Hunger & Fury: The Political in Bosnia and Herzegovina

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Abstract

This text is an attempt to (re)approach the process of political and social transformation in Bosnia-Herzegovina (BiH) over the past century and a half through the prism of popular agency. The primary research question of this dissertation asks why given nearly uniformly catastrophic social indicators across virtually all socio-economic categories there are so few instances of overt popular dissatisfaction (e.g. protests *and/or* energetic voter turnout) with the prevailing political order in BiH? In addressing this question through an analysis that straddles political theory, international relations, and political economy literatures I focus on the role played by the specific local variant(s) of the nation-state form in essentially *depoliticizing* the majority of the population in this polity. My central argument is that rather than creating the conditions for rational-legal public administration and multi-party competition, the state in BiH has historically served to deny political agency to would-be citizens. The state in BiH has actively sought to eliminate civil society, in other words, and that therefore the defining political and social crises in contemporary BiH must be understood in the context of nearly two centuries of this particular and peculiar state (and nation) formation process. I argue that the historic evolution of the BiH polity has been characterized by a form of *elastic authoritarianism*; the process of seemingly persistent ideological mutation contrasted by static political and economic patterns. Uniquely persistent patterns marked in BiH primarily by oligarchic political and parasitic economic practices. Thus despite decades of international "democracy promotion" efforts in BiH since the conclusion of the war in the 1990s, it is these broader patterns of state formation (and perpetuation) that have suffocated attempts at genuine popular participation in the country's politics.

For Amra, Refik, Emina, and Ayna.

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The completion of this dissertation is only partially the result of my own efforts. In fact, it is mostly the product of the support, patience, and mentorship of a constellation of people who have navigated me through this journey.

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The role my parents and family have played in this undertaking is difficult to encapsulate, no less so the significance of its completion in their eyes. My parents' eternal dedication, bravery, and sacrifice for their family is something I have only grown more awed and humbled by with age. My sister, to whom I have scarcely often enough expressed gratitude for her friendship and affection, has also ensured that the collective trials and triumphs of our little tribe will be remembered by at least one more generation. Watching Ayna (currently eight going on *ninja*) grow up over the course of writing this text has only further convinced me of the importance of autonomy and agency—as both a principle of politics and pedagogy.

It has been from Elise Wang, however, that I have learnt the finer points of functioning personhood. Where I middle at opining, she is the scholar. Yet above all, she is my friend, always; an exhausting feat for which I am forever indebted.

Because I am humbled by them all, the reader will recall that all errors, typos, and gross (mis)generalizations in this text are solely my own.

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Introduction

"Those who profess to favor freedom and yet depreciate agitation, are people who want crops without ploughing the ground; they want rain without thunder and lightning; they want the ocean without the roar of its many waters. The struggle may be a moral one, or it may be a physical one, or it may be both. But it must be a struggle. Power concedes nothing without a demand. It never did and it never will." – Frederick Douglass, "West India Emancipation," 1857.

For all the horrors of the Bosnian War (1992-1995) and the bloodied political lines along which the country fractured, and along which it remains divided today, the daily work of "co-existence" is the task of ordinary people who usually have neither the emotional nor financial means to begin their lives anew, again, once more, together or apart, as the circumstances may warrant. And yet democracy as a social phenomenon has only existed when just these peoples, these *plebes*, the *demos*, have won the right to govern themselves, wrested from the grip of their superiors through their collective agency, despite their poverty and individual weaknesses.

Over the course of the last century and a half, two imperial regimes have collapsed in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH), two separate incarnations of Yugoslavia have met the same fate, and entire populations have been exterminated, in the 1940s and 1990s. Despite what appears to be the *entropic* quality of the state in this polity, I argue that the defining feature of modern Bosnian and Herzegovinian politics and history, which is to say, the period from the end of 19th century to today, has been the emergence of an *elastic* state form as the primary mode of social organization in the region. By this I mean that while particular ideological regimes have come and gone in BiH, a peculiar *staatsidee* has remained; one fundamentally and persistently patrimonial and authoritarian. What is thus *particular* to BiH (and to the Balkans as a whole, to an extent) is that dramatic ideological mutations have been accompanied by stationary socio-political practices: a virtually identical cast of elites has survived revolutions,

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wars, and geopolitical realignment, while persistently suppressing the ability of ordinary peoples and citizens in BiH from any meaningful participation in the political process.

Accordingly, I am concerned with why, though they have fought in the ranks of imperial and national armies and militias, and have been exposed to the machinations of virtually every major ideological movement of the 19th and 20th centuries, political conditions for the majority of people in BiH have essentially remained static. The country is today, as it was at the end of the 19th century, overwhelmingly rural, economically backwards, and politically dominated by a handful of socio-economic (and criminal) "clans" of supposedly mutually incompatible ethno-national persuasions.

Though the 20th century produced some of the worst horrors in the history of humanity, from the Holocaust, to the Great Leap Forward, to the Rwandan Genocide, it was also a century of tremendous positive change. From women winning the vote to decolonization, the world is in many places and in many ways a far different place than it was at the end of the 19th century. And yet my descriptions of BiH's current social and political ills would be intimately familiar to not only my deceased grandparents, but my great grandparents and likely even my great-great grandparents. As Refik Hodžić remarked in a recent *Guardian* article on the struggles of genocide survivors in post-war BiH, "There's a connection between economic robbery and the trauma of the past...Poisonous cynics are making money by undermining our attempts to bring peace. This is hatred as a smokescreen for robbery" (Vulliamy 2015).

In other words, what has survived through all these generations is not some inherent Balkan idiocy that has made them less capable of claiming for themselves "peace, order, and good governance." Though conditions appear to have remained static, in reality, the 19th and 20th centuries were a period of profound conflict and transition for the entire region. During the four decades or so of Communist rule, for instance, Yugoslavia and BiH along with it underwent a rapid process of economic modernization and industrialization that elevated living

standards (in the cities, at least) to levels comparable with the West. But unlike the great social and class confrontations that defined the development of Europe's western half, in the Balkans neither representative democracy nor a capitalist mode of production followed from or accompanied in any meaningful sense technological industrialization.

Over the course of the next five chapters, I will explain how the state in the Balkans and BiH *remained* perennially as an "organized protection racket," as Charles Tilly has labelled the initial stage of state formation. This peculiar Balkan state form endured, despite a series of ideological transformations, as a largely patrimonial and authoritarian mode of social organization. At the root of this political peculiarity is the likewise primitive nature of economic relations in the region—as understood by the Marxist theorist David Harvey, in particular—based on a continuous process of "accumulation through dispossession," in which violence was an integral aspect of this specific "mode of production." Indeed, I suggest that it was these static and retrograde economic practices that ultimately stunted the further development of a genuine *polis* in the Balkans and BiH, instead continuously tilting towards an emptying of the popular aspects of modern state formation that characterized the collapse of feudalism in Western Europe.

In place of liberal social contracts, the atom of social cohesion and association in the Balkans became the germ of the "nation-state" complex, a fiction of homogeneity possible only through successive episodes of war, genocide, and dispossession. The fantasy of the ethnically-pure nation-state, ostensibly inspired by the French (and later European) Revolution(s), served in reality the interests of Balkans elites who wished to keep the region from undergoing precisely the profound *social* transformations that came to envelop Western Europe at the end of the 18th century and continued throughout the course of the 19th and 20th centuries. And while nationalism is not a phenomenon unique to the Balkans as such, its per-

sistency and decidedly anti-democratic bent, then as now, has significantly altered the course of social developments in the region in a particular manner.

Specifically, the embrace of nationalism ably obscured the primitive economic regime of the Balkan elites, which always relied heavily on the use of violence and dispossession against overwhelmingly rural (and uneducated) populations. As a result, war and the outward appearance of regime change often roiled southeastern Europe—but rarely did dramatic social changes follow in their wake. The emergence of the state form in the Balkans after the collapse of the Ottoman Empire must thus be understood through these defining "local characteristics." As must the experience of the generations of ordinary Balkan *plebes*, who in the process of Balkan state-building became members of nations, without ever becoming citizens, who were forced into the state, while being ejected from the *agora* and thus the *polis* as a whole.

Yet my use of these lynchpin concepts in democratic political theory, like polis and demos, is not without problems. Since one of the central claims of this text is that state and political development in BiH and southeastern Europe has been differently constituted than the development of these institutions and norms in the West,[1] does it even make sense to speak of a Bosnian demos if, as I claim, a substantive sense of citizenship remains unrealized here? And for that matter, how ought we as theorists and scholars to think of a term like "ordinary people," which seems so vague and unconsidered?

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[1] I should from the onset acknowledge the vagueness of "the West" as a conceptual category. Aside from Edward Said's seminal deconstruction of the categories of both "the East" ("the Orient") and "the West," Liah Greenfeld has also convcingly argued that Western modernity was initially a localized, English phenomenon that can be traced to country's social and political transformation in the 17th century. Only later did France, Germany, and other European states join the political and cultural space of what would later become known as "the West," as each followed their own paths to "modernity" (Greenfeld, 1993). While both Said and Greenfeld's insistence on the historically contingent nature of the term is well taken, it is also no doubt the case that to speak of the West today is to definitively gesture at a relatively coherent collection of societies. Accordingly, I use the term to refer to the Western European states, plus certain settler-colonial states founded by British imperialists; specifically, the United States, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand. In other words, the prosperous, stable parliamentary democratic regimes that dominate both the world's economy and its (geo)politics.

My aim in this work is not to provide for a theory of citizenship in southeastern Europe as such, and in any case that project has already more ably been undertaken elsewhere (Štiks and Shaw 2013). Nor do I aim to deviate very far from the established understandings of the term as proposed by other radical democratic theorists. Martin Breaugh, for instance, provides a refined definition of "plebes": "'The Plebes' is the name of an experience, that of achieving human dignity through agency. The plebes designates neither a social category nor an identity but rather a fundamental event: the passage from a subpolitical status to one of a full-fledged political subject" (Breaugh 2013, xv). Breaugh argues that the plebes are not like the demos because the former has always been a pejorative term for those who were insurrectionary and revolutionary in their demands for popular power, while the demos were reformist and institutional, who sought to be granted representation by their benevolent elites (ibid, p. xviiii). Moreover, the plebes were specifically those who comprised the Roman underclass but who through a series of popular revolts, won for themselves greater rights and in the process realized their own agency as a collective, and ushered in what Breaugh refers to as a "discontinuous tradition of political freedom," a concept not unlike Sheldon Wolin's "fugitive moments" of democracy—episodic articulations of genuine collective deliberation and agency—which I will discuss at length in this text (ibid, p. xix).

In truth, I am quite sympathetic to Breaugh's insistence on the crucial difference between the plebes and the demos, on the difference between the "many" as a dangerous rabble, and the "people" as refined, conservative audience. And indeed, much of what I propose is required for democratic renewal in BiH is just that: the presence of a dangerous rabble. Yet as Wendy Brown notes, contra Breaugh's account, the precise meaning of demos remains contested in political theory; it is unclear whether it is to mean "the people" in their entirety or the poor, specifically (Brown 2015, 19-20). The difference is not insignificant, as presumably a definition of the demos aligned with the poor, or the underclasses, would position the term closer to the insurrectionary tendencies that Breaugh highlights. But both the use of demos

and plebes by these democratic theorists gestures at a bigger claim: that contemporary citizenship in the West is in some important respects a shell of what it was in Ancient Greece and even the Roman Republic. Which is to say that even for them, coming out of the comparatively "deeply" democratic West, citizenship remains a work in progress; a concept that even in our lifetime, for instance, has deteriorated under the pressures of rapacious neoliberal economics and is today in need of resuscitation.

In this then, I find a point of contact with the situation as exists presently in BiH and as it has developed throughout the period I will consider. Like Breaugh, Brown, Wolin and others, I use the notion of the demos and plebes in an *aspirational* sense. When I use the term citizens, on the other hand, it tends to be more technical, as for instance in the discussion in Chapter V regarding constitutional discrimination of particular legal citizens in contemporary BiH. And in between the potential Bosnian demos and the reality of what passes for citizenship in the country today, there are "ordinary people"—*obični narod*—a vulgar term perhaps within the annals of political theory but one that best approximates, in my experience, how the majority of the population in BiH and the former Yugoslavia as a whole think of themselves. Admittedly, the term is certainly imbued with a kind of tragic pathos in the collective imagination of the region, a sentiment I aim actively subvert here. But since this project is one invested in making legible the ideal of the demos, I feel it appropriate, even necessary, to use on occasion the lexicon of the people to whom I am trying to make this ideal legible in the first place.

Because significant portions of this project concern themselves with Balkan political history, a similar clarification of my historiographical approach is also necessary from the onset, as with the preceding particulars of my theoretical terminology. Of course, my aim in this work is not to provide a definitive account of the social transformation of southeastern Europe over the past century and a half. Instead, my objective is to demonstrate why the displacement

and suppression of civic agency in contemporary BiH is not merely a result of the Dayton constitutional order. Indeed, my project aims to show how the anti-democratic dimensions of the Dayton constitution are themselves a product of broader and older socio-political patterns.

In this respect, my work is most influenced by the *longue durée* approach of the Annales School and the Political Marxist view of social transformation. From the Annales School I take the rejection of "histoire événementielle," that is of history as seen as a series of dramatic events and/or as dominated by particular individuals and their associates. As I will stress throughout this text, in order to fully grasp their social and historical relevance, even the specific decisions of particular leaders need to be understand in the context of broader patterns of development.

Indeed, as Fernand Braudel's pioneering work on the Mediterranean space suggests, in this respect, even the environment can play a defining role in the evolution of particular societies (Braudel, 1995). Admittedly, Braudel has occasionally been accused of a kind of "environmental determinism" in his work. Such accounts, however, do a disservice to the intricate and complex network of social, political, and geographic relations and factors Braudel depends on to inform his view of the Mediterranean region—the most relevant of his studies for my purposes. Nevertheless, I grant that environmental determinist accounts do exist—especially in the popular literature on the Balkans (Lynch, 2013). And insomuch as Chapter II, specifically, of this text makes reference to the distinctions between hill and plains cultures, as explored in the work Perry Anderson and James Scott, it is not where the explanatory stress of my approach rests.

Assisting my use of Braudel's macro-historical approach is also the work of Political Marxist scholars like Benno Teschke and Ellen Meiksins Wood. Teschke's critical assessment of the role of the Peace of Westphalia in the development of the modern state system is important for my considerations of the peculiar mutations of the state form in southeastern Eu-

rope. Wood's critique of the traditional accounts of the emergence of capitalism ("question-begging [assumptions] that it has always existed in embryo, just needing to be liberated from its natural constraints") meanwhile, parallels my own attempts to dislodge nationalism from the center of Bosnian and Balkan historiography (Wood, 2002, p. 97). Such theses dominated popular accounts of the region in the 1990s, and although most scholarship since then has challenged notions of "ancient ethnic hatreds" as catalysts of southeast European history, comparatively little work has been done examining the phenomenon according to the parameters of something like the Political Marxist or Annales School approach.

This text is an attempt to undertake such an examination. Since nationalism persists as the dominant analytical lens for southeastern Europe and BiH—even when it is *rejected* as a relevant category by informed scholars—then understanding the phenomenon as a "social form," with both political and socio-economic functions (rather than merely a cultural trait) must be part of the foundation for a new critical approach.

Above all, it is contemporary BiH that is most affected by this peculiar history. In the proceeding five chapters I will demonstrate why it is not merely the dissolution of Yugoslavia or the bizarre and convoluted features of the Dayton Peace Accords that have conspired to keep this country one of the poorest and most corrupt in Europe. I will show how the seemingly unbridled power of BiH's political and economic elite is the direct consequence and product of the weakness or rather the defeat of BiH's *plebes* and *demos* over the course of more than a century of state building and state collapse.

To begin thinking about BiH citizens as agents rather than victims of change it is necessary not only to embrace a critical historiographical approach, however, but also to situate such an analysis in the context of existing debates about democracy, rather than what has elsewhere been referred to as "transitology"; various assessments of the seemingly unending "transitions" of post-Communist and post-war states since the end of the Cold War (Gans-

Morse, 2004). Moreover, it is necessary to move away from the massive but narrow "war literature," (Donia & Fine, 1994, Silber & Little, 1996, Andjelic, 2003, Glaurdić, 2011) in which I also include the bulk of critical scholarship that remains invested in debates about the (construction of the) dissolution of Yugoslavia and the various experiences thereof (Campbell 1998, Mueller 2000, Wilmer 2002, Žarkov 2007, Todorova 2009, Bistro 2012). Both of these sets of literature have made tremendous contributions to expanding and moving studies of the Balkans beyond the essentialism of Robert Kaplan and his associates who initially popularized the "ancient ethnic hatreds" thesis as the primary analytical framework for the dissolution of Yugoslavia. But the task remaining concerns the future and not the past. Chapters II and III of this text will cover some historical ground but they do so for the sake of context and there still primarily with an eye to the question of barriers to and possibilities for civic agency in contemporary BiH. In short, I tread on some familiar historical ground but only to dislodge the traditional focus on the "national question" with an examination of the *political question*.

The second through fourth chapters will trace the marginalization of popular political participation in BiH over the course of the last century and a half, beginning with the end of the Ottoman Empire and leading into the contemporary period of sovereignty. For BiH, this period was marked by several transitions, from empire(s) to constitutional monarchy, from one-party dictatorship to nominal representative democracy. I argue that this disparate succession of regimes nevertheless shared at least one essential and common vision: the attempt to prevent the emergence of an autonomous civil society, able to challenge elite power that could contest state authority, and present democratic alternatives to the uniformly exclusionary and hierarchical machinations of existing elites. While some of these regimes were categorically anti-democratic, others, like the Communists and the contemporary ruling establishment, were and are ideologically committed to some version of democracy. Nevertheless, in practice, they too have worked to evacuate the political out of politics in BiH.

I borrow this distinction, between the political and politics, primarily from Sheldon Wolin[2]:

> I shall take the *political* to be an expression of the idea that a free society composed of diversities can nonetheless enjoy moments of commonality when, through public deliberations, collective power is used to promote or protect the well-being of the collectivity. *Politics* refers to the legitimized and public contestation, primarily by organized and unequal social powers, over access to the resources available to the public authorities of the collectivity. Politics is continuous, ceaseless and endless. In contrast, the political is episodic, rare.

> [...] In my understanding, democracy is a project concerned with the political potentialities of ordinary citizens, that is, with their possibilities for becoming political beings through the self-discovery of common concerns and modes of action for realizing them. (Wolin, 1996, p. 31)

I read Wolin's conception of democracy in conversation with James C. Scott's understanding of the term, who similarly argues:

> It is a cruel irony that the great promise of democracy is rarely realized in practice. Most of the great political reforms of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries have been accompanied by massive episodes of civil disobedience, riot, lawbreaking, the disruption of public order, and, at the limit, civil war. Such tumult not only accompanied dramatic political changes but was often absolutely instrumental in bringing them about. Representative institutions and elections by themselves, sadly, seem to rarely bring about major changes in the absence of the force majeure afforded by, say, an economic depression or international war...Ordinary parliamentary politics is noted more for its immobility than for facilitating major reforms.

> ...The fact that democratic progress and renewal appear instead to depend vitally on major episodes of extra-institutional disorder is massively in contradiction to the promise of democracy as the institutionalization of peaceful change. And it is just as surely a failure of democratic political theory that it has not come to grips with the central role of crisis and institutional failure in those major episodes of

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[2] The political is a concept appearing in virtually all of modern political and democratic theory. I emphasize Wolin's contribution and the contributions of other radical democratic thinkers because theirs is ultimately the conception that most readily makes sense to me within this context. Carl Schmitt's conceptualization of the state and the political is *à propos* here, especially as it concerns the friend-enemy distinction, but also the notion of the "sovereign dictatorship" because it represents, arguably, the opposing pole to Wolin's (Schmitt, 2007). If Schmitt's understanding of the political is the process whereby "we" oppose ourselves to an "other" in order to create internal unity, a secure state, then the problem in BiH is not that there is no conception of the political but rather that there are (at least) three different ideas thereof. The Office of the High Representative (OHR), the executive body of the international community's presence in BiH, as a kind of "sovereign dictatorship" has failed to create any kind of holistic political project, despite being a fundamentally extra-constitutional body. However, this understanding of the political is not particularly useful to this work and if anything leads us down the path of insisting on *more* state authority and more virulent nationalism when my aim is to distill the deeply problematic facets of both in the first place.

social and political reform when the political system is relegitimated (Scott, 2012, pp. 16-17, 19).[3]

What both Wolin and Scott suggest is that democracy is a Janus-faced concept. It is at once the mantra of every government in the Western world and many others too, with the addition of qualifying prefixes such as "Islamic" and "workers'" a common practice. On the other hand, what we understand by democracy has shifted dramatically over the centuries—with its most radical, participatory potentialities having virtually withered away completely. "Contemporary democratic governments," writes Bernard Manin, "have evolved from a political system that was conceived by its founders as opposed to democracy." "[W]hat we today call representative democracy," he continues, "has its origins in a system of institutions (established in the wake of the English, American, and French revolutions) that was in no way initially perceived as a form of democracy or of government by the people" (Manin, 1997, p. 1). Today, Wolin concurs, "[w]hat is actually being measured by the claim of democratic legitimacy is not the vitality of democracy in those nations but the degree to which democracy is attenuated so as to serve other ends. The most fundamental of these is the establishment and development of the modernizing state" (Wolin 1996, p. 42).

Jeremy Valentine provides a useful overview of the competing conceptions of the political, noting nevertheless that collectively "the distinction between politics and the political serves to designate a difference between on the one hand normal, ordinary and routine everyday activities which are occupied by the production and distribution of power, both senses of

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[3] Related here are also the competing usages of the term "democracy," even within the "radical democratic" camp. Most importantly, the last decade has witnessed the rise of the "deliberative democratic" approach, especially as influenced by Jürgen Habermas' work on "discourse ethics" (Habermas, 1999). There has also been an accompanying interest in broadly post-structuralist critiques of various aspects of democratic theory (Tønder & Thomasse, 2005, pp. 1-16) , seen even in the most radical quarters of this school, as with Saul Newman's work on "post-anarchism" (Newman, 2010). A comprehensive review of this literature is impossible at this juncture so I will instead merely emphasize why I draw on contributions by Wolin, Scott, Graeber and others in this text or rather, what shared thread I am interested in pursuing in their work. Namely, I am interested in material politics rather than discourse analysis. In keeping with the plenums I discuss later in this text, following Scott I am interested in "major episodes of extra-institutional disorder," the logistics involved in their formation, and their potential to win major reforms and concessions from governing authorities. I find in Wolin et al not only a discussion of such tactics but also the theoretical analysis which embeds this process of popular intervention into the canon of genuine, robust democratic thought.

'power over' and 'power to', and including the contested and disputed nature of these activities, and, on the other, that which is supposed to ground, explain, or distinguish and locate these activities as a specific sphere of thought or action" (Valentine 2006, p. 506). In considering contributions from Hobbes, Schmitt, Arendt, Wolin and others, Valentine, however, consistently returns to the notion of "ground" and "foundation(s)" and suggests that the political is, in essence, a return to the questions of origins and basis of political order. As such, he critiques accounts that deny "the historicity of the polity" (ibid, 509) and obscure the violent and anti-democratic dimensions of "normal, ordinary and routine everyday activities" that constitute politics.

Far more constitutive of the modern political experience, Wolin, Scott, and Valentine suggest, is the 1648 *Peace of Westphalia*, the text that defined an "institutional arrangement for organizing political life that is based on two principles: territoriality and the exclusion of external actors from domestic authority structures" (Straumann 2008, p. 173) and Max Weber's subsequent clarification of the state as being the one institution characterized by its monopoly over the *legitimate* use of violence in society (Weber M. 1994). In short, the role of the state and the relationship between democratic practices and institutions lies at the heart of the modern political experience.

The state's monopoly over the legitimate use of violence is synonymous with what Richard Day has called the state's "hegemony of hegemony" (Day, 2005, p. 8) and perhaps even Michel Foucault's earlier conception of *biopower* and *governmentality* (Foucault, 2009). Namely, that a crucial dimension of the state's "monopoly" consists not only of the pacification and elimination of competing coercive projects (i.e. a civil war or foreign occupation) but, above all, in the hegemonic assertion that there cannot be alternative forms of social organization to the state *form*. A state can be broadly liberal or authoritarian—and this distinction is important—but for society as such to exist there must be a state. This logic has re-

mained consistent from the moment Hobbes argued that without the guaranteed security of a state,

> there is no place for industry, because the fruit thereof is uncertain: and consequently no culture of the earth; no navigation, nor use of the commodities that may be imported by sea; no commodious building; no instruments of moving and removing such things as require much force; no knowledge of the face of the earth; no account of time; no arts; no letters; no society; and which is worst of all, continual fear, and danger of violent death; and the life of man, solitary, poor, nasty, brutish, and short (Hobbes & Hay, 2000, pp. 77-78).

