 141-142.

The EC shifted their position from supporting Yugoslav unity to supporting Slovenian and Croatian desires for independence. The EC failed to recognize the course of events occurring in Slovenia and Croatia, which played a crucial part in their decisions for independence.⁵

Western banks and governments supported Soviet and Yugoslav political leaders, who promised economic liberal reforms. The EC promotion of neoliberal capitalism often contributed to their neglect of other essential components necessary for democratic development.⁶ The EC support of Yugoslavian democratic leaders, only based on their economic promises, disregarded many unresolved questions regarding their possible ethnic nationalist inclinations.

In autumn of 1991, German approval of Croatian and Slovenian independence was resisted by other EC member states. The other EC member states were concerned of potential dangers of war, particularly with the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina. However, by December of 1991, a ten hour meeting would convince other EC members to support the German plan of an independent Croatia and Slovenia.⁷ Perhaps the promises of economic reform by certain Yugoslav politicians steered the EC shift of position, from supporting Yugoslav unity to supporting Slovenian and Croatian independence.

⁵ Radeljić, 4-7.

⁶ Radeljić, 23.

⁷ Radeljić, 32.

Radeljić argues that the role of the Catholic Church, should be further explored in its relation to Croat and Slovene desires for independence. Radeljić asserts that the influence of the Catholic Church was significant across Slovenian and Croatian borders.⁸ The Catholic Church could mobilize large crowds and spread common political objectives. Radeljić questions the common political objectives of the Catholic Church and argues that these objectives should be further investigated.

The role of strong political personalities have been analyzed in regards to the demise of Yugoslavia. Certain scholars for decades have blamed Josip Broz Tito for establishing an unrealistic system, and Slobodan Milošević for triggering the war.⁹ Promises of economic reform contributed to the rise of Slobodan Milošević and Franjo Tuđman. In 1986, Milošević was elected as the leader of the Serbian League of Communists, presenting himself as a young technocrat and convincing several Western diplomats that he would set Yugoslavia on a modern footing.¹⁰ Milošević's ability to control the media was very consistent in his utilization of state television and the *Politika* publication to discredit his rivals in Serbia and rally massive public support for Milošević's aggressive campaign abroad.¹¹ The Milošević administration was effective in controlling the Serbian media. In 1988, the news editor for Radio-Television Serbia, Branko Mihajlović, was instructed to inflate the numbers of protesters who were

⁸ Radeljić, 36.

⁹ Radeljić, 16.

¹⁰ Radeljić, 23.

¹¹ Louis Sell, *Slobodan Milošević and the Destruction of Yugoslavia* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2002), 183.

glorifying Milošević.¹² Historian Louis Sell argues that the Serbian nationalism propelled by Milošević failed, as it contributed to counter nationalism in other republics of Slovenia, Croatia and Bosnia.¹³

Kate Hudson argues that strong political personalities and ethnic nationalism did not play a significant role concerning the demise of Yugoslavia. Hudson asserts that the fall of Yugoslavia resulted from geopolitical and geostrategic actions by foreign states. For example, Hudson points out that the role of United States was crucial to the development of the Bosnian conflict. Despite the known dangers and oppositions of the Bosnian Serb community, the United States moved toward taking responsibility and recognition of Bosnia. The United States failed to recognize the concerns of different parties involved in the development of a Bosnian constitutional framework for modification. United States recognition of Bosnia, further propelled Bosnia into war.¹⁴ Hudson and Radaljić, are both critical of the EC in shifting their position to support the nationalist framework for an independent Croatia and Slovenia, while ignoring 50,000 protesters during July of 1991 in Sarajevo who were demonstrating their support of a unified Yugoslavia.¹⁵

¹² Sell, 184.

¹³ Sell, 5.

¹⁴ Kate Hudson, *Breaking the South Slav Dream The Rise and Fall of Yugoslavia* (London: Pluto Press, 2003), 103.

¹⁵ Hudson, 99.

Certain interpretations of Victor Meier agree with Radeljić, regarding Western incompetency and irresponsibility in their handling of the Yugoslavian crises. Meier argues that it was the handling of the Yugoslavian economic situation by Belgrade bureaucrats that provoked the demise of Yugoslavia and that the Slovenes had rational economic motives for Slovenian independence. Belgrade bureaucrats came up with their own inventive ideas to raise revenue. In 1981, the bureaucrats developed the idea of taxing the flow of hard currency, by taxing a toll for each border crossing. The new economic draft required each Yugoslav citizen to pay a sum of 1,500 dinars upon departing from one republic to another. This new economic draft was furiously rejected by Slovenia and other Western republics.¹⁶ The economic decisions made by Belgrade politics contributed to the increase in Slovenian desires for independence. Meier does not agree with Radeljić regarding German responsibility in their recognition of Croatia and Slovenia. But instead, Meier argues that those who accuse Germany of acting unilaterally and prematurely in recognizing Croatia and Slovenia, did not offer any real alternative solutions to the Serbian rejection of the final Hague draft proposal.¹⁷

The 1980s Yugoslavian economic debt created many difficulties of currency distribution and inflation. As a result of harsh economic conditions, newer proposals arose. Slovenian politicians being in the majority of the economic planning section were confronted with a dilemma to accept a unification of economic policy in order for

¹⁶ Viktor Meier, *Yugoslavia A History of Its Demise*. London: Routledge (1999), 12.

¹⁷ Meier, 226.

Yugoslavia to function as a unified state. As a result of economic unification, the currency ended up in the hands of the Yugoslav National Bank. The Yugoslav National Bank, ran by the Belgrade administration failed to redistribute the currency and pay off Slovenian debt to foreign countries.¹⁸ Meier further elaborates on the irresponsibility of the Belgrade administration in their handling of the currency and the tough economic pressures confronted by the Slovenians.

Current Literature on Football and the Disintegration of Yugoslavia

The political, economic, cultural and religious perspectives provide much insight regarding the demise of Yugoslavia. However, popular cultural events could be just as effective. Richard Mills, Petar Stanković, Dejan Zec, Miloš Paunović, and Dario Brentin have attempted to tackle the issue of football and its relationship to the demise of Yugoslavia and its aftermath. Due to the difficulties of accessing original primary sources, these scholars were limited in their research attempts. I often found the same primary sources in their work. Despite this challenge, most of these scholars managed to come up with their own original interpretations. I give much credit to these scholars for attempting to tackle such a challenging analytical perspective.

Richard Mills has done several works regarding football and Yugoslavia. Mills analyses football and club supporter's war memorials in former Yugoslavia. Football

¹⁸ Meier, 16.

monuments of Partisan martyrs and heroes were erected after World War II and after the dissolution of Yugoslavia, the same clubs erected monuments of martyrs and heroes who were part of football fan clubs that joined the Serbian paramilitary groups, during the Yugoslavian dissolution conflict. Mills explores the way Serb and Croat football clubs fused their communist and nationalist past by erecting monuments, pictographs and plaques. Those who joined ethnic paramilitary groups during the Yugoslavian conflict and got killed, were portrayed as martyrs influenced by traditional mythologized histories. Mills concludes that monuments which represented the communist liberation struggle, and those that represent the martyrs and heroes from the recent ethnic Yugoslavian conflict are uncomfortably put alongside one another. However these monuments share one commonality in their symbolical representation of two distinct violent periods of Yugoslavian history.¹⁹

Mills has done research regarding football during the Tito era. According to Mills, football was utilized as an instrument to promote Yugoslav unification. The Partisans who fought during WWII, were commemorated by the Velež, Mostar football club as martyrs. Velež Mostar football club was highly regarded by the Communists as having a patriotic multi-ethnic character: This fact was utilized by the Communists to promote the future of "Brotherhood and Unity". Mills explains the significance of Mostar's multi-ethnic character and how, since 1922, its history was in line with the communist

¹⁹ Richard Mills, "Commemorating a Disputed Past: Football Club and Supporters' Group War Memorials in the Former Yugoslavia," *History* 97, no. 328 (2012): 540-577.

revolution. Due to Mostar's attempt to preserve Tito's spirit of "Brotherhood and Unity", the city became a major target by ethnic nationalists during the Bosnian Civil War. Mills' exploration of the increase in football violence across stadiums from 1989 to 1991, further investigates the role of football fans and football fan clubs in relation to the rise of ethnic nationalism. By his utilization of Serbian media sources, Mills concludes that football played an essential role in the revival of Serbian nationalism. Dejan Zec and Miloš Paunović have done research regarding the integrative influence football had in Yugoslavia after the two world wars. Zec and Paunović assert that football played a positive role in integrating Yugoslavian society after both World Wars.²⁰

Petar Stanković presents another interesting perspective on the issue of football by analyzing the republic of Slovenia. A century earlier, the Slovenes attempted to gain independence from Austria-Hungary and thus identified more closely with their Slavic identity. However during the late 1960s, many Slovenes were dissatisfied with being part of Yugoslavia and began to move closer toward their Western identity. Slovenia's geopolitical position as the most northwestern federal republic and their participation in the process of Western economic modernization facilitated in making Slovenia the most economically advanced republic. This also made Slovenia the institution of aiding less developed Yugoslav republics. Slovenians were convinced that aiding less developed

²⁰ Dejan Zec and Miloš Paunović, "Football's Positive Influence on Integration in Diverse Societies: the Case Study of Yugoslavia," *Soccer and Society* (2015): 232-244.

Yugoslav republics inhibited their economic growth. Stanković argues that this move toward Western identification by the Slovenes, resulted from their dissatisfaction with the economic situation in Yugoslavia. Dissatisfaction with being part of Yugoslavia, led many Slovenes to develop a transforming negative perspective of football, as football was the most popular game in Yugoslavia and utilized as an integrative force. In Slovenia football became synonymous with feelings that stimulate the lowest human instincts. Footballers lost support of Slovenians and were gaining a stereotypical reputation of stupidity. However once Slovenia became independent, football once again gained in popularity, as Slovenes demonstrated immense support for their 1992 Slovenian national football team.²¹ Despite an increase move toward alpine sports during the late 60s by the Slovenes, the Republic of Slovenia still continued to have football clubs.

There have been studies regarding the role of football in the aftermath of the Yugoslavian dissolution. Dario Brentin analyzed the role that sports played in shaping Croatia in the first ten years of the country's independence. Brentin emphasizes the active involvement in football by the Tuđman government for purposes of constructing a newly independent Croatia. In the aftermath of the Yugoslavian dissolution, football was utilized by newly formed governments as a tool to foster objectives in the construction of newly independent nations. Brentin agrees that during the late 1980s football increasingly became a tool of expressing support for nationalist allegiance by

²¹ Peter Stanković, "Sport and Nationalism: the Shifting Meanings of Soccer in Slovenia," *The Landscapes of Cultural Studies*: (2005): 5-7.

the presence of Četnik and Ustaša symbolism across football stadiums, translating into conditions of football violence.²² These interpretations have given us much insight on the role of football and the disintegration of Yugoslavia. However, this is still a new area of study that needs further development.

The difficulty of accessing primary material was the greatest challenge of this project. I attempted to locate as many primary sources as possible. The challenge of locating sources was difficult due to lack in funding and time to visit some of the major academic institutions in the region of former Yugoslavia. The localized and regional nature of this subject matter, and the political and economic turmoil of recent decades, has limited the format of this material to print, and the availability of this material to libraries within republics of former Yugoslavia. For instance WorldCat, a global library or “union” catalog, indicates that the National Library Information System of Slovenia possesses some material on this topic, but that material is in print format. Unlike in the West, no significant number of digital archives have yet been created by Serbian, Croatian, Slovenian, and Bosnian Universities.

I was under the impression that the Slavic Reference Service could assist me in locating some original primary sources from the former Yugoslavian region. However the Slavic Reference Service could only assist me in locating certain primary written

²² Dario Brentin, “A lofty battle for the nation’: the social roles of sport in Tudjman’s Croatia,” *Sport and Society* 16, no. 8 (2013): 993-1008.

(print) material located in Slovenia. Some of these primary sources located in Slovenia are not digitized and I could not gain access to them. I was not successful in my attempts to contact Safet Sušić, a former Yugoslavian national team player, by means of email or social networking. I was able to locate the site <http://www.nfsbih.ba/en/> which is listed as the home page of the Bosnian and Herzegovina national football team. On the site there is an email and several phone numbers provided for the main office of the Bosnian and Herzegovina national football team. I attempted to call these numbers and send them email to acquire contact information for retired footballers who played for the former Yugoslavian national team. After several attempts to contact the office of the Bosnian and Herzegovina national football team, there was no response through email, and the contact phone numbers provided on their homepage are invalid.

I depended on internet sources and managed to find newspaper articles from *Washington Post*, *New York Times*, *The Toronto Star*, and *Sydney Morning Herald (Australia)*. The internet websites *rsssf.com* and *bigsoccer.com* provided much statistical information. Richard Mills utilized certain commemorations from the former Yugoslavian region and produced his own original interpretations. For future scholarly research, I would advise traveling to and visiting major football stadium museums in the former republics of Yugoslavia, as well as visiting the University of Belgrade, University of Zagreb, University of Sarajevo and University of Ljubljana. These locations potentially have additional primary sources that could contribute to this developing analytical perspective.

Despite the challenge of accessing original primary sources from the former Yugoslavian region, I was able to utilize the sources available and come up with an original interpretation that adds to this scholarly analytical context. This original interpretation argues that the infiltration of ethnic nationalism within Yugoslavian football occurred in a structural sequence from the bottom to the top level of Yugoslavian football.

During Tito's rule football fan clubs were monitored and fan clubs that expressed ethnic nationalism were suppressed. However once Tito died, football fan clubs were less monitored and reemerging expressions of ethnic nationalism within fan clubs became apparent by the late 1980s. Rioting and ethnic nationalist expressions intensified during the late 1980s, among two major football fan clubs: Delije supporting Crvena Zvezda (Red Star), Belgrade and the Bad Blue Boys (BBB) supporting Dinamo, Zagreb. Within these two major football fan clubs, radical elements of nationalistic expressions were becoming visible. These fan clubs could always argue that they were not portraying ethnic nationalism, but instead only supporting their respective teams. The radical behaviors within these two major fan clubs produced tensions, affecting the entirety of Yugoslavian football.

The Yugoslavian major football clubs were influenced by their fan clubs who were becoming increasingly nationalistic. All of these new developments occurring at the Yugoslav club level football during the late 1980s were significantly impacting the

Yugoslavian national football team, which attempted to continue its tradition of fostering ideals of Yugoslavian “Brotherhood and Unity”. The originality of this work contributes to the current context of scholarly literature regarding the disintegration of Yugoslavia. The next chapter will explore the background history of the former Yugoslavian region.

CHAPTER I

BACKGROUND HISTORY OF YUGOSLAVIA

Earliest Records of the Yugoslavian Region

The earliest records of the Yugoslavian region date back to Greco-Roman documents from the middle of fourth-century BC, describing the ancient Illyrians who settled between the Adriatic Sea in the west, the Drava River in the north, the Morava River in the east and the Vojse (Aoös) River in the south. In 358 BC King Philip of Macedonia conquered some of the Illyrian tribes, but after the death of his son Alexander in 323 BC, internal conflicts between his successors weakened Greece, leading to the reemergence of Illyrian independent kingdoms in the north. During the second-century, Rome had conquered the region of former Yugoslavia and records indicate several Goth invasions of the region during the fourth-century AD.

Christianization of the Yugoslavian Region (Roman and Byzantine Influences)

Christianization of the former Yugoslavian region can be traced to the fourth-century AD when the Roman Emperor Constantine converted to Christianity. Constantine dividing the Roman Empire into Western and Eastern halves, established the new capital Constantinople (modern day Istanbul, Turkey) in the east. By 600 AD priests based in Rome began their exploration of the eastern Dalmatian coastal towns bringing with them a new set of Christian beliefs. While pagan groups attacked the

Christian population of Romanized Illyrians, they too were assimilated into Roman Catholicism by 900 AD.¹

By the tenth-century, western Venetian and eastern Byzantine influences presented themselves in most of the geographical areas of the Balkan Peninsula. These two influences were in competition with one another, particularly on the Dalmatian coast, where the Byzantine authorities attempted to deny Venetian political power. Pressures from a growing Venetian Empire pushed Croat kings to collaborate with the expanding Hungarian Kingdom to the north and by 1102 the Hungarian king signed a joined agreement, the *Pacta conventa*. The agreement established a separate but unequal existence of Croatia as part of the Hungarian Kingdom, lasting until 1918. The region of Slovenia had been also acquired by the Hungarian Kingdom. By 1167 the Byzantine Empire had gained control over the region of modern day Bosnia and Herzegovina, establishing its political authority. The Byzantine Orthodoxy brought in their uniquely distinct Christian customs that distinguished them from Western Christianity. The Byzantine priests wore their hair long, did not speak Latin and had the right to get married.² By the thirteenth-century there were clear distinctions between the Latin West and the Greek East.

¹ John R Lampe, *Yugoslavia As History: Twice There Was a Country* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 14.

² Lampe, 15.

The Influences of Western Christianity were more prominent in western geographical areas of modern day Croatia and Slovenia, resulting in their adherence to Rome. The eastern geographical areas, of modern day Macedonia and Serbia were significantly influenced by the Byzantium Christian customs, giving them the Orthodox custom.³ The influences of the Latin West and the Greek East had a profound effect on later religious developments of Catholicism and Orthodox Christianity in the Balkan region.

The region of Slovenia had a unique distinct historical makeup compared to any other regions of former Yugoslavia. During the late sixth-century the Slovene's ancestors came from the northern Alpine region, speaking a distinct South Slav language. Slovene culture was greatly influenced by their proximity to Central European Frankish German lands. As a result of Slovene conversion to Christianity during the eight-century, they lost their political independence to Frankish feudal lords. German settlers moved into the plains and valleys pushing the Slovenians into the highland regions. During the fifteenth-century, the Habsburg rulers arose to authority and replaced the Franks as Holy Roman emperors. The Habsburgs integrated several parts of modern Slovenia into their governmental structure. The lack of Ottoman presence in the Slovenian region during the fifteenth- and sixteenth-century, gave the Habsburgs an advantage of being able to focus on suppressing the Protestant Reformation movement. In Slovenia

³ Leslie Benson, *Yugoslavia: A Concise History* (Houndsmill, Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave, 2001), 1.

Lutheran followers who opposed the authority of the conventional Catholic hierarchy were suppressed by the Habsburg military force.⁴ The Habsburg's strong hold and influence in the region of Slovenia contributed to a predominantly modern Catholic Slovenia.

Fourteenth-Century and the Rise of the Ottoman Empire

The rise of the Ottoman Empire from the East during the fourteenth-century increasingly moved them toward westward expansion and into the region of Kosovo. In June 1389, the famous battle of Kosovo took place against Serb forces, in which the Ottomans were the victors. By 1453 the Ottomans had conquered Constantinople (modern day Istanbul, Turkey) and began to move further west conquering lands of modern day Kosovo, Macedonia, Serbia, Bosnia, Herzegovina and Croatia, by 1485. The Ottoman influence to the former Yugoslavian region, was not only limited to territorial expansion, but their religious and traditional customs were brought with them. The Ottoman introduction of Islam further complicated the religious makeup of the former Yugoslavian region. During the second half of the fifteenth-century, inhabitants in the Kingdom of Bosnia gradually converted to Islam. This was a gradual process that took more than a century for Islam to become the majority religion in the Kingdom of Bosnia. The Ottomans enforced a central government that controlled tax collection, land tenure

⁴ Lampe, 29.

and established native religious rights in local provinces, as long as Ottoman authority was not challenged.⁵

By the sixteenth-century the Ottoman expansion occupied much of the eastern former Yugoslavian territories. Between the fifteenth- and nineteenth-century, the Ottomans had a major influence on the region of former Yugoslavia. During 1529, under the rule of Suleiman the Magnificent, the Ottomans were at the height of their power. "He ruled directly over much of southern Russia, Transylvania, Hungary and the Balkans, Anatolia, Jordan, and most of modern Iraq, Kuwait and the western shore of the Gulf. He was protector of Jerusalem and Muslim holy places."⁶ The Ottoman Empire had grown substantially in size and by 1529, they would be knocking at the doors of Vienna.

The Gradual Weakening of the Ottoman Empire

The Habsburg campaign to stop the advancement of the Ottomans during the sixteenth-century suffered many losses and the Ottomans were able to conquer a vast amount of Habsburg territory. In autumn of 1529, a vast Ottoman army (a quarter of million men), led by Sultan Suleiman I (Suleiman the Magnificent), surrounded Vienna, only to retreat back into Hungary due to endless rain. Despite the 1529 Ottoman retreat back to Hungary, the fears of a Turkish invasion still remained among the Viennese,

⁵ Lampe, 21-22.

⁶ Alan Palmer, *The Decline and Fall of the Ottoman Empire* (New York: M. Evans, 1992), 3.

during the years of the Counter-Reformation.⁷ During much of the 16th and early seventeenth-century, the Ottomans still retained a strong influence in Eastern Europe.

The gradual weakening of the Ottoman Empire started after their major loss against the Holy Roman Empire, during the battle of Vienna in 1683. During the first Viennese Siege of 1529, Sultan the Magnificent retreated from Vienna in good condition; in 1683 Grand Vizier Kara Mustafa was defeated and forced to retreat from the battlefield.⁸ Modern academics have indicated six major signs of a weakening Ottoman Empire that started during the middle of seventeenth-century, including:

Inflation was exacerbated by cheap silver from Peru generating an increase in the cost of basic food; failings in the pyramidal structure of *timar* tax collection; the growth of banditry, following a population explosion in Anatolia; ruinous fires in several overcrowded cities; an inflexible adherence to old way of waging war and governing conquered lands; and (from 1536 onwards) the grant of 'Capitulations'- the treaties which, by giving special legal rights and tariff concessions to Europeans who resided within the Ottoman Empire, ensured that profitable trades should fall increasingly into foreign hands.⁹

During the nineteenth-century, the Ottomans attempted to avoid empire weakening by pursuing a campaign of modernizing their educational system. The Ottoman educational modernization was a state project executed from top of the government in order to educate a new bureaucratic government elite.¹⁰ Despite the Ottoman attempts at

⁷ Palmer, 9.

⁸ Palmer, 13.

⁹ Palmer, 6.

¹⁰ Somel, Selçuk Akşin, *The Modernization of Public Education in the Ottoman Empire, 1839-1908: Islamization, Autocracy and Discipline*. Leiden: Brill, 2001: 83.

reform, economic decline and the waging of war contributed to further weakening of the Empire.

The Rise of State Nationalism in the Balkans

During the nineteenth-century, the Ottoman Empire continued to decline in its ability to maintain a strong empire. By the middle of the nineteenth-century the Ottoman Empire was considered to be the “sick man of Europe”. The weakening of the Ottoman Empire laid a foundation for revolutionary nationalist uprisings in Serbia in 1815, followed by Greece in 1830, Romania in 1856, Bulgaria in 1878 and Albania in 1913. The emergence of ideal nations of Greater Serbia, Greater Albania, Greater Greece were based on ideals of the new nationalist elites to recreate states by recovering the “unredeemed” national territories, resting their legitimacy on exemplifying their historically imagined community.¹¹

The rise of state nationalism at times produced violent uprisings and regional conflicts in the Balkan area, contributing to further weakening the Ottoman Empire. The rise of Arab state nationalism also posed a great threat to the existence of the Ottoman Empire. The Arab revolt during World War I, contributed to Arab officers collaborating with France and Britain in their struggle to gain independence from the Ottoman Empire.¹² The decline of economic conditions contributed to the weakening of the

¹¹ William W. Hagen, “The Balkans' Lethal Nationalisms,” *Foreign Affairs* 784, (1999): 53.

¹² M Uyar, “Ottoman Arab Officers between Nationalism and Loyalty during the First World War.” *War in History* 20, no. 4 (2013): 527.

Empire, thus creating an atmosphere for the loss of confidence in the Ottomans rule, by provincial regions within the Empire. The loss of confidence for the Ottoman Empire to function advanced the promotion of aggressive forms of state nationalism; reciprocally the rise of aggressive forms of state nationalism further contributed to the weakening of the Empire.

The rise of European nationalism has been linked to a nineteenth-century phenomenon known as “Romanticism”, which originated as a reaction to the scientific and industrial revolutions of the eighteenth-century. As a result, romanticism produced some great literary and artistic work regarding nature. In the Balkans romanticism expressed itself in forms of literature, poetry and art. One of the great poets, Peter Petrović Njegoš wrote three major masterpieces. His 1847 poem, *The Mountain Wreath (Gorski Vijenac)* regarded the Montenegrin struggles against the Ottoman Empire. The other two of his poems: *The False Tsar Stephen the Small (Lažni Car Šćepan Mali)* and *the Ray of the Microcosm (Luča Mikrokozma)*, glorified Montenegrin heroic struggles and battles against the Ottoman Empire.¹³

WWI and the Collapse of the Ottoman Empire

The late nineteenth-century growth of European nationalism, contributed to the formation of military alliances across Europe based on economic, territorial and political

¹³ Charles Jelavich and Barbara Jelavich, “*The Establishment of the Balkan National States 1804-1920*,” (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1977), 276.

interests. In 1882, the Triple Alliance was signed between Germany, Austria-Hungary and Italy. The agreement of the Triple Alliance was meant to be utilized based on defensive military terms. Each member agreed to aid one another in case of an attack. When the First World War broke out in 1914, Italy decided not to take part in the war. Italy's decision was based on a broken agreement by Germany and Austria-Hungary to uphold the military alliance, which was only meant to be utilized for a defensive purpose. Austria-Hungary broke the military alliance by declaring war on Serbia.

By the early twentieth-century, the rise of state nationalism contributed to the formation of states creating military alliances against the Ottoman Empire. The formation of military alliances between Serbia, Montenegro, Bulgaria and Greece formed a strong front against the Ottoman Empire. During the first Balkan conflict of 1912, the Ottomans lost much territory in the Balkan region; by the time the second Balkan conflict erupted in 1913, the Ottomans had lost nearly all of their European territory.

On August 31, 1907, with the signing of the Anglo-Russian Entente, the Triple Entente was formed, between the great powers of United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, Russian Empire and the French Third Republic. The formation of the Triple Entente gave a great counterweight of power to the Triple Alliance. Many scholars agree that the formation of nineteenth-century military alliances contributed to the

intensification of political disagreements, based on political and economic interests which led to the developments of World War I.

One major example of this political disagreement involved the Austro-Hungarian occupation of Bosnia and Herzegovina in 1878. Austro-Hungary then made a political decision to annex Bosnia and Herzegovina in 1908. The French *Le Petit Journal* captured the international significance of Austria-Hungary annexing Bosnia and Herzegovina and the loss of territory by the Ottomans to Austria-Hungary. *Le Petit Journal* featured a drawing on the cover of Prince Ferdinand of Bulgaria declaring independence by taking away Bulgaria from the Ottomans, while the Austria-Hungarian Emperor Franz Joseph annexes Bosnia, and Abdul Hamid II (Sultan of the Ottoman Empire), is portrayed as hopelessly standing by as Ottoman territory is taken. The significance of the Bosnian annexation provoked large reactions among the Serbs, as they constituted the largest ethnic group in the Habsburg province. This created much Austro-Serbian antagonism that contributed to the developments of World War I.¹⁴ Serbian antagonism contributed to certain elements of radicalism, including the formation of a secret military society known as the Black Hand.

On June 28, 1914, Archduke Franz Ferdinand of Austria visited Austro-Hungarian province of Sarajevo, the capital of Bosnia and Herzegovina. During the Archduke's visit, a nineteen year old Bosnian Serb, and Black Hand member, Gavrilo Princip shot and

¹⁴ Lampe, 82-83.

killed the Archduke. The killing of the Archduke provoked the trigger for Austria-Hungary to declare war on Serbia. The war on Serbia was declared by Austria-Hungary on July 28, 1914. Many scholars would agree that the unsettled political disputes from the late nineteenth-century and the creation of military alliances laid the foundations for the World War I conflict.

The First Yugoslavia (Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes)

The constant conflict with the Russian Empire during the nineteenth-century and the rise of state nationalism in the Balkan region, contributed to the Ottomans decision to join the Triple Alliance during World War I. This decision would be the final blow to the Ottoman Empire, as the Triple Alliance lost the war. The dissolution of the Ottoman Empire gave an opportunity for the victors to craft a newly constructed Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, known to many as the “First Yugoslavia”. After the Serbian Parliament was pushed into exile in 1916 to the island of Corfu, Greece a new agreement to create a new Kingdom was signed by the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes. The declaration of Corfu proclaimed national self-determination by Serbs, Croats and Slovenes from Austria-Hungary and was signed on July 20, 1917.

During the Paris Peace Conference of 1919, the victors of WWI, decided to craft the southern Balkan region into the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes. By October 1929, this newly constructed region became the Kingdom of Yugoslavia (The first Yugoslavia). The creators of the first Yugoslavia did not take into account several

differences in tradition, religion and linguistics. These differences were further encouraged by nineteenth-century popular state nationalist movements.

The unification of Yugoslavia based on a common south-Slavic identity was not completely a new idea. The idea of a common south-Slavic identity had presence among the Croatian elite in Karlovac, Zagreb and other Croatian towns during the 1830s. The idea was to unite “sub-groups” from the Slovenes to the Bulgarians. One of the significant figures of the pan-Slavist Illyrian Movement, Ljudevit Gaj called it the “Union of Greater Illyria”, based on the assumptions that the South Slavs were the descendants of ancient Illyrians.¹⁵ The idea of “Greater Illyria” emerged despite the presence of the developing nineteenth-century state nationalism. Perhaps the growing movement of cultural “Illyrianism” could be attributed to the popularity of a simplistic historic interpretation, while not having to deal with the complex historic developments of the region. Cultural Illyrianism was in opposition to state nationalism. However cultural Illyrianism and state nationalism both shared an attempt to create a state based on ideas of an imaged historic community.

Perhaps the rise of political Illyrianism could be attributed to certain decisions made by the Hungarian politician Károly Khuen-Héderváry in 1883. Károly Khuen-Héderváry became the Ban (ruler) of the Kingdom of Croatia-Slavonia in 1883 and his rule lasted until he was replaced in 1903. Khuen-Héderváry spread a common Magyar

¹⁵ Lampe, 43.

language, and was charged by the Croat elite for cultural Magyarization. There was also the popular interpretation held among the Croat elite that the policies of the Hungarian Ban attempted to follow the intentions of divide and rule.¹⁶ Ideas of the first Yugoslavia, based on romanticized ideals faced many challenges, particularly from those groups who were influenced from developments of nineteenth-century state nationalism.