To this point, Chris Kortright suggests accordingly that almost "all theories of the State proceed as if the State were indeed a universal, a prerequisite to our social existence rather than a product of our social existence"(Kortright, 2005). David Kanin agrees, noting the "absolute value of the state is rarely questioned, even when the performance of specific states is" (Kanin, 2003, p. 494). Scott also alerts us to the need to *historicize* the emergence of the state and, accordingly, the historical specificity of its mode of power. "The rise of the modern and now hegemonic political module of the nation-state," he argues, "displaced and then crushed a host of vernacular political forms: stateless bands, tribes, free cities, loose confederations of towns, maroon communities, empires. In their place stands everywhere a single vernacular: the North Atlantic nation-state, codified in the eighteenth century and masquerading as universal" (Scott, 2012, p. 53). Charles Tilly too, as mentioned, is famous for having similarly linked the question of violence and the state, conceiving of the latter as an "organized protection racket," inextricably linking "state-making" with "war-making" (Tilly, 1985).[4] Yet "[p]olitical power as coercion," Pierre Clastres reminds us, "is not the *only* model of true power, but simply a *particular case*, a concrete realization of political power in some cultures." "Hence," he goes on to conclude, "there is no scientific reason for granting that modality the privilege of serving as the reference point and the basis for explaining other and different modalities" (Clastres, 1989, p. 22) .

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[4] A similar account, focusing on the role of violence and banditry in the process of state-making, is also given in Mancur Olson's text *Power and Prosperity: Outgrowing Communist and Capitalist Dicaorships*.

Even in the liberal West, the state has impeded politics, these authors argue; it has narrowed the full scope of possibilities available for social organization. Nevertheless, within the framework of a liberal-democratic order, the ground for critique is still fertile. Harold Lasswell's conception of politics as the process by which we determine "who gets what, when and how," for instance, can be largely sequestered to the state and the limited forms of contestation and debate that are allowed to occur within its parameters (Lasswell, 1958). A far broader interpretation, however, can also follow, one that circumvents the state altogether. In their anthropological research, Scott, Graeber, and Clastres demonstrate the complex and diverse set of answers possible to Lasswell's rubric. At the very least, as both a theoretical and practical project, we must note the distinction between politics and the state.

In contemporary BiH, however, the concept(s) of politics and the state and the inherent tension between the two have become *fused*. The "glue" holding the two together is the concept of the nation and the nation-state more broadly, especially as it has been reified by the internationally sponsored Dayton constitution. As Asim Mujkić argues, the contemporary Dayton order insists on a politics of national "biology" where each respective community believes that "we" need "our" state to consolidate its authority and secure territories in order that they, our historic ethno-national enemies, will not exterminate us as individuals and as a group (Mujkić, 2007). Instead of enabling communitarian representation, as originally imagined (Holbrooke, 2011), this constitutional order segments, segregates, and homogenizes the country's respective communities, forcing them into continuous and irresolvable conflict. There is no ideological contestation, not question of who gets, what, when, and how beyond the drawing of lines on maps. Since only essentialist antagonisms prevail, no real possibility for accommodation, reconciliation, or the creation of new political allegiances or identities exists within this framework. The rapper Edo Maajka captures the logic succinctly: "*nije bitna*

ideologija, bitna je biologija, bitna je genetika balije, Ustaše i Četnika" (Maajka, 2004).[5] Zero-sum "anti-politics," in essence, or what James Ferguson labels an "'anti-politics machine,' depoliticizing everything it touches, everywhere whisking political realities out of sight, all the while performing, almost unnoticed, its own pre-eminently political operation of expanding bureaucratic state power" (Ferguson, 1994, p. xv).

The state is everywhere a practical and theoretical hegemon, however, and so Wolin and Mujkić et al share, to a certain extent, a conceptual vocabulary. Yet for all their skeletal similarities, the liberal-democratic state Wolin takes aim at and the oligarchic, Ethnopolis Mujkić deconstructs are phenomena worlds apart. Still, if all states sequester the political, why then is the degree of fusion between politics and the state so much greater in BiH than elsewhere? Why then do social movements and robust, autonomous civil societies persist in many other nation-states, including those in still emerging democracies, yet not in BiH?[6]

The short answer, one I expand on throughout the remainder of this text, has to do with the class structures that have historically shaped the state in BiH. Marx argued that "the executive of the modern state is nothing but a committee for managing the common affairs of the whole bourgeoisie" (Marx & Engels, 1969). That is to say, that the state is a classed phenomenon and that the class dimensions within the state inform its type and function. As I begin to argue in Chapter II, however, there was no bourgeoisie in BiH, there is still not a bourgeoisie in BiH today, and therefore the state in BiH is not a bourgeoisie state; meaning that while the political is sequestered in every state, it is not equally sequestered or for the same reasons. As a result, while BiH today broadly mimics the existence of certain liberal in-

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[5] "Ideology isn't what matters, biology matters, genetics matters: *balije, Ustaše* and *Četniks*." The *Ustaša* and *Četniks* were World War II era Croatian and Serbian quislings, respectively. Both terms are today pejorative labels for Croats and Serbs while the term *balija* similarly applies to Bosniaks—though its meaning and entomology is difficult to translate.

[6] According to the 2014 *Freedom in the World* report by Freedom House, BiH is listed as only "partially free," for instance. Of the seven other states in Europe listed as "partially free" or "un-free," three are in the southeast of the continent while two of these are former Yugoslav republics (Macedonia, Kosovo, and Albania) (Freedom House, 2014). These shared lineages explain why in Chapter II and III, I take a broadly regional perspective that I begin to hone in on BiH itself in Chapters IV and V.

stitutions (e.g. elected parliaments), in reality, the dominant political paradigm in the society remains distinctly non-liberal—both in the prevalence of nationalism as the primary ideological "foundation" (as Valentine might argue) and in the prevailing political economic practices. Exploitative economic practices exist in BiH as they exist in the West, yet these practices are distinctly "primitive," in the Marxian sense of the term,[7] promoted by a class of dispossessors and looters, at best a *lumpenbourgeoisie* class, but more accurately a bandit class. While bearing a resemblance to other post-Communist oligarchs (Eyal, Townsley, & Szelényi, 1998, Volkov, 2002) their rise through the maelstrom of war, informed by a history of similar local practices, and subsequent international legitimation nevertheless makes them distinct.[8]

While it is not my intention to argue that societies do or should have a linear path of development (that liberal-democracy is the end of history, as it were), in attempting to make the case for a democratic analysis of the state in BiH, I think it is useful to follow the work of other democratic theorists who, nevertheless, focus primarily on trials and tribulations of predominantly liberal-democratic regimes. I maintain that their scholarship still offers a great deal of currency for my analysis of the development of the state in BiH. Representative democracy as it is in the Euro-Atlantic world may indeed be truncated, as Wolin and other radical democrats argue, that is that *politics* replaces genuine experiences of the *political*, but it is

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[7] I will expand on my use of the terms "primitive accumulation" and "accumulation through dispossession" in Chapter II.

[8] Robert Latham has astutely reminded me of the literature and critiques of the (failed) state phenomenon in Africa which also make for a relevant point of comparison. For instance, both Siba Grovogui and Alison J. Ayers, two esteemed IR scholars and Africanists, argue that "state failure" on the continent is, primarily, a function and/or the result of capitalist imperialism essentially. Grovogui critiques the Eurocentric "Westphalian model" for assuming and insisting on a uniform model of sovereignty—one that has few historical antecedents in African history, other than through colonial imposition (Grovogui, 2002). Ayers, meanwhile, takes aim at the rapacious tendencies of global capitalism for contributing to the collapse sovereign regimes in African even after the end of (formal) colonial rule (Ayers, 2012). Neither account is wrong, especially the point about the "Eurocentric" origins of the state and state-centric IR and political science, as suggested by many of the scholars previously cited. Where I part in my analysis, as will become clear in later chapters, is that while Western and Eastern imperialisms have certainly played a formative role in the "under-development" of Balkan states and society, the dominant factor has been the tendencies, practices, and strategies of local elites and their confrontations with local populations targeted for assimilation and/or extermination. As I argue above, I think this constitutes a distinct developmental trajectory.

clearly superior, that is, more democratic than the situation in BiH. Within the liberal-democratic order, the possibility of the political nevertheless continues to exist within the logic of these systems. The mobilization and organization of citizens in the name of expanding (or "reclaiming") their respective democratic processes is entirely within the realm of the possible (and legal) in these societies; in other words, citizens continue to be able to intervene even in the established political process in a variety of a ways.

In BiH, on the other hand, the constitution explicitly denies the concept citizenship, insisting instead almost exclusively on ethnicity as the only relevant category of identity in an ostensibly democratic state. But though the Ethnopolis may be the ruling order in BiH, and though it may work towards the fusion of politics and the state, and towards the negation of the political altogether, between the political and the state there is an insurmountable atomic tension. By insisting on cleaving and splitting these concepts, I intend to release certain glimpses of the potential spaces for the expansion of the democratic experience, and the need for popular intervention, even (or especially) in as depoliticized a polity as BiH.

I will attempt to advance this argument in the following five chapters. Though I above gave some indication of the contents of these sections, I wish to nevertheless spell out more clearly how each of these chapters fits within this broader discussion. In the first chapter I will concentrate on fleshing out the theoretical position(s) of this project, situating them within the existing literature(s) on BiH but also within contemporary debates concerning the nature of democracy. As the linkages between these two fields are few and far between, and they, independently of each other, entail massive bodies of literature, this first chapter will focus on key perspectives. My task here is to establish points of contact; primarily, to explain why radical democratic critiques should inform our thinking about the development of the state in BiH.

In the second chapter, I situate the thesis in a historical context, beginning with a broad survey of the development of the Bosnian polity and the emergence of the Balkan na-

tion states between the arrival of the Ottoman Empire in the region in the fifteenth century to the Nazi invasion of Yugoslavia in 1941. I am especially concerned with the creation of these states as the initial episode(s) in a generational process of what I call "elastic authoritarianism"; the process of seemingly continuous ideological transformation, even evolution, yet accompanied by static political and economic norms. Norms characterized in BiH primarily by oligarchic political and parasitic economic practices.

The historical focus sharpens in the third chapter, to concentrate on the advent and dissolution of the socialist self-management regime in the second Yugoslav state, from 1945 to 1980. I focus especially on the accompanying purge of progressive elements within the communist establishment, whose so-called "anarcho-liberal" perspectives articulated not only a meaningful critique of the then regime, but of the broader process of state formation in the Balkans as a whole albeit with some significant reservations. The chapter concludes with a discussion of the profound democratic vacuum left by the disappearance of these genuine democratic and progressive voices within Yugoslavia, and the consequences of that as the country decisively veered towards political and economic crisis.

The final unravelling of the second Yugoslav state and the establishment of the Dayton constitutional order in BiH after 1995 are covered in the fourth chapter. Following the examination of similar processes in Chapters II and III, I discuss the way in which the collapse of the second Yugoslav regime and the emergence of BiH as a sovereign state nevertheless transpired as an elite-dominated process, whose most significant feature was the evacuation and extinguishing of popular participation—despite the initiation of democratic elections— rather than the explosion of ethno-national tensions.

The fifth and final chapter will address the failure(s) of subsequent reform efforts of the Dayton constitutional system in BiH. Despite the adoption of largely "free and fair" electoral practices in the post-war period, I will present BiH as an essentially authoritarian state

albeit one fractured among competing blocs of ethnic sectarians, and thus seemingly perpetually teetering on the brink of collapse. Examining closely the constitutional order established at Dayton, I will argue that reform of such a regime is virtually impossible and will instead advance in place a radically political project for BiH, with popular agency as its centrepiece, making the case for a theoretical project that envisions BiH as an emerging polis rather than as a failed state.

This political project, however, is also woven throughout the text as a whole. In particular, chapters two through four will each hone in on particular "episodes" of democratic potential: the Balkan federalist movement in the nineteenth century, the Yugoslav New Left of the 1960s, the anti-war movement in BiH in the early 1990s, and finally the country's growing post-Dayton protest movement(s). The purpose of this approach is to demonstrate that, as a social space, BiH has never lacked for the insurrectionary and revolutionary impulses necessary for the development of genuine political-democratic social practices. Nevertheless, the primary task of this approach is to explain precisely why these Balkan uprisings *did not* establish such a democratic tradition in the region, unlike similar revolutionary episodes in the West. In the final analysis, however, I will show how even these failed insurrections have tremendous informative potential for a country attempting to have the seeds of its tenuous democratization take root.

Indeed, though it may at times read like a history of failure, the ideal and the aspirations of substantive democratic practice permeate this text. That is why each chapter will examine also the multiplicity of moments of possible democratic and political interventions by ordinary peoples in the historic processes of state formation and consolidation in BiH. After all, no commentary on democracy could possibly foreclose the power of moments—"fugitive moments," as Sheldon Wolin refers to them—in which the *demos* is not only able to emerge but to truly affect change. In this respect, I am convinced of Douglass' formulation: power

concedes nothing without a demand. And in so much as the democratic demands and aspirations of BiH's peoples have been denied to them historically, it remains for the scholar only to document these instances and to learn from them for future moments in which more may be demanded and won. It is clear that failing to steer a new course carries a high price indeed.

Chapter I: Politics, the Political & the State in BiH

<u>Introduction</u>

This text is an attempt to (re)approach the process of political and social transformation in Bosnia-Herzegovina (BiH)[9] over the past century and a half through the prism of popular agency. The primary research question of this dissertation asks why given nearly uniformly catastrophic social indicators across virtually all socio-economic categories there are so few instances of overt popular dissatisfaction (e.g. protests *and/or* energetic voter turnout) with the prevailing political order in BiH? In addressing this question through an analysis that straddles political theory, international relations, and political economy literatures I focus on the role played by the specific local variant(s) of the nation-state form in essentially *depoliticizing* the majority of the population in this polity.

My central argument is that rather than creating the conditions for rational-legal public administration and multi-party competition, as Max Weber understood them (Maley 2011, 52-120), the state in BiH has historically served to deny political agency to would-be citizens. The state in BiH has actively sought to eliminate civil society, in other words, and that therefore the defining political and social crises in contemporary BiH must be understood in the context of nearly two centuries of this particular and peculiar state (and nation) formation process. While this claim is informed by existing critiques of the state *as such*, this text nevertheless stresses the *specificity* of the BiH state. I argue that the historic evolution of the BiH polity has been characterized by a form of *elastic authoritarianism*; the process of seemingly

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[9] Throughout this text I will use the abbreviation "BiH" to refer to the full name of the country, using the standard stylization of the country's local name *Bosna i Hercegovina*. While the abbreviation "BH" or "B-H" appear to have become popular in certain English language publications, as has referring to the country as "Bosnia-Herzegovina" or even just "Bosnia," I find this to be somewhat problematic. I take this position primarily because I think it important to recognize the distinct linguistic and cultural differences that differentiate Herzegovina (the south) from Bosnia (the north) even as the two have been inextricably linked throughout their histories. Recognizing these regional identities is also crucial to undermining hegemonic ethno-nationalist mythologies. Strictly speaking, a Bosniak and a Serb from Mostar (Herzegovina) would historically have had more in common with each other than with their ethnic "kin" in Sarajevo (Bosnia)—to say nothing of still more dubious linkages with their perceived brethren in Serbia, Montenegro, Croatia etc.

persistent ideological mutation contrasted by static political and economic patterns. Uniquely persistent patterns marked in BiH primarily by oligarchic political and parasitic economic practices. Thus despite decades of international "democracy promotion" efforts in BiH since the conclusion of the war in the 1990s, it is these broader patterns of state formation (and perpetuation) that have suffocated attempts at genuine popular participation in the country's politics.

Only by confronting the specificity of the BiH state form, the functions of nationalism within its evolution, and the underlying class dimensions of this state-nation form, can we offer a thorough answer to the question of why BiH's citizens appear consistently as victims rather than agents of historical change.[10] Understanding these processes, I offer, will allow us to (at least, conceptually) (re)claim precisely that which has been marginalized in existing theoretical treatments of the country's political development and without which any kind of substantive conception of democracy is impossible in BiH or anywhere else for that matter: autonomous, popular agency.

Autonomy, however, is always a contingent phenomenon. One of the central arguments of this text concerns the tension(s) between democracy and the state. Substantive democratic experiments have always challenged the homogenizing tendencies of the state or existed outside of the borders of the state altogether. Most importantly, democratic space *within* the confines of the state has historically been the product of contestation, of the organized power of *plebeians* and of the *demos* challenging the exclusionary tendencies of state-building elites (Breaugh, 2013).

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[10] I once had an opportunity to listen to Zlatko Lagumdžija, the then long-time leader of the Social Democratic Party (SDP) of BiH, describe how, in his view, "the Berlin Wall collapsed onto the people of BiH." Such narratives, which displace responsibility for local events unto grand geopolitical changes, entirely out of the hands of local populations, are to me the stuff of conspiracy theories rather than sober political analysis. Unfortunately, in my experience, such narratives are pervasive in the collective political imagination of the region as a whole. In contrast, and as stated at the onset, this dissertation is an attempt to (re)approach the process of political and social transformation in BiH explicitly through the prism of popular agency.

As such, the primary thrust of my commentary on the "anti-democratic" nature of the state, both in the Balkans and generally, is not to envision some "post-statist" future as such. Indeed, I quite readily embrace the democratic "superiority," for lack of a better term, of the contemporary liberal-representative West, even in the age of neoliberal austerity, especially as compared with what passes for democratic governance in present-day BiH. My aim, instead, is to remind the reader of the tremendous radical energy that was required to attain and sustain even this "truncated" version of democracy. It is precisely this process of "popular intervention" or what Gramsci called "the war of position" that I think has been in historically absent in the Balkans. It has been absent, especially, as an intellectual current—an antagonistic, radical interpretation of what a just and free society requires—and, to a lesser extent, as an actual social phenomenon.

Moreover, I should like to clarify from the onset that I am obviously aware of the vast literature on the "state and democracy" in political science. The purpose of this text is not to contribute to this literature as such—though I often rely on it—but rather to study these phenomena as they have manifested themselves (or not) in BiH *in particular*, and the Balkans more broadly. In other words, it is the *lack* of critical scholarship on the state and democracy *in the context* of BiH and the Balkans that my project aims to remedy. In the final analysis, I argue that the (curious) case of BiH *also* offers something to the literature on the state and democracy more generally but this observation is reserved primarily for the conclusion of this text and represents a comparatively tangential point.

In this first chapter, I will attempt to provide the beginnings of a theory of popular intervention that will guide my analysis throughout the remainder of this text. Aside from drawing sharp distinctions between democracy and the state, I will also in this discussion juxtapose politics and what is in much of the radical democratic literature referred to as the political. This distinction is intimately related to the popular interventionist ideal of democracy I em-

brace in this text and that likewise forms the theoretical basis for my critique of the historic process of state-building in the Balkans. In short, while the process of state-building has always and everywhere involved the extinguishing of the political, which is to say the substantive exercise of social agency by the *demos*, I argue that this aspect of statism has been especially acute and pronounced in the Balkans, the most obvious symptom of which has been, as mentioned, the (pre)dominance of the "national question" in this region over all other concerns.

In the remainder of this text I will contextualize the relative weakness of the Balkan *plebeian* masses, of the Balkan *demos*, and therefore of democratic institutions in the Balkans more broadly, through an analysis of the violent and dispossessive tendencies of Balkan elites during the past century and a half. Yet I will also argue that each failed democratic insurrection in the Balkans not only strengthened the hand of the region's historic oligarchs, it also made the need for a greater, better organized democratic intervention on the part of those defeated masses more necessary. This final tension between the failure and inevitability of democratic intervention (if one desires a democratic Balkans that is) will begin to take shape in the proceeding discussion but will mostly be unpacked in the last chapter of this text. Nevertheless, the suggestion that democracy, insomuch as it exists at all, is primarily fleshed out in the process of its articulation, in Sheldon Wolin's "fugitive moments" in other words, in the insurrection of the many against the few, is woven throughout this text.

Remember Bosnia?

At the time of the Bosnian War (1992-1995) a veritable tidal wave of books, articles, and analyses was published on the country's conflict, its histories, and its future prospects. The attention continued for some time after the fighting came to an end with the signing of the Dayton Peace Accords in 1995, as the international community became deeply involved eco-

nomically and politically in the country's post-war reconstruction.[11] Over the course of the 2000s, however, international attention to BIH waned. Both Washington and Brussels acquired new geopolitical priorities after 9/11 and the 2003 invasion of Iraq and, moreover, by the middle of the decade it appeared clear that the prospect of renewed hostilities in the country, at least of the sort seen during the 1990s, was virtually zero. Of course, a litany of Western policy groups continued to (in)frequently publish reports on BiH (the International Crisis Group (ICG) being perhaps the most significant of these)[12] but it seemed clear BiH was on the path of peace, prosperity, and democratic consolidation. Observers held up the country's stable currency, the creation of a Constitutional Court, and unified armed forces as just some of the most significant benchmarks of the journey from "Dayton to Brussels" (Hitchner, 2006). As confirmation of its tremendous progress, BiH signed (but failed to enact) a Stabilisation and Association Agreement (SAA) with the EU in 2008, a first crucial step towards joining the Union.

It was not until the spring of 2015, however, that the EU-BiH SAA finally came into effect. In the intervening seven years, much of the progress the country had made in the first decade after the war unravelled. The 2010 General Elections not only failed to produce clear winners but led to general government gridlock; it took sixteen months to form the first governing coalition, one that collapsed within weeks and was followed by a series of likewise unstable and fleeting compacts. Meanwhile, a 2009 decision by the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) stating that the country was legally obligated to change provisions in its con-

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[11] In Chapter IV I will provide a thorough description of the actual workings of the Dayton constitutional order. For now, I will concentrate on certain relevant theoretical concerns, developed throughout the remainder of this chapter.

[12] Though, tellingly, the ICG released the last of its BiH reports in 2014, arguing that while the country remains mired in constitutional and political problems and is "slowly spiralling towards disintegration," it nevertheless poses "little risk of deadly conflict." This assessment is proof of what close observers of international policy in BiH have understood for nearly a decade: Brussels and Washington simply no longer consider BiH a priority. The terrain is thus once again open for a plethora of political options, including catastrophic violence (International Crisis Group, 2014). Shortly after the ICG report was published, the Democratization Policy Council (DPC) released a rejoinder revealing how during the Crimean annexation crisis, the President of the *Republika Srpska* (RS) entity in BiH, Milorad Dodik, was on the verge of beginning the breakaway process of his "republic," believing he would have Moscow's backing. According to the report, it was Belgrade, not Moscow, Brussels, or Washington, that dissuaded Dodik from his scheme (Weber & Bassuener, 2014).

stitution barring BiH citizens not belonging to one of the three "constitutive peoples" (Bosniaks, Serbs, or Croats) from holding many public offices, including within the three-member Presidency, remained (and remains) unimplemented despite nearly five years of EU pressure (European Commission, 2014). European officials initially threatened non-recognition of the 2014 elections in BiH as a result but as political conditions in the country deteriorated, this demand was dropped.

For all intents and purposes, many government ministries and institutions simply ceased to function as a result of this political deadlock. The shuttering of the National Museum of BiH in Sarajevo in the fall of 2012—left devoid of government funding due to partisan conflicts—was only the most visible symbol of BiH's increasing institutional collapse. It seemed BiH was now on the brink of catastrophe—and not on the path to Brussels. As noted, the international community had already all but withdrawn from day-to-day management of the country's "peace implementation process" at this time, believing the first decade of its administration had prepared the terrain for "local ownership," and with new geopolitical problems further east needing increased attention. An obvious and near instant vacuum emerged. In the midst of partisan mayhem, now unchecked by international supervision, BiH's weak and barely functioning institutions proved unable to respond, especially in an environment (once again) increasingly dominated by nationalist brinkmanship.

In the June of 2013, however, an extra-institutional response began to be formulated.[13] A partisan dispute over personal identification numbers resulted in large crowds of citizens blockading the state parliament in Sarajevo. Then in February 2014, a small worker-led protest in Tuzla triggered days of violent demonstrations across the country that saw dozens of government buildings and party offices torched. Thousands clashed with riot police and thousands more subsequently attended a series of *ad hoc*, grassroots civic assemblies (*plenumi* or plenums) in which workers, students, and pensioners drew up demands for moribund gov-

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[13] I will discuss the subsequent events in much greater detail in Chapter V.

ernment representatives and institutions. Nearly twenty years after the end of the Bosnian War, something akin to a mobilized civil society, with a genuine civic consciousness appeared to have finally returned. It suddenly seemed as though the idea of "local ownership" had taken root among the most important segment of BiH society: its citizens.