During the 1920s Yugoslavia had many different governmental transformations. In 1928, the founder of the Croatian Peasant Party Stjepan Radić was assassinated. The following year, King Alexander, proclaimed a dictatorship, abolishing the parliament and suspending the constitution. Alexander pursued a policy of suspending regional and national rights and imposed Yugoslavism, calling it “integral Yugoslavism.” In order to accomplish his political objective of “oneness”, King Alexander decided to replace historical divisions by dividing Yugoslavia into nine geographic units called “banovina”. Croatia would be divided into two units and Serbia into five. Any national symbols and flags were forbidden. This suppression of nationalistic expression had an undesired outcome for King Alexander, contributing to consequences of separatist desires in Croatia and Macedonia. “In Crnobrnja’s opinion, this was the moment they made their definitive break with the concept of Yugoslavia. Ante Pavelić, later to become the notorious leader of the Ustashi state, left Yugoslavia at this time only to come back years later as head of the so-called independent State of Croatia.”¹⁷ The consequence of

¹⁶ Lampe, 63.

¹⁷ Hudson, 23.

suppressing nationalist expression produced oppositions of radical elements, ultimately leading to the assassination of King Alexander by a Mussolini sponsored Ustaša-Macedonian terrorist group in 1934.

The assassination of King Alexander gave Yugoslavs an opportunity to hold the election of 1935, in which the dictatorship was officially ended. As the result of the 1935 elections, Milan Stojadinović emerged to power from 1935-1939. In the midst of an international depression, Stojadinović's economic reforms improved certain conditions of the economy. However, these economic reforms were significantly dependent on Germany. As a result, Stojadinović faced much opposition for his pro-Axis policies by Serbian old Radicals and the Yugoslav National party. This opposition contributed to Stojadinović's replacement by Prince Paul.¹⁸ The increase in Serbian and Croatian radicalism intensified during the rule of King Alexander and Stojadinović.

The Development of Communism during the First Yugoslavia

The development of communism in the former Yugoslavian region was inspired by Marxist-Leninist ideology. The Yugoslav communist operated as an underground illegal group. The communist ideology became particularly popular among the agrarian masses. The establishment of the Croatian peasant party made up the fourth largest group in the Interim National Legislature (INL), during the 1920 general election to the

¹⁸ Hudson, 23.

Constituent Assembly.¹⁹ The communist populist message continued to intensify popular agrarian support during the 1920s. Many Yugoslav soldiers were held as prisoners in Russia, during the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917 and were influenced by Marxist-Leninist ideology. One of these soldiers was Josip Broz Tito. In 1921, the Socialist Party of Yugoslavia was established, though it continued to face opposition during the 1920s and 1930s.

WWII and the Birth of a Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (SFRY)

In an attempt to avoid Nazi invasion Prince Paul of Yugoslavia signed the Tripartite Pact, joining the Axis Powers. However the Tripartite Pact agreement signed by Prince Paul did not include providing the Nazi's with territory or military assistance. The signing of the Pact to join the Nazi's sparked internal Yugoslavian resistance which led to the removal of Prince Paul by a coup d'etat two days later. On April 6th, 1941, the Nazi's invaded Yugoslavia and soon after their invasion the Ustaše fascist movement created an independent state of Croatia.

In 1941, the Nazi occupation of Yugoslavia produced a guerilla warfare between three major groups fighting one another for control. The Nazis formed the puppet state in Croatia called Ustašas, led by the Croat fascist Ante Pavelić. The second group consisted of Serbian nationalists known as the Četniks, led by Draža Mihailović. The

¹⁹ Hudson, 19-20.

third group consisted of people from various ethnic backgrounds calling themselves the Partisans, led by the communist Josip Broz Tito.

There were many atrocities committed in the Yugoslavian region during WWII, including ethnic cleansing and genocide in Jasenovac. The Jasenovac concentration camp created by the Independent State of Croatia (NDH), existed between 1941 and 1945 and was one of the largest concentration camps in Europe. The ethnic Serbs living in Slavonia (northern eastern part of modern day Croatia), were the majority of the victims, the Ustaša's attempted to remove from the province. The other victims of the Jasenovac concentration camp included: Jews, Romani and any individuals who were accused of holding anti-fascist views.

The war resulted in the Partisans' being victorious over the Četniks and the Ustašas. By the time the Nazi's were defeated by the allied powers in 1945, Tito and the Partisans had gained control over the region and a new communist Yugoslavia was born. "According to the Moscow declaration of 1955, the Soviets formally admitted that the Yugoslavian defeat of fascism was largely credited to Yugoslavia's own efforts. However, the bloody consequences of World War II resulted in the death of 305,000 fighters. The Partisans antifascist liberation movement gained popular momentum, as it include all ethnicities."²⁰ The Yugoslav liberation movement continued to have a lasting impact in

²⁰ Vjekoslav Perica, *Balkan Idols Religion and Nationalism in Yugoslav States* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 96.

the post-war years, as the Communists utilized their anti-fascist liberation victory to craft a new Yugoslavia based on “Brotherhood and Unity” among all ethnicities.

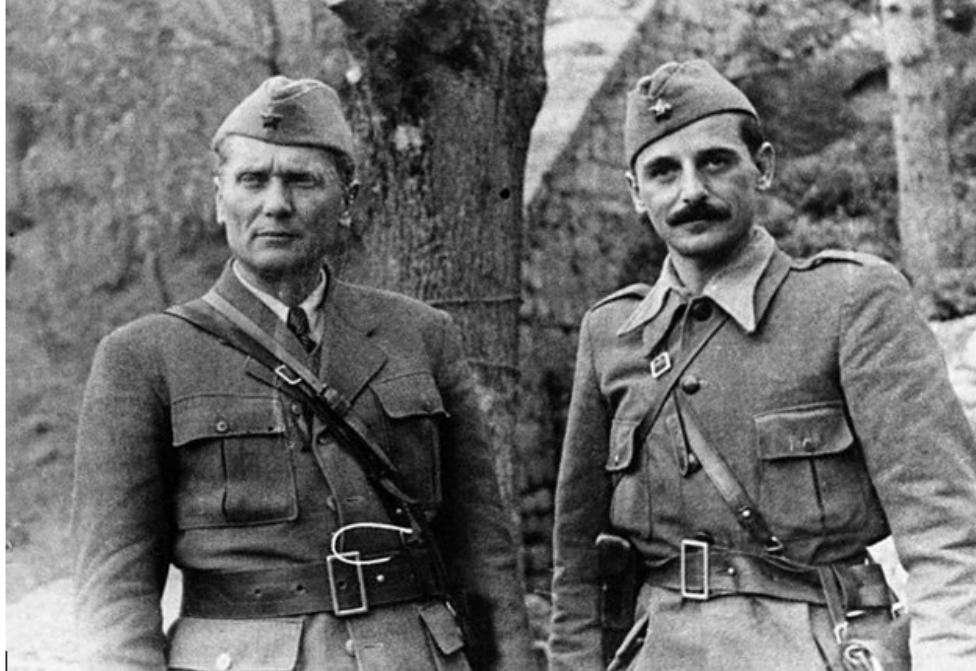


Image 2: Marshall Josip Broz Tito and General Konstantin “Koča” Popović²¹

After WWII, a new communist Yugoslavia was born consisting of six individual republics: Serbia, Croatia, Slovenia, Bosnia, Macedonia and Montenegro. This new nation confronted the difficulties of rebuilding its infrastructure and lessening the tensions between nationalists groups, who fought one another during the war. In 1945,

²¹ Zack Morris, *The Yugoslavian Partisans of WWII: A Tribute to Overlooked Heroes*, History, accessed October, 5, 2015, <https://historyhustle.wordpress.com/2015/02/27/the-yugoslavian-partisans-of-wwii-a-tribute-to-overlooked-heroes/>.

the provisional government of Democratic Federal Yugoslavia was assembled and during the same year, Tito's pro-Republican government won the post-war elections. The Communists understood that the history of Yugoslavia consisted of ethnic conflicts dating back to the fourteenth-century. Perhaps this is why the communist avoided real historical scholarly discussions, regarding the regions ethnic history. The Communists instead focused on creating a new Yugoslavian based on civic national ideals.

The Communists fostered the idea of "Brotherhood and Unity" and attempted to put the ethnic past of conflict behind. As Vladimir Dedijer, a loyal partisan communist and the official biographer of Josip Broz Tito wrote:

The "Brotherhood and Unity" idea gave a profoundly humane element to Tito's political program. In Contrast to hatred (rooted in nationalism manipulations with ethnicity and religion), Tito urged love among all Yugoslav peoples. We have eradicated hatred, turned it into dust and ashes, we have eliminated the chauvinism incited and spread among our peoples by various anti-people's elements who have exploited the sensitive nationality problem whenever it suited them.²²

The communist government attempted to construct a civic state in which everyone was equal under the law.

In 1947, Yugoslavia joined the Communist Information Bureau (Cominform), a Soviet dominated organization. Economic and Political disagreements between Joseph Stalin and Josip Broz Tito led to the expulsion of Yugoslavia from the Cominform. The

²² Vjekoslav, 100.

charges by the Cominform brought against Yugoslavia were based on the notion that Yugoslavian strategies were too leftist in regards to rapid nationalization of retail outlets and taking the populist path, when dealing with the peasantry. The Cominform members made accusations that Yugoslavia was diluting from a forefront party and subordinating with the People's Front. When the Yugoslav Communist Party attempted to argue their positions, they were only labeled as Trotskyists and fascist agents. Yugoslavia's elimination from the Cominform originated from the intensification of Tito's views on political independence and perspectives on foreign policy.²³ Tito's communist ideology differentiated from Stalinism, as he planned to set Yugoslavia on a different path, without Soviet political pressure or influence.

Success of Tito and the Communists

Despite all of the challenges of bringing everyone together, during the post-war reconstructive period, the Yugoslavian communist government still had much success in their campaign of "Brotherhood and Unity". Many aspects of Yugoslavian life served as facilitators' of "Brotherhood and Unity", particularly sporting events. In 1945, Tito's Relay (Titova Štafeta) was created and it became a ritual event every year carried out on Tito's birthday. Tito's Relay was later renamed the "Relay of Youth". Each year youthful runners raced throughout Yugoslavia carrying a baton for Tito's birthday. Tito's birthday

²³ Hudson, 42-43.

became a national holiday celebrating the nation's youth and immortality.²⁴ The fostering of "Brotherhood and Unity" facilitated a new Yugoslav national identity and after 1960s, it was allowed to register as Yugoslav by nationality. In 1981, after the death of Tito the number of people registered as Yugoslavs by nationality reached its highest population of 1,216,463 and 4.5 million people were uncertain of their ethnic identity.²⁵ These statistical results can be attributed to the campaign of "Brotherhood and Unity". Tito's campaign of fostering "Brotherhood and Unity" for nearly four decades had been fairly successful in the people's association with the Yugoslav identity. Tito's image was associated with ideals of "Brotherhood and Unity" and those who criticized Tito faced the consequences of being anti-Yugoslav.



Image 3: A Young Teenager Handing Tito the Baton, during Titova Štafeta Event²⁶

²⁴ Vjekoslav, 104.

²⁵ Vjekoslav, 101.

²⁶ Matija Grah, *Titova štafeta in dan mladosti*, Delo, (2012), accessed October, 5, 2015, <http://www.delo.si/druzba/panorama/titova-stafeta-in-dan-mladosti.html>.

Western and Eastern influences were noticeable in many areas of Yugoslav life, including popular culture. As a consequence of socialist modernization, there were investments in press, radio, television, recording and film industries facilitating the enabling of the Yugoslavian popular culture. Yugoslavian popular culture in the 1970s had a unique character, as it was politically and economically leaning toward the West, while socially toward the East. The popular culture of former Yugoslavia represented its historical origins of Eastern tradition, as well as its Western leanings.²⁷ Perhaps, it was the communist embracement of Yugoslavian Eastern and Western cultural influences which gave rise to the popularity of “Brotherhood and Unity”.

Tito’s Attempt at Constructing a Civic Yugoslavia

There has been much written on how European nations were constructed. The idea of “the civic” and “the ethnic” constructing of a nation were introduced by scholars to explain the construction of European nations. Past scholarly literature refers to the “civic-West” and the “ethnic-East” to explain the differences and parallels between Western European and Eastern European nation building. Academics have proposed several theoretical approaches regarding the issue. Some have even disputed the notion that there are vast differences between the constructing of Western and Eastern European nations, by arguing that Western nations were constructed based on ethnic

²⁷ Uroš Čvoro, *Turbo-folk Music and Cultural Representations of National Identity in Former Yugoslavia* (2014), 30.

identity, similar to Eastern European nations. Civic states are built on ethnic and civic factors and their relationship depends on the progress of democratization.²⁸ Tito attempted to construct a civic state in which all citizens were equal under the law and no ethnic group would have legal privileges over another. Thus, the Communists feared the reemergence of ethnic nationalism as the greatest threat to the developments necessary for constructing a civic state.

Challenges of Post-World War II Reconstruction

Though the ideals of “Brotherhood and Unity” were gaining in popular momentum during the post-World War II period, there were still major challenges faced by the Communists in their post-war reconstructive efforts. After World War II, the Communists attempted to reconstruct Yugoslavia under a common Yugoslavian identity. One of the Communists’ main objectives was bringing the Serbian Party organization to their views. This was challenging due to the war conflict during WWII between the Četniks and the Partisans. The Četniks still had much popularity in Serbia. Certain actions of Tito did not aid to the process of conforming Serbians to his ideology, when he delivered a coup de grace to the old Serbian dominated royalist army and had Draža Mihailović executed.²⁹

²⁸ Taras Kuzio, "Nationalizing States" or Nation-Building?: A Critical Review of the Theoretical Literature and Empirical Evidence," *Nations and Nationalism: Journal of the Association for the Study of Ethnicity and Nationalism* 7, no. 2: (2001): 135.

²⁹ Banac, "Fearful Asymmetry of War: The Causes and Consequences of Yugoslavia's Demise," 145.

The internal political conflicts during the Tito era suggest different political interest establishments and that Tito and the Communists never solved the puzzle of converting everyone to their political ideology. Another example of this unresolved puzzle occurred when Serbian Alexander Ranković was removed by the Communists, which raised fears among Serbian Titoist, who were concerned with the lack in representation of Serbian interests.³⁰ One of the major arguments for the fall of Ranković related to his position of Serbian centralization, opposing Tito and the communist ideology of de-centralization by creating individual republic powers.

The Communists were convinced that the promotion of de-centralization would aid against republic nationalism. In 1974, the constitutional modification gave the autonomy to the provinces of Kosovo and Vojvodina within the Serb Republic giving them proportional power within the Yugoslav federation. The constitutional modification of 1974 was not popular in Serbia and continued to be an issue of uncertainty after the death of Tito in 1980. During the 80s, Serbian campaigns against Kosovo's autonomy (where the majority of ethnic Albanians resided), continued to increase, provoking the use of fire arms in 1981.³¹ The uprisings and campaigns against the constitution of 1974, continued throughout the 70s and 80s.

³⁰ Banac, *Fearful Asymmetry of War: The Causes and Consequences of Yugoslavia's Demise*, 147.

³¹ Banac, *"Fearful Asymmetry of War: The Causes and Consequences of Yugoslavia's Demise,"* 148-149.

The communist rule had accomplished transforming a peasant society into a moderate industrial power. Without the utilization of Stalinism, Yugoslav socialist democracy had delivered many of its promises. However the failures and unresolved disputes were more prevalent in the end.³² These failures and disputes would have a larger impact after the death of Josip Broz Tito.

Problems in the Post-Tito Period

When looking at Yugoslavia the day after the death of its president Josip Broz Tito, most would probably conclude that Yugoslavia was a strong united nation, with strong military capabilities. Even Tito himself could not imagine the destructive path Yugoslavia was headed toward. In a 1978 interview, Tito stated:

We are doing all to prevent any pressure to Yugoslavia after me. Anybody who thinks after my death, Yugoslavia could collapse and that it is in dangers from some planning invasion from the Soviet Union. I don't believe in it. Yugoslavia has great unity despite multi ethnic groups. Yugoslavia has one of the most powerful Armies in Europe. The self-people-defense system provides that everybody is ready to defend our country. Yugoslavia can put 8 million people on a battle field and 8 million is not a joke, especially against Yugoslavian people who have had a routine for wars.³³

The notion that Yugoslavia would fall so rapidly after the death of Tito, was something that very few had anticipated. Tito did not go any further to elaborate on the possible threat of reemerging ethnic conflicts. According to this interview, Tito mainly

³² Benson, 132.

³³ Josip Broz "Tito", Interview 1978, English subtitle "Pitanje: Šta će biti sa SFRJ posle Vas?" *YouTube Video*, Flash video file, Accessed 5 June, 2014, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6cCxrBkzoak>.

viewed the Soviets as a potential threat to the existence of Yugoslavia. After the death of Tito, there were many unresolved national disputes. Some have argued that these unresolved national disputes resurfaced to a greater extent, and aided one another reciprocally, contributing to the demise of a great power.

After the death of Tito in 1980, Yugoslavia was considered by many to be a strong military nation capable of defending itself. Each Yugoslavian republic had its own communist branch of government and any disputes were handled at the federal level. Despite the economic success of the communist party in transforming Yugoslavia into a moderate industrial power, there were still many economic uncertainties. In 1971, Yugoslavia accrued a debt to the United States of 4 billion dollars and by 1978 the figure increased to 11 billion dollars. By 1983, the debt owed to the United States had increased to 20.5 billion dollars. Consumer prices kept increasing by 36 percent annually from 1980-1983, and then the following 12 months it increased by 67 percent. By 1984 a quarter of all families were below the poverty line. Most household budgets were spending about two-thirds of their income for food items.³⁴

A 1986 Yugoslav economic statistical graph, analyzing each individual Yugoslav republic, indicated that Yugoslavia was economically isolated from other markets. The Yugoslavian commodities suffered a poor export cargo flow to other European markets. The Yugoslav economy was a semi market economic system, based on self-management

³⁴ Benson, 134.

of workers. Since the 1970s, Yugoslavia had an agreement with the European Economic Community, permitting its companies to have free admission to the larger European market.³⁵ The developments of the Yugoslavian economy to incorporate certain elements of privatization, contributed to the uniqueness of the Yugoslav state economic system. The Yugoslav economy offered a third alternative economic system that was between state socialism and laissez-faire capitalism.

The global economic crises, and the domestic economic structural weaknesses reciprocally contributed to Yugoslavian economic instability. In 1979, the Yugoslav federal government introduced new economic proposals. These new economic measures attempted to decrease domestic consumption of imports and to increase exports. However this attempt to balance the import and export payments was not significantly improved. Due to economic instability, a federal government formed an economic commission, known as the Kraigher Commission in July of 1981. The commission was headed by the Slovene federal president Sergej Kraigher. By 1983, the Kraigher Commission published conclusions of their long term economic stabilization program, recommending social ownership, retention of the basic economic structure and the introduction of increased liberalization of trade. Economic debates regarding economic reform during the 1980s raised the issue of political reform.³⁶ The attempt to

³⁵ Zdravko Petak, "The Political Economy Background of Yugoslav Dissolution," (2003): 1.

³⁶ Hudson, 58-59.

promote economic reforms in Yugoslavia, contributed to the emergence of new political personalities.

The Kosovo Incident and the Rise of Milošević

The autonomous region of Kosovo, an area with an ethnic majority of Albanians, was created by the 1974 Yugoslavian constitutional modification. The declaration of Kosovo as an autonomous region was not favored among many Serbs and was one of the major unresolved disputes of the Tito era. The Serbs living in Kosovo were the minority of the population. The first incident of unrest in Kosovo occurred in March and April of 1981, when the University of Priština students protested. The students were protesting Kosovo's isolation from Yugoslavia and the mass amount of poverty in Kosovo in comparison to other Yugoslav republics. The students felt frustrated about the high unemployment rate and poverty in Kosovo.

The University of Priština specialized in liberal arts and did not train people for technical jobs. Technical jobs were at a greater demand. This produced a large number of people with high degrees in liberal arts, with low job prospects. High unemployment rate from the educated elite contributed to the call for Albanian nationalism and that Kosovo should become a Yugoslav republic. The student protest gained momentum and became widespread throughout Kosovo, forcing the Yugoslav government to call a state of emergency.

In the years of 1985 and 1986, a memorandum was produced by the sixteen members of the Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts (SANU). The memorandum was published by a Serbian daily tabloid newspaper *Večernje Novosti* in 1986 and gained public awareness. The memorandum argued for the modification of the 1974 constitution, based on notions that the constitution was discriminatory to the Serbs, and that the Slovenians and Croatians were taking over Serbia's economy. The memorandum also argued that Albanians were committing genocide against the Serbs in Kosovo and that Serbs living in Croatia were in the greatest danger.

The significance of the SANU memorandum convinced many people in the Republic of Serbia that the Serbs were victims in the autonomous region of Kosovo and the Republic of Croatia. In 1987 an incident occurred in Kosovo between the ethnic Serbs living in Kosovo and the police. On April 24, 1987, Slobodan Milošević was sent by the President of the Republic of Serbia, Ivan Stambolić to settle the animosity in Kosovo between the ethnic Serbs and Albanians. When Milošević arrived in Kosovo, a town hall meeting with the ethnic Serbs and Albanians took place. During the meeting an incident occurred outside, between the police and a crowd of ethnic Serbs. Milošević walked out to address a crowd of ethnic Serbs, claiming to have been beaten by the police and stated, "niko ne sme da vas bije", translated as, "no one shall dare beat you". This statement by Milošević was continuously repeated on Serbian television program RTV (Radio Televizije Vojvodine). This became the new slogan that replaced the old slogan of "Brotherhood and Unity" and a new Serbian father figure was born. Milošević's rise to

popularity was founded on the notion that he was fighting against Serb suffering.

Milošević's popularity allowed him to take Stambolić's position in an intraparty coup on May 8, 1989, as he became the president of Socialist Republic of Serbia.³⁷



Image 4: Milošević Gazimestan Speech on June 28th, 1989³⁸

On June 28, 1989, Milošević delivered his famous Gazimestan Speech. The date chosen for the speech marked the 600 year anniversary of the Battle of Kosovo. The Gazimestan monument was chosen to be the place where Milošević delivered the speech. The monument is approximately six to seven kilometers from the actual battle site. The timing of the speech was given in the midst of tensions between ethnic Serbs

³⁷ Gerard Toal and Carl Dahlman, *Bosnia Remade: Ethnic Cleansing and Its Reversal* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 41.

³⁸ Kelly Hignett, *Slobodan Milošević addressing the crowd at Gazimestan, Kosovo, 28 June 1989*, *The View East Central and Eastern Europe, Past and Present*, (2012), accessed October, 6, 2015, <https://thevieweast.wordpress.com/tag/milosevic/>.

and ethnic Albanians residing in Kosovo. During the speech Milošević emphasized the history of Serbian heroism in the battle of Kosovo, and mentioned that Serbia was the defender of European culture, religion and society. The audience chanted Milošević's name, while holding many signs of Serbian nationalist symbolism. Due to the content of the Gazimestan speech, the location and Milošević's decision to deliver it on a historic day which was previously utilized to foster Serbian nationalism, many academics have marked this day as the beginning of Yugoslavian disintegration.

Desires for Independence by the Republics of Croatia and Slovenia

In June of 1989, the Croatian Democratic Union (Hrvatska Demokratska Zajednica) was founded. The leader of the Croatian Democratic Union, Franjo Tuđman in 1991 made statements against the leadership of Yugoslavia stating, "unfortunately Serbia is being more than irrational. It is now impossible to talk about Yugoslavia as a national entity-Serbia has sent that country over the precipice."³⁹ The other prominent member of the Croatian Democratic Union, Stjepan Mesić who later became the second president of Croatia stated, "talking to Borisav Jović about the Constitution is like trying to fill a bucket with holes in it"⁴⁰ The Republic of Croatia elected the Croatian Democratic Union in the 1991 election. Slovenian new leadership led by Milan Kučan, increasingly opposed the leadership in Belgrade led by Milošević. The handling of the

³⁹ Paul McGeough, "In this war, a soccer boycott really hurts," *Sydney Morning Herald (Australia)*, 2 August, 1991, 5 March, 2015, <http://www.library.uni.edu/gateway/owl/lexisnexus-academic>. 1.

⁴⁰ Paul McGeough, "Leaderless Yugoslavia Heads for Chaos," *Sydney Morning Herald (Australia)*, 20 May, 1991, 6 April, 2015, <http://www.library.uni.edu/gateway/owl/lexisnexus-academic>. 2.

Kosovo situation, and statements made by Milošević advocating Serbia's national history, contributed to Slovene and Croat sentiments of being part of Yugoslavia, an undesirable condition. The two major republics of Slovenia and Croatia no longer wanted to be part of a "Serbian" Yugoslavia.

The Tragic Demise of Yugoslavia (SFRY)

The tragic breakup of former Yugoslavia occurred in sequences of events that unfolded shortly after Slovenian request for independence in June of 1991. Between June of 1991 and May of 1992, most of the institutions that were established for half of century no longer existed. The declaration of independence by Croatia and Slovenia in June of 1991, prompted an attack by the Yugoslav Federal Army (JNA) on Slovenia.

The war only lasted for ten days in Slovenia and then the Yugoslav Federal Army (JNA) withdrew from Slovenia and moved into Croatia, occupying two thirds of Croatian terrain. In 1992 the Yugoslav Federal Army (JNA) assisted the Bosnian Serbs in occupying two thirds of Bosnian territory in their fight against the Bosnian Croats and the Bosnian Muslims.⁴¹ Bosnia having the most ethnically diverse population, suffered the most casualties during the Yugoslavian conflict. The genocidal killing of Bosnian Muslims in Srebrenica by the Bosnian Serb forces, led by General Ratko Mladić in July of 1995, became the first Genocide in Europe since the Holocaust. The signing of the Dayton

⁴¹ Petak, 1.

Agreement on December 14, 1995, officially ended the war in Bosnia. In 1998, the Yugoslavian conflict continued into Kosovo and lasted until June of 1999. The Yugoslavian Political and Military conflicts produced seven independent countries: Serbia, Croatia, Slovenia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Macedonia, Montenegro and Kosovo. Montenegro gained their independence from Serbia in 2006 and Kosovo gained their independence in 2008. Today the region has largely incorporated itself into the larger capitalist neoliberal global economic system.

Many in the former Yugoslavian region still reflect on some of the glorious successful moments of Tito's political program of "Brotherhood and Unity". However these glorious moments have passed and many have accepted the modern day realities of new governments and economic systems. The communist system of Yugoslavia has been an interesting case study, as it included elements of democratization and privatization.

Significance of Football and Sport in Yugoslavia

Under the leadership of Tito, the communist government was actively involved in popular events for political objectives in shaping a new Yugoslav identity. Sports in particular were influenced by active communist involvement. One example of this active involvement in sport came directly from Tito, as he delivered his famous speech in 1972 at the fifth anniversary of Velež, Mostar football club and stated:

Comrades, you are on the right path, not only since yesterday, but from your origin. Furthermore, you have remained politically united. I want the future to foster "Brotherhood and Unity", which is needed to steadily become stronger and to be consolidated. I want especially that you, the young generation that follows sport, become the first soldiers of those who will guard against every nationalist assault. You must be united; you should cherish and strengthen the "Brotherhood and Unity" of our nation. That is our socialist way.⁴²

Tito believed that through sports, a new national identity could be constructed.

Tito's choice of giving his address in front of the Velež, Mostar football club has been largely credited to Velež, Mostar's multi-ethnic character. Velež, Mostar football club played a significant part of the socialist national liberation struggle during World War II, as many of their footballers and supporters joined the Partisans. There was a desecrated socialist monument built in Velež, Mostar to the fallen footballers and functionaries of the national liberation struggle.⁴³ This visual symbolic monument honored those Velež footballers and supporters who lost their lives in the struggle against nationalism and fascism. Relay of Youth (Titova Štafeta) was another example introduced by the Communists to facilitate a sporting spirit among the Yugoslav youth.

The next chapter will further explore the communist involvement in shaping Yugoslavian identity through means of physical culture, sport and football during the rule of Tito. It will explore some of Tito's deeply held convictions regarding the significant role physical culture and sport had on shaping national identity and fostering

⁴² Richard Mills, "Velež Mostar Football Club and the Demise of 'Brotherhood and Unity' in Yugoslavia, 1922-2009," *Europe - Asia Studies* 62, no. 7 (2010): 1107.

⁴³ Mills, "Velež Mostar Football Club and the Demise of 'Brotherhood and Unity' in Yugoslavia, 1922-2009," 1107, 1108, 1113.

ideals of Yugoslavian “Brotherhood and Unity”. The chapter will also explore the historical background of football in Yugoslavia and in which ways the game was utilized by the communist government under the leadership of Josip Broz Tito.

CHAPTER II

FOOTBALL, PHYSICAL CULTURE, AND TITO

Football during the First Yugoslavia

In 1896, a Jewish German student by the name of Hugo Buli brought a football to his friend when visiting Belgrade from Berlin. By the twentieth-century, football had been introduced to most of the regions of former Yugoslavia. The major influence of the game came to the Yugoslavian region from their Central European neighbors. In 1919, the first Yugoslavian national team was formed in Zagreb (Modern day capital of Croatia). The team was admitted into the Federation Internationale de Football Association (FIFA) in 1919. Since the Yugoslavian national team was established in Zagreb, most of the players on the team were ethnic Croats. The Yugoslavian national football team's first major tournament participation took place in the 1920 Summer Olympics, held in Antwerp Belgium. The team played Czechoslovakia and lost the game 7-0.

The establishment of the Yugoslavian football league in 1923 provided better recruiting opportunities for the national team. However during the 1920s, the state did not actively get involved in football and financial support for the national team was lacking. Yugoslavian football clubs were not allowed to pay regular wages to their players. It was the rising popularity of the game that contributed to the increase in attendance during matches. As a result of an increase in attendance during matches,

clubs sold more game tickets and made greater profits.¹ In 1929, the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes was renamed Yugoslavia by King Alexander I. During the same year of 1929, the Yugoslavian Football Association moved their headquarters from Zagreb to Belgrade. Zagreb was angered by the relocation of the Yugoslavian Football Association's move to Belgrade and prohibited any of their players to take part in the 1930 World Cup. As a result of Zagreb's prohibition, the 1930 Yugoslavian World Cup national team was predominantly made up of ethnic Serbs. Yugoslavia took fourth place in the 1930 World Cup held in Montevideo, Uruguay. In the 1934 World Cup qualifier, Yugoslavia lost to Romania 2-1 and did not qualify for the World Cup hosted in Italy.