But much of that optimism seemed to implode after the October 2014 General Elections. Despite professing near universal disillusionment with the country's ruling establishment, BiH voters returned to power a virtually identical roster of leaders and parties as the one that had been at the helm, with barely any interruption, since 1990. How was it possible that four years (at least) of institutional collapse, demonstrations, and riots, amid growing poverty and inequality, produced no significant change in the character of BiH's elected government(s)?

To truly answer this question, as will become clear over the course of this text, requires examining not only the foundations of BiH's post-war constitutional order but the foundations of the state itself in the Balkans as a whole. My argument, the theoretical dimensions of which I will begin to lay out in this opening chapter, is that the origins of the initial crisis of governance in BiH, as much as the subsequent protests, and (seemingly) the eventual re-affirmation of nationalist rule are all intimately related to the particular and peculiar foundations of Balkan statehood and political economy.[14] Of central concern to the discussion is the role of the aforementioned social revolts (and others similar to it), or what I will term as "popular interventions," through which it is possible, I argue, to envision a substantive break with existing practices and norms and through which a concrete project for actualizing more participatory forms of social organization will likewise become visible.[15]

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[14] I will begin to sketch out the roots, forms, and function of this state form and economy in this chapter but the substantive development of this crucial thread occurs in later chapters.

[15] I had the unique opportunity to essentially test the thesis of this dissertation in the maelstrom of the confusion of this past February, over the course of a series of op-eds, media interviews and appearances, as well as through the launch of an archival blog with colleagues from Canada, the US, Western Europe and BiH itself, called *BH*

Obviously, the question of democratic insurrections as preconditions for substantive democratization has become especially charged in the wake of the contradictory results of the Arab Spring but also the Euromaidan in Ukraine and even the so-called Colour Revolutions of the early to mid-2000s. While I will not provide a comprehensive comparative study of these particular democratic revolts, I will return nevertheless, throughout the course of this text, to the historical and theoretical analysis that informs my argument; namely, that despite occasionally setbacks, there is no substitute for a broadly revolutionary method—that is, a constant process of popular invention and participation—not only for societies transitioning out of authoritarian regimes but for all societies invested in *remaining* democratic in any meaningful sense of the term. In short, while this text fully recognizes the durability of authoritarian rule in the Balkans, what I will refer to as its "elastic" quality, I will likewise flesh out the possibility and necessity for an elastic and perennial possibility for popular, democratic intervention.

To this end, in the following section I will begin to detail the extent to which such an analysis has been absent in existing treatments of post-war BiH and the "theoretical dead ends" to which this hole in the literature has led significant portions of the scholarly and policy community who have concerned themselves with BiH, in particular, but also the wider Balkans as a whole.

Thinking about BiH

In her indispensable survey of post-Yugoslav academic literature, Sabrina Ramet notes that the field "on post-Dayton Bosnia-Herzegovina is divided by three major controversies" (Ramet 2005, p. 185). She lists these as:

Protest Files (BH Protest Files, 2014). As I have spent the better part of the past four years writing on this subject, both in academic journals and popular media, advocating for popular democratic initiatives in BiH to confront and overturn the existing institutional arrangements in the country, I can at the very least confidently say that there is an audience for this perspective. Whether my analysis is correct or desirable nevertheless remains a matter of academic and policy debate.

(1) whether reunification or partition is the better strategy for achieving stability in the area; (2) whether democratization (i.e., including turning governmental authority over to locals) should be (or should have been) undertaken as soon as possible or whether it is preferable to build a civic culture in Bosnia first, before entrusting locals with autonomous power, and (3) for how long should the international community maintain a presence in the unfortunate republic and continue to funnel in money (ibid).

On the face of it, questions of democratic consolidation and agency would appear to permeate all three of these categories. This appearance does not survive serious scrutiny, however. Nor do substantive questions concerning BiH's actually existing political economy ever begin to surface in the texts in question. Nevertheless, as the only systemic attempt to categorize the political science literature on post-Dayton BiH, Ramet's survey is the only sensible point of departure for intervention(s) into these debates.

As it concerns the first of the debates delineated by Ramet, the respective interventions by Nixon, Campbell, and Brendan Simms (Nixon, 1993, Campbell, 1998, Simms, 2002) demonstrate that discussions about partition and segregation were hallmarks of the European response to the "Bosnian crisis" from its earliest days and that these arguments effectively encouraged the use of violence to create homogenous ethnic enclaves while side lining the concerns of ordinary Bosnians and Herzegovinians. "The proposed partition of Bosnia," Campbell points out "into ethnic–national cantons meant that the first peace proposal for Bosnia embodied, prior to the outbreak of open and widespread conflict in Bosnia, the very nexus between identity and territory upon which the major protagonists in the later conflict relied" (Campbell, 1999, p. 404). Such proposals were only ever "charter[s] for ethnic cleansing," as Josip Glaurdić argues citing an earlier work by James Gow (Gow, 1997), adding that they were inductions to "*create* new ethnic realities on the ground," meaning new "Bantustans" where once there had been mixed and pluralistic communities (Glaurdić, 2011, p. 290). Indeed, as V.P. Gagnon convincingly argues, the international community's acceptance of the "ethnic narrative" as a prime causal factor, yet also confusingly as the primary key to solving

the broader Yugoslav crisis, only perpetuated and emboldened the nationalists and their pursuit of violence that the West nominally sought to challenge. He rejects the thesis that the dissolution of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (SFRJ) was rooted in the supposed "ancient ethnic hatreds" of this state's peoples; an argument most famously advanced in Robert Kaplan's text *Balkan Ghosts* (Kaplan, 1993), a book instrumental in shaping then US President Clinton's view of the conflict. Gagnon counters this argument in his study of Serbia and Croatia:

> ...the violence of the Yugoslav wars of the 1990s was part of a broad strategy in which images of threatening enemies and violence were used by conservative elites in Serbia and Croatia: not in order to mobilize people, but rather as a way to *demobilize* those who were pushing for changes in the structures of economic and political power that would negatively affect the values and interests of those elites. The goal of this strategy was to silence, marginalize, and demobilize challengers and their supporters in order to create political homogeneity at home. This in turn enabled conservatives to maintain control of the existing structures of power, as well as to reposition themselves by converting state-owned property into privately held wealth, the basis of power in a new system of a liberal economy (Gagnon, 2004, p. xv).

Today, the use of the ethnic narratives continues to be a hallmark of reactionary elements within BiH and, on occasion, their foreign backers and/or lobbyists. As Gerard Toal notes, sensationalist nationalist rhetoric is a central element in the arsenal of the ruling ethnonational establishment in BiH (Toal, 2013). By promoting a public discourse based on seemingly intractable, zero-sum political conflicts the respective nationalist movements in BiH have created a polity in which "[under] the cover of the legitimacy conferred by free and fair elections, citizens as individuals are stripped of any political power" (Mujkić, 2007, p. 113). Mujkić thus offers that rather than being an emerging post-war democracy, BiH is best described as an "Ethnopolis":

> Even a superficial look at Bosnian political practice forces one to conclude that the obvious lack of the main ingredients of constitutional liberalism in the vague provisions of its Constitution – a document that elevates the collective rights of ethnic groups above those of individual citizens – has pushed Bosnia's so-called "democracy" ever deeper into the quicksand of discriminatory, illiberal political

and social practices. Indeed, "the ethnic principle generally determines the constitutional procedures and functioning of the central government of the Dayton Constitution." The unwillingness of the representatives of both the domestic and the international communities to introduce liberal principles has proved to be disastrous. The constitutional framework laid down in the Dayton Agreement encourages procedural democracy only among the political representatives – or better, the ruling oligarchies – of the various ethnic groups…

…I call a community characterized by the political priority of the ethnic group(s) over the individual that is implemented through democratic self-legislation, and a community characterized by the political priority of the ethnic group's right to self-determination over the citizen's right to self-determination where the citizen's membership in a political community is determined by her or his membership in ethnic community, Ethnopolis (ibid, p. 112 & 116)

Mujkić's theoretical deconstruction of this new perversion of democracy has significant antecedents in the international policy community. As the Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) noted in a report for the US Congress, in the lead-up to the war in BiH there was hardly a nationalist in the land who did not carry around a copy of the Swiss constitution and a map of the country's cantons—popularly held up in the region as an example of a successful small, wealthy, yet internally fragmented state (Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe, 1991). But partition, federalization, cantonization and all similar projects have consistently been revealed as attempts to enshrine narrow ethno-nationalist agendas while systematically marginalizing substantive democratic demands in BiH. Thus, while still a frequent refrain heard from various quarters, including the above cited ICG report, arguments that the deeply segregated BiH state is still not *sufficiently* segregated are little more than the rebranded talking-points of nationalist lobbyists and their sympathizers (Jukic, 2014) and are categorically at odds with any substantive conception of democratization. Indeed, they are precisely part of the "democratic cover" Mujkić alerts us to above.

Moreover, these debates rarely seriously entertain the economic viability of such bizarrely constituted territories. As Susan Woodward notes "[as] in much of Europe, economic regions cross political boundaries, and they both require and engender co-operation. None of the three [ethnic] units of Bosnia as currently constituted are economically viable" (Wood-

ward, 1996, p. 74). I use the term "bizarre" because by strictly emphasizing ethnic rather than economic-ecological regions, for instance, proponents of ethno-territorialisation end up drawing "apartheid cartographies" under the auspices of a supposedly liberal peace arrangement, as Campbell argues (Campbell, 1999). By any other meaningful socio-economic standard, however, these are completely nonsensical borders, a point also made by Mirko Pejanović, who notes that meaningful democratic changes require also a sensible administrative framework within which responsible political, economic, and social institutions can develop (Pejanović, 2015, pp. 59-64).

During the severe flooding in the country in May 2014 the absurdity of BiH's existing organization became clear. For example, the greater Doboj region in north-central Bosnia is split between the Federation entity (also "FBiH") and the RS despite the fact that its natural economic region is predominately with the towns and villages located in the Federation half, with whom it also shares a watershed. As such, when the city of Doboj flooded in 2014, its predominantly Serb population relied on aid from their predominantly Bosniak and Croat neighbours in the Federation, especially once the RS authorities realized they had no means of reaching the stricken town. When, after the flooding, the mayor of Doboj expressed his gratitude to the residents of nearby settlements he found himself labelled as a traitor to the Serb nation by the Dodik administration in Banja Luka (Vele, 2014). This practice continued as it became clear that towns under the control of the opposition Serb Democratic Party (SDS) were being shut out of access to reconstruction funds by Dodik's ruling Alliance of Independent Social Democrats (SNSD) (Čamdžić, 2014). Thus, I argue that plans for "ethnic" borders are in reality plans for political homogeneity, and indeed, for authoritarianism as it is clear that even within the overwhelmingly ethnically Serb RS entity, there are always traitors to be found as far as the Dodik administration and its nationalist compatriots are concerned.

This argument can also be observed in the fact that the RS's relative homogeneity has done little to promote the region's democratization. In fact, according to most analysts, media freedom and political opposition is ever more restricted in the entity, as compared to the FBiH. Emptied of democratic concerns, the argument for ethnic partition becomes little more than a call for ethno-authoritarianism or what Branka Magaš provocatively referred to simply as fascism in her analysis of Slobodan Milošević's tenure in Serbia (Magaš, 1994). Nor is this surprising, in the broader canon of partition studies as the authors of one volume point out: "The reasons that compel a nation to be partitioned in the form of the partition of the state are the reasons that guarantee the renewed life of the nation. This also ensures the near-permanent imprisonment of the critiques of partitions within nationalist reasoning" (Bianchini, Chaturvedi, Iveković & Samadda, 2005, p. 1). The stifling of even procedural democratic practices prevails, of course, because democratic and political[16] concerns rarely feature in partition scenarios to begin with. Where the dialogue becomes exclusively ethno-nationalist, and ethnic logics prevail even within the international community, it is difficult to offer contrary modes of association (Bose, 2009).

On the other hand, Ramet's second cleavage hones in on the question of democratization explicitly but frames it as a chronological rather than methodological question. That is, democracy becomes synonymous with "local rule" or what was once popularly referred to in the BiH policy community as "local ownership" (Donais, 2009). The implicit suggestion here is that democracy is synonymous with the "internationally recognized standards" of broadly liberal-democratic, parliamentary systems and that the only question is when the process of establishing such a framework begins and to a lesser extent how and when the international community is to go about advancing this process.

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[16] I will define my understanding of politics and the political in the next section. For the time being, I mean political concerns here to mean substantive, complex perspectives on social organization rather than the essentialist discourses of ethno-nationalists.

This debate, however, does nothing to problematize existing relationships between the international community and the previously mentioned "locals," that is, local elites, nor does it seriously investigate the latter's actual commitments to substantive democratic reforms. Thus, traditional policy accounts (Bose 2002, pp. 206-215, Bieber 2014) have taken almost at face value the idea that the various (nationalist, especially) political parties authentically represent the interests and opinions of the various communities in BiH even as citizen engagement and, more specifically, voter turnout rates have continued to decline (Puhalo & Perišić, 2014). This logic also dominated in much of the international community's perceptions of the Yugoslavia dissolution more generally (Campbell, 1998, Mueller, 2000, Gagnon, 2004, Glaurdić, 2011) and then, as today, bore little relationship to the actual plurality of political opinions in BiH and (the now former) Yugoslavia. Today, similar narratives remain an integral part of the EU's approach towards BiH as the nominal "reform" process has devolved into an exclusionary dialogue between EU bureaucrats and the leaders of the six or seven largest political parties in BiH (Cooley, 2012).

Obviously such an elite-dominated reform process has led to the creation of a profound "democratic deficit" (Sebastián, 2012, p. 609). Yet time and again the international community has failed to confront the reality that "installing the right elites" (Manning, 2006, p. 725) is absolutely no guarantee of success in building a rationalized state or conciliatory elite culture, to say nothing of building a broader, participatory democratic culture. The elementary problem here remains that for the majority of the main political actors in BiH, in power largely as a result of the international community's legitimation in the first place, reform is simply not in their interests (Sandić-Hadžihasanović, 2012).

In reality, BiH's established political machines almost uniformly operate as criminal syndicates or are in any case deeply aligned with existing criminal networks, with individual party leaders and their associates often having personally enriched themselves over the course

of the war and the post-war period through various profiteering and dubious privatization schemes (Andreas, 2008, Divjak & Pugh, 2008, International Institute for Middle-East and Balkan Studies, 2010). Here I return to the previous discussion about intra-ethnic solidarity; the political economy of the Ethnopolis is fundamentally based on deception and dispossession while "ethnic entrepreneurs"—political actors who gain and maintain power through appeals to ethno-nationalist politics—peddle fear and discord among the respective ethno-national communities in order to mask their criminal activities. By definition then, the worst forms of dispossession are actually *within* the respective ethnic communities, as in the case of the RS, the Croat Democratic Union's (HDZ) domination of Herzegovina, or the Party of Democratic Action's (SDA) rule in predominately (rural) Bosniak areas. The data on this matter is clear: according to Transparency International, BiH remains one of the most corrupt states in Europe and the organization specifically cites "lack of political will" as primary obstacle for reform (Transparency International, 2014). A 2012 report on the role of organized crime in BiH similarly notes that established political actors and underground criminal networks are deeply intertwined (Brady, 2012). And as I will detail in a later chapter, there is virtually no major party leader in the country who has not, at one time or another, been indicted on or suspected of any number of criminal misdeeds.

In short, for the majority of the elite establishment in BiH democratic reforms are a mortal threat; any notion of genuine democratic accountability is categorically at odds with a system where seemingly intractable ethno-nationalist conflicts actually serve to obscure a political economy based on a still primitive mode of accumulation. Thus, even the alternative literature Ramet cites ("to build a civic culture in Bosnia") in her second point fails to sufficiently confront the institutional logics of the existing regime. There is, I argue, no incentive within existing institutions in BiH for reform. A civic culture thus cannot emerge nor be built within these bodies nor can it be imposed from the outside—especially not by the same international actors who facilitated the emergence of this regime, in the first place. Instead, a genu-

ine autonomous "civic culture" can only emerge when there is a critical mass of citizens who will deliberately act to overturn the system as a whole, thereby creating a new social compact to meet their actual demands and priorities. Yet precisely because there is a collective inability to confront, even within the academic literature, the realities of BiH's *actually existing* political economy such a proposal, one that envisions a deliberate dismantling of the Dayton regime on the part of a mobilized citizenry, is simply not entertained by any of Ramet's cited authors. Admittedly, while the emergence of such a mobilized citizenry is not a sufficient precondition for the country's democratization, it is the most necessary one and the one, I argue, most curiously absent in existing treatments of BiH's development as a sovereign polity. Again, though ostensibly explicitly concerned with "democratization," an autonomous democratic option does not occur in the dominant literature precisely because it does not adequately consider the real basis of BiH's contemporary political economy or its political culture. Because the latter is obscured in these accounts, the urgent necessity of the former is likewise marginalized.[17]

Finally, the duration of the international community's involvement in BiH closes out Ramet's analysis of the central debates on the country's post-1996 period. Whether approached from the question of domestic democratic development or broader European security, the debate as it is presented by Ramet—which though not exhaustive is indicative of the field as a whole—once again fails to adequately come to terms with the multifaceted failures of the Dayton regime. David Chandler's promising but ultimately confused contributions to this debate are also paradigmatic (Chandler, 2000). Chandler's work is perceptive and rests on two primary arguments: the foreign "meddling" allowed and encouraged by the Dayton con-

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[17] Kimberly Coles' anthropological survey of the construction of BiH's electoral regime does not engage significantly with the question of extra-electoral politics in the country, though she ably deconstructs the "democratic credentials" of the existing state (Coles, 2007). Meanwhile, an extensive policy report commissioned by the Council of Europe in 2005, on the other hand, largely posits "participatory democracy" as something that can be built by elites to foster increased participation in existing political structures. The report both truncates the meaning of "participatory" and fails to critically reflect on dominant elite interests in the region (Greer, Murphy, & Øgård, 2005).

stitution fostered the emergence of a corrupt and incompetent local elite; and more broadly that the nation-building project in BiH was always more concerned with achieving the ideological goals of the international community (e.g. BiH as a liberal-democratic society integrated into global circuits of capital) than substantively engaging with and addressing local problems (e.g. political accountability, citizen empowerment, anti-corruption etc.).

Chandler is not wrong on either point but his text is ultimately more concerned with plugging BiH into an existing narrative about neoliberal globalization than it is a close study of local politics. This becomes especially clear in the text's conclusion: Chandler vaguely acknowledges the Dayton constitution as byzantine and one that promotes a degree of ethnochauvinism but ultimately decides that the country is insufficiently fragmented: "Allowing Croat-governed areas of Bosnia to have closer links with Croatia and allowing greater independence for [the RS] would take away a lot of the insecurities felt by ordinary Bosnian people. Once the return of refugees and displaced people did not implicitly question the borders and political allegiances of the regions, then cross-border movement would face fewer obstacles and people would begin to have a real choice about where they wished to live" (ibid, p. 199). This assessment follows from his analysis earlier in the text of "power-sharing and multi-ethnic administrations." Chandler argues that ethnic majorities in BiH have *insufficient* control over their respective territories (ibid, p. 66-89), using as an example the Western-backing of the then Prime Minister of the RS, Milorad Dodik, a "foreign stooge" likely to be rejected by Serb voters according to the author (ibid, p. 78). In reality, the last eight years have seen Dodik flower into an arch-nationalist, insisting like Chandler, that the internationals have stripped the entities of their constitutional powers as he has systematically promoted the continued exodus of Bosniaks and Croats from the RS—in the name of true ethnic majoritarianism. In other words, most of Chandler's policy preferences have come to pass and the result has been a disaster for civic and democratic values in the country (Mujanović, Elections and ethnic cleansing in Bosnia-Herzegovina, 2014).

It is not merely in hindsight that Chandler's critique is problematic, that is, now that we know how Dodik's rise to power has turned out: the issue, as he demonstrates in his conclusion, is that democracy is reduced to a game of numbers—of empowered majorities and pliant minorities. Moreover, like previous commentators, he uncritically accepts the proposition that the various nationalist parties in BiH are the only authentic representatives of their respective communities. Thus, democratization in BiH, he argues, can only come through a "better" ethnic compact (e.g. a separate Croat entity, clearer ethnic boundaries) and the departure or at least withdrawal of the international community. Hence, while an entire chapter is devoted to the question of civil society and bottom-up citizen empowerment, one that provides for an astute critique of the foreign-backed NGO industry (ibid, p. 135-153), Chandler again concludes by remarking on the severed link between the population and the elites as the biggest failing of the (then) robust civil society sector in BiH.

Chandler attempts to wrap his critique of foreign intervention in BiH in a democratic veneer but his own conception of democratic administration remains limited, unwilling to distinguish between the different political projects of local actors as he promotes their empowerment. This "anti-colonialist" thesis popular among so many critics of the Dayton regime, including Chandler though perhaps made most famous by Gerald Knaus (Knaus & Martin, 2003), is in actuality no more democratically inclined than the Euro-American nation-building they purport to critique. In an important 2003 article, Knaus and Martin argued that the international community's involvement in BiH had largely been a failure and focused specifically on the role of the OHR and its then head Paddy Ashdown. Their critique rested on the extraordinary powers of the High Representative, the appointed "Raj" of the international community's mission in BiH as the authors referred to him, an office with the ability to impose laws, sack officials and generally enforce the letter of the Dayton Agreement. "Any post-conflict mission," the authors countered however, "that aims to establish democratic govern-

ance and the rule of law must institutionalize checks and balances on the use of extraordinary powers at the very outset" (ibid, p. 73).

While this thesis is laudable in principle, it is in practice distinctly limited in its critique. Surely the biggest and most substantive affront to "democratic governance and the rule of law" in BiH was not the occasional sacking from public office of known war criminals and profiteers, as Knaus and Martin complained, but rather the institutionalization of these individuals' preferred political arrangements as the constitutional order of the post-war BiH state. By accepting essentially the nationalist perspective (on the necessity of ethnic separation and an end to international state-building efforts) to critique the international community's project in BiH these nominal progressives end up sharing the same ideological terrain as local nationalists. Timelines for international withdrawal from BiH are less important, I argue, than the *substance* of democratic administration in the country. On this basis, a more devastating critique of the Euro-Atlantic regime in BiH is to point how it has failed according to its own legal-rational rubric.

In this sense, BiH absolutely lacks a functional law enforcement apparatus. For instance, more than four years since the Strasburg-based European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) ruled that limiting the office of the Presidency of BiH, along with several other implicated institutions, exclusively to self-declared members of the three constitutive peoples was legally discriminatory, the 2009 decision has yet to be implemented (Claridge, 2010). Accordingly, despite this so-called "Sejdić-Finci" ruling, named after the two representatives of the Jewish and Roma communities who brought the lawsuit forward, Roma and Jewish citizens, among others, are still unable to legally hold the post of President. Despite *several* court decisions against the so-called "Two Schools under One Roof" practice, whereby children in certain "mixed" cantons in the Federation entity are forced to attend ethnically segregated schools, this practice still persists (Jelin, 2012). Meanwhile, the head of the state police

agency (SIPA), Goran Zubac, remained at his post for a year and a half while he was simultaneously under investigation (and later convicted) for activities ranging from corruption to insubordination (Slobodna Bosna, 2014). Nor is the state even able to collect taxes in some instances, as entire towns simply refuse to take and deal in local currency, as in the case of Međugorje, a Croat-majority town in Herzegovina dominated by the HDZ, which has become a Catholic pilgrimage site worth millions every year—none of which the entity or state governments collect on (Al Jazeera Balkans, 2014).

All of this is only possible in a state that barely functions as such. After nearly two decades of the international community's involvement in BiH, the legal-rational administration of the state barely exists. If it is possible for individuals within the state security apparatus to behave as rogue elements, if tax dodging is endemic, and if local and international court decisions are simply ignored by the relevant parties, then there is neither a monopoly of violence nor a legal-rational order to the state. Instead, what Robert Antonio has called "reactionary tribalism"[18] and Mujkić's idea of the "Ethnopolis" are still further superseded by what I call a militant oligarchism, that while indeed operating behind an ethno-chauvinist façade, is so rapacious and ravenous that it begins to destroy even the structural arrangements allowing for its rule in the first place, namely a captured state apparatus. As such, while there are diverse and sometime contradictory definitions of the "failed state" concept (Akpinarli, 2010), insomuch as we define the phenomenon at least as one marked by the lack of a coherent monopoly of violence and the lack of a relatively effective government delivering positive goods

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[18] Robert Antonio suggests that Schmitt's recent revival, both academically and politically, is rooted in a New Right critique of the neoliberal order, that finds resonance in Schmitt's call for "a total state to restore the political's rightful primacy over capitalist society, combat enemies, and curb subjects' evil ways" (Antonio, 2000, p. 60). While I share Antonio's ambivalence of Schmitt's understanding of the political (as noted below), one might nevertheless argue that insofar as post-Yugoslav nationalists have a vision of the state and a critique of (neo)liberalism it may very well be Schmitt-like. However, my issue then is that this implies a more sophisticated ideological project than I think we have actual evidence for, especially as many of these same nationalists and chauvinists are themselves the banner-men of neoliberal restructuring. Schmitt, in any case, appears to have classical fascism in mind when he invokes "the political's rightful primacy," a project that despite its genocidal similarities (and despite Magaš earlier invocation of the term) to the Balkan nationalisms is nevertheless distinct. A more sophisticated analysis of the particular class dynamics leading to the formation of the Balkan state is required to make sense of the nationalist project in this region—an analysis I take up beginning in Chapter II.

to its citizens (Rotberg, 2003, pp. 1-25), then BiH certainly fits the category of a *failing* or weak state if not an outright failed one.

Despite governing BiH with virtual impunity for nearly two decades and with as robust a mandate as any in the history of international state building, for this same country to be today one of the most corrupt in Europe, frozen in a permanent, stuttering and incoherent "reform process," one in which "European values" like anti-discrimination and free and fair elections do not appear as actual policy objectives for anyone involved, is to me a far more damning critique of the international order in BiH than Chandler's majoritarian thesis. It is also more damning than Knaus and Martin's anti-colonialist argument because it exposes how catastrophic this supposed foreign despotism has been in achieving its own stated objectives. Aside from being morally shallow, this analysis ignores that most other colonialist regimes at least had a sophisticated apparatus of rule (and oppression). In BiH, the colonialist regime is staffed by disinterested bureaucrats unable and/or unwilling to control the local population, local oligarchs and the increasingly infuriated population at large. In short, in this respect, BiH appears to me less like a colony than a failed state.

There is a great deal to criticize in the international community's approach or lack thereof towards BiH but debates that so privilege the international factor, in the sense of making international involvement in the country's administration the most salient aspect of BiH's broader democratization, only reinforce the marginalization of the autonomous agency of ordinary citizens. Indeed, what has remained constant in periods of both little and great international involvement in BiH over the past two decades is the desire of the local political establishment to exclude ordinary citizens from the political process. In this respect, the international community's role can be both positive and negative but ultimately the people of BiH can do little to affect the policy debates in foreign capitals. What the people can and must do if the country is to have any prospect of evolving into a stable, democratic polity however is

to become an unavoidable, mobilized, and autonomous political force. I believe that this perspective is missing not only in debates about international policy in BiH but overwhelmingly in debates about the country's future prospects as a whole.

Defining Democracy

The preceding formulation is meant to be an inherently democratic one but it is admittedly a *radical* democratic thesis. Therefore, it is necessary to define the contours of what I understand to be the distinctly democratic impulse of this analysis. To this end, Bernard Manin comments on a "paradox": "that, without having in any obvious way evolved, the relationship between representatives and those they represent is today perceived as democratic, whereas it was originally seen as undemocratic" (Manin, 1997, p. 236). While Manin concludes that contemporary representative government is a "balanced system," he nonetheless argues that the balance is one between democratic and undemocratic, populist and oligarchic elements—and the growing supremacy of the latter over the former (ibid, p. 237-38). Wolin begins his critique where Manin ends his because whereas democracy for him begins at the Athenian polis and ends at what he terms "audience democracy," and believes still in the idea of "balance," Wolin conceives of this side lining of the participatory elements of the democratic experience as an "inverted totalitarianism."[19] Here it appears as though it is "politics all of the time" yet in reality what persists is a "politics largely untempered by the political." Wolin continues: "Party squabbles are occasionally on public display, and there is a frantic and continuous politics among factions of the party, interest groups, competing corporate powers, and rival media concerns. And there is, of course, the culminating moment of national elections when the attention of the nation is required to make a choice of personalities rather than a choice between alternatives. What is absent is the political, the commitment to

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[19] Wolin's thesis is "*not* that the current American political system [and liberal-democratic system, more broadly] is an inspired replica of Nazi Germany…Reference's to Hitler's Germany are introduced…to illuminate tendencies in our own system of power that are opposed to the fundamental principles of constitutional democracy. These tendencies are…totalizing in the sense that they are obsessed with control, expansion, superiority, and supremacy" (ibid, p. xvii).

finding where the common good lies amidst the welter of well-financed, highly organized, single-minded interests rabidly seeking governmental favours and overwhelming the practices of representative government and public administration by a sea of cash" (Wolin, 2008, p. 66). For her part, Hannah Arendt dealt with a similar problem, the erosion of the participatory and deliberative character of contemporary democracy, and suggested that what had been lost between the time of the polis and modern democratic experiment(s) was not, in fact, democracy but *isonomy*:

> Freedom as a political phenomenon was coeval with the rise of the Greek city-states. Since Herodotus, it was understood as a form of political organization in which the citizens lived together under conditions of no-rule, without a division between rulers and ruled. This notion of no-rule was expressed by the word isonomy, whose outstanding characteristic among the forms of government, as the ancients had enumerated them, was that the notion of rule...was entirely absent from it. The polis was supposed to be an isonomy, not a democracy. The word 'democracy', expressing even then majority rule, the rule of the many, was originally coined by those who were opposed to isonomy and who meant to say: What you say is 'no-rule' is in fact only another kind of rulership; it is the worst form of government, rule by the demos (Arendt, 1990, p. 30).

Arendt goes on to explain that for the Athenians isonomy merged the concepts of freedom, equality, and participation. Hence, she argues, "equality, which we, following Tocqueville's insights, frequently see as a danger to freedom, was originally almost identical with it" (ibid). However, this notion of equality was not merely formal equality under the law, it was equality in the sense of "no-rule"—or perhaps better still, no *rulers*. The citizens of the Athenian polis were not merely subject to the law, they themselves were its creators—not their "representatives." Wolin situates his project within the same trajectory:

> I have been attempting to retrieve aspects of democracy that suggest a tension with the organizational impulses of ancient and modern constitutionalism. A reflection of that tension is the fact that democracy has no continuous history following the absorption of Athens into the Macedonian empire. From 322 B.C.E. to the political experiments launched by the American and French revolutions of the eighteenth century, there were examples of city-state republics in which the "people" sometimes had a small share, but the evidence overwhelmingly indicates that these were oligarchies dominated by the rich and the well-born. That hiatus ends

in the destruction of democratic hopes by the failure of modern revolutions and the creation, instead, of the modern representation of democracy, the nation-state organization. (Wolin, 1996, p. 42).

What Arendt, Wolin, and Manin are all suggesting I believe is that the historic transition between the polis and the parliament was a fundamental loss, a withering away of the substantive elements of the democratic experience—of *isonomy*. Yet between the polis and the parliament are not merely time, and not merely the rise of the bourgeoisie and the rise bourgeois democracy. What stands in between is the rise of the modern state. If both Arendt and Wolin idealize the political as the truest and most substantive expression of democratic potential, and both historicize its origins and widest application to the polis then it seems rather important to remind ourselves that the polis was *not* a state. Moshe Berent succinctly sums up the case:

> ...the Greek polis was not a State but rather what the anthropologists call 'a state-less society'. The latter is characterized by the absence of 'government', that is an agency which has separated itself out from the rest of social life and which monopolizes the use of violence. In stateless societies the ability to use force is more or less evenly distributed among the armed or potentially armed members of the community (Berent, 2006, p. 140)

The suggestion here is not that the Athenian polis was an anarchist commonwealth. Rather, I am trying to underscore the significance of the fact that, arguably, the one society most fully defined by a continuous experience with the political—at least according to the admittedly Eurocentric perspectives of Western democratic theory—was one that did *not* have a state. This is not to suggest that a lack of state is *sufficient* to attain a political regime. Yet taken in conjunction with Clastres' work on indigenous societies in the Americas, Scott's analysis of the so-called Zomia region in upland Southeast Asia (Scott, 2009) or David Graeber's work on Malagasy village life for instance (Graeber, 2007), I argue that contesting the state's exclusionary forms of power (that is, coercion and hierarchy) is a *requirement* for a substantive experience with the political.

To this point, Scott argues that it "would be worthwhile to study the history of the various non-state spaces that have opened up within modern democracies. What is their meaning and what have their implications been?" (Holtzman & Hughes, 2010). Contemporary anarchist scholars have spent the better part of the last two decades fleshing out the contours of these spaces (Bey, 1991, Marshall, 2010, Graeber, 2013). But it is not necessary to accept the anarchist thesis wholesale in order to take away a crucial lesson for democratic praxis from such anarchist interventions. One does not need to advocate for the abolition of the state (Scott does not, for instance) to argue that the political appears to exist in an inverse relationship to the ideological and/or material power of the state in society. In other words, genuine democratic experiments are those that, as part of their program, on some level attempt to challenge the state as the exclusive form of political association and recognize that democracy is a practice not a destination. In democratic societies the state is recognized as existing outside of the citizens themselves and thereby existing only through their consent, a consent that is measured not merely through elections and referenda. Certainly the monopoly of violence has historically tended to overpower this "right" to dissent but it is nevertheless a significant feature of the mythos[20] of bourgeoisie social contract theory.[21] In BiH, it has been treatises about

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[20] Wolin argues that "myth," is an integral part of politics, as a whole. By "myth" Wolin means, perhaps more simply, the ideological basis of a given political community. The objective reality of the myth is less important than a collective belief and continual validation of it. Thus, Wolin's critique of contemporary parliamentary democracy, for instance, is that "[rituals] have become ritualistic. The hollowness of the constitutional myth and the self-caricature of its rituals suggest an ontological crisis of a political order which has lost its political ground" (Wolin, 1985, p. 232). At fault, ultimately, is "the unprecedented concentration of power associated with the modern state; it destroyed the myth-ritual conception of power as repair of the world and replaced it by a conception of power as domination over both nature and man [sic]" (ibid, p. 238). Wolin, in short, is again gesturing towards the tension between the state and the political, primarily as a result of the problematic, systemic coercion entailed by the monopoly of violence.

[21] Even Graeber, who like Manin, draws a firm distinction between republicanism (specifically James Madison's writings in the *Federalist Papers*) and democracy, is able to make his case for the latter on the basis of the positive conceptual currency that the term has nevertheless acquired in bourgeoisie society (Graeber, 2013, pp. 154-158). In contrast, the term democracy, associated as it is with the plunder of the post-1996 period has few, if any, positive connotations in the public imagination in BiH. In fact, as one scholar argues, the same is true of the entire concept of politics in BiH. Heleen Touquet notes that in "Bosnia 'politika' has almost taken on a meaning of its own, which cannot possibly be translated by 'politics.' Like many Eastern Europeans, Bosnians have a very low opinion of politics. According to the World Values Survey, more than 70% of Bosnians have little or no confidence at all in political parties" (Touquet, 2011, pp. 462-463).

national liberation rather than social contracts that have prevailed; totalizing ideologies of the state and nation have replaced the idea of the citizen and the idea of democratic praxis.

This is not to say that Wolin et al have perfectly encapsulated the democratic project. James McCormick argues "radical democrats" like Wolin "foreclose the possibility that democracy can directly serve as a vehicle that effectively—that is, through laws and institutions—dismantles hierarchies and ameliorates domination" (McCormick, 2010). "A political vision that denies the people any participation in rule, except in 'extraordinary moments,'" he contends "and for all intents and purposes grants elites free rein to do so in everyday politics is simply not worthy of the name 'democracy'" (ibid). C. Douglas Lummis takes issue with both accounts, however, noting "in this age when virtually everybody claims to be a democrat, democracy itself has still no more than a fugitive existence. If eternal [institutional] democracy is too much to ask, fugitive democracy is too little" (Lummis, 1996, p. 163). McCormick's critique of Wolin doubles-back on the merits of parliamentary democracy, arguing that he has unduly sullied the emancipatory potential of institutionalized democratic practice. I suggest, in place, that the two respective critiques of McCormick and Lummis are on the mark, while their own claims remain unconvincing. Lummis' (and Wolin's) critique of institutional democracy is valid I contend, while McCormick is correct to suggest that narrowing substantive democratic experience to "fugitive moments" is insufficient. The alternative would seem to necessarily be an idea of democracy that is neither strictly institutionalized in the statist sense nor fleeting or temporary.

Accordingly, various theorists have taken up the task of expanding the potentialities of popular democratic participation and intervention. For his part, Lummis argues for a "trans-border democracy," a global movement "outside of and against the state," comprised of civil society activists and social movements of various sorts (Lummis, 1996, p. 140). Graeber endorses the open assemblies of the Occupy movement as a model for a new kind of participa-

tory democracy (Graeber, 2013). Chantal Mouffe, another prominent contemporary radical

democrat, proposes something she refers to as "agonistic democracy," a theory that embraces

a degree of conflict within these new open polities as desirable and necessary to the develop-

ment of the political. She argues that:

> …agonistic confrontation is in fact its [democracy's] very condition of existence.
> Modern democracy's specificity lies in the recognition and legitimation of conflict
> and the refusal to suppress it by imposing an authoritarian order. Breaking with
> the symbolic representation of society as an organic body[22] - which was character-
> istic of the holist mode of social organization - a democratic society acknowledges
> the pluralism of values, the 'disenchantment of the world' diagnosed by Max We-
> ber and the unavoidable conflicts that it entails (Mouffe, 2000, p. 163).

At times these respective approaches are perhaps in conflict with one another (Mouffe

is sharply critical of consensus-based models that Graeber frequently seems to endorse, for

instance). Yet they collectively insist on the necessity of the expansion of opportunities for

democratic deliberation, for the increase of participants in these debates, and for the broaden-

ing of the process of democratic administration (and specifically to reveal the anti-democratic

aspects of the dominant neoliberal economic paradigm). In other words, these scholars per-

ceptively take issue with the international community's approach to democratization in BiH,

as I suggested at the beginning of this section. They reject, I believe, what David Chandler has

elsewhere referred to as the "peace without politics" that marks the Dayton regime's exclu-

sionary character (Chandler, 2006). In effect, they force us to reflect on the fact that state

building in BiH has meant amputating the political: first through the violence of war and then

through the politically stultifying peace process. This is certainly true of the contemporary

moment in BiH but is also constitutive of the broader state development process in the coun-

try over the past two centuries. Democratization, these scholars suggest instead, is not a pro-

cess of convincing elites to govern justly, it is a process of enabling the greatest degree of

public self-management (or *samoupravljanje*) possible, a feat which itself can only be accom-

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[22] This notion of "organic bodies" is precisely the purpose of nationalist narratives about the state and society as established by Mujkić, to represent politics in non-negotiable biological terms.

plished through continuous popular participation and intervention in the political process, whatever shape it may presently take.

Praxis

If the preceding democratic analysis informs this dissertation, it nevertheless remains necessary to ask how one is to get from Dayton to the proverbial polis. In Chapter V I will thoroughly analyse existing social movement manifestations in contemporary BiH. For now, I want to explicate what I believe to be the methodological component of the radical democratic literature informing this project. That is, the manner in which the radical democratic critique can also illustrate how political change can actually occur, rather than merely deconstructing currently dominant paradigms.

Sheri Berman succinctly describes the fraught process of transition from authoritarianism to representative democracy, arguing that one cannot

> [treat] new democracies as blank slates, ignoring how much of their dynamics and fate are inherited rather than chosen. Turmoil, violence, and corruption are taken as evidence of the inherent dysfunctionality of democracy itself, or of the immaturity or irrationality of a particular population, rather than as a sign of the previous dictatorship's pathologies. Because authoritarian regimes lack popular legitimacy, they often manipulate and deepen communal cleavages in order to divide potential opponents and generate support among favored groups. So when democratization occurs, the pent-up distrust and animosity often explode. And because authoritarian regimes rule by command rather than consensus, they suppress dissent and block the creation of political and social institutions that allow for the regular, peaceful articulation and organization of popular demands. So citizens in new democracies often express their grievances in a volatile and disorganized way, through a dizzying array of parties, extremist rhetoric and behavior, and street protests and even battles (Berman, 2013).

Aside from BiH's own pronounced authoritarian legacies, the international factor has turned the country into an interesting variation on this theme. While corruption, social distrust, and extremism are all present in ample doses, up until very recently, there have been few outward manifestations of popular dissatisfaction. In fact, popular participation in politics, in any form, has been demonstrably absent.

On the one hand, with the close supervision of the international community, BiH has developed a complicated and highly institutionalized political system based on ethnic quotas and power-sharing that has all the technical appearances of a functioning, albeit peculiar, representative democracy. The so-called "civil society" sector is likewise highly professionalized, composed almost entirely of foreign-backed think tanks, lobby groups, NGOs and charities (Bieber, 2002). On paper, the Dayton constitutional order has created a finely tuned machine, replete with safety valves to keep the country stable and peaceful. And indeed, from a geopolitical standpoint, BiH has become remarkably stable since the end of the 1992-1995 war and hence has been the subject of glowing scholarly treatment between 1996 and 2006, a "lasting peace" as an example for other fractured states such as Iraq (Gelazis, Benjamin, & Lloyd, 2007).

On the other hand, the chasm between dispossessed citizens and entrenched and unaccountable elites seems to be growing exponentially with each passing year—the consequences of which I will explore further in Chapter V. For the time being it nevertheless remains to be explained that in contemporary BiH the existing democratic institutions have, in short, failed. As there is no need for elites to ever solicit voters outside of their own ethnic community according to the Dayton constitution, elections in BiH are in reality but quasi-competitive censuses. Since the political arena is dominated by a handful of parties and secure employment is only to be found in the partisan public administration, clientalism is rife. Of the population that is actually employed fully one third work in this partisan public administration—by some claims, the largest such figure in the world (Večernji List, 2014). In other words, a significant number of families in the country depend on the income provided by breadwinners whose own employment depends on acquiescence to the existing regime. Unsurprisingly, disillusionment with the system is endemic with 45% of registered voters opting out of recent

elections altogether (Klix, 2014).[23] Such low turnout, as elsewhere, favours the incumbents, who are able to win elections strictly by driving their hard core supporters to the polls. These few voters are in turn dependent on the services provided by their benefactors and are unwilling to jeopardize what little stability they have. The incumbents are thus returned to their posts, beginning the cycle anew.

From *within* such an arrangement, few alternatives seem possible. After all, voters have consistently lent their support to nominally reform oriented parties, social-democrats and anti-nationalists of various sorts. Indeed, these same parties (e.g. the SDP, SNSD, SBB, SDU, Naša stranka)[24] have formed governments or been leading members of governing coalitions, at every level of government, several times over. Little has changed and at least in the case of Dodik's SNSD, the party has rapidly transformed into a virulently nationalist bloc since coming to power (Toal, 2013). In most cases, the ranks of the other parties have been no less riddled by corruption and criminal scandals of every sort. At one time or another, the leader of virtually every major party has been suspected of significant financial misdeeds (Karabegović, 2012, UNODC, 2013, Halimović, 2014, Halimović, Otvorena Pandorina kutija carinskih i poreskih prevara u BiH, 2014). As such, challenging the reactionary inertia of the system seems possible only form without. There are simply too many people who depend on and actively promote the existing regime to expect change to come from within.

The problem then is not merely one of "bad leaders" that can be resolved by "good leaders." As Manning notes, it is not a question of "installing the right elites," instead it is a

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[23] There has also been a marked decline in voter participation in virtually all developed democracies since the end of the Cold War, at least. BiH is not that different, in this respect, but when taken in the broader context of declining social and political participation which concerns me in this dissertation, the trend is alarming.

[24] The Social Democratic Party (SDP), the Alliance Independent Social Democrats (SNSD), the Alliance for a Better Future (SBB), the Social Democratic Union (SDU), and Our Party (Naša stranka). The reform oriented SDP was the biggest vote getter in both the 2000 and 2010, while the ruling SNSD was originally founded as an explicitly anti-old guard movement in the RS (the old guard being Karadžić's Serb Democratic Party (SDS). Ironically, the SNSD leaders today routinely accuse the SDS of being a "pro-Bosnian" party (Glas Srpske, 2014). In any case, it would be appear that at least 25-30% of voters consistently vote for reform-oriented programs. A "constituency for change" thus clearly exists; whether its desires are reflected by the parties they support is a different question (Bassuener, 2014).

matter of recognizing that any meaningful concept of democracy must be practice based. This I believe is at the heart of the radical democratic analysis, as a whole, a linking mechanism between these theories and existing dynamics in BiH. After all, Wolin et al are primarily concerned with the perceived failures of representative democracy in the West, where most of the problems described above (corruption, unemployment, and nationalism) are not nearly as virulent or as widespread phenomena. Yet the connection is a form-based one; the shared frustrations of democracies hollowed out and truncated by the class interests of the elite in their respective polities. The idea of the polis, in contrast, is the idea of a society where there is no *raison d'état* to supersede the will and ability of the citizens to administer their own affairs, as they see fit. It is the idea of a society that realizes its collectivity not through "imagined communities" but through rational processes of association, deliberation, and continuous popular intervention and participation.

James Scott does not believe that it is possible to escape the modern state nor does it appear Wolin thinks so either. Nevertheless, both continue to emphasize the necessity of expanding the realm of human association beyond and against the contours of the state. Why? Because while the polis may ultimately be strictly a myth, the ideal is an educational one, alerting us to the fact that the kind of democracy the polis is supposed to resemble is only possible through attempts to actualize the political in the here and now. The political, in short, is not a destination; it is a continuous experience, as Valentine argues, or as I have been formulating it here, following Wolin, an intervention into the status quo of existing political conduct.

What does this mean for BiH then? As one local activist argued in the wake of the February protests, it is the idea of "teaching people with PTSD to participate" (Noni, 2014). It is the recognition that since the state and democracy are both classed phenomena, free(er) societies are those where the masses are able to challenge the power of the elite and where the

elite, in turn, actively fear the popular response. Elites must believe that they can and will be replaced, either at the ballot box or in the streets, in order for democracy to actually exist. If they do not fear this, existing democratic practices become simple intra-oligarchic contests, duels lacking any connection to the needs or expectations of the population at large. In short, politics replaces the political, where political simply comes to mean "state capture" by one cartel or another.

In this respect, both Machiavelli and Gramsci are convincing. Machiavelli's claim that free republics are those where the plebeian masses remain armed and dangerous, from the perspective of the elite, appears like a historically grounded analysis. Gramsci's expansion on this point, namely that politics is a "war of manoeuvre" and a "war of position," his proclivity for vanguard parties aside, merely explicates this argument for the contemporary period. In short, as democratic theorists, both Machiavelli and Gramsci are advocates for what I earlier referred to as a kind of "popular intervention" in the political process. Both foresee the "con-stitutionalizing" of democracy, as Wolin phrases the eventual institutionalizing of democratic politics within the framework of a "legal-rational" Weberian state. Nevertheless, antagonism must precede institutionalization, if democracy is to maintain any kind of popular element(s) during the period of state consolidation. It is unsurprising therefore that the (re)emergence of the radical democratic critique has coincided with the end of the welfare state and its so-called "class compromise." As power has shifted dramatically in favour of capital, across the globe, and away from labour, the depth and quality of Western democracy has likewise deteriorated. In short, the working class has lost its militancy, lost the war of manoeuvre and position, and thereby lost its ability to contest power (Gramsci & Buttigieg, 1992, Vatter, 2014).

As it concerns the Balkans, as Scott argues, this means that it is significant that the roots of contemporary Euro-Atlantic democracy—though substantially weakened in the ne-oliberal era—are to be found in the "Age of Revolutions," a period during which Europe's

feudal and monarchic regimes were toppled through a series of violent, popular insurrections. Though these ended in the establishment of the bourgeoisie state, they *also* contained considerably more radical elements.[25] As their genesis was revolutionary, the formation of these regimes was inextricably linked to the tensions between conservative and radical elements. Insomuch as the conservative factions won out, their victories were not so totalizing as to completely negate the concessions won by popular, organized, mass movements in the process of overturning the *ancien régime*. Most importantly, these conservative victories could not abolish the discourse of universal rights and dissent, on which still more radical movements would continue to draw on, in advocating going beyond the liberal state—Marxist, anarchist, and republican alike. Thus, the democratization of the liberal state**,** as Mouffe labels it, occurred through a continuous process of contestation between popular and conservative elements; through revolutionary births, tumultuous evolutions, and continuous popular intervention.