Yugoslavia failed to qualify for the 1938 World Cup, after losing to Poland 4-0 in the first leg and then winning 1-0 in the second leg of the tournament. The team lost in the 1939 Neighboring Countries Cup to Romania 2-1. During the remainder of 1939 and 1940, Yugoslavia participated in a few other friendly matches and their last game before World War II was a friendly contest verses Hungary in which they tied 1-1. The Yugoslavian football team was dismantled during the World War II conflict. However during the war, there was the emergence of independent states which participated as part of FIFA. The independent State of Croatia associated with FIFA and continued to play matches, until they were abolished by the new Socialist Federal Republic of

¹ Zec, and Paunović, 235.

Yugoslavia (SFRY) in 1945.² After the war, the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia abolished any independent states and the SFRY national football team was created.

Football during the Communist Post-War Reconstruction

After World War II a new communist Yugoslavia was born and football continued as usual. The new Yugoslavian national football team made their first appearance in the 1948 Summer Olympics hosted in London, England, representing the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (SFRY). Yugoslavia started off the tournament by defeating Luxembourg 6-1 and then defeating Turkey and England by the same score of 3-1 to reach the finals. In the final Yugoslavia lost to Sweden 3-1. Yugoslavia took silver in the 1952 Summer Olympics held in Helsinki, Finland. In the 1952 Olympic tournament, Yugoslavia defeated the Soviet Union. In the 1950 World Cup tournament, Yugoslavia defeated Switzerland 3-0 and Mexico 4-0, but after losing to Brazil 2-0, they failed to make it out of the first round. The 1948 and 1952 Yugoslavian national team was comprised of ethnic Croat and Serb players, including a Bosnian Croat and a Bosnian Serb on the team. In 1948 and 1952, the national team still lacked players from the other Yugoslav republics of Slovenia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Macedonia and Montenegro.

² Croatian players in Yugoslavian national team: Historic injustice, Big Soccer, August 20, 2011, accessed May 22, 2014, <http://forums.bigsoccer.com/threads/croatian-players-in-yugoslavian-national-team-historic-injustice.1805884/>.

In the early post-World War II communist reconstructive period, many clubs in the Yugoslavian football league were renamed to foster the communist ideology. These clubs included: Partizan Belgrade, Crvena Zvezda (Red Star) Belgrade, Dinamo Zagreb, Proleter Zrenjanin and Spartak Subotica. Most football clubs with any type of historic ethnic affiliation were banned by the Communists. An ethnically Croatian team, Zrinjski Mostar, and ethnically Serbian team Slavija Sarajevo were both banned from participating in the league. Clubs HAŠK and Građanski, which dated back to 1903 and 1911 were also both prohibited. Hajduk Split and FK Vojvodina were the only two teams that survived the early communist reconstructive period. New football club names were established to promote the communist liberation ideology of the working class. These teams included: Metalac (Metal Worker), Radnik (Laborer), Proletar (Communist), Rudar (Miner), Željeznicar (Rail worker), Radnički (Workers Club), Sloboda (Freedom), Napredak (Progress) and Budućnost (Future).³ These names symbolically represented the working classes and the promising future of a new communist Yugoslavia. Getting rid of teams with any ethnic affiliation facilitated the communist political ideology of suppressing the ethnic nationalist past and attempting to establish a new national ideology. In 1947, The King Alexander Cup was changed to the Marshal Tito Cup. The

³ Miša Miladinović and Siniša Nikolić, "Yugoslavia National Team List of Results - Introduction Page," rsssf.com, Last updated: September 21, 2004, accessed May 22, 2014, <http://rsssf.com/tables/joeg-intres-intro.html>.

Marshal Tito Cup was a football tournament played separately from the Yugoslavian football league competition and it persisted from 1947-1991.

A 1986 monograph on Crvena Zvezda (Red Star) Belgrade football club, demonstrates that there were 15 political and military communist leaders who served as the club president, since 1948.⁴ The 1986 monograph demonstrates that the communist officials were actively involved in Yugoslavian football. From 1945-1948, there were 34 total footballers that represented Yugoslavia. 10 were ethnic Serbs, 22 ethnic Croats and only one ethnic Hungarian and Slovene player.⁵ The popular belief was that the national team was predominantly made up of ethnic Croat and Serb players, due to some of the major Yugoslavian football clubs located in the republics of Serbia and Croatia.

Tito's Statements on Expanding Physical Culture and Sport

During the Tito period there were many expansions in physical culture and sport. After the communist takeover and the establishment of SFRY, Tito was convinced that expanding physical culture and sport would facilitate in the development and the education of the youth. In a 1945 interview Tito stated, "we have the intention to develop physical culture and sport. The way we develop physical culture and sport in the city, we will do it the same way in the villages. The youth must have all of the

⁴ Richard Mills, "'It All Ended in an Unsporting Way': Serbian Football and the Disintegration of Yugoslavia, 1989-2006," *The International Journal of the History of Sport* 26, no. 9 (2009): 1194-1196.

⁵ Zec, and Paunović, 239.

opportunities for a diverse physical development.”⁶ Tito held a meeting in 1946 with the youth and stated, “the task of the youth is to renew and restore their land, to study and to physically develop.”⁷ In December of 1948, Tito addressed the Congress for the People’s Youth (Narodne Omladine) and declared, “in our country physical education must gain a general mass character.”⁸ In March of 1952, in a delegation with the Congress of the Student Alliance of Yugoslavia Tito asserted, “the manifestations of best individuals can result from means of practicing sport.”⁹ From his earliest days Tito and the Communists put much emphasis on the expansion of sport in order to build a new character within the youth culture.

In May of 1954, a message to the International Congress of Sport Medicine Tito stated, “physical culture has a great meaning for the general progress of every nation. Physical culture enhances the biological health quality of the people, and strengthens their abilities as laborers. It increases their cultural elevation and their well-being and satisfaction.”¹⁰ On September of 1962, Tito’s speech for the opening of the seventh

⁶ Miloš Velicković, *Fizička kultura i sport u Jugoslaviji*. (Beograd: Savez za Fizičku Kulturu Jugoslavije, 1980), 32.

Original language: “Mi imamo nameru da široko razvijemo fizičku kulturu i sport kako u gradu tako i na selu. Omladina mora imati sve mogućnosti za mnogostrani fizički razvitak.”

⁷ Velicković, 32.

Original language: “Zadatak je omladine da obnavlja i izgrađuje zemlju, da uči i da se fizički razvija.”

⁸ Velicković, 32.

Original language: “Fizičko vaspitanje u našoj zemlji mora dobiti opšti masovni karakter.”

⁹ Velicković, 32.

Original language: “Kroz masovnost u sportu ispoljiće se najbolji pojedinci.”

¹⁰ Velicković, 32.

European Championship, addressed the importance of strengthening international relations by the usage of sport. He stated, “this type of sporting activities and meetings have a great meaning in strengthening the trust between people of a multi-diverse world, which contributes to strengthening peace in the world.”¹¹ Tito believed that sports were a way to break diversity barriers in the world and that they were significant to Yugoslavia’s multi-ethnic character.

During the 1970s, Tito continued to emphasize the significance of expanding physical culture and sport. In 1971, an address to the Yugoslavian delegation for the Alliance of Physical Culture Tito stated, “a man should start his involvement with sports from childhood. I've always been involved in sports, and it benefited me greatly and because of that I am physically and otherwise resistant.”¹² In November of 1979, Tito had an interview in which he stated, “sport must be sport, and it should be freed from negative passions and commercials. It is especially dangerous for friends and sport organizations to allow in sport the appearances of nationalist hostilities. The youth must energetically stand up against these appearances.”¹³ Tito understood the ethnic

Original language: “Fizička kultura ima veliki značaj za opšti napredak svake zemlje. Ona podiže biološku i zdravstvenu vrjednost ljudi, jača njihovu radnu sposobnost, pomaže njihovom kulturnom uzdizanju, pomaže podizanju blagostanja i zadovoljstva ljudi.”

¹¹ Velicković, 32.

Original language: “Ovo i mnogo druga sportska takmičenja i sportski sastanci imaju veliki značaj i za međusobno upoznavanje naroda i učvršćenje što većeg povjerenja među ljudima, među raznim narodima svijeta i predstavljaju doprinos učvršćenju mira u svjetu.”

¹² Velicković, 32.

Original language: “Sport kod čovjeka treba da počne od djetinjstva. Uvijek sam se bavio sportom i to mi je mnogo koristilo, jer sam zbog toga i fizički i inače otporniji.”

¹³ Velicković, 32.

nationalistic sentiments that could be fostered through sport and during his presidency sought to expand physical culture and sport in the spirit of Yugoslavian unification. Tito focused on the youth as the most important aspect of the country and believed that physical culture and sport played a significant role in the development of the youth.

There were many new sporting projects developed by the Communists. Many of these projects were closely associated with the communist liberation movement. On October 14, 1974, a sporting complex was opened in Niš, Serbia. The complex could hold 6000 members. The construction of this sporting complex was constructed on the day that Yugoslavia celebrated the Partisan liberation of Niš, Serbia during World War II. This sporting complex was meant to symbolically represent the communist liberation ideology. The complex was intended for many different sporting activities including: handball, tennis, table tennis, boxing, basketball and volleyball. The project also included a one hundred meter football stadium and next to the stadium a complex of pools were constructed. Sporting complexes were built throughout Yugoslavia.¹⁴ Edvard Kardelj, one of the crafters of Yugoslavian workers self-management plan during the late 1940s and one of the main authors of the 1974 Yugoslavian Constitution was vocal

Original language: "Sport mora biti sport, sto je moguće vise oslobođen raznih negativnih strasti i komercijalizma. Naročito je opasno, i za društvo i za sporske organizacije, ako se u sportu dozvole pojave nacionalne netrpeljivosti. Omladina treba energično da ustaje protiv takvih pojava."

¹⁴ Velicković, 88-96.

about the significance of sporting events and their ability to foster democratic pluralism among rural and urban residents.¹⁵

Football became part of Tito's larger communist effort to expand physical culture and sport in order to develop a new socialist youth in the spirit of Yugoslav unification. Tito's project to develop the youth, contributed to the expansion of various women's sporting activities. In 1977, Mima Jaušovic won the French Open in Tennis. Đurđa (Đurđica) Bjedov won the gold medal in swimming, in the 1968 Summer Olympics. The communist idea of physical culture and sport broke many gender roles by integrating women into various sporting activities. The other expansion in Yugoslavian sports was among the disabled. Yugoslavia held the Association for Sport and Recreation of Invalids in 1966. The purpose was to develop a united interest in developing a variety of sporting activities for different types of disabilities. This would include participants who were disabled from the war and it was open to both genders from all ages.¹⁶ However despite women becoming more integrated into Yugoslavian sports, football was still a male sport. Women being integrated into certain sports became part of a larger communist effort to develop a new spirit within the socialist youth.

Tito attempted to make physical culture and sport part of Yugoslavian tradition. Annually during Tito's birthday celebration on May 25th, there was a ritual youth relay

¹⁵ Velicković, 26.

¹⁶ Velicković, 80.

event held in Belgrade, Serbia. The relay event became a significant part of Yugoslav tradition and it was renamed the Day of the Youth (Dan Mladosti). On this day, young people would compete in sporting events that symbolized Yugoslavian youth. The young participants came from all over Yugoslavia. The relay was meant to develop the youth in a socialist revolutionary spirit of “Brotherhood and Unity”.¹⁷ The relay began in Kumrovec, Croatia where Tito was born and the winner of the relay would hand Tito a baton with a birthday pledge. Communist activism in the game of football was part of their larger effort to develop a sporting tradition among the youth.

Significance of Yugoslavian Football Success on an International Level

In 1952, during the Helsinki Summer Olympics, the author Paul Mojzeš recalls the Yugoslav football game against the Soviet Union. In the first game against the Soviets, Yugoslavia made a significant comeback and tied the match 5-5 and then went on to defeat the Soviets 3-1 in their second match. According to Mojzeš the victory against the Soviets was a great indicator of massive support for Tito. Children were identifying themselves with players from Partizan, Crvena Zvezda (Red Star), Hajduk and Dinamo, without regarding their ethnic identity.

The definition by Benedict Anderson in 1983, of a nation as an “imagined community” helps us understand the link between nationalism and sport. Individuals

¹⁷ Velicković, 72.

that live even in the smallest nations often do not meet each other in person. However, in their mind there is the idea of national cohesiveness. This feeling of belonging to a nation is felt more strongly in times of war and sporting events. During sporting events there are national flags, anthems, banners, and patriotic symbolism. Sport can be utilized to transform strangers into a collective group against a common adversary.¹⁸

The Yugoslavian football victory against the Soviets symbolically strengthened the elements necessary for an existence of an imagined common national identity, as defined by Anderson. In the early communist period, sport received the recognition as a significant element to reinforce the state and strengthen the Yugoslavian multiethnic character. There were many investments by the communist government to provide quality faculties, training and organizations. There was also an emphasis to provide funding toward school sport programs that provided children access to sporting activities and training by trained sport instructors.¹⁹

¹⁸ Allen L. Sack and Željko Suster, "Soccer and Croatian Nationalism: A Prelude to War," *Journal of Sport & Social Issues* 24, no. 3 (2000): 306, 309.

¹⁹ Patrick K. Gasser and Anders Levinsen, "Breaking Post-War Ice: Open Fun Football Schools in Bosnia and Herzegovina," *Sport, Civil Liberties and Human Rights* (2006): 458, 459.



Image 5: The 1952 Yugoslavian National Team Vs U.S.S.R. in Tampere²⁰

In the 1952 Summer Olympics, there were many Yugoslavian patriotic symbols and flags displayed. The 3-1 Yugoslavian football victory against the Soviets symbolically represented a victory against a socialist rival for the future of socialism. This game strengthened nationwide support for the national team. This victory was depicted in other areas of Yugoslavian popular culture, including film. The 1985 Yugoslavian film, *When Father Was Away on Business (Otac Na Službenom Putu)* depicted the celebration of the Soviet victory felt among the people of Yugoslavia. Perhaps it was this symbolically unifying Yugoslavian victory against the Soviets, which gave the Yugoslav

²⁰ Soccermond, *Vs. U.S.S.R. 1952 in Tampere*, accessed October 6, 2015, http://www.soccermond.com/countries/uefa/serbia/national_team.php.

communist government reasons to be actively involved in the game of football during the 1960s and 1970s.

The Yugoslavian national football team had much success in international competition and gained the respect of many powerful football nations. The national team was successful in reaching the finals of the Olympic tournament in 1948, 1952, and 1956. The national team won first place in the 1960 Olympic tournament hosted in Rome, Italy. By 1984, Yugoslavia had won total of five Olympic medals equaling the Soviet Union and Hungary. In the European Championships, Yugoslavia reached the finals twice in 1960, 1968 and semi-finals in 1976. Dragan Džajić scored a free kick in the 1968 European Championship semifinal against the world champions England, placing Yugoslavia in the finals for the second time. Yugoslavia continued to be a dominant force in football during the 1980s and in the 1990 World Cup they reached the Quarter Finals to play the talented Argentinian squad, led by Diego Maradona. Yugoslavia tied Argentina 0-0, and then went on to lose by a penalty shootout.