The Balkans have not lacked for insurrections and revolutionary movements but as I will chronicle in Chapters II and III, an autonomous, populist factor, at odds with the almost exclusively aristocratic and elitist leadership of these rebellions never materialized. In this sense, what has emerged in the Balkans through a series of formative episodes is a state type emptied of substantive popular institutions and participation, reified as a moral and ethical end in and of itself. I argue that the state in the Balkans has been conceived of in fetishized (nationalist) terms by local elites in order to minimize substantive democratic participation on the part of the vast majority of the population; historically, overwhelmingly peasants. Indeed, the state has served to actively deny the emergence of anything akin to a "civil society" in the Balkans. In this process, nationalism, as I will argue in Chapter II, became an ideological veil,

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[25] Consider the "Putney Debates," the remarkable debates within the New Model Army leadership during the English Civil War. The evolution of British bourgeois democracy cannot be understood merely through the victory of the parliamentary forces but must also recall the "threat" of radical, populist elements *within* the New Model Army and in English society more broadly during this period. It was these populist elements that drove the aristocratic camp within the movement to adopt certain key reforms they were unlikely to have embraced purely of their own volition (Baker, 2007).

mimicking the contours of a social contract between the masses and their leaders but was in reality a project emptied of virtually the entirety of its participatory character.

As Gagnon notes in reference to the resurgence of nationalist politics in the 1990s, despite appearances of mass mobilizations, the nationalist project was, in reality, a politics of profound social demobilization. The Balkan nation-state, however, has always taken this form and events in the 1990s were, in fact, based on dynamics established at the end of the 19th century. The Balkan nation-state has only ever been an exercise in violence—within and without. Would-be nationalist elites have pursued policies of assimilation and extermination of "opposing" peoples and the conquest of lands near and far; these campaigns have had as their primary objective the pacification of local "majorities," their transformation from classed to ethnic populaces, and thus their exclusion from meaningful participation in the administration of their respective polities.[26] As I argue in Chapter II, the sinister function of genocide in this process is to implicate ordinary citizens in campaigns of murder, torture, and plunder, and thereby defuse and displace social and class resentments, as well as any possible bonds of solidarity among various communities, which would otherwise be directed at the governing elites themselves. Instead, by displacing social resentments to ethnic others, Balkan elites have historically successfully preserved and obscured the origins of these resentments, in the first place. Namely, political economies based on processes of accumulation through dispossession, the *modus operandi* of a ruling class composed of bandits, brigands, and (formerly pliant) imperial clients.

Though moments of seismic political upheaval continued to present opportunities for new kinds of political compacts, especially during the second Yugoslav period, the compounding legacies of lasting authoritarian tendencies have proven difficult to overturn. Never-

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[26] Of course, most states, as I have already suggested, are rooted in violence, indeed, genocide and certainly the history of many contemporary Western states is rooted in concrete and relatively recent campaigns of extermination (i.e. especially in settler-colonial socieites like the US, Canada, Australia). The use of this tactic has not made Balkan elites and state-builders unique as such, but the continued prevalence of this strategy and accompanying modes of political organizing and rhetoric are unique at least in the contemporary European context.

theless, I maintain that the only possible alternative, the only possible intervention into this reactionary lineage is a political one. Namely, the democratization of the state in BiH requires the emergence of a radical democratic movement, capable of creating horizontalist (that is, non-hierarchic), participatory structures, like the plenums, to replace existing, hollowed-out, statist institutions. These new popular assemblies must themselves be experiments in democratic public administration and can in no way postpone substantive democratic participation in favour of any sort of enlightened, vanguard dictatorship. Moreover, these assemblies must remain fully autonomous from the state, even if over time their presence will inevitably have to become legitimized, perhaps even co-opted by the security apparatus. This process is to be expected though delayed for as long as possible. The most effective means of delay, as elsewhere, will be the presence of a militant, mobilized, and organized social movement arm of the popular assemblies (Azzellini & Sitrin, 2014). In this respect, while the emergence of the plenums during the course of the February protests in BiH was at once a major step forward for the political project, as it also coincided with the proverbial departure from the street, the popular assemblies quickly dissipated as a credible threat to the establishment.

What I am proposing actively draws on the experience and literature of global social movement organizing (Collis, 2012, Piven, 2012, Gelderloos, 2013). It also draws on historic revolutionary experiences, both great and small, over the course of the 19th and 20th centuries. And though it is perhaps an unforgivable sin in the radical imagination, I am making an essentially conservative argument. Even if what we want to arrive at is moribund, truncated liberal parliamentarianism (from the perspective of the radical democratic critics) we must recognize that the bourgeois state begins and persists in a permanent tension with more radical and more progressive democratic elements within it. "Democratization" cannot exist in any meaningful sense of the term, if there is neither substantive contestation nor substantive debate taking place within a given polity. Nor can democratization take place in a polity where the ruling elite so dominate the state and the political process as to make even elections an exercise in

mere rotation. Even representative democracy requires the plausible spectre of autonomous, militant civic self-organization. Republics dominated by aristocracies, to paraphrase Machiavelli, must nevertheless contain a significant plebeian element, lest the republic quickly give way to tyranny.

Since we know that the emergence of stable liberal regimes coincides with (and may, indeed, require) a progressive disciplining of the plebeian masses, I do not see how it is possible to begin with an already marginalized citizenry and arrive at the bourgeois state. Instead, this seems to be only a recipe for the kind of oligarchy predominating in BiH today. The membrane between liberalism and oligarchy, while real, is nevertheless at times thin, as I argued earlier. To force even the liberal state in a democratic direction requires the kind of insurrectionary and militant politics of opposition that have characterized the evolution of this state form in the West.

Conclusion(s)

This chapter covered three interconnected movements. In the first section, I identified a significant gap in the existing literature on the political evolution of the BiH polity. Specifically, I argued that there was little attention paid to democracy and democratization as a popular, participatory project. In the subsequent section, on the basis of a radical democratic literature, I identified a distinction between politics and the political and, moreover, a tension between the political and the state. I argued that the political is a radical, emancipatory project, committed to deepening and broadening the opportunities for popular, democratic participation in the process of public administration. I continued this analysis in the third portion of this chapter, where I concluded that such a politics has historically been actively marginalized in BiH. Yet if our intent was indeed to promote democratization in BiH then a political project was the only means forward. If our aim was liberal-democracy, then we would have to allow and embrace the full spectrum political evolution and contestation that marked the emergence

of the liberal state in the West to be replicated in the southeast of Europe as well or, at least, something approximating this process. In other words, the rise of bourgeoisie democracy was impossible without the simultaneous rise and persistence of a still more radical, participatory, plebeian option. This, I maintain, was as true of the European and Atlantic revolutions as it is of BiH today.

In the chapters that follow, I will begin to root this argument in the specific historical and social experience of the state in BiH. The theoretical analysis that guides my understanding of the nearly two centuries of political evolution in the region, including the still very much contested future of the BiH polity, has been introduced in the discussion above. If this analysis must be conceived of in ideological terms, perhaps there is no better label for it than the dreaded spectre haunting the imaginations of the Yugoslav Communist establishment during the 1960s: *anarcho-liberalism*. For my own purposes, I do not mean that this work is either anarchist or liberal; rather it is a reflection of a commitment to the depth of the potentialities implied by a substantive understanding of democracy. In other words, mine is a conception of democracy as ranging *from* anarchism *to* liberalism. If democracy has any currency as a theoretical or practical ideal, then it is as a constant spectre, haunting all states and all forms of government. And it is this ideal that permeates, that informs, and that haunts this text.

Chapter II: States, Nations & Federations

Introduction

The process of independent state formation in the Balkans in the 19th century, amid the collapse of the Ottoman Empire, was the product of the particular socio-economic conditions of the region. Especially important was the class structure of Balkan society in this period. The nascent elites under whose guidance these new states were formed were not Atlantic liberals because economic relations in the 19th century Balkans were not capitalist. No bourgeois model of government, i.e. liberal-parliamentary democracy, could thus emerge in societies where there was no domestic bourgeoisie.

How then could we characterize the class structures that led to the formations of the early Balkan states and, by relation, the kinds of governing systems they created? By and large, the early Balkan state-founders gained their authority as formerly pliant clients of the Ottoman state and/or as bandits. By the 19th century, the weakened Porte—the seat of sultanic power in Istanbul—increasingly came to rely on various local "big men" to maintain some semblance of law and order and the most effective big men proved to be individuals who had previously been the very bandits who the Empire wished to combat (Barkey, 1994).

In this non-capitalist political economy wealth and privilege could only be secured by a single means: accumulation through dispossession.[27] In short, violence became the defini-

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[27] I use the term accumulation though dispossession, popularized by the geographer David Harvey, in its original Marxian sense, e.g. primitive accumulation of capital through the use of extra-economic violence. I use the former term, however, to make explicit that the political economy of the Balkans remains at this stage to this day and that it is not some "previous" epoch of development. Harvey himself argues that accumulation through dispossession is a lasting quality of capitalism (Harvey, 2003, p. 145). While I think he is correct in this assessment, I maintain like Marx originally did that it is also a process of accumulation constitutive of pre or non-capitalist social relations. The absence of bourgeois political institutions in the Balkans cannot be divorced from the absence of capitalist property relations. Therefore, while contemporary dispossession practices in the Balkans *are* part of global patterns of neoliberal policy, they are *also* a local phenomenon, the result of local class dynamics. It is this latter point that I feel has hitherto been insufficiently developed and is therefore one of the primary contributions of this text to existing debates on global (and Balkan) political economy. Fredy Perlman, who I cite later in this chapter also provides a useful discussion of the concept of primitive accumulation and shares an understanding thereof that is closer to my own (Perlman, 1984). In Perlman's account, lasting primitive accumulation practices become dominant in societies where elites failed to establish foreign/colonial outposts, from whence raw resources could be extracted, away from the "core." What becomes necessary instead are local pop-

tive feature of the Balkan state; violence employed by state-forming elites against an over-whelmingly peasant population. The crushing of the peasant-led Timok Rebellion in 1883 or the bloody Obrenović-Karađorđević rivalry became the hallmarks of this particular moderni-zation project rather than the creation of representative parliamentary bodies as in parts of the West. Violence alone, however, could not have ensured that such a system of accumulation would persist. What was required was a facsimile or model of popular participation that would nevertheless preserve the privileged position of the elite. Nationalism became this model.

As P. M. Kitromilides argues, rather than nationalist movements giving birth to states it was precisely the opposite (Kitromilides, 1989). Statist elites *constructed* and promoted ethno-national identities to entrench their own positions of power.[28] In the Yugoslav lands, the national question was used to undermine every other kind of political mobilization (e.g. based on class) against the new elites. What few "reforms" did eventually take place during the 19th and early 20th centuries, were almost in every case purposefully constructed in ethno-national terms—to mitigate their radical political and economic potential. Accordingly, nationalism in the Balkans was from its onset a fundamentally anti-democratic project and operated explicit-ly on the idea of excluding and/or minimizing popular participation in the new states. I draw

ulations which can be stripped and dispossessed. Nationalism, he argues, provides a means to facilitate this pro-cess by creating arbitrary "us" and "them" divisions that allows the elite to ostracize and dispossess a segment of the population in the name of "national liberation."

[28] Comparatively little has been written on nationalism in the Balkans as a constructed project even though works by Benedict Anderson and Eugene Weber are classics in the field of nationalism studies. Thus, despite the intricately documented construction of the ethno-nationalist project by Milošević in the late 1980s and early 90s, the lack of engagement with the broader thematic studies of the phenomenon of nationalism results in a rather *Balkanist* (per Todorova) discourse about the Yugoslavs. The suggestion being that while the "nationalist awak-enings" of the 19th century were morally good and represented the authentic inclinations of the Balkan peoples, their subsequent inability to "evolve" beyond these programs, meant that these societies could not turn into prop-er democratic and truly multicultural regimes. The obvious implication here is that Western societies, *on the oth-er hand*, managed to do exactly this—to follow the path from national awakenings, circa the French Revolution and into the 1848 Revolutions, into liberal-representative democracy and today multiculturalism. Aside from ignoring the supremely anti-democratic motivations behind the invention of representative democracy, the ex-termination and colonization projects of settler states and their sponsors, as Ghassan Hage argues, this narrative ignores also the continued assumptions of white power and privilege that underpin contemporary multicultural-ism in the West (Hage, 1998). Gagnon makes a similar point in a yet unpublished paper. All of which is to say, that ignoring the constructed nature of the nation (likewise, race) has served not merely to essentialize and ob-scure the intricacies of the development of the state in the Balkans but also in the West, and the vested power interests guiding the process in both.

this point in sharp distinction to the position, perhaps most famously advanced by Rabushka and Shepsle, that democracy in "plural societies" is always in danger of unravelling and is thus essentially ill-suited as a system of governance for such polities by virtue of something akin to the "ancient ethnic hatreds" thesis (Rabushka & Shepsle, 1972). Instead, I wish to draw attention to the manner in which "plurality" became politicized and class antagonisms were purposefully subverted into ethno-national conflict, in this one space, at least, freeing successive generations of elites in the region to continue the same essential program of accumulation, unabated. Accordingly, this chapter is an analysis of the *origins* of that program, rather than a history of the area as such, especially as it concerns the emergence of the state form in this region, and serves primarily to inform my later examination of the (re)emergence of similar patterns of accumulation and dispossession at the end of the 20th century.

While this chapter traces the emergence of the state and the nation in the Balkans as practical and ideological projects, from the dissolution of the Ottoman Empire to the end of the Second World War, integral to this discussion are also the critics of this state-nationalist nexus. Analysing the contemporaneous emergence of the Balkan federalist tradition, I argue that genuine, local democratic thought existed and that it was consciously anti-statist and anti-nationalist. The existence of this domestic radical democratic movement alerts us to the fact, that from the moment of genesis of the Balkan nation-state, opposing projects existed, whose proponents clearly recognized the fusion of authoritarian, oligarchic, and exploitative practices which this social form of the nation-state represented and relied upon. Understanding the Balkan federalist critique of the nation-state is also central for this text because it represents the first genuine moment of popular intervention in the elite-dominated state-building processes. It was a paradigmatic confrontation over the essential contours of the Balkan state; whether it would be a largely oligarchic or largely popular model of social organization.

Moreover, as I will show in Chapter III, the popular-elite split signified by the emergence of the Balkan federalists remained a current and active fracture in the region, visible both in the development of the self-management system in the second Yugoslav state and in the emergence of the so-called New Left during the same period. The true effect of the eventual suffocating of democratic opposition in what was then still Yugoslavia would not become clear until the 1990s. However, the *longue durée* required to make sense of the cataclysm that befell the region at the end of the last century, I argue, necessarily requires an investigation of the origins of the Balkan state at the end of the 19th century as well as the alternative modes of social organization against which the architects of state power opposed themselves.

The Early Political Economy of the Balkans

The term *država*, the local word for "state," has as its root the verb *držati*, meaning "to hold." These etymological origins are significant: they attest to conceptual proximity in the region between the idea of the state and the idea of domination—of holding, holding down and owning a land and a people by a superior force. Superior force ended the medieval Bosnian state[29] with the beheading of its last king, Stephen Tomašević, by the armies of the Porte in 1463.[30] The end of feudalism in the Balkans, however, is difficult to date. Yet this fact is itself

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[29] A text from 958 AD provides the first mention of the "territory of Bosona" as a distinct political space, written by the Byzantine Emperor Constantine Porphyrogentius (Hoare, 2007, p. 33). In Porphyrogentius' account the Bosnian territory is subject to the administration of the Serbian Prince yet is worthy of distinction from Serbia proper. By the late 12th century, a chronicler in the employ of Emperor Manuel Komnenos would note that "Bosnia does not obey the grand *župan* of the Serbs; it is a neighbouring people with its own customs and government" (Malcolm, 1994, p. 11). A sovereign, medieval Bosnian state emerges during this period, under the rule Ban Kulin (ibid). While formally a vassal state of the Kingdom of Hungary, the so-called Banate of Bosnia had become a *de facto* independent state by the late 1190s (Fine, 1994, p. 44). The Banate of Bosnia (1154-1377) is followed by the Kingdom of Bosnia (1377-1463), after the crowning of Stjepan Tvrtko Kotromanić in 1377. While Ban Kulin remains "remembered" in the popular imagination as a wise and benevolent ruler (as most state-founders), the medieval period is on the whole one of instability, war and religious persecution—of the schismatic Bosnian Church by Catholic inquisitors, in particular (Fine, 1975).

[30] Present day Herzegovina was for centuries known as "Hum" and was a region considered part of greater Bosnia. In the middle of the 15th century, as it fell under the control of Duke Stjepan Vukčić Kosača, a frequent opponent of the Bosnian throne, who styled himself with the German title of *Herzog*, the territory became known as *Hercegovina*, literally "the Herzog's land." Much as the concept of the state is etymologically proximate to domination in the Yugoslav languages, so the very name of BiH is colored by elite domination.

telling of the *differently* constituted class dynamics of the region.[31] What kind of political economy did the Ottomans encounter in the Balkans and what did they replace it with?

Under the rule of the Porte, "the local ethnic nobility was soon eliminated" resulting in an initial period of prosperity, as Ottoman hegemony wiped away the squabbling fiefdoms of the Medieval Balkan states (Anderson, 1974, p. 372). Yet Perry Anderson argues that this also contributed to the emergence of a reactionary trajectory to the later evolution of social formations in the region; the subversion of class antagonisms into ethno-national ones. Anderson argues that despite the economic exploitation of peasants under the Medieval Balkans having been more severe than the Ottomans agrarian regime, the former nevertheless "represented an indubitable historical advance in these laggard social formations. For it signalled a rupture with clan principles of organization, tribal fragmentation, and the rudimentary cultural and political forms attendant on these. The price paid for this advance was, precisely, class stratification and increased economic exploitation" (ibid). In other words, because the exploiting class had been "local," it would have later prevented the emergence of a "national question," or at least prevented it from completely subsuming the question of class conflict. Instead, the elimination of the local nobility had as its

> main cultural and political result...an actual regression to clannic institutions and particularist traditions among the Balkan rural population. Thus in the Serb lands - where this phenomenon has been particularly studied - the tribal *plemena*, the chiefly *knez* [sic] and the kin-webbed *zadruga*, which were fast disappearing before Ottoman conquest, now revived as pervasive units of social organization, in the countryside. The general relapse into a patriarchal localism was accompanied

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[31] The focus on the so-called "agrarian question" is a well-established point of discussion within development studies, and has historically been a central concern of radicals and modernizers of every sort, in particular for Marxists. The tendency to regard peasants as a "counter-revolutionary class" is a point firmly established by Marx himself and this perspective continued to inform the policies of state socialist regimes across (South) Eastern Europe, including Yugoslavia. On the other hand, anarchists, beginning with Bakunin, have typically regarded peasants in a more sympathetic light, arguing that their primitive communalist inclinations were important, organic bases for any future classless societies. This perspective has survived into the contemporary period; tellingly, both James Scott and David Graeber wrote their earliest scholarly works on the peasant experience in southeast Asia, and Africa, respectively. For my purposes, the lasting significance of the agrarian dimension in Balkan social development lies in the overwhelmingly rural character of the region's historic populations and, in the context of overlapping experiences of state collapse and state formation, their precarious socio-political position. A position that has made the peasant classes of the Balkans the primary targets of state indoctrination and extermination practices (e.g. nationalism). In short, one cannot comment on the history of the Balkans, without commenting on the peasants.

by a notable decline in literacy. Cultural articulation of the life of the subject population became largely a monopoly of the Orthodox clergy, whose servility to the Turkish rulers was matched only by its ignorance and superstition. Towns lost their commercial or intellectual importance, becoming military and administrative centres of Ottoman rule, planted with Turkish craftsmen and shopkeepers. Thus, although the great mass of the rural population benefited materially from the initial impact of the Turkish conquest, because it led to a decline in the volume of surplus extracted from the immediate producers in the countryside, the other side of the same historical process was an interruption of any indigenous social development towards a more advanced feudal order, a regression to pre-feudal patriarchal forms, and a long stagnation in the whole historical evolution of the Balkan peninsula (ibid, pp. 373-374).[32]

Thus, the economic system of the early Ottoman period in the Balkans in the 16th century cannot be compared to West European feudalism, as it fundamentally rested on central state control—"at its apex, [the Empire was] basically bureaucratic rather than feudal" (Lampe & Jackson, 1982, p. 23). At this time, the Ottoman political economy was organized through a *timar* system administered by *sipahi* cavalry officers in the rural areas and a guild-like system in the towns. The system is worth describing at length:

> The *sipahi* had no claim to the land itself; it remained part of the 87 percent of Ottoman territory in the 1528 census that was state land. His sons could inherit no more than a fraction of his income, not necessarily from the same *timar* and only if they too served the Sultan. The father received a small fraction of the land, or better, income grant in return for his personal support and three days of peasant labor a year…Otherwise, the peasants owed the *sipahi* no personal services. He collected prescribed amounts of their annual harvest, roughly 10 to 20 percent. He typically used this tithe to maintain the several horses and horsemen that his grant obliged him to bring to the summer campaigns. Rather than risk the use of forced labor outside the Sultan's direct control, the grant also directed the *sipahi* to collect certain money taxes from the peasants. By far the largest of these levies was a head tax for the exemption of all adult, non-Moslem [sic] males from military service. Finally, peasants might pass on the right to use their part of the *timar* holding to their sons. They could obtain an Ottoman document attesting to this right (ibid, pp. 24-25).

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[32] Amila Buturovic has correctly noted that more detailed accounts of Ottoman history and Bosnian Ottoman history in particular provide for more nuanced readings of the region's socio-economic development. Halil İnalcık and Donald Quataert, for instance, write compellingly of the rise of a Bosnian "merchant" class (İnalcık and Quataert, 1996, pp. 265-266) during the course of the 16th century, at the height of Ottoman power. Yet my reliance on Anderson and other non-Ottomanists in this section is deliberate and, in any case, borne out even by other Ottoman scholars. Namely, in Baki Tezcan's masterful survey of the late Ottoman Empire, Bosnia is mentioned only three times (Tezcan, 2010). This is to say, and to buttress the point made by Anderson et al, that after an initial period of spectacular economic growth in the 16th century, social and political development in Ottoman Bosnia stagnated. Too much has been made of this stagnation in Orientalist nationalist accounts, as I note later in this chapter. Notwithstanding the importance of close historical analysis, as it conerns my central argument on the "primitive" nature of the Balkan state form, the significance of the Ottoman period is ably established by the (admittedly) generalist accounts cited herein.

As the authors argue, this was not a West European feudal mode of production. Instead, this was a "system of military occupation, staffed and controlled by the central government" (ibid, p. 25). "The urban guild system was likewise tightly controlled," they note, "explicitly designed to prevent the emergence of an independent, for-profit economy. As *timar* agriculture supplied food, the urban economy provided the army with weapons, uniforms and other equipment for pressing forward on the frontier. Both the urban and rural regimes were also designed to maintain civil order in the interior with a minimum of military force" (ibid).

Since there was no concept of private property in the Ottoman Empire akin to the one in Western Europe, no domestic nobility could (re)emerge and, as a result, all privilege was secured through attainment of state posts. "Given that the whole arable territory of the Empire was deemed the property of the Sultanate," Anderson argues, "the central domestic purpose of the Ottoman State…was naturally fiscal exploitation of the Imperial Possessions" (Anderson, 1974, p. 367). This arrangement also meant that the formation of the state in the Balkans, where the vast majority of *timar* estates were found, was from the onset premised on state capture and/or a primitive mode of accumulation. That is, the monopoly of violence that came with control of the state, in the absence of a bourgeoisie, came also to mean virtually absolute control over resource extraction and accumulation. Since this particular dimension of the Ottoman administration survived well into the Austro-Hungarian period (1878-1918), it became a well-worn practice of local elites. While the Hapsburgs "codified and thoroughly regulated agrarian relations, eliminating many landlord abuses," they never fully abolished the system of Ottoman agrarian relations, thus "imperial administrators reinforced the traditional dominant elites and froze in place a social structure that proved deeply resistant to economic and political transformation" (Donia R., 2007, p. 2). Moreover, such an approach also explicitly maintained "the state [as] an accomplice in the gathering of agrarian dues," that is, wealth extraction through overtly coercive means—primitive accumulation (ibid).

While peasants under the Ottoman *timar* administration were treated far better than their West European peers, by the 18th century a more exploitative form of tax-farming emerged under the *chiflik* estates (Mazower, 2002, p. 19). The rise of these estates led to abusive treatments of the predominately Christian peasants by a newly empowered landlord caste, with their own private armies, on whom the Empire increasingly depended for its defence. In fact, the emergence of the *chiflik* system corresponded directly to the progressive collapse in the authority of the central Ottoman state from the death of Suleiman the Magnificent in 1566 (Lampe & Jackson, 1982, p. 26). Indeed, only after the death of Suleiman does an economic order develop that is "eminently feudal [in] origins" and characteristics (ibid). Accordingly, the "agents of anti-Sultanic disobedience," Clemens Hoffmann argues, "were not an incipient commercial or even national class. Rather, they were a newly constituted seigniorial class, keen on retaining and enlarging its surpluses...[this] realisation of gains was, however, made possible much more by the politically constituted, unimpeded, higher level of surplus-extraction from the peasants based on the central state's inability of regional political control, rather than by exploiting the inequalities of markets. This is why the âyân's[33] collective interest did not consist in political and technological 'progress', but much more in stagnation and preserving the status quo" (Hoffmann, 2010). In other words, the *chiflik* system depended on the use of violence against peasants by newly-empowered landlords and their bandit militias amid the collapse of central authority.

Perry Anderson places these violent practices in the context of Ottoman political economy, more broadly:

> The characteristic Turkish town eventually came to be dominated by a stagnant and backward *menu peuple* that prevented any entrepreneurial innovation or accumulation. Given the nature of the Ottoman State, there was no protective space in which a Turkish mercantile bourgeoisie could develop, and from the 17th century onwards commercial functions devolved increasingly onto infidel minority communities, Greek, Jewish or Armenian, which had always anyway dominated

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[33] The *ayans* were the landlords of the *chiflick* system.

the export trade with the West. Muslim traders or producers were thereafter generally confined to small shopkeeping and artisanal occupations.

Thus even at its height, the level of the Ottoman economy never achieved a degree of advance commensurate with the Ottoman polity. The basic motor-force of imperial expansion remained relentlessly military in character (Anderson, 1974, pp. 375-376).

The "basic motor-force" that survived the Ottoman period, however, was a regional economy wherein the use of overt violence was virtually the only way to accumulate wealth. As a result of the *chiflik* transition, "[t]he most distinctive feature of rural relations in the South-East [of Europe]," Anderson notes "was the break-down of any firm civic order imposed from above: banditry became rampant, encouraged by the mountainous relief of the region, which made it the Mediterranean equivalent of flight on the Baltic plains, for the peasantry. Landlords, conversely, maintained bands of armed thugs or *kirjali* irregulars on their estates, to protect themselves from revolt and repress their tenantry" (ibid, 387). Those that were most comfortable with such practices, bandits, landlords, and various warlords would thereafter be the exclusive members of the new Balkan elite.

In the popular imagination, these bandit-warlords have been remembered as romantic freedom fighters, as *hajduks*, the local incarnation of Hobsbawm's "social bandits" with BiH origins (Hobsbawm, 1981, p. 71). Though the 16th century was stable period of growth, as the Ottoman Empire's hold on the Balkans weakened thereafter, widespread brigandry emerged as a problem. In the late 18th and early 19th century, a weakened Porte was forced to turn many of these bandits into actual governors, like the famed Ali Pasha (1740-1822), to maintain some semblance of control over the region. The trend of turning bandits into rulers, David Kanin argues, is one that became a staple of imperial and later international administration in the Balkans (D. Kanin 2003). Among the formative political and social elites in the region, there were few who were not some combination of bandits, landlords or warlords. Intellectuals and revolutionaries who espoused more progressive ends remained marginalized and persecuted (Hassiotis, 2011, p. 217). (In this sense, the dissolution of the SFRJ too marked a pro-

cess of state capture by entrenched criminal and provincial conglomerates, as in previous epochs (Andreas, 2008).)

Contrary to the romantic image of the *hajduks*, Barkey describes the bandits as a parasitic class, in collusion rather than conflict with landlords and central authorities: "...bandits [were] the malefactors of rural society. They hurt the rural community in several ways: they inhibit its potential for collective action; they plundered its resources and actively participated in its coercion by local power holders. These agents of the local strongman could not have been benevolent. Bandits were neither necessarily nor often enemies of the state" (Barkey, 1994, p. 21). Above all, she stresses the need to distinguish between "class-based movements that threaten the structural arrangement in society and a banditry that attempts to benefit from existing structural arrangements in society. These bandits, in the final analysis, have no reason for the destruction of those structures of inequality from which they benefit" (ibid).

The imperial authorities' legitimization and institutionalization of the bandits in the governing order, argues Barkey, constituted the central element of the state consolidation process of the Ottoman Empire and was at odds with the norm in Western Europe, where the practice was one of confrontation rather than negotiation with elements that challenged the state's authority. While the system functioned, the authorities "managed and played off different groups, responding to and curtailing their orbit of influence while keeping all groups dependent on the state. A state-centered culture was embedded in the structure of society by state action, with everyone from elites to bandits dependent on state-servicing patronage" (Barkey, 1994, p. 16). The banditry that prevailed in the Ottoman Empire, she argues, was thus the result of demobilized soldiers, local strongmen, and/or bandits seeking legitimation from the center. These were not Hobsbawm's "social avengers," instead, these were "status-seeking rebels" (ibid, p. 18). Exactly these status-seeking rebels became the post-Ottoman Balkan elites.

The elites who emerged in the collapse of the Ottoman Empire were educated in generational patterns of clientelistic and parasitic behaviour. As wealth could only be obtained through plunder, through accumulation by dispossession, force was always required—and the state's monopoly of violence was the premier way to accomplish this. Individual opponents, when they emerged, were negotiated with accordingly. The real threat to this order was the threat of collective, popular action.

The Ottomans had dealt with this danger through the non-hereditary *timar* system that, aside from preventing the emergence of West European-style feudal nobility, also precluded the possibility of peasant rebellions. Precisely because the *sipahi* were a military class, expected to go and furnish frequent military campaigns, and that their estates were temporary, patrimonial privileges, they were essentially "absentee landlords" (ibid, p. 92). Moreover, the administrative lines of the *timar* estates were such that a single village might often be divided among several *sipahi*. Thus, peasants "who knew each other on the basis of living in the same or in contagious villages did not necessarily deal with the same landholder. And, since peasants from the same village were bound to different landholders, they had no direct common enemy to ally against. Therefore, in most cases of peasant-landholder conflict, individual peasants were pitted against individual landholders" (ibid, p. 95). In short, the system was almost *designed* to prevent the emergence of class conflict.

Class resentment (and exploitation) nevertheless continued, but this analysis of then-dominant social practices sheds light on why the potential for class conflict mutated into ethno-national conflict. Ultimately, widespread peasant revolts in the Ottoman Empire came not during the *timar* period but rather once the *chiflik* estates emerged. It was at this stage that opportunistic local elites were able to mobilize and to use religious differences to diffuse the resentment engendered by actually existing class relations. While the peasants urged the Porte

to reassert strong, central authority and dismiss the corrupt *ayans*, *pashas*[34] and their various associates, thus directing their ire towards their local exploiters, a segment of these local elites began to displace this resentment outwards. By insisting that the primary conflict was Christian-Muslim, rather than class-based, these elites discovered the contours of that which they had lacked previously: the appearance of an ideological program. I will describe this nationalist program in further detail below, for now it remains only to say that exactly *how* this project emerged is less important than what its function was.

The traditional claim that the Ottoman *millet* system[35] provided the original basis for the separation of what would later become ethno-national communities is one that removes elite and popular agency from the equation (Velikonja, 2003, p. 59). There is little reason to believe that the *millet* system would have birthed nations if national identities were not intentionally prescribed and inscribed by elites. It is no doubt the case that a segment of these elites (and many radicals) genuinely *believed* in the idealness of nations, while actively debating their "naturalness." However, their consistent educational efforts suggest that they nevertheless believed that the masses had to be *convinced*, of both their belonging to these nations and that this belonging was in their interest. Yet this nationalist ideal is unlikely to have become much more than another ideological fantasy had it not been recognized as an effective means of securing power for statist elites. It was only when nationalism became a state program that it began to speak to concrete material and economic grievances of the general population—because it began to be used by the new elites to subvert class resentment and to channel these grievances into reactionary ethno-nationalism.

So defining was the influence of these early nationalist elites on the region that the political economy of the Yugoslav lands continued to be dominated by the clientelistic and pat-

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[34] An honorific akin to governor that in popular Bosnian parlance remains a term of affection or respect.

[35] A system whereby individual legal codes existed for the various religious communities of the Empire, into which all individuals were classed.

rimonial[36] patterns they established well into the 20th century; and this despite the moderniz-

ing efforts of the Austro-Hungarians, the monarchist authorities in the first Yugoslavia, and

later the Communist regime in particular. While the socialist period saw the emergence of

large-scale industrial projects, a staple of state socialist regimes attempting to mimic Western

development models, control over these enterprises remained patrimonial with only a bureau-

cratic veneer. In BiH, this process continues today, coupled with a new round of dispossession

during both the war (1992-1995) and the post-war rush towards privatization (Toal & Dhal-

man, 2011, p. 117). Thus, "criminals and other inhabitants of the [Balkans]...continue to ma-

nipulate local and international officials by constructing rhetorical discourses of loyalty to the

international regime, while at the same time pursuing illegal business activities in the tradition

of [kleptocracy]" (D. Kanin 2003, 521).

Ottoman and Austro-Hungarian Reform Efforts

Barely able to cope with the lawlessness within their own borders, by the early 19th

century, leading Ottoman officials began to realize that the survival of their Empire depended

on major reforms. Thus in BiH, an initial round of reforms began with wider changes in the

Ottoman system. Sultan Mahmud II first abolished the janissary corps in the 1820s, and then

turned towards restructuring the tax and land system of the Empire in the 1830s. Both moves

were aimed at modernizing the Ottoman state. In BiH

> the landowners—southern Slav in race [sic] and speech but conservatively Mus-
> lim in religion and outlook—had resisted every attempt at westernization made by
> successive Sultans. Mahmud II's formal abolition of feudalism finally destroyed
> the *Kapetanate* [sic], the privileged of forty-eight beys[37] who, when the Empire

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[36] Max Weber's *Economy and Society* is the standard referential text on patrimonialism. Weber distinguishes between bureaucracy as a "precision instrument" and patrimonialism, a system in which the "political realm as a whole is approximately identical with a huge princely manor" (Weber, 1978, p. 990 & 1013). While Weber notes that bureaucratic regimes are not necessarily democratic, he nevertheless strongly identifies patrimonialism with the East, and the "Oriental Sultans," in particular. While the origins of the patrimonial model are patriarchal, its logic is clearly capable of expanding far beyond the family. Its essential characteristics remain the manner in which power is wielded autocratically, discretionally, and clientalistically.

[37] Ottoman title, akin to "lord" or "governor" of an administrative unit.

was at its zenith had been entrusted with administering the subdivisions of Bosnia in return for raising *sipahi* regiments for the Sultan's cavalry. But the *Kapetan-ate*[38] [sic] went down fighting, literally. Open revolt against Mahmud in 1837 was followed by an even wider rebellion when reports...held out promise of legal equality and social upgrading for Christians and Jews. Not until March 1850 did a powerful Ottoman army...finally suppress the Bosnian beys (Palmer, 1992, p. 114).

However, by 1910 there were still some 444,920 peasant families that were classified as *kmets*—customary tenants or sharecroppers, usually understood to be the closest approximation to serfs in the region (Lampe & Jackson, 1982, p. 286). While Ivo Banac too notes that Ottoman "feudalism" differed from its Western counterparts in that it allowed for "the free movement of serfs, [and] no military obligations for non-Muslims," its legacy was nevertheless an ethno-confessionally tinged agrarian question (Banac, 1988, p. 366). The *chiflik* practice would essentially continue into the Austro-Hungarian occupation which "did little to change...[the] system of backward, exploitative sharecropping left behind as the principal Ottoman legacy to the province" (Lampe & Jackson, 1982, p. 284). In short, "maximizing tax revenue to defray the costs of military occupation was always the major Hapsburg motive in [BiH], along with maintaining military security" much as it had been for the Ottomans (ibid). According to the 1910 figures, 91% of landlords with *kmets* were registered as Muslims, while 73% and 21% of *kmets* were registered as Orthodox and Catholic, respectively (Banac, 1988, p. 367). However, Banac stresses that it "must be remembered...that most Bosnian land-

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[38] The *kapetanije* were an Ottoman administrative system not exclusive to BiH but, perhaps, most fully autonomous there. It was a "peculiar local military and administrative structure [that] evolved in Bosnia from the Ottoman *timar*...system. In the border zones, mainly in and around the military forts, officials known as *kapetans* or *kapudans* (captains) performed a mix of military, administrative, and border police duties. They also went to war when the sultan called upon them. While at the end of the 17th century there were 12 of such districts, all of them along the border, a hundred years later there were 39 *kapetanije* through [BiH]." The author continues: "Because the imperial center was so formidable, the *kapetans* were successfully kept in check. During the 16th and 17th centuries, however, the *kapetans* were able to convert the land into private holdings, make their office hereditary, treat the local peasants as they pleased, diminish the power of the governor...and make Bosnia a state within the state" (Čuvalo, 2010, p. xxxiv). The legacy of the captains is most readily visible today in certain (often, prominent) family names in BiH such as Kapetanović and Gavrankapetanović (literally "Raven Captain").

lords (61.38 percent) owned less than 123.55 acres of land...The point is that the Bosnian Muslim upper crust was not made up of Oriental nabobs living in ostentatious luxury" (ibid).

Banac was here responding to an already well-worn narrative in Yugoslav historiography by the 1980s that represented the Ottoman *ayans*, and Muslims more broadly, as privileged, entitled, and wholly reactionary. Later this analysis became a constitutive part of Serbian nationalist mythology and a kind of class-based argument for genocide. The "Oriental nabob" comparison is nevertheless instructive from the perspective of *actual* class analysis. The term *nabob* originates with British colonization of the Indian sub-continent—specifically, the "British subjects who had gone either to India or to the West Indies and returned to England with spectacular wealth" (Casid, 2005, p. 49). The Bosnian Muslim *ayans* and *beys* were not nabobs, any more than the emerging Serbian and Montenegrin kings and princes were actual royals. British nabobs were members of a trans-continental, imperial bourgeoisie. The Bosnian Muslim elites' wealth, status, and privilege largely came from the titles they could extract from the collapsing central Ottoman authorities and what they could appropriate from an impoverished peasantry. The same was true of the Serbian and Montenegrin kings and princes——who in a single lifetime shifted from loyal Ottoman subjects to "national liberators." More specifically, they shifted from having been the *enforcers* of the Ottoman order, the very oppressors of the peasant classes, to posturing as their emancipators. In short, the reference to nabobs is rather illuminating because it alerts us to the wholesale non-existence of a bourgeoisie in BiH at the end of the 19th century. What existed in BiH, like in Serbia and Montenegro and the rest of the Ottoman Balkans, were elites whose conception of wealth and power fundamentally (and almost exclusively) rested on the use of violence in the service of the dispossession of the peasantry. What they accumulated, they hoarded, and their political ambitions extended only towards preserving this status quo.

Yet for all the claims of Ottoman economic and political backwardness, the Austro-Hungarian occupation of BiH was little better and, in fact, in some demonstrable measure worse. It was during this period that the "agrarian question" *ought* to have been resolved, presumably, with BiH's entry into the concert of Europe. However, even a brief survey of Hapsburg economic policy demonstrates how much the Austro-Hungarians themselves contributed to the peripheral status of the country. This was a reflection of Austro-Hungary's own quasi-capitalist development and dominant authoritarian political structure, itself beset by parochial antagonisms. Donia explains:

> In becoming the monarchy's sole colony, [BiH] became the economic periphery to two rival "cores", one dominated by the agrarian Hungarian elite and the other by the German liberals of Cisleithanian Austria. Those two dominant elites were constantly at odds. They had rival economic interests and national loyalties, and many groups in the monarchy became allies of one only to find themselves adversaries of the other. The rival elites each hoped to burden the emperor and the imperial regime with the task of advancing its preferred foreign policy as well as its domestic agenda. The imperial regime, of course, had an agenda of its own, and most day-to-day administration in [BiH] fell to loyal bureaucrats who found that the internecine competition crippled their own efforts to govern. In the monarchy's complex decision-making architecture, the Hungarian agrarians had the advantage of being able to obstruct most decisions. Many of them unsuccessfully opposed the occupation from the outset, but they succeeded in crafting legal constraints on the monarchy's activities in [BiH] (Donia R., 2007, p. 6).

The colonial "development" of BiH was thus limited again by an imperial administration, arguably, already itself in the process of coming undone. Donia explains that "the Hungarian obstructionists secured a guarantee that no funds from the monarchy's coffers would be employed for projects in [BiH]...this limitation drove imperial administrators to focus on developing extractive industries to generate revenues in the province. While the authorities may have turned principally to extractive industry...fiscal constraints effectively eliminated the alternatives and led the new rulers to insist on state ownership of most major firms in the tobacco, lumbering, and iron ore industries" (ibid). As a result, manufactured goods continued to be produced in the imperial centres and to be imported into BiH, only furthering the country's

peripheral and dependant status. The emergence of a local merchant class, a bourgeoisie of any sort, thus remained unrealized.

The Austro-Hungarian regime's fundamental inability to resolve its own contradictory policy approach to the new colony meant that a series of stopgap measures merely escalated and contributed to an already charged political climate.

> The new administrators' high hopes to provide universal elementary education, embodied in their proposal to build a network of schools throughout the province, went unrealized. This single failure of Austria-Hungary's colonial project meant that literacy rates rose little during the monarchy's forty year rule. Since few Bosnians could read and write, many skilled laborers were imported from elsewhere in the monarchy to fill the relatively few industrial jobs created by economic development. Making up for the deficiency in government-sponsored schools, Muslim, Catholic, and Serbian Orthodox leaders expanded their respective parochial school systems, often with financing and teachers from neighboring lands. The parochial schools fostered nationalism and produced youthful malcontents, some of whom actively protested Habsburg policies or opposed Habsburg rule (ibid, p. 7).

By 1918, the closest BiH had come towards mimicking a capitalist mode of production (and political administration) was still but a facsimile. The Austro-Hungarian Empire did little to develop the colony beyond leaving behind colourful facades in the cities and a skeletal extractive infrastructure in the country. The quasi-feudal relations of the Ottoman period remained in place.

World War I and the formation of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes (from 1929, the Kingdom of Yugoslavia) ostensibly brought about the final, formal abolition of this agrarian order in BiH, with the agrarian reforms of 1918 and 1919. These reforms, however, were coloured more by national rather than class antagonisms (Banac, 1988, p. 368). Or rather, they represented the manner in which class antagonisms had already been subverted through a nationalist discourse and policy agenda:

> By July, 1919, more than four hundred thousand hectares of land had been taken from 4,281 Muslim landowners. Sometimes land was taken without any refund. In other cases, the compensation offered by the state—some of which was paid immediately and the rest in instalments—was well below the land's fair-market value. All of this had a catastrophic economic and social effect on the Muslim community as many landowning Muslim families were reduced to poverty. One result

was a new exodus of Bosnian Muslims to Turkey. The Muslims were also generally uneducated. In the 1930s, the level of illiteracy for Yugoslavia as a whole was 88 percent, while the figures for Muslims were even more dismal: 95 percent (99.68 percent for women) (Velikonja, 2003, p. 145).

These legal reforms also took place in the context of a campaign of violence against

the Muslims of Yugoslavia, especially in BiH, that in their then most recent incarnation, had

begun during the course of World War I.[39] The pogroms by ethnic Serb militias were given a

tacit seal of approval by the new government in Belgrade and resulted in the deaths of thou-

sands of Muslims—peasants and landowners alike. The reforms and extra-judicial killings

amounted to a "systematic destruction of Muslims," as one observer noted at the time (Banac,

1988, p. 368).[40] The resulting political, economic, and demographic shift had lasting conse-

quences for BiH and Yugoslavia's social evolution (Semiz, 1996).[41]

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[39] One must, however, also make note of the Austro-Hungarian *Schutzkorps*, a volunteer militia in BiH composed primarily of Bosnian Muslims that was guilty of hundreds of killings of local Serbs during the war in what Banac refers to as "lynch-courts" (Banac, 1988, p. 149). Both Velikonja (Velikonja, 2003, p. 141) and Lampe (Lampe, 2000, p. 109) claim that the *Schutzkorps'* activities were the first case of "ethnic cleansing" in BiH. However, while the militia was originally created after the Annexation Crisis of 1908-1909, they had to be re-mobilized for the war in 1914. Thus, Banac notes that as it concerns actual killings, the "activities of the *Schutzkorps* were in part undertaken for the misdeeds of Serbian Chetniks [sic], who were fairly active in attacking the Muslims of eastern Bosnia in the fall of 1914" (Banac, 1988, pp. 149-150). The claim of "first" acts of ethnic cleansing is also curious given that expulsions and murders of Muslims in Serbia had become episodic by the middle of the 19th century. It may very well be that the first ethnic-killings on the *legal* territories of BiH were carried out by the *Schutzkorps* but, as this chapter argues, this ignores the wider regional context. Moreover, accounts that isolate particular events without considering broader ideological movements essentially play into nationalist narratives.

[40] I am grateful to Terry Maley for alerting me to the parallels in this process and what the theorist Robert Antonio has called "reactionary tribalism." Antonio is concerned with political realignment after the end of the Cold War but the grievances mobilized (or *demobilized* according to Gagnon) by the New Right across Europe and North America are similar to those activated by the new Balkan elites in the 19th and 20th centuries. In both instances, the class based grievances (unreformed feudal relations and neoliberal de-industrialization) of large segments of the population (Christian Slavs and white Europeans and North Americans) are redirected into ethnic conflict (with Muslim Slavs and racialized migrants, among others). Antonio, in fact, makes reference to BiH at one point, or rather, the 1992-1995 war but I believe this dissertation shows that his argument has implications beyond the "post-modern" period (Antonio, 2000, p. 56).

[41] Stephen Schwartz even suggests that the ultimate dissolution of the SFRJ had its roots in the specific "backwardness" of Serbia in contrast to all the other former Yugoslav republics, BiH included, beginning with the post-Ottoman transition. He argues that a realization dawned on the Serbian elite in the late 1980s with the dimming of the Cold War: "Aside from the superficial cultural sophistication of Belgrade, Serbia had very little to offer the new world. While Slovenia was producing computer peripherals and the Croats were planning resort hotels and the Bosnians were getting rich by exporting agricultural products, Serbia's economy rested on the major assets it had possessed since the beginning of monarchist Yugoslavia at the end of World War I: the Yugoslav state bureaucracy, the army, and the police... It was raw fear for the future of a statist, centralist Serbia in a free-market world that transformed the Serbian communist organization into an agency of ultranationalist incitement to violence. The Slovene communists thoroughly and effectively remade themselves as free-marketeers, and the Croat and Bosnian Muslim communists were prepared to surrender power to elected non-communist parties, because they all knew they had professional, economic, and political options other than as communist bureaucrats. That is, they were willing to exchange power for property; but for the Serb communists, loss of

It was not until after World War II that the Communists made a serious effort towards the "modernization" of agricultural relations, however crudely understood. Beginning in 1947 and ending in 1953, the new Communist authorities undertook the most centralized and directed redistribution scheme in the region's history. Ultimately, the scheme failed largely due to militant peasant resistance, combined with the necessity for the new Yugoslav authorities to maintain support among this population in the wake of the Tito-Stalin split of 1948 (Bokovoy, 1998). By 1953, a new economic regime was in place: "In March 1953, the government began dissolving collective and state farms. Two-thirds of the peasants abandoned the collectives within nine months, and the socialist share of land ownership sank from 25 percent to 9 percent within three years. In an attempt to mitigate the problem of peasant landlessness, the government reduced the legal limit on individual holdings from 25 to 35 hectares of cultivable land to 10 hectares; this restriction would remain on the books for over three decades and would prevent the development of economically efficient family farms" (Curtis, 1990).[42]

Thus, from the late 18th century to the early 1950s, BiH and the wider Yugoslav region experienced a century of massive changes. As Mazower notes, it was not until the 1960s that the local economies developed and stabilized enough for "the emergence in the Balkans of urban populations at a level close to the European norm, with its characteristic pattern of small families, high consumption, industry and services" (Mazower, 2002, p. 14). Yet urbanization merely masked the otherwise untransformed nature of the oligarchic and kleptocratic local political economy. Today, in the wake of the collapse of the second Yugoslav state, BiH is once again transparently dominated by economic brigandry and demographic collapse (Katavić, 2015).