The Communist Commemoration of Football Clubs

Certain Yugoslav football clubs were commemorated by being closely linked to the achievements of the Partisan struggle for national liberation. In Hajduk, Split Football Clubs history, existed an illustration stating, “with patriotism and firm affiliation to the struggle of our people for freedom, enhancing Hajduk’s name they permanently obligated all generations of players and friends who wear, or will wear, the red five

pointed star-acquired in the difficult days of the liberation war with pride on their white shirts.”²¹ Footballers that were murdered or died fighting as Partisans were also honored in the Željezničar Football Club book stating:

To all of them as well as to many others who are unknown, today's generation at Željezničar Football Club players, administration, managerial team and the large army of loyal supporters, state their gratitude for everything which they gave to the club and to their country in the struggle for freedom, for our socialist today and the even better socialist tomorrow.²²

The remembrance of heroic individuals was done through a process of books and poetry. Jovan Mikić, also nicknamed ‘Spartak’, was killed on October 10, 1944, as a Yugoslavian Partisan soldier. After the war Mikić was honored as an historic commander and his nickname Spartak was adopted by the Subotica Sport Association. Mikić was honored as having superhuman capacities and a socialist martyr. The Užice football club, Sloboda was renamed to FK Sloboda Titovo Užice and there was a wall erected with a five-pointed star badge.²³ On the five-point star badge it stated, “with pride we preserve the memory of the footballers and sports workers of our club, who during the course of the National Liberation Struggle honorably fell for freedom.”²⁴ By honoring the killed footballers, the Communists communicated to youth a connection between

²¹ Mills, “Commemorating a Disputed Past: Football Club and Supporters' Group War Memorials in the Former Yugoslavia,” 552.

²² Mills, “Commemorating a Disputed Past: Football Club and Supporters' Group War Memorials in the Former Yugoslavia,” 552.

²³ Mills, “Commemorating a Disputed Past: Football Club and Supporters' Group War Memorials in the Former Yugoslavia,” 547-552.

²⁴ Mills, “Commemorating a Disputed Past: Football Club and Supporters' Group War Memorials in the Former Yugoslavia,” 547.

socialism, martyrdom and athleticism. Through football a new socialist spirit of Yugoslavia could be fashioned.

Tito's Suppression of Early Fan Clubs and Ethnic Nationalism

The potential threat of football clubs to promote ethnic nationalism was perhaps a significant reason for communist involvement in the Yugoslavian national football league. The Croatian Sports Club Zrinjski Mostar (Hrvatski Športski Klub Zrinjski Mostar), was associated with fascist Ustaša led NDH in 1941. Zrinjski Mostar became a significant part of Croat nationalist symbolism by its displays of the club's badge that contained the red and white squares. The name Zrinjski came from a noble Croat family fighting against the Ottomans and the Austro-Hungarians in the seventeenth century.²⁵ After the communist takeover in 1945, Zrnjski Mostar was banned and did not return until 1992. The Communists did not underestimate football's potential threat to foster a sense of historic ethnic identity; and they handled this threat by getting rid of many football clubs and their fan clubs. The Communists also created new football clubs. FK Partizan was founded on October 4, 1945, and one of the club's founders was the communist Partisan General Koča Popović. In the early post-World War II period, certain clubs from less developed Yugoslav republics were incorporated into the Yugoslavian National Football League. The addition of FK Sarajevo (Bosnia and Herzegovina) in the

²⁵ Mills, "Velež Football, Club and the demise of brother hood and unity of Yugoslavia," 1120.

1948-1949 season was a great example of expanding the league to clubs from various Yugoslav republics.

During the 1950s football fan groups were emerging to support their football clubs. Fan groups were a significant contributor to the early developments of the Yugoslavian football league. The fan group Torcida formed in Croatia on October 28, 1950, to support their football club Hajduk Split. The name "Torcida" derived from the Brazilian Portuguese word for supporters. Torcida had around 30,000 spectators gathering around the field, while the stadium only held 15,000. The Torcida fan club was accused of displaying illegal Croat nationalism and forced to go underground.²⁶ The Communists feared that the Torcida supporters could mobilize large crowds and promote ethnic nationalism. In order to survive Tito's communist period, the Torcida fan club had to operate as an underground group, while continuously confronting the possibility of prosecution. This incident of the Torcida fan club further suggests that Tito and the Communists were aware of the potential for fan clubs to foster ethnic hostilities.

Football became an essential component for Communists to foster national Yugoslav identity by encouraging a multi-ethnic football atmosphere. The international football victories by the Yugoslavian national football team served as a symbolic

²⁶ Christian Axboe Nielsen, 2010, "The goalposts of transition: football as a metaphor for Serbia's long journey to the rule of law," *Nationalities Papers* 38, no. 1 (2010): 89.

representation of Tito's communist success. The Yugoslavian national team's multi-ethnic presence served as a fitting representation of "Brotherhood and Unity". The Communists were well aware of the threat posed by football's ability to foster the reemergence of ethnic nationalism, and as a result attempted to prohibit any type of nationalist expressions through football. Through football, a socialist revolutionary spirit could be fashioned by building monuments on football stadiums and commemorating the "fallen heroes" who lost their lives fighting for the socialist liberation struggle. The Communists' involvement in Yugoslavian football had a profound effect in the way the game was perceived nationally, as it served objectives of instilling a multi-ethnic character.

Despite the occasional ethnic nationalist sentiments expressed through sport during Tito's rule, the communist government through sport still managed to accomplish certain sentiments of Yugoslavian integration. Football in particular was a great tool of utilization in fostering "Brotherhood and Unity" during the Tito era. The next chapter focuses on the transforming role of football in the post-Tito era and explores certain developments emerging within football fan clubs, which affected the structure of Yugoslavian football, including the Yugoslavian national team and how football, once utilized as an integrative force of Yugoslavia became a tool for promoting ethnic nationalism.

CHAPTER III

FOOTBALL IN THE POST-TITO PERIOD

Football in the Early Post-Josip Broz Tito Period

During a football match between two major rival teams of the Yugoslavian league, Crvena Zvezda (Red Star) Belgrade, and Hajduk, Split played on May 4th, 1980, the announcer proclaimed that the country's President, Josip Broz Tito, had died. The game immediately stopped and cries started throughout the stadium. The fans began singing a patriotic Yugoslav song called "Comrade Tito, We Pledge Our Allegiance" (Druže Tito Mi Ti Se Kunemo).¹ This moment in Yugoslav football history captured the atmosphere of "Brotherhood and Unity" felt among the various people of SFRY. It could be argued that this symbolic moment of allegiance to Tito represented his active involvement in football during his leadership.

By 1980, football in Yugoslavia had been firmly embraced as the national game. Football had been promoted and encouraged by the communist government. The Yugoslavian national team represented the Yugoslav dream of "Brotherhood and Unity", and thus, achievements by the team represented Yugoslavian success. Players that represented the Yugoslavian national team also played for some of the major clubs in the Yugoslavian football league. These teams included: Crvena Zvezda (Red Star)

¹ Petar Jan Margry, *Shrines and Pilgrimage in the Modern World New Itineraries into the Sacred*. (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2008), 92.

Belgrade, Partizan Belgrade, Hajduk Split, Dinamo Zagreb, FK Vojvodina, Velež Mostar, NK Rijeka, Olimpija Ljubljana, Željezničar Sarajevo, FK Sarajevo, FC Vardar and Sloboda Tuzla. The success of these teams in European football competitions facilitated ideas of Yugoslavian progress. Some of the major Yugoslavian teams had large football fan clubs that supported them. During the Tito period, the Yugoslavian national team, major teams in the league and football fan clubs actively played a role in fostering Yugoslavian integration.



Image 6: Players Crying, during the Crvena Zvezda (Red Star), Versus Hajduk, Split Game Played On May 4th, 1980, After the Announcement of Tito's Death²

² Gregor Zupanc, *Boys Cry: Tears, Football and High Politics*, Balkanist, (2014), accessed 10, 6, 2015, <http://balkanist.net/boys-cry-tears-football-high-politics/>.

The Communists suppressed fan club groups with historic ethnic nationalist affiliations, changed names of football clubs and encouraged the Yugoslavian national football team. The communist government under the leadership of Tito was strategically involved in utilizing the game to facilitate ideas of “Brotherhood and Unity”, and to a large degree this was a successful strategy. Two former Yugoslavian players Rajko Mitić (Serb) and Stjepan Bobek (Croat) played for Yugoslavia in the late 1940s and early 1950s and were considered the best one-two punch combination to ever play the game. They scored 80 goals combined for the team. Numerous articles were published about their friendship and in 1952 they wrote a book that became the national bestseller. These two players were accepted by the football audience as national legends representing the Serb-Croat collaboration. Their popularity was stronger in Serbia than Croatia, because they both played for Belgrade teams.³

The pressures for the Yugoslavian national team and clubs to play an essential role as an integrative force continued throughout the 1980s. The national team continued their success, winning third place in the 1984 Olympics. According to The *Washington Post* article covering the 1984 Olympics, “Yugoslavia finally showed the poise and scoring ability that have made it the gold medal favorite, hitting Iraq with four goals in the final 35 minutes.”⁴ The 1984 national team had great scoring abilities. The

³ Zec and Paunović, 239-240.

⁴ Doug Cress, “Yugoslavia Wins Soccer Finale at Navy; the L.A. Olympics,” *The Washington Post*, 4 August 1984, 5 March, 2015, <http://www.library.uni.edu/gateway/owl/lexisnexis-academic>, 1.

team had a weak showing in the European Nations Cup in 1984, when they lost all three first round games by 8 combined goals. The *Washington Post* reported, “reactions (at home) was like anywhere else, said Toplak. Everybody was very angry and very sad. We were embarrassed.”⁵ Coach of the Yugoslavian national team, Ivan Toplak, recognized the significance of international games and the profound effect they had on the people of Yugoslavia. Yugoslavian football losses in international competition were heartbreaking to their home supporters, while their victories were expressively celebrated. The national team provided aspirations to the people of Yugoslavia and a way to forget serious political and economic issues.



Image 7: The 1984 Yugoslavian National Team Vs France at the 1984 Euro⁶

⁵ Doug Cress, “Toplak, Yugoslavs Play for National Pride; the L.A. Olympics,” *The Washington Post*, 28 July, 1984, 5 March, 2015, <http://www.library.uni.edu/gateway/owl/lexisnexis-academic>, 1.

⁶ Soccermond, *Euro 1984 vs. France*.

In 1983, Yugoslavia's national football coach Ivan Toplak attempted to prepare a younger generation of players for the 1984 Euro Cup and 1986 World Cup. In his attempt to get a younger national team for the World Cup, Toplak cut the leading scorer of the 1983 Yugoslavian league season Sulejman Halilović, an ethnic Bosniak.⁷ This move by Toplak to cut Halilović could be viewed with some suspicion of ethnic favoritism. However, Toplak argued that his decision for cutting older players from the 1983 national roster was based on preparing younger players for the 1986 World Cup.

In 1980, the United States boycotted the Moscow Summer Olympics, and as a response the Soviet Union boycotted the 1984 Los Angeles Summer Olympics. Coach Toplak responded to the Soviet Union's boycott of the Olympics by stating, "we did not discuss the boycott in Yugoslavia at all. Why should we? We are an independent country, and we do what we feel is right. We will not be told what to do by the Soviet Union, or anybody else."⁸ By standing up against the Soviet Union, Toplak was defending the principles of Titoism. Coach Toplak attempted to prepare the best national squad to represent Yugoslavia in the 1986 World Cup. Toplak stated, "people say we will win the gold medal, but they must realize I have only boys. The World Cup is our top priority, but the Olympics are important too. This is the future team, but it must also win now. This is not easy."⁹ Toplak's major concern was preparing a young talented

⁷ Doug Cress, "Toplak, Yugoslavs Play for National Pride; the L.A. Olympics," 1.

⁸ Doug Cress, "Toplak, Yugoslavs Play for National Pride; the L.A. Olympics," 2.

⁹ Doug Cress, "Toplak, Yugoslavs Play for National Pride; the L.A. Olympics," 1.

squad for the 1986 World Cup. In 1984 and 1986, the national team still played a significant role in fostering a unified Yugoslavia by representing the nation on an international level and standing up to the Soviet Union, a socialist rival.

The Yugoslav issue of nationalism still continued to be unresolved in the early post-Tito period. In 1981, ethnic Albanians in the autonomous region of Kosovo demanded a republic. The result was a riot killing dozens of people, and leading to the imprisonment of 657 others. By 1983, inflation in the economy increased by 42 percent and the foreign debt was approximately nineteen billion dollars. Belgrade's inability to handle the economic crises contributed to an increase of ethnic nationalist attitudes.¹⁰ Some of the first early signs of ethnic nationalist sentiments were expressed on a football stadium in Belgrade, when the Priština fans cheered in support of Enver Hoxha, the president of Socialist People's Republic of Albania in 1983. According to a 1983 *New York Times* article:

At a soccer match in Belgrade this October, fans of the Pristina team from Kosovo started chanting "E-Ho! E-Ho!" for Enver Hoxha, Police intervened, and Serbian politicians wrote to the Pristina Soccer Association, demanding apologies. About the same time, a post office was bombed and an electric power plant, sabotaged. Kosovo is finished as Serb territory, that's certain said Milutin Garasanin, a distinguished archeologist at Belgrade University.¹¹

¹⁰ David Binder, "A Return to Yugoslavia." *The New York Times*, 25 December, 1983, 6 April, 2015, <http://www.library.uni.edu/gateway/owl/lexisnexis-academic>, 2, 5.

¹¹ David Binder, "A Return to Yugoslavia," 7.

A New Generation of Fan Clubs and Players during the late 1980s

During Tito's communist period, fan clubs played a significant role in glorifying socialist martyrs and the socialist revolution. By the mid-1980s, new fan clubs began to emerge. In Serbia, Crvena Zvezda (Red Star) gained a new fan club known as the Delije, formed in 1989. The Delije soon became in close collaboration with the fan club for the team FC Olympiacos, (Greece) and they called themselves Pravoslavna Braća (Orthodox Brothers).

In 1990, Željko Ražnatovic (Arkan) who was considered a notorious criminal, managed to escape several prisons across Europe and become the Crvena Zvezda (Red Star), Delije fan club president. He declared that the civil war was not initiated by the generals of the army, but instead the war was initiated by the fans that were present at the match between Dinamo Zagreb and Crvena Zvezda (Red Star) played on May 13, 1990. Delije fans converted into committed volunteers, for Arkan's paramilitary army, the "Tigers". In 1992, the Crvena Zvezda (Red Star) Review war report concluded that the Delije were abandoning their paraphernalia and collecting weapons to pursue war.¹²

¹² Gary Armstrong and Richard Giulianotti, *Football Cultures and Identities* (Basingstoke, England: Macmillan, 1999), 176-177.