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power meant loss of everything. There was no economic buffer to make the transition easier for them" (Schwartz, 1999). Schwartz's point is somewhat polemical, but largely concurs with the one made by Gagnon; namely, that the violently engineered dismantling of the SFRJ was as a transitional strategy for the Belgrade elite to prevent a popular push for democratization. Both Schwartz and Gagnon implicitly draw attention to the coercive character of the state in Serbia.

[42] Chapter III will deal in detail with the question of worker's self-management from 1953-1987.

Creating the State, Inventing the Nation

After the First Serbian Uprising of 1804[43], and with their own experiences as clients of
the Ottoman regime in mind, the emerging Balkan elites purchased and sponsored the services
of a new generation of supposedly "nationally conscious" bandits in an effort to win popula-
tions and regions to their respective causes, typically through "what was essentially state-
sponsored terrorism" (Bracewell, 2003, p. 27). While it was typically accepted by the learned
classes, even at the time, that events like the Serbian Uprising had been chiefly organized by
"hayduks, robbers and riff-raff"

> ...[the] genius of the first rebels against the Ottomans was to link these [bandit]
> traditions to a more general political struggle against a foreign overlord and even-
> tually to constructions of national identity. This also meant that a certain kind of
> political roughness and violence became central rather than peripheral part of
> post-Ottoman Balkan political life from the beginning of the nineteenth century.
> The first uprising against the Ottomans was led by Karadjordje ('Black George'
> whom *The Times* referred to by his Serb name of 'Czerni George' [sic]) who had
> been a one time hajduk as well as an Austrian army auxiliary...[The] existence [of
> these bandits] became a definitive part of national identity (Carmichael, 2002, p.
> 41).[44]

The newly independent Balkan states could hardly offer social services or even basic
security to their populations but they could offer a sense of belonging. Or rather, they could
create the conditions whereby targeted populations could be cajoled and/or terrorized into de-
claring themselves as "ethnic" and "national" subjects of these new states. After all, the pri-
mary source of "insecurity" was the "national liberators" in question in the first place. In other
words, the state created the problem(s) it purported to remedy.

The creation of "ethnically homogeneous territories on a mass scale…had no compa-
rable precedent on the Balkan peninsula. The years that followed the collapse of the Habs-
burg, the Romanov, and the Ottoman empires after the First World War witnessed a radical

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[43] Generally considered the first successful anti-Ottoman uprising in Europe.

[44] There is, in fact, a robust literature on the linkages between violence, state-making and nationalist mythology
in the Balkans, much of which is cited in this chapter. A text that makes the connection between these historic
processes and their more recent application is Ivo Žanić's *Flag on the Mountain: A Political Anthropology of the
War in Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina*, especially his lengthy discussion of the bandit-liberator motif, what the
author refers to as the cult of the *hajduk*.

'un-mixing' of populations in the former imperial realms. International treaties and national policies made diverse local communities into separate Greek, Turkish, Bulgarian, and Albanian nationals who were forced to relocate to new 'homelands'" (Hajdarpasić, 2008, p. 719). In Serbia, for instance, the 1860s and 1870s saw the expulsion of nearly the entire Muslim population and "the destruction of most mosques and other sites associated with Islam or the Ottomans" (ibid, p. 718). Areas like BiH and Macedonia, that were the target of competing claims, witnessed not only an upsurge in nationally-inclined schools, newspapers and fraternal societies but also militias and militant secret societies of every sort. The entry of these violent bands into villages and hamlets would quickly dissolve traditional societies—the lives of the new majorities and fleeing minorities depended on declaring themselves according to the new rubric. The Balkan Wars (1912-1913) witnessed mass displacement and ethnic cleansing as the concert of the new regional states attempted to nationalize their territories and the populations that inhabited them (Nijemi Balkan, 2013).

Even in the Serbian heartland, however, the new authorities were hardly above using violence to forcibly incorporate their "own" recalcitrant peasants into the new nation-state fold. In 1883, a rural rebellion in eastern Serbia erupted when villagers "refused to hand in their weapons to the military unless they received modern replacements" (Glenny, 2011, pp. 167-168). Whereas the insurrectionary character of the peasantry had once been supposedly celebrated, it now became an opportunity for King Milan (1854-1901) to test out the effectiveness and loyalty of his new army. While the so-called "Timok rebellion" was short-lived, at one point "nearly a quarter of the country was under rebel control and the uncoordinated peasant volunteers almost succeeded in dividing the country along an east-west axis." "Despite its short duration," Glenny argues, "this was probably the single most important event in Serbian history between independence in 1878 and the outbreak of the Balkan Wars in 1912. The confrontation between an autocratic modernizer and a militant peasantry also established a pattern of militarization which was later repeated in other Balkan states, albeit in slightly

different forms" (ibid). This militarization was the process of state-building itself, however. Nor was this lost on observers at the time: "The Austro-Hungarian consul in Belgrade was unable to contain his delight: 'A new page was written in the history of the Serbian people, when the army launched its first shell at the rebels'" (ibid). Finally, the crushing of the rebellion "dealt a harsh blow to the ideology of rural socialism, inspired by the Russian *narodniki*.[45] In his memoirs, Pera Todorović, a Radical Party leader, noted how the uprising gave vent to the fanatical hatred of the bureaucrats among the peasantry" (ibid).

The policy and cultural literature produced in Serbia and Montenegro during this period is also informative. For instance, Ilija Garašanin's famed 1844 *Načertanije* program for the expansion of the Serbian state was a mixture of propaganda and jingoism. BiH, as a primary target of Garašanin's program, is a place where the then Serbian Minister of the Interior expounds on the necessity for the national education of all the religious communities, in order that there might be established a "unity of Serbs and Bosniaks."[46] Yet the entire program is premised on either a division or shattering of the Ottoman Empire, inevitably by an assortment of established and emerging Christian states (Garašanin, 1844/1939). For its part, the Montenegrin Prince-Bishop Petar II Petrović-Njegoš' 1847 epic ballad *The Mountain Wreath* is entirely fixated on the extermination of the mountain kingdom's Slavic Muslim population, and as Michael Sells argues, becomes the literary basis for Serb nationalism's anti-Muslim bent in the 19th and 20th centuries (Sells, 1998, p. 41). Both texts represent pillars of the "Greater Serbia" program—an ideal repeatedly rejuvenated throughout the 19th and 20th centuries. This program was not always explicitly chauvinist, as proponents occasionally found themselves receptive to the idea of a Yugoslav and/or a Balkan federation that would necessarily include non-Serbs as part of its population. Nor was irredentism of this sort exclusive to

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[45] Russian peasant communes, akin to the local *zadruga*.

[46] Garašanin nevertheless distinguishes between "Serbs" and "Bosniaks." The former are strictly the inhabitants of Serbia, while the latter are *all* of the inhabitants of BiH, including the Orthodox Christians. While Garašanin repeatedly gestures towards the last of these as supposedly natural "Serbs," his insistence on the necessity of national education is nevertheless striking.

Serbia. Nevertheless, the idea was openly advocated by leading government figures in Belgrade during the royal Yugoslav period, by Draža Mihailović's quisling Četnik movement during the 1940s, and the likes of Radovan Karadžić and Vojislav Šešelj during the 1990s—all moments that corresponded to episodes of extreme violence against non-Serb populations in the area.

In this post-Ottoman vacuum, elites scrambled to consolidate peoples and territories. Accordingly, domestic Serbian politics was dominated from 1804 to 1903 primarily by a blood feud between the Obrenović and Karađorđević clans. The feud ended finally with the murder of the last Obrenović ruler, Alexander I of Serbia (1876-1903), by members of the secret military society, the Black Hand—of later Franz Ferdinand-related fame. The bankrupt and cynical nature of post-revolutionary politics in the country, dominated by such intra-oligarchic disputes, led Mikhail Bakunin to remark sarcastically that in "Serbia, the overthrow of one prince and the installation of another one is called a 'revolution'" (Bakunin, Statism and Anarchy, 1873).

Thus, the whole period of independence produced little except for provincial intrigue. Precisely because the Serbian "nobility" had not been imported from elsewhere in Europe, the Obrenović and Karađorđević clans and their followers had to embellish their own humble origins—a process that meant what little wealth the newly independent polity could create was quickly siphoned off for the elites. Moreover, the desire by the elite to immediately begin expanding their freshly minted kingdom meant that militarization became a prominent theme of 19th and early 20th century Serbia, a fact that would invariably influence its neighbours. While limited democratic reforms waxed and waned in the new state, the irredentist and jingoist outlook of even the more liberal movements within Serbia severely constrained the possible shape of any actual participatory political project. Virtually all popular energy was channelled into an immobilizing nationalist rhetoric. As Dubravka Stojanović argues the elites' rapacious

thirst for expansion and war meant that, as a polity, Serbia became perennially "unfinished";

both because its borders were never clearly established and because permanent military mobi-

lization stunted the ability for any sort of autonomous civil society to emerge (Stojanović,

2013).

While nationalist narratives promised unity and emancipation, in practice they exclu-

sively promoted the interests of the local elite's politics of dispossession and depoliticization.

The Serbian radical Dimitrije Tucović's 1914 treatise *Serbia and Albania: A Contribution to*

the Critique of the Conqueror Policy of the Serbian Bourgeoisie described this policy in the

context of the Balkan Wars (Tucović, 1914).[47] Drafted into the Serbian army during both the

Balkan Wars and later World War I, Tucović along with an entire generation of young Balkan

radicals died in the trenches of the European war. If World War I dealt a significant blow to

the international socialist movement, in the Balkans it virtually exterminated many of the

youth most interested in democratic and anti-nationalist organizing.[48] Nevertheless, before his

death, Tucović thoroughly indicted the nationalist leaders of his time, recognizing that the se-

ries of post-Ottoman wars in the Balkans were merely an effort on the part of the elites to

consolidate their respective claims to the Serbian, Montenegrin, Bulgarian, Romanian and

Greek states (Zeman, 1990)**.** Rather than liberation for the peasant and (what existed of the)

working classes, this process was largely one of elite parcelization, conflict, and occasional

accommodation. Moreover, Tucović like many of his peers understood that confronting these

new elites would necessarily mean confronting the national question; thus, they rejected the

nation-state in favour of the Balkan Federation. I will return to this topic towards this end of

this discussion.

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[47] As with the Russian Bolsheviks, Tucović use of the *bourgeois* label was propagandist expediency rather than careful analysis. Both Tsarist Russia and the Kingdom of Serbia lacked developed bourgeois social formations.
[48] Trotsky would write of Tucović's death: "How many harbingers of the Balkan Federation have fallen in the wars of the last years! The heaviest blow for Serbian and all Balkan social-democracy in the war was the fate of Dimitrije Tucovic who was one of the noblest and most heroic figures of the Serbian workers' movement" (Trotsky, 1915).

The images of the despotic, exploitative Ottoman and generally Muslim *ayans*, *pashas*, and janissaries that would become an important trope of Christian-nationalist narratives in the 19th and 20th centuries also had their origins in this transitional period (Palairet, 1997, pp. 34-39). Indeed, the changes related to the *chiflik* estates constitute a critical dimension of the political economy of Christian-nationalism in the Balkans, an ideological project that begins a series of genocidal episodes against the region's Muslims (Sells, 1998). In turn, the Muslim-Bosniak "national project" in BiH essentially became one of survival; as one influential Muslim leader argued in 1919: "There are no class differences. Muslim peasant and Muslim landlord feel the same way because neither has become dead to the demands of justice and will not covet other people's property" (Banac, 1988, p. 368).[49] Well into the 20th century, identification by BiH's Muslims as Croats or Serbs was the norm and fed into the denial of a Bosniak national identity by Serb and Croat nationalists, even after 1971, when "Muslim by nationality" was added as a separate census category.

More importantly, however, the above comment illustrates the fundamental tension in BiH, at the time, between class and ethnic conceptual frameworks. While Sakib Korkut[50] spoke for a community that was now largely marginalized and persecuted, the essential logic employed was one shared, indeed, embraced by all nationalist leaders. Peasant and landlord *alike* ought to feel the same way because despite their transparently different social and economic positions, their ethno-national identity inherently bound them. Hence, both elites advocating for genocide and those attempting to survive genocide, stressed the importance of belonging to an ethno-national whole.[51] Yet the reasons for accepting this logic were dramatical-

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[49] As noted, anti-Muslim pogroms largely centered on the expropriation of property. The reference here to "other people's property" concerned the efforts of dispossessed Muslims to win some restitution for lands taken, lands they, of course, understood to have been their own.

[50] The speaker in question and one of the founders of the Yugoslavian Muslim Organization (JMO), the first Muslim/Bosniak political party in the region.

[51] This logic is today best encapsulated by far-right Serb and Bosniak organizations like "Obraz" (literally, cheek, figuratively, honour) and the "Bosnian Movement for National Pride" (BPNP). While they insist on propagating the "true" extent of the genocide against their people (in the 1940s and 1990s, respectively), they happily celebrate the genocide of the other (in the 1990s and 1940s, respectively). However, what both Obraz and the

ly different in the cases of the vast majority of the population and the elites who claimed to represent them. Terrorized both psychologically and physically, local populations sought out the safety of any and all saviours. For elites, however, the process was the consolidation of an immensely lucrative political system. By carving out antagonistic Serb and Muslim *ethne*, elites ensured the emergence of a permanently immobilized population, ripe for exploitation, from which any grumble of discontent could be stifled by insisting on the imminent danger of extermination from the "other," certified through a growing history of real and perceived injustices. What was most dangerous to this system was not actual extermination, but the emergence of a different analysis—an analysis that might recognize that peasant and landlord *did not* have like interests and that, indeed, the Serb and Muslim peasant had, in fact, more in common than the Muslim peasant and Muslim landlord and Serb peasant and Serb landlord, respectively.[52] It is thus no surprise that in 1919 and 2015, within the nationalist discourse, the most dangerous enemy is not "the national other" but rather those from *within*, propagating class-consciousness or even merely a more robust conception of identity politics.

It is important to stress how late this national coalescing among all of the various communities in BiH was and how contested the process was, especially among those educated enough to recognize that this was a competition among constructs. For instance, Branka Magaš describes how the Bosnian Franciscans had consistently rebuffed attempts by the Church and other political authorities in Croatia to rechristen them as "Croats" (Magaš, 2003). Among these Franciscans, Ivan Franjo Jukić (1818-1857), remains perhaps the best known. An early proponent of religious pluralism, the young friar consistently wrote under the pseudonym *Slavoljub Bošnjak* ("Slavophile Bosniak") (Hoare, 2007, p. 59). At the time, Jukić was pleading with the inhabitants of BiH to "grab a hold of books and journals, to see what others

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BPNP agree on, fundamentally, is that left-wingers and LGBTQ people are the real threat. Precisely because they explode the zero-sum dichotomy of Serbs and Bosniaks, by introducing questions of class, performance, identity and gender.

[52] Or, for that matter, that it was possible to be a Serb Muslim from BiH, for instance, and to regard one's "kinfolk" not as the Orthodox Serbians from Serbia proper but the Catholic, Jewish, Muslim, and Orthodox communities from BiH.

have done, to gather the same resources and to lead our people out of the darkness and into the light of truth" (Ljiljak & Miljanović, 1970, p. 54).[53] The light of truth was clearly the emerging national identities of the Serbs and Croats that were already then leading them down the path to "national independence." Jukić and his Franciscan cohorts proverbially "retained a memory" of the medieval Bosnian kingdom and in the midst of 19th century political romanticism, hoped to revive this sovereign entity once more, complete with a corresponding "Bosniak" national identity that would span across all of BiH's religious communities (Magaš, 2003, p. 20). For his part, Ivo Banac notes that as late as 1891, Safvet beg Bašagić, a prominent Bosnian Muslim poet and activist was able to pen an ode in which he bemoaned, "From Trebinje...to the gate of Brod, there were never any Serbs or Croats." Bašagić meant Trebinje and Brod to symbolize the southern and northern tips of BiH, and the lack of Serbs and Croats was a reference to the only recent "conversions" of Orthodox and Catholic Christians to their respective ethno-national movements. Tellingly, by 1894, Bašagić had himself moved to Zagreb and declared himself a Croat (Banac, 1988, p. 362).

This transformation of class antagonisms into ethno-national fratricide, nevertheless, became a staple tactic of elites in the Yugoslav lands during the 19th century, and a critical element of why democratic class analysis remains stunted to this day—especially with the nationalist revival in the late 20th century. With a large uneducated peasant population, often in fear of extermination or at least robbery, promises of security became popular means of attaining support. That these new nationalist elites were typically the ones themselves stoking the fires of suspicion, animosity, and orchestrating the violence against the peasants was only part of the broader strategy. After both the First Serbian Uprising (1804-1813) and the Greek

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[53] With regards to Benedict Anderson's point about the relationship between the spread of the printing press and the rise of nationalism, it is interesting to note that the first printing presses in Croatia and Serbia were in operation by 1493 and 1507, respectively according to the Incunabula Short Title Catalogue (http://www.bl.uk/catalogues/istc/index.html). Meanwhile, the first Ottoman press operated by a Muslim, rather than one of the commercial minorities, was not opened until 1727 and was not fully legally established until considerably later in the 18th century (Sabev, 2007). Clearly, the formation of Muslim national identities lagged behind those of their Christian peers.

War of Independence (1821-1832) led to the creation of nation-states rather than Balkan federations of any sort, a successful pattern had been set in place—one soon followed by Montenegro, Romania and Bulgaria. "Throughout the [19th] century," Hassiotis notes, "the policy of the Balkan nation-states was based on the rationale of expansionism and of unifying all their co-religionists and ethnic kinfolk under their aegis" (Hassiotis, 2011, p. 214).[54]

Nationalism thus represented a strategic necessity for the emerging elites in Serbia and later Croatia. These elites "claimed Bosnia in the first instance not because Croats or Serbs lived there (each of these, after all, formed only a minority within the Bosnian population), but because possession of Bosnia was perceived to be of strategic importance for their own survival, development and regional pre-eminence" (Magaš, 2003, p. 21). Great effort was thus expended "to appeal to real, albeit suitably embellished histories of state individuality," such as the state parliament or *sabor* in Zagreb and the Orthodox faith as a national church in Serbia as a basis for the contemporary project of nation-state expansion (ibid, p. 20). "The Bosnian state," on the other hand, "disappeared before its elite had codified its history in a manner which could be passed on to future generations in suitably adapted versions" (ibid). As Magaš argues, the projects from 19th century Croatia and Serbia were concerned "not so much with national unification in the ethnic sense but with appropriation of the Bosnian state tradition…Volumes and volumes were written, especially by the Serbian side, aiming to prove that Bosnia was their ancient patrimony, flooding the academic market and leaving false traces

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[54] Serbia and Greece ought to be spoken of in tandem, Schwartz agrees, noting that their particular "nation-state" logics were of a sort: "Long before France refined the concept of a single national identity defined by a centralist state, the Castilian monarchy in Spain spent at least 400 years attempting to assimilate the Basques and Catalans, with little success. Germany, although united in the late nineteenth century, had never seen a serious attempt to force the abandonment of local cultural identity; nor had Italy. And even in Jacobin France, Brittany and other regions proved extraordinarily resistant to forcible cultural homogenization. Serbia's leaders should have learned from these examples, but they ignored them. Instead, during monarchist Yugoslavia, before 1941, they chose as a model Greece, which imposed a national identity by expelling and killing Turks and forcibly suppressing its own Albanian and Macedonian minorities. After 1945, even as Tito broke with Stalin, Serbian communists looked to the Stalinist practice of compulsory Russification for inspiration in their treatment of, above all, the Kosovar Albanians" (Schwartz, 1999). Schwartz's implication that this policy on the part of Serbia *began* during the first Yugoslav period is not entirely accurate, as I have argued, and has its origins instead in the 19th century. The Albanian population of Kosovo may have suffered disproportionately due to their presence in the supposed heartland of Serbian national ideology, but it is important to note that Muslims, in particular, in BiH and the Sandžak have fared little better.

everywhere" (ibid, p. 21). National unification was relatively incidental, it was simply a means to an end.

For the Muslim elites in BiH the drawn out and ambiguous process of imperial dissolution confused their ambitions. Transforming themselves from clients to independence leaders was especially precarious given their comparatively favoured status as co-religionists, albeit with long autonomist inclinations.[55] Even more so, given that the new revolutionary elites in semi-independent Serbia and Greece continued to negotiate terms with the Ottoman authorities and that the idea of full sovereignty rarely seemed particularly realistic or desirable, even to the Christian nationalists. What rebels and agitators typically demanded, most of whom tended to be peasants and *kmets*, especially with the increasing strength of the *ayans*, was a return to the central authority of the Porte and the Sultan (Malcolm, 1994, p. 92). The *ayans* used both the weakened position of the Porte and the chaos in the countryside to continue to extract favors and privileges from the center; only when it became evident that the central authorities were no longer able or willing to continue this practice, did the local Muslim lords begin to realize and embrace the necessity for a new regime.

The emergence of the *chiflik* regime began a prolonged period of both Christian and Muslim confrontations with local and central Ottoman authorities, though for profoundly different reasons for peasants and elites, respectively. Yet the relative peace and prosperity of the 16th century had cemented a different conception of political relations. "The central role of the state in public life and the direct relationship established between peasantry and central authority," argues Victor Roudometof "...distinguished the Ottoman world-empire from the decentralized system of the European small feudal states. It also greatly influenced the people's mentality regarding the relationship between state and society; the state was conceived of as an organic part of the society and not as an independent agent" (Roudometof, 2001, p. 22).

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[55] By autonomist I mean here practices like the *kapetanije* and long-standing anti-tax efforts that as previously noted had transformed the province into a virtual "state within a state."

Such an attitude only further contributed to the ability of state-building elites to undermine and disrupt the development and emergence of antagonistic and democratic civil society in the region.

A rather ironic trend developed as a result: while the "organic" conception of the state emerged during the brief interlude of Ottoman stability, the actual process of state-building and administration playing out *at the time* was transparently violent and kleptocratic. Peasants in the 18th and 19th centuries had an ideal of the state that they may have never themselves actually experienced, in other words. Moreover, only in the cities, where the authority of the *ayans* depended on negotiations with all manner of merchants, guilds, and other notables, did their patrimonial fiefdoms resemble anything akin to marginally negotiated institutions. Here, the post of *ayan* was even at times elected—voted on by both Christian and Muslim citizens—through much of the 18th century, though the *ayans* themselves were always Muslim (Malcolm, 1994, p. 92). Cities like Sarajevo and Mostar remained in a "state of near permanent resistance to the central government from the 1760s to the 1830s" (ibid). The Bosnian Uprising led by Husein Gradaščević between 1831 and 1833 was constitutive of the general stance of the local Bosnian Muslim elites: autonomy was preferred but not for any particularly "patriotic" reasons. In fact, what has since been celebrated as a movement for "Bosnian independence" appears to have had more to do with preserving the quasi-feudal privileges of the Bosnian Muslim elites against the creeping reformism of the central Ottoman state (Malcolm, 1994, pp. 121-122). Perry Anderson contextualizes these changes, arguing

> Once [the] territorial expansion [of the Empire] ceased...a slow involution of its whole enormous structure was inevitable. The privileges of an extraneous slave corps[56], deprived of its military functions, gradually became intolerable to the bulk of the dominant class of the Empire, which eventually exerted its inert weight to normalize and recover command of the political apparatus of the Ruling Institution. The surplus rural population that had been enlisted as auxiliaries or freebooters in the armies of the Porte, turned to social revolt or brigandage once the military machine could no longer absorb it. Moreover, the stoppage of extensive ac-

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[56] A reference to the liquidation of the Janissary corps by Sultan Mahmud II in 1826, an event that paved the way for a series of provincial revolts, including Gradaščević's uprising.

quisition of lands and treasure was inevitably to lead to much more intensive forms of exploitation within the bounds of Turkish power, at the expense of the subject rayah[57] class. The history of the Ottoman Empire from the late 16th to the early 19th century is thus essentially that of the disintegration of the central imperial State, the consolidation of a provincial landowning class, and the degradation of the peasantry (Anderson, 1974, p. 378).