Image 8: Groups of Delije: The Ultra Boys, Belgrade Boys and the Red Boys¹³

Branislav Željko (Želja) was a significant member of the Delije who traveled to watch every game of Red Star. When the war began, Željko joined Željko 'Arkan' Ražnatović's Srpska Dobrovoljačka Garda (Serbian Volunteer Guard), a paramilitary organization that included many Delije members. Arkan's paramilitary army was accountable for several war crimes in Croatia and Bosnia during the Yugoslav conflict. Many of the Delije members that lost their lives during the Yugoslav conflict (1991-1999) were commemorated as Serbian national heroes. In Marakana Stadium there is a memorial tablet with a Serbian coat of arms, Serbian Orthodox Cross and the Red Star commemorating members that lost their lives for their homeland. Željko today has a

¹³ *Belgrade Soccer Stadium Murals*, Designboom, (2009), accessed Oct, 7, 2015, <http://www.designboom.com/art/belgrade-soccer-stadium-murals/>.

special place in Red Star football club's history, as his commemorated picture is prominently displayed in the Marakana Stadium, Belgrade.¹⁴

The Delije were divided into two main groups, the north called the Ultras and the south called the Red Devils. The Ultras were more influenced by Italian chanting during football matches. The Red Devils prided themselves on English customs of drinking and fighting. The Red Devils were constantly getting into trouble with the communist police. The communist police had a difficult time in stopping ethnic nationalist sentiments across football stadiums, as it involved very large crowds chanting, singing and waving nationalist symbols.

On March 17, 1986, the fans of the Croatian team Dinamo, Zagreb established another fan club, the Bad Blue Boys (BBB). The Bad Blue Boys were named after a popular Western film *Bad Boys*, starring Sean Penn. A journalist Andrej Kricković argued that the Bad Blue Boys were at the forefront of the Croatian national movement and that they were among the strongest supporters of Franjo Tuđman (First President of Croatia). Starting from their early establishment in 1986, the BBB went all around Yugoslavia, and shouted names like Dinamo, Zagreb and Croatia. In 1998, Saša Podgorelec, a Zagreb film director made a documentary film about the Bad Blue Boys and mentioned that they

¹⁴ Mills, "Commemorating a Disputed Past: Football Club and Supporters' Group War Memorials in the Former Yugoslavia," 568-572.

were aware of their identity and courageous to express their desires for Croatian independence, while others feared to do the same.¹⁵



Image 9: Monument Built at Maksimir Stadium to Honor Those BBB Supporters Who Died Fighting For Croatian Independence¹⁶

The 1998 documentary film titled *BBB* produced by Saša Podgorelec, with English subtitles about FC Dinamo, mentioned the history of FC Dinamo and its historic significance to Croat national symbolism:

Blue outfits, white letter d and red and white square on Dinamo's Coat of arms became symbols of silent, but persistent Croatian resistance to continuous Serbian aspirations for domination in common state. To cheer for Dinamo meant to be proud of your roots and to preserve the awareness of appertaining to the

¹⁵ Blog, <http://ultrasavantixxx.blogspot.com/2014/02/bad-blue-boys-dinamo-zagreb-ultras.html>, accessed 04, 5, 2014.

¹⁶ Christopher Houben, *Bad Blue Boys*, Flickr, (2006), accessed 10,11,2015, <https://www.flickr.com/photos/houb/en/367923395/>.

nation for some future times when Croats will live independently. In the mid-80s a group of most mettled and faithful fans named themselves Bad Blue Boys their name is, at the same time, their program. Boys like to drink and fight but above all they love their club. They love it so much that they still root for Dinamo although the club's name is now Croatia. BBB's fun fights from football fields outgrew into serious and bloody 5-year war for Croatian's independence. Supporters didn't hesitate to go and fight. Many died, often with Dinamo's coat of arms on their uniforms. On 13th September 1994, under the west stand of Maksimir stadium a monument was raised in the honor of fallen BBB. The money for it gathered by Bad Blue Boys themselves.¹⁷

Once Croatia became independent in 1991, the newly elected Croatian government decided to change the name of FK Dinamo to Hašk Građanski on June 25th, 1991. The Tuđman government argued that the name "Dinamo" was a communist propaganda tool utilized to delete the national history of Croatia. FK Dinamo supporters were upset about the government's decision to change the club's name. The supporters argued that they cheered the name Dinamo for generations and were not associating the name with the communist history of "Brotherhood and Unity". Some of the supporters for the name Dinamo were claiming to be among the strongest Croat nationalists and felt that the government was questioning their loyalty to Croatia.

An interesting dialogue took place in 1991 among Dinamo football fans, as shown in the *BBB* film. The football fans were discussing the issue of Dinamo's name being changed by the newly elected Croatian government:

But against whom shall we fight? We voted for the government, we elected them, shouted out their paroles and now they turn their backs on us and we become their enemies. I thought about it and I honestly don't understand it. We

¹⁷ Saša Podgorelec, "bbb" *Youtube Video*, 1998, Flash video file, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t1DnjqamZRE> (Accessed October 10, 2015).

will be against them. They can't say that we're against the State. They'll ask us to suggest a name. We have it: Dinamo! But they say the name has to change. Why?¹⁸

In the documentary, Podgorelec conducted an interview with some of the BBB fans discussing why they were upset when Dinamo was changed to Croatia. One of the fans stated, "none of us was ever a communist, as far as I know. We were the first to start to shout against Serbia and Yugoslavia, cheering for Dinamo. We're all nationalists and Dinamo was Croatian nationalist club. Everywhere."¹⁹ The Dinamo fan was refereeing to a period in the late 1980s, when Dinamo football fans were utilizing the name Dinamo to fight against Yugoslavian unification and to foster Croat nationalism.

In 1993, Tuđman gave a speech in front of upset Dinamo supporters, who were shouting to change the name back to "Dinamo". Tuđman furiously attempted to educate the Croatian public regarding the historic nature of the name Dinamo and why it was changed to Croatia:

Zagreb again talks as the capital of all the Croats should. And those few weak voices, shouting: Give us Back Dinamo! We gave you back. We gave back. Hear and listen! We didn't give back, we've resurrected Croatia! Resurrected the Croatia that they wanted to smash forever. With Croatia we've resurrected Hašk, and Građanski, and Dinamo and all positive spirit in Croatia's history and sports. And you, dear young men, who don't know that or who are an instrument of various provokers, do you know where the name 'Dinamo' exists now? In Ćuprija in Pančevo in Serbia. Do you want again to live with them in "Brotherhood and Unity"? So don't be tricked by the provokers. We have a sacred Croatian name

¹⁸ Saša Podgorelec, "bbb" *Youtube Video*, 1998.

¹⁹ Saša Podgorelec, "bbb" *Youtube Video*, 1998.

and the sacred Croatia's history. We'll never again repeat such foolishness like Dinamo, like Yugoslavia, like Balkans.²⁰

The BBB fans continued to argue that the name Dinamo was part of Croatian nationalism, in which they supported during the late 1980s. After the death of Tuđman in 1999, by the majority of the votes the name Croatia was changed back to Dinamo in 2000.

The Fan clubs that formed in the late 1980s, were ideologically moving away from those fan clubs developed under the Tito period. Formerly based on embracing and commemorating the communist past. These new fan clubs were based on expressing and encouraging nationalist movements. The Delije and the Bad Blue Boys were both developed on the premise of Western imitation. This is perhaps what made them popular among their fans. It was the supporters of Dinamo that burned a Serbian flag during a match in Zagreb, played in May of 1991.²¹

Fan expressions in support of their ethnic nationalities continued to be openly expressed across football stadiums throughout the 1980s, particularly among Serbs and Croats. This was a transformation from the Tito era, in which any expressions of ethnic nationalism was strongly monitored and suppressed. However even in the late 1980s, there were consequences if caught expressing ethnic nationalism, as it was still

²⁰ Saša Podgorelec, "bbb" *Youtube Video*, 1998.

²¹ Paul McGeough, "Leaderless Yugoslavia Heads for Chaos," 2.

considered a crime in Yugoslavia.²² Despite the consequences of displaying ethnic nationalism, stadiums were still increasingly being filled with hostile environments between Serbs and Croats.

Football stadiums were places where fans could express their hostile nationalist sentiments in large crowds with great support. This was perhaps influenced from football matches arguably being hostile in their nature and thus the fans could justify their hostile nationalist expressions as “just old football rivalries”. At times the BBB and the fan club group Torcida, from Split Croatia, joined to organize mobs into political attack groups in Croatian cities. These fan groups were among some of the first members to join the ranks of the Croatian army. During the war there was much fan symbolism expressed by soldiers from Delije and the BBB. Many of the participants of Croatian fan clubs defined the first clashes of the war as a continuation of clashes between Serbian and Croatian football fan groups. Monuments were later erected in Croatian football stadiums to honor the memory of those that were killed.²³ It is interesting that the Torcida fan group from Split was the same group that was forced to go underground during the Tito period. The group suddenly emerged during the late 1980s to join up with the BBB and organize political squads that promoted Croat

²² Ivan Đorđević, and Bojan Žikić, “Football and War in Former Yugoslavia. Serbia and Croatia Two Decades After the Break-up,” *University of Belgrade* (2013): 3.

²³ Armstrong, and Giulianotti, 177.

nationalism. The post-Tito communist authorities underestimated the powerful nationalist symbolic meanings behind these hostile football environments.



Image 10: The Violence at Maksimir Stadium on March 13th, 1990, among Delije and the Bad Blue Boys (BBB) Supporters²⁴

In 1987, a group of young Macedonians created a soccer fan association, known as the Komiti, supporting their club Vardar. The Komiti raised many issues regarding the historical questions and issues of Macedonian minorities within Yugoslavia. The group became prominent in the Macedonian public sphere, especially after Vardar won the Federal Championship of the 1986/87 season.²⁵ Despite the Komiti not gaining as much

²⁴ Brentin, Balkanist, (2015), accessed October 10, 2015, <http://balkanist.net/the-maksimir-myth-25-years-since-the-symbolic-dissolution-of-socialist-yugoslavia/>.

²⁵ Židas Daskalovski, *Walking on the Edge: Consolidating Multiethnic Macedonia 1989-2004* (Chapel Hill, NC: Globic Press, 2006), 24-25.

notoriety as the more vocal Serb and Croat fan group organizations, they were still prominent in their expressions of Macedonian nationalism.

On May 13, 1990, three thousand Delije members led by Arkan, traveled to Zagreb, Croatia to support their team Crvena Zvezda (Red Star), Belgrade against Dinamo, Zagreb. Tensions were building during the game, as expressions of nationalist symbolism erupted from both sides. Ultimately, tensions among the Delije fans and the BBB escalated into physical violence which wounded sixty people. This was considered as one of the most violent riots in history by football spectators. One of the Dinamo Zagreb players, Zvonimir Boban, who was an ethnic Croat was captured on film television kicking a police officer.



Image 11: Zvonimir Boban's, Famous Image of Kicking a Police Officer at Maksimir Stadium (Zagreb), On May 13th, 1990²⁶

²⁶ Dario Brentin, *The 'Maksimir Myth' 25 Years Since the 'Symbolic Dissolution' of Socialist Yugoslavia*, *Balkanist*, (2015), accessed October 10, 2015, <http://balkanist.net/the-maksimir-myth-25-years-since-the-symbolic-dissolution-of-socialist-yugoslavia/>.

Boban's kick became an iconic moment of his football career. Zvonimir Boban was a Yugoslavian national team future prospect. He participated in Yugoslavia's national under twenty football team, which won the 1987 World Youth Championship. These incidents occurring at club level football were significantly impacting the future of the Yugoslavian national team. Boban was part of a new generation of talented Yugoslav footballers that emerged in the late 1980s, who were future prospects for the Yugoslavian national football team.

The Yugoslavian Communist Government Suspicious of Nationalist Activities by
Former National Footballers Living in the West

Interestingly during the late 1980s, ethnic Serb and Croat semi-professional football teams and fan groups, based in Western countries increased their hostilities toward each other. This increase of ethnic hostility was not as visible during the early 1980s. In 1984, an ethnic Albanian residing in the United States formed the New York Albanians. The New York Albanians team members came from Yugoslavian republics of Macedonia, Montenegro and the autonomous region of Kosovo. *The New York Times*, quoted the president of New York Albanians Martin Shkreli stating, "we enjoy beating a team like New York Croatia, not because of old political rivalries, but because it's a good team. In fact we're good friends and usually roast a lamb when we host each other."²⁷

²⁷ Marvine Howe, "In New York, Balkan Rivalries are Fought on a Soccer Field," *The New York Times*, 11 August, 1991, 6 April, 2015, <http://www.library.uni.edu/gateway/owl/lexisnexis-academic>, 1.

During the early 1980s, football was considered by many of these teams as non-political and just an extra-curricular activity.

However as the national crises of Yugoslavia progressed during the late 1980s, hostilities between ethnic Serb and Croat semi-professional football clubs, based in the West, increased. In 1991, *New York Times* news article quoted the president of New York Croatia Tony Donlić as stating, “luckily we don’t play Serbs now because it could get really rough. He recalled that the last time his team played against Queens United, about two years ago, when the Serbs flaunted the Yugoslav flag with the red star of communism. Angry Croatians seized the flag and warned they would burn it next time.”²⁸ Donlić was referring to Queens United, a team that was comprised of half ethnic Serb players and was relegated to the second division. By 1991, football players and supporters residing in the West, were increasingly showing support for their ethnic nationalities. In 1991, *The New York Times* reported, “before they take to the soccer field, the members of New York Croatia stand at attention. For the homeland! The captain shouts. Ready! Ready! Ready! the team members respond.”²⁹

In Sydney Australia, there was the development of a Sydney Croatia football club. In 1988, supporters of Sydney Croatia (semiprofessional club) waved their red, white and blue flags in the sky at every home game. These flags were symbolic for

²⁸ Marvine Howe, 2.

²⁹ Marvine Howe, 1.

Croatian independence from Yugoslavia. The captain and coach of Sydney Croatia Vedran Rožić stated, “I don’t want to mix sports and politics. I am here for soccer and nothing else.”³⁰ The Yugoslavian communist government became suspicious of Rožić due to his sudden move to Australia after earning 10 caps for the Yugoslavian national team. The Communists feared that Rožić could be utilized as a propaganda tool for Croats living in Australia. Despite Rožić never disclosing his personal political views, the communist Yugoslav government continued to be suspicious of his activities. There were major security exercises in Australia when games were played between Serbs and Croats.³¹

Perhaps the increase of hostilities expressed in Western countries by ethnic Serbs and Croats, was due to many footballers and supporters having deep connections to Yugoslavia. Many of these footballers and supporters moved from Yugoslavia to the West and still had family members residing in Yugoslavia. Some of these fans were even willing to get physically involved and fight for their respective ethnicities during the Yugoslavian dissolution conflict. At the start of the Yugoslavian war, ten New York Croatian fans flew to Yugoslavia to join the fight against the Serbs.³² Perhaps, communist suspicions regarding former national Yugoslavian footballers residing in the West, were based on their understanding of the national team’s role of fostering

³⁰ Michael Cockerill, “For Fans of Croatia the Name is the Game; Grand Final Countdown,” *Sydney Morning Herald (Australia)*, 30 August, 1988, 6 April, 2015, <http://www.library.uni.edu/gateway/owl/lexisnexis-academic>, 1-2.

³¹ Cockerill, 2.

³² Cockerill, 2.

Yugoslavian unification. Thus, focusing on this external threat to Yugoslavia, the communist officials were undermining internal threats of Yugoslavian football clubs and their fan clubs.

The 1990 World Cup Yugoslavian National Football Team

Historically the Yugoslavian national football team was dominated by ethnic Serbs and Croats, along with players who played for major football clubs located in Serbia and Croatia. The 1990 World Cup squad had eight players from all of the Serbian teams. Croatian teams were also still significantly represented on the national roster. At the time *The Sunday Herald* reported, “there were many accusations of match-fixing, that Crvena Zvezda (Red Star) and Partizan players were being favored in national selections and even that players of the Serbian clubs were being paid in hard foreign currency while those of others were getting along on worthless Dinars.”³³ Perhaps this increase of traditional frustrations reported in 1990, could be linked to desires of independence by other Yugoslav republics.

Surprisingly in the midst of a political and national crises, the 1990 Yugoslav national team had one of the most multi-ethnic rosters. The 1990 team included five ethnic Bosniak players (Faruk Hadžibegić, Fahrudin Omerović, Mirsad Baljić, Refik Šabanadžović and the legendary Safet Sušić); it had two ethnic Montenegrins (Dragoljub

³³ Murray L, “Violence threatens game in Yugoslavia,” *Sunday Herald*, 30 September, 1990, 5 March, 2015, <http://www.library.uni.edu/gateway/owl/lexisnexis-academic>, 1.

Branović and Dejan Savićević) and two ethnic Macedonian (Vujadin Stanojković and Darko Pančev) along with one ethnic Slovene (Srečko Katanec). Finally it had ten ethnic Croats (Tomislav Ivković, Zoran Vulić, Davor Jozić, Zlatko Vujović, Alen Bokšić, Robert Prosinečki, Robert Jarni, Davor Šuker, Andrej Panadić and Dragoje Leković) and only two ethnic Serbian players (Predrag Spasić and the legendary Dragan Stojković). The 1990 national Coach Ivica Osim was born in Sarajevo (Bosnia and Herzegovina), during World War II. His father was ethnically Slovene-German and his mother was Polish-Czech. Osim had a unique multi-ethnic background from most previous Yugoslav coaches. The 1990 World Cup squad included players from all Yugoslavian republics. After Yugoslavia disintegrated, some Croats were upset that all of the trophies won by the former national Yugoslavian football team went to Serbia.³⁴ This frustration by Croats is perhaps due to having such an historic ethnic Croat presence on the national Yugoslavian team.

Coach Ivica Osim was criticized by journalists for his selection of the 1990 national team roster. Coach Osim was criticized for his selection of nine players that played for clubs in Western Europe and not for the Yugoslavian league. Out of those nine players seven of them became starters.³⁵ Osim justified his actions by stating:

³⁴ Croatian players in Yugoslavian national team: Historic injustice, Big Soccer, August 20, 2011, accessed May 22, 2014, <http://forums.bigsoccer.com/threads/croatian-players-in-yugoslavian-national-team-historic-injustice.1805884/>.

³⁵ Michael Janofsky, "Support for Maradona From an Opponent," *The New York Times*, 29 June, 1990, 5 March 2015, <http://www.library.uni.edu/gateway/owl/lexisnexis-academic>, 1.

With the Yugoslavian press attacking me, the players, everybody, there was big pressure on them for each match. They felt they had to prove themselves as players. Their individual play became more important than the team. Now that they have proved themselves, they have improved the team. They are playing much better and have only the pressure of the importance of each match. Of course, if we lose on Saturday, the journalists will turn against me again. I expect that.³⁶

Previous national coaches, like Coach Toplak did not face such criticism from the press. Yet unlike Toplak, Ivica Osim was successful in getting the team to the quarter finals during the 1990 World Cup. The 1984 Yugoslavian Olympic team and the 1990 World Cup team had the same purpose of fostering Yugoslavian unification and ethnic nationalism within both of the team rosters was difficult to detect. The Olympic team did not face the political environment and the ethnic hostilities that the World Cup team confronted. This is perhaps why the 1990 Yugoslavian national football team was harshly criticized by journalists and at times seemed hopeless in their efforts to foster Yugoslavian unification. Players: Tomislav Ivanović, Srećko Katanac, Safet Sušić, Faruk Hadžibegić, Zlatko Vujović and Dragan Stojković played in the 1984 Yugoslavian team that participated in the UEFA Cup tournament and the 1990 Yugoslavian team which participated in the World Cup tournament. These were some of the older veteran players who were not impacted by new developments of ethnic nationalism within Yugoslavian club level football.

³⁶ Janofsky, 2.

The 1990 World cup roster was dominated by older veteran players, with the additions of several younger players. Among those younger players were Robert Prosinečki and Davor Šuker, who later became among the greatest legends of the Croatian football. Younger players such as Zvonimir Boban, who was the future prospect for the Yugoslavian national team, were influenced by club level football, which had experienced an infiltration of ethnic nationalism within their fan clubs. Despite the divisive political realities of Yugoslavia, the 1990 Yugoslavian national World Cup team veteran dominated roster, attempted to continue fostering the Yugoslavian spirit of “Brotherhood and Unity”. However younger players that emerged on the 1990 national team roster, such as Davor Šuker, witnessed certain developments of ethnic nationalism occurring at club level football. Davor Šuker was a talented ethnic Croat player that signed with Dinamo, Zagreb in 1989.

The 1990 Yugoslavian National Football Team’s Temporary Success of Yugoslav Unification

Coach Ivica Osim, selected many Yugoslav players for the 1990 national team who played in foreign European clubs and was harshly criticized by the Yugoslavian press for not selecting players who played for the Yugoslavian national league. Perhaps, Osim thought that Yugoslav players who played in foreign European football clubs were less impacted by ethnic nationalist exploitations in Yugoslavian club level football. Some believed that Osim’s choice of selecting young players who played in other countries

was good for the team. According to a news article from *Toronto Star*, “the boys play for foreign teams and it is a good education for them to travel and live with people in other countries and learn their ways, Rede said. They see how these top clubs run and they see that harmony is a good thing between people. Hopefully, these players will be the next generation of Yugoslav managers who will implement a more open way of thinking a more efficient way of working together.”³⁷ Perhaps the idea was that if Yugoslav younger players traveled and played in foreign countries, they would learn how to participate in a multi-ethnic environment, and thus not be affected by the nationalist developments occurring in Yugoslavian club football.



Image 12: The 1990 Yugoslavian National Team Vs Argentina at the 1990 World Cup Hosted In Italy³⁸

³⁷ Mary Ormsby, “Soccer team unifying force in Yugoslavia,” *The Toronto Star*, 29 June 1990, 5 March, 2015, <http://www.library.uni.edu/gateway/owl/lexisnexis-academic>, 2.

³⁸ Soccermond, *Vs. Argentina 1990*.

Despite all of the challenges, Coach Ivica Osim still believed that through victory the national team could bring the nation closer together. The team prepared the best national squad for the 1990 World Cup, hosted in Italy. Yugoslavian success in the World Cup served as a unifying factor momentarily, as cries were heard throughout the streets, supporting the Yugoslavian Blue. A *Toronto Star* news article quoted a Belgrade newspaper, “football will save Yugoslavia and the World Cup will bring the country together.”³⁹ The Croatian journalist Miro Rede said, “the people of Yugoslavia can put their problems aside when it comes to watching soccer”⁴⁰ *Sportske Novosti* of Zagreb stated, “for many people in Yugoslavia, Yugoslavia is a country that doesn’t exist in their minds. They all want to be separate. But for now, at least as long as Yugoslavia keeps winning, it is different at home. For once, everyone is thinking the same thing: We’re all for the Blues.”⁴¹ There was the momentary belief that the national team could foster Yugoslavian unification.

On June 29, 1990, a *Toronto Star* news article covered the preparation for the 1990 World Cup Quarter Final match between Yugoslavia and Argentina:

The Blues face a formidable opponent in defending champion Argentina. But the 51-year-old Rade, a former Yugoslav international player who anchored the inside left for Partizan Belgrade and Dynamo Zagreb, believes the team can succeed because of its togetherness. There are no problems on the team;

³⁹ Ormsby, 1.

⁴⁰ Ormsby, 1.

⁴¹ Ormsby, 1.

the boys love soccer and there is too much at stake in Italy to be wasted on pettiness. They are playing for Yugoslavia, they are all Yugoslavs and they want to win the World Cup for Yugoslavia.⁴²

The same *Toronto Star* news article published on June 29, 1990, also reported that one of the top players for the Yugoslavian national team Dragan Stojković nicknamed Piksi stated:

I am a Yugoslav first, but I hope that perestroika comes to our soccer association. I can understand our soccer federation's view of wanting to keep its best soccer players in Yugoslavia, but that's not the best way. I think you can safeguard the national team for events like the Olympics and the World Cup, but you can also allow players to leave because, eventually, most of them come back home. When you don't let the players leave, too many of them get lost along the way.⁴³

According to his statement, Stojković a veteran Yugoslavian national footballer, interestingly acknowledged that he was a Yugoslav first. Perhaps Stojković was concerned about the unification of the Yugoslav national team. It could be detrimental to the unification of the national team if younger players were only exposed to Yugoslav club football. Thus, Stojković possibly believed that allowing players to travel and play for other clubs in different countries could strengthen the unity of the Yugoslavian national football team. Unfortunately, many of the younger generation of Yugoslav footballers who emerged in the late 1980s, were playing for major football clubs in Serbia and Croatia.

⁴² Ormsby, 1.

⁴³ Ormsby, 2.



Image 13: Crvena Zvezda (Red Star), Belgrade 1991 UEFA CUP Celebration Photo, Showing Several Players Making the Četnik Hand Sign⁴⁴

In 1991, Crvena Zvezda (Red Star), Belgrade won The Union of European Football Associations (UEFA) championship. There were several non-Serb players who played for the 1991 Crvena Zvezda (Red Star) team including: Prosinečki, Šabanadžević, Savićević, Marović, Najdoski and Pančev. In the famous celebration picture after winning the UEFA cup in Bari, there were eight players celebrating the victory by extending the two-finger and a thumb, a Serb Četnik salute representing the Trinity and the association to the Serb Orthodox Church. Prosinečki an ethnic Croat and a member of the 1990,

⁴⁴ Red Star Belgrade, Xtratime, <http://www.xtratime.org/forum/showthread.php?t=271140>.

Yugoslavian team was not.⁴⁵ Many of the players who played for Crvena Zvezda (Red Star) were a younger generation of talented players and future prospects for the Yugoslavian national team. The UEFA cup victory by Crvena Zvezda (Red Star), Belgrade could have been utilized as a unifying moment, but instead it was utilized to promote ethnic nationalism.

By 1990, Yugoslavian football clubs became tools for fostering ethnic nationalism. This promotion of ethnic nationalism at the club level, affected the entire structure of Yugoslavian football and was a leading obstacle for the 1990 national team to foster the unifying Yugoslavian spirit. By winning, the 1990 national team was only temporarily successful in getting many Yugoslav's for a moment, to feel a sense of Yugoslavian unity.

⁴⁵ Jonathan Wilson, *Behind the Curtain: Travels in Eastern European Football* (London: Orion, 2006), 107.

CONCLUSION

The Communists utilized physical culture and sport to promote ideas of Yugoslav unification. As a result, the communist succeeded in expanding sporting programs all over Yugoslavia. They were particularly concerned with building the socialist moral character of the youth. The communist campaign against ethnic nationalism could be traced in many forms of Yugoslavian life, particularly in sport. The Communists were actively involved in football and utilized it as a tool to promote their ideology by commemorating football clubs, changing names of football clubs to symbolically represent the socialist liberation movement and eliminating teams with historic ethnic nationalist affiliations. All of this was apparent, particularly during the Tito period, in which many football fan clubs were monitored and suppressed from expressing nationalist sentiments.

In order to survive Tito's communist period, certain fan clubs were forced to go underground. The Torcida fan group which was originally forced to go underground during the Tito period, emerged again in the late 1980s to join the BBB and organize political demonstrations. During the Tito period, the Communists succeeded in building a new Yugoslav spirit of unification through physical culture and sport. Many Yugoslavian athletes felt that they were representing a unified Yugoslavia on an international level. Despite communist success, there were still traces of ethnic nationalism in sport prior to 1980. However, ethnic nationalism was much harder to

detect in sport during the Tito period. This can be credited to the communist success in expanding sports in the spirit of Yugoslavian unification and their active involvement to suppress any type of ethnic infiltration that presented itself in Yugoslav sport.

In the early aftermath of Josip Broz Tito's death, sports in Yugoslavia still continued to be utilized in the spirit of unification. This was particularly evident in the early 1980s. Football, and in particular the national team served as a unifying force representing the same Yugoslavia that Tito had built. It was more difficult to trace ethnic nationalism in sports during the early post-Tito period. However there was still an example of expressing ethnic nationalism in football during 1983, when Kosovo Priština fans, comprised of mostly ethnic Albanians, expressed their support for the Albanian president during a football match played in Belgrade, Serbia.

The Yugoslavian national team continued to have many successful moments in international football during the early 1980s. The Yugoslav football league also continued to operate as usual and many of the league's top players were selected to represent the national team. However during the late 1980s, there were certain ethnic nationalist developments that could be traced within the Yugoslavian national football league. The supporters of Dinamo Zagreb, known as the Bad Blue Boys (BBB), formed in 1986 and the supporters of Crvena Zvezda (Red Star) Belgrade, known as the Delije, formed in 1989. There were other fan groups such as the Macedonian Komiti created in 1987, which were active in encouraging discussions regarding Macedonian historical

studies. The BBB and Delije prided themselves on Western ideas of and were influenced by Western popular culture that gained prominence in other parts of communist Eastern Europe, which arguably contributed to the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989.

These two major fan groups, the Bad Blue Boys and Delije, produced radical nationalist elements within them. Some members were there to only support the team, while others were taking a radical approach in expressing their ethnic nationalist sentiments. These radical elements of fan clubs created much hostility between Croats and Serbs. The radicalization of fan clubs, affected the two major football clubs of the Yugoslav League: Dinamo, Zagreb and Crvena Zvezda (Red Star), Belgrade. These fan clubs expressed much nationalist symbolism during games, as they sang nationalist songs and waved nationalist flags. By the late 1980s, football in Yugoslavia lost its unifying character and increasingly became a tool for fostering ethnic nationalism.

The two major teams Dinamo, Zagreb and Crvena Zvezda (Red Star), Belgrade were losing their pure character of facilitating the Yugoslav dream of “Brotherhood and Unity”. The events occurring in the Yugoslavian football league were structurally effecting the future of the Yugoslavian national team, as some of the top players on team were selected from Dinamo and Crvena Zvezda (Red Star). The younger generation of players were influenced by the nationalist exploitations occurring at club level football. However, the 1990 national team was still dominated by veteran players and attempted to foster Yugoslavian unification. All of these events that effected

Yugoslavian football on a fan club and club level, structurally affected the national team. The veteran players on the national team who still believed in Yugoslavian unification, were overwhelmed by ethnic nationalist exploitations occurring within Yugoslavian club football. Despite the momentary success of bringing back sentiments of Yugoslav unification by the 1990 Yugoslavian national team, the team was not able to accomplish long-term sentiments of bringing Yugoslavs together in the spirit of “Brotherhood and Unity”. The 1990 Yugoslavian team was the last generation of veteran players who gave any type of hope for the survival of Yugoslavian unification. However the team was increasingly losing its unifying character, as a new generation of players were selected for the national team. The younger generation of Yugoslavian players were increasingly affected by club level exploitations of ethnic nationalism.

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