Only once it became readily apparent that the Ottoman Empire's hold on BiH had all but completely dissolved did Muslim elites begin to make any serious efforts at creating a sovereigntist or nationalist movement of their own. In 1878, as Austro-Hungarian troops headed for Sarajevo, representatives from the Muslim and Orthodox communities launched a militant anti-Hapsburg campaign. The Orthodox priests leading their congregation, "dressed like robber chiefs, with pistols and scimitars in their belts...were happy to think that Bosnia had thrown off Ottoman rule and had no wish to see it replaced by the rule of Austria" (Malcolm, 1994, p. 134). The Muslims were roused to action primarily by Salih Vilajetović better known as Hadži Lojo, a one-time Sarajevo cleric, who had been expelled from the city by the Ottoman authorities and was popularly known as a brigand and outlaw. As with the Serbian Karađorđe, it was armed outlaws who led the charge for a new statist political order, quite literally dressing themselves in the garb of ethno-religious leaders. The two groups paraded through the city with arms and issued a call to their peers. As one Muslim organizer wrote: "You fellow Bosnians, Christians and Latins [Orthodox and Catholics], for the honour of the homeland in which you have experienced centuries of tranquillity, go with your Islamic countrymen into battle and expel the enemy...Defending the homeland is the duty of all peoples who live in it" (Donia R. J., 2006, p. 52). Few Catholics, however, joined the movement, and the city's Jewish population was exempted only on the basis of a "war tax" (ibid, p. 51).

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[57] *Rayha* or *raja* in the local Slavic, were the taxed, predominantly Christian subjects of the Empire. The term, however, remains a staple of contemporary Bosnian parlance where its meaning has shifted to "the people" more broadly and is consciously opposed to the position of elites. A term of endearment among the working class ("moja raja," my friends, my crew) it is a topic of discussion in Chapter V. See also my article "Princip, Valter, Pejić and the *Raja*: Elite Domination and Betrayal in Bosnia-Herzegovina," *South-East European Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 1, No. 3, 2013.

Skirmishes throughout the country followed that same year, until Hapsburg troops entered the capital where they were forced to engage in house-to-house fighting to pacify the city. While the Austro-Hungarians lost five thousand men, it would take nearly 300,000 to completely subdue the insurrection across BiH (ibid, p. 54). Spurred on by joint Muslim-Orthodox guerrilla activities, only in the early 1890s did resistance to Hapsburg rule completely dissipate (Malcolm, 1994, p. 134). Nevertheless, once the Hapsburg authorities made it clear that they would pursue a policy of "continuation" from the Ottoman period, especially as it concerned the question of land reform (that is, that no significant reform efforts would be made), a familiar pattern remerged (ibid, p. 140). Muslim elites vacillated between appealing to Vienna and Istanbul to preserve their relative privileges, leaders of the Orthodox community agitated for Serb nationalization, while Catholic leaders pursued a similar irredentist policy, arguing for an autonomous Croatia within the Austro-Hungarian Empire that would include BiH.

BiH did not lack for elites or individuals with statist ambitions—but the upper classes were fractured and provincial. Worse, those propped up during the Hapsburg period were particularly incompetent:

> ...no particular skills, educational preparation, or even basic competence were required of appointees to the positions in question. With the exception of leaders of the religious hierarchies, local office-holders needed no administrative ability and did little real work. They were ciphers, elevated to prestigious positions in hopes that the respect they engendered would translate into the loyalty and quiescence of the communities which they led. Their days were filled with ceremonial appearances, courtesy visits to higher authorities, participation in delegations of appreciation, and other symbolic gestures of loyalty. They were compensated with salaries, but the more significant payoff for their public displays of loyalty came in the status associated with the positions to which they were appointed. Every town had its mayor, deputy mayors, town councilmen, and appropriate religious authorities carefully selected to reinforce loyalty and obedience to the regime (Donia R., 2007, p. 4).

If the Ottoman period had facilitated the emergence of a predatory, bandit-class of elites, the Austro-Hungarians modernized the process in peculiar ways. The Hapsburgs brought to BiH appearances, "aimed only to append the outward manifestations of modernity

to a traditional society" (ibid, p. 1). While the architectural landscape of cities like Sarajevo and Mostar underwent rapid "Europeanization" during this era, the political apparatus calcified around a parochial, backward class of elites who would remain in power up to the final dissolution of what the Communists optimistically referred to as "bourgeois" political forces after the end of the Second World War.

The nationalist project had everywhere in the region the effect of immobilizing radical-democratic thought and organizing but in BiH, because of the added layer of internal competition and confusion, it utterly *depoliticized* ordinary people. They were perennially facing extermination, according the propagandist line, and could only expect salvation through embracing whatever respective ideological project was presented to them: Serbian or Croatian nationalism, respectively. As Muslim elites had once again assumed that some sort of favourable (to them) imperial administration would continue, a Bosniak national movement did not seriously emerge until the socialist period and even then narrowed itself to seeking official permissions (Buljina, 2010). Bizarrely, the most concerted effort at creating a "Bosnian" identity fell to the Austro-Hungarians.

The Hapsburgs correctly concluded that Serbia and Montenegro had both successfully sponsored and encouraged insurrection primarily by Orthodox peasants against their rule in BiH. In response, the Court appointed a senior diplomat in 1882 to spearhead the Austro-Hungarian pacification of the country. Benjamin von Kállay's twenty-one year administration of BiH (1882-1903) concerned itself in large part with establishing a distinct social and political conception of BiH among the local populace, in a direct effort to keep the country out of the sphere of influence of Serbia (and Montenegro, to a lesser extent) (Milojković-Djurić, 2000). Importantly, as with the Ottoman reform efforts, this process began in a moment when the Austro-Hungarian Empire itself was starting to come apart at the seams.

Kállay's policies had two primary and inter-related objectives: the establishment of a BiH state and a corresponding BiH nation. As imperial "engineer," Kállay wrote openly of the constructed and symbiotic relationship between state and nationalism. Kállay "considered as his most important task the instillation of the spirit of statehood in the newly acquired regions of [BiH]," something he believed the country (and what he understood as "the East," as a whole) historically lacked (ibid, p. 217). Simultaneously, he advanced what he referred to as "*Bošnjaštvo*" (Bosniakhood or Bosnian nationality), an identity that all Bosnians, regardless of ethnicity or religion could subscribe to (Velikonja, 2003, p. 134). As previously noted, this idea found strong resonance in pre-Ottoman Bosnian statehood, a legacy celebrated by more liberal BiH Catholics and the Franciscan order in particular (Banac, 1988, p. 360). This reading also appealed to BiH Muslims elites and their tradition of struggling for Bosnian autonomy within the Ottoman state.

Ultimately, Kállay's attempt was undone by the level to which exclusivist nationalism(s) had already engendered themselves amongst the emerging Serb and Croat populations of BiH. Segments of these communities resented the project because it was imposed through an "administrative absolutism" and was thus viewed as an authoritarian and artificial imposition, even though it was largely rooted in actual historical practice and experience—or, at least, as much as the mythologies underpinning the emerging Serbian and Croatian states (Velikonja, 2003, p. 134). Much like later ideas of "Yugoslavism," nationalist critics were able to navigate around the fact that these peoples genuinely shared a history by focusing on the authoritarian manner through which the ideas were promoted (and studiously ignoring the equally authoritarian and despotic manner in which their own supposedly homogenous nationalist identities were enforced). Hence, dissatisfaction with Austro-Hungarian occupation and later Communist authoritarianism resulted in a rejection of *Bošnjaštvo* and *Jugoslovenstvo* amongst segments of the population.

It is nevertheless also necessary to think about Kállay's administration of BiH in something other than fatalist ethno-national terms. Kállay bemoaned the lack of a *Staatsidee* in "the East" even as he explicitly organized against the state-building efforts of Serbia and Montenegro and their irredentist programs for BiH (Milojković-Djurić, 2000, pp. 211-215). Presumably, the issue was not the lack of a *Staatsidee* in the Balkans but rather the upstart cabal of independent states challenging traditional Austro-Hungarian, Ottoman, and Russian influence in the region; as earnestly as Kállay attempted to convince the peoples of BiH that they were *different* from the people in Serbia and Montenegro, so too did elites in these states attempt to convince their "own" people within and without their existing borders that they were all one. While these respective programs brought these empires and states into conflict (almost incessantly from 1804 to 1918, if not 1941), their operational logic was, in fact, the same—as noted previously on the question of genocide. Nationalization was merely *one* of the means by which states were established, and that it occasionally featured relatively benev-olent "educational" activities (ibid, p. 214) cannot be taken in isolation of wider (and extreme-ly) violent processes.[58] In short, Kállay's *Bošnjaštvo* and later Tito's "brotherhood and unity" were no less artificial constructs than Serb or Croat national identity and all of them were, in any case, the *product* of rather than the *inspiration* for the creation of states (Kitromilides, 1989).

The Kingdom of Yugoslavia and the National Question

After formally annexing BiH in 1908, the Dual Monarchy intended to bring the prov-ince fully into the fold of the Empire. By 1914, however, arguably the most pressing question of the period—the agrarian one—had still not been resolved. Aside from the growing din for war in the west of Europe, in BiH the situation too was becoming unstable; between 1880 and 1910, the population increased by a startling sixty-four percent (Zeman, 1990, p. 31). The

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[58] Nikola Stojanović's 1902 text, *Until Extermination, Yours or Ours*, which insisted on the Serbinization of the region's Croats, as a means of establishing Serbian hegemony ("the atom of fresh Serbian democratic culture," as he referred to it) is an example of a fusion of both approaches (Cohen, 1996, p. 4).

dramatic growth in population only added to an already volatile political and economic situation. The Empire's rule over the province, in this sense, was as much undone by the events of World War I, as by the specific conditions in BiH. Despite limited efforts at improving education and infrastructure, an alliance of Magyar and Muslim landowners, as well as the narrow ambitions of the Austrians themselves, ensured that the "breakup of large estates remained anathema" (Ajami, 1995, p. 46). In 1916, it was the son of one of these peasant families who described the lot of his parents and their sort: "...they are completely impoverished... they are treated like cattle. The peasant is impoverished. They destroy him completely. I am a villager's son and I know how it is in the villages." Gavrilo Princip, the assassin of the Archduke Franz Ferdinand in Sarajevo on June 28th, 1914 was by then two years into his prison sentence. "Therefore," he concluded, "I wanted to take revenge, and I am not sorry" (Butcher 2014, 103).

Princip was nevertheless a muddled product of his time. The young assassin had spent years agitating against Habsburg rule as part of a loose organization that has subsequently been referred to as "Young Bosnia" (*Mlada Bosna*) (Donia R. J., 2006, pp. 109-114). Princip and the "Young Bosnians" were emblematic of the contradictions of their time: they were equal parts radicals and nationalists of various stripes; sometimes Yugoslavs, often Serbs in particular—though there was at least one Bosnian Muslim member of Gavrilo's circle, Muhamed Mehmedbašić (ibid, p. 114). Noel Malcolm refers to them as "idealistic but ill-educated teenagers" who were "fiercely anti-clerical; they wanted social revolution just as much as national liberation" (Malcolm, 1994, p. 153). Bakunin, Herzen, and Kropotkin seem to have featured prominently amongst their philosophical influences, while Vladimir Dedijer notes that their "idols [included] Gorki, Andreyev, Guyot, Whitman, Oscar Wilde and Henrik Ibsen" (Dedijer, 1964, p. 576).

When it came time for Princip to give an explanation for his actions in Sarajevo, the young man offered an equally burdened response: "I am a Yugoslav nationalist, aiming for the unification of all Yugoslavs, and I do not care what form of state, but it must be free from Austria" (ibid). Complicating matters even further was the role of the so-called "Black Hand," a secret paramilitary organization from the Kingdom of Serbia, that had been agitating amongst BiH Orthodox population along a "Greater Serbian" line and was thought to have had a hand in the assassination (Bougarel, 1999, p. 169). Dedijer, however, emphasizes that while the "Archduke was killed by the joint action of the secret revolutionary societies of Bosnia and Belgrade," the relationship between these respective parts was mired by disagreement and confusion (Dedijer, 1964, p. 584). In many respects, the idealism of the actual assassins stood in marked contrast to the provincial intrigues of their Belgrade sponsors.

The suggestion of a revolutionary who "does not care" what form of state he would give inspiration to is an almost comical retort to the zealously ideological convictions of 20th century radicals like Lenin, Trotsky, and Tito but it speaks to the ambiguity of political life in BiH and the wider Balkans in 1914. Rather than dismissing Princip as a misguided youth, a more nuanced reading should give weight to the competing ideological projects in currency at the time. After all, Princip and his associates were trying to make sense of an environment where anarchist, Marxist, nationalist, monarchist and liberal currents (and bizarre marriages between these tendencies) all seemed legitimate and viable. By 1918, both Princip's young life and the Great War had ended and out of its ashes emerged the first, nominally post-imperial Balkans. Yet the same ideological muddle that had been the hallmark of the Young Bosnians would define the birth (and death) of what was first the State of Slovenes, Croats and Serbs (DSHS) (1918), then the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes (1918-1929), and finally the Kingdom of Yugoslavia (1929-1941).[59]

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[59] Formally, the Kingdom of Yugoslavia was replaced by the Federal People's Republic of Yugoslavia (FPRY) in November of 1945, though the Kingdom had *de facto* ended with the April 6th, 1941 Nazi invasion of the

The emergence of the Yugoslav state(s) had two related but not identical origin points: one was in the broader trajectory of "Yugoslav" and Balkan cultural thought; the other, the particular geo-political aims of the South Slav elites in both semi-independent Serbia and the Hapsburg territories (Slovenia, Croatia, and BiH). Over the course of the First World War, the latter of these phenomena became wound up in the wider question of post-war European political reorganization (Robinson, 2011). Nevertheless, it is what both of these origins were *missing* that would become definitive of the broader Yugoslav experience. This missing element was a substantive set of political organizing principles, functional institutional arrangements, and above all, a culture of participatory public administration rather than mere elite-driven ideological ambitions.

The so-called Illyrian and later Yugoslav movements had their origins in the three above-mentioned western territories. These manifestations were regarded originally with considerable suspicion by the ruling establishment in Serbia, which after 1804 viewed itself as the apparent "Piedmont" of any unification struggle in the region (ibid, pp. 11-12). Thus, what developed in the west of "Yugoslavia" was first a linguistic and cultural movement, headed by the likes of Ljudevit Gaj (1809-1872), Josip Strossmayer (1815-1905), and Franjo Rački (1828-1894). All three had preferred the terms "Illyrian" and/or "Yugoslav" specifically as a point a differentiation from the already virulently parochial "nationalist" movements in Slovenia, Croatia, and Serbia.[60] Later, this cultural-linguistic project evolved into a movement for greater political rights for the South Slavs of the Hapsburgs lands and only in the course of the unravelling of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, a movement for sovereignty (Cornwall, 2011).

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country. Between April of 1941 and the end of "Yugoslav Front" in May of 1945, Yugoslavia was parceled out between administrative zones belonging to the quisling Independent State of Croatia (NDH) and the quisling regime in Serbia, Albania, Bulgaria and Hungary as well as directly German and Italian controlled territories. However, at the behest of the Western Allies, the remnants of the Yugoslav royal government-in-exile and the Communist Partisans signed an agreement in June of 1944 (the Treaty of Vis) for the creation of a joint interim government. The alliance was short lived, and the November 11th, 1945 election confirmed the victory of the Communist-led "National Front" over the royalist forces.

[60] The Yugoslav project was itself preceded by the Balkan federalist idea but this will be dealt with separately below.

While the idea of unification with Serbia was both ideologically and practically popular among the western Yugoslavs, within Serbia itself, Yugoslavism was viewed primarily as a means of accomplishing the unification of the Serbs within a single state, especially among the elite.

Despite this, three distinct groupings came together to form the first Yugoslav state in 1918: the representatives of the internationally unrecognized DSHS, the Kingdom of Serbia, joined by Montenegro, and the Yugoslav Committee, an émigré body based primarily out of London, consisting of members from Croatia and BiH (Djokić, 2007, pp. 26-27). In spite of the generally republican and federalist bent of the westerners, and the monarchist leanings of the easterners, there was a prevailing sense of excitement and hope among the vast majority of the "founders" of the new state. While Cornwall provides for an astute study of the "grass-roots" origins of the DSHS, it is nevertheless the case that the Yugoslav state was brokered by a collection of largely unelected, unaccountable elites. This may not have been unique to the Yugoslav state in the post-World War I restructuring of Europe's borders but it represented yet another episode of state-building almost wholly divorced from popular participation. Indeed, like many of the new states emerging after World War I, the Yugoslav compact was a legal rather than popular creation.

Sensing the early emergence of potential fissures, a number of Croatian delegates insisted on clearer governing principles for the new state, rather than mere "national unification." Still others, eager to begin a new era in South Slav history promoted moving the capital not to Belgrade or Zagreb, but rather to Sarajevo (ibid, p. 28). "How different," asks Djokić, "might Yugoslavia's history have been had Sarajevo been the capital city?" (ibid). Though a tantalizing thought, it is unlikely however that mere geographic re-structuring, as both the first and second Yugoslav experiments demonstrated, could have reversed entrenched elite tendencies and, more specifically, the exclusion of ordinary citizens from political life by said elites.

Yugoslavia's problem, and by extension BiH's, as I argue throughout this text was always political rather than ethnic or geographic.

The capital, in any case, was not moved nor were the principles of the new state fleshed out in significant detail. The absurdity of the situation was made manifest in December of 1918 when the representatives of the DSHS travelled to Belgrade to announce jointly with the then Prince Regent Alexander of Serbia the creation of the new state. While it had apparently been agreed that the new state would be a monarchy, the exact extent of powers of the King and Parliament had not been settled. A curious scene thus played out:

> Replying to the invitation [to become King of the new compact], Alexander promised to be 'King only of the free citizens of the *State* of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes',[61] and to 'always remain faithful to constitutional, parliamentary and broad democratic principles, based on universal suffrage...May our *Kingdom* of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes be ever happy and glorious!' Therefore, he made it clear that so far as he was concerned, Yugoslavia would be a kingdom, before the provisional institutions could make a decision on the form of government. As already indicated, the opposition to monarchy was not strong and it was almost certain that after an interim period of state formation the Serb-Croat-Slovene union would remain a kingdom under the [Karađorđević] dynasty. However, the way Alexander imposed his vision of Yugoslavia did not bode well for the future of South Slav democracy (ibid, p. 37).

The state was formed but there did not exist a clear vision for it yet nor a constitutional framework. For the moment, the first of these is the more important question to address: the nature of ideology in the new polity in 1918. A Yugoslav state had been formed but not as a popular enterprise—that is, one in which the masses had participated. While the union was thus largely popular *among* the people, it had not been their energies that had created it. There had certainly been no lack of *agitation*, especially towards the end of the 19th century, for a Yugoslav state within and later entirely sovereign from the Austro-Hungarian Empire. Despite this, little practical political vision had been spelled out in the century that preceded the

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[61] Nor apparently had the reordering of "nationalities" in the name of the state been without controversy (ibid, p. 48). So, while naming conventions elicited complaints, fleshing out the distinction between parliamentary democracy and monarchism was left for a later date.

creation of a Yugoslav state.[62] That the Yugoslavs should be together was a widespread sentiment in 1918—*how* they should be together, however, remained to be decided.

Why the answer to this question remained open was rooted in the experience of class and state formation that I have discussed at length throughout this chapter. The Peace of Westphalia in 1648 established the monopoly of violence as the central element of the state but as Benno Teschke argues, the "contemporary" state system was as much the product of the class relations ushered in by the emergence of capitalism in Western Europe in the 19th century (Teschke, 2003). Similar class relations were yet to emerge in the Balkans by the time the Ottoman Empire's hold on the region collapsed and they were still lacking as Austria-Hungary unravelled. In his study of the emergence of the post-Ottoman state system in South Eastern Europe, Clemens Hoffman alerts the reader to the same problem:

> capitalism [is] not simply...a purely economic category, but [is] a holistic socio-logical concept that captures wider social relations peculiar to modernity. Capitalism is differentiated from feudalism as a fundamentally different system of social reproduction with associated forms of political organisation. In pre-capitalist formations, the production process, or the economic is politically institutionalized. Hence, surplus extraction is carried out through extra-economic means, i.e. through direct physical and politically constituted control. Accumulation, therefore, is always political as well as necessarily associated with territorial command which, in turn, equals income. Thus, economic and political powers are fused. Property is constituted through political force, rather than private contracts (Hoffmann, 2010, p. 49).

In other words, the transition towards purely economic exploitation never occurred within the Ottoman or the Austro-Hungarian empires. The formations that came to dominate the Balkan political imagination from the 19th century onwards (the state and the nation) were thus ideals that continue to obscure rather than illuminate the essential nature of Balkan political economy. As a form, the state came to dominate in the Balkans because it was the one organizational model fundamentally premised on *legitimizing* violence as the central component of social relations. Nationalism became wedded to this form because it could serve as a kind of binding mechanism between rulers and ruled, without importing anything akin to a

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[62] The exception, as I argue in a moment, being the trajectory of Balkan federalist thought.

legal-rational accountability framework (e.g. elections). It is thus a social contract without any substantive contractual basis. From the onset then, to be an ethnic subject in the Balkans was to be depoliticized subject.[63]

The effects of this were so stultifying that even when a *common* South Slav state emerged it was almost inescapably beset by the patterns set into motion by earlier regimes. Ivo Banac argues that "despite dictatorships and democratic renewal, occupations and wars, revolutions and social changes, after 1921 hardly any new elements were introduced in the set pattern of South Slavic interaction" (Banac, 1988, p. 415). June 28th, 1921, was the year the centralist *Vidovdan* (St. Vitus' Day) constitution was adopted, that "represented the final triumph of Serb national ideology" in the new state (ibid, p. 403). Confronted by growing calls for the democratic federalization of the Kingdom, the central debate of the young "Provisional Parliament…concerned the issue of centralism and unitarianism" (Djokić, 2007, p. 45).[64] Initially, both camps were represented by members from all ethnic communities and the Serbs of Croatia and BiH were some of the most ardent critics of the centralist position.

Yet it was precisely the debates about democratization and federalization that led to the establishment of King Alexander's dictatorship on January 6th, 1929, after the assassination of the popular Croatian agrarian leader, Stjepan Radić. These concerns were a distinct phenomenon that only *later* become intertwined with the Croat and Serb "national question(s)," respectively. The King's move to supposedly reign in the irresponsible behaviour of the politicians was initially popular, even with certain members of the political class (Djokić, 2007, pp. 84-85). But it was thought that this would be a temporary measure. Yet Alexander's intent was otherwise and the King soon "regarded himself as the embodiment of the state and

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[63] This claim should remind the reader that my analysis of nationalism in the Balkans is meant to be a theoretical deconstruction of the phenomenon, and an examination of its socio-economic *functions* within the post-Ottoman ideological apparatus constructed by the region's emerging elites, from the 19th century forward. As Dejan Guzina has reminded me, useful echoes of this thesis can also be found, however, in more traditional accounts of the national question in southeastern Europe (Sugar and Lerderer, 1994; Hroch, 1985).

[64] "By unitarianism I mean the understanding of Yugoslavia as a Yugoslav nation-state, whereby Serbs, Croats and Slovenes were three 'tribes' of one, Yugoslav nation. Centralism, in this context, refers to a political system where decision-making occurs in the center [Belgrade]" (ibid).

of the nation, taking quite literally the pledge to remove any 'intermediaries' between him and the people, made on 6 January 1929" (ibid, pp. 85-86).

On the other hand, while Radić had been one of the earliest critics of the Yugoslav state and often flirted with overt Croatian nationalism, it is telling that his base remained the agrarian-federalist camp, that he was certainly the most popular politician in all of Yugoslavia, and that his consistent persecution by the royal regime was based, primarily, on their suspicion that he was a Bolshevik (Lampe, 2000, p. 139).[65] Arguably, it was not until *after* his death that the debates about the Yugoslav state became reconfigured as a Croat-Serb conflict.

After Alexander was himself assassinated in 1934, his successor, Prince Paul continued to govern on the basis that federalism and democracy were more dangerous to the stability of the Kingdom than nationalism. Accordingly, the Cvetković–Maček Agreement (*sporazum*)[66] of 1939 completely territorially reorganized the country for a second time, after Alexander had already done as much in 1929. Both the 1929 and 1939 reorganizations were an attempt to resolve the "Croat question," not by substantively federalizing and democratizing the country, but by creating nationally constituted regions. While Alexander claimed to be relieving tensions by renaming the new regions after rivers rather than historic regional and national names, in reality he

> …partitioned Bosnia out of existence between four provinces (banates), in each of which the Muslims were a minority. In 1939, Radić's successor Maček underwrote a new partition of [BiH], with thirteen of its counties going to the newly established autonomous Croatia and thirty-eight reserved for the projected Serbian portion of Yugoslavia. The division was accomplished by discounting Muslims altogether. For example, if in a given county the Catholics constituted 34

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[65] Ironic, given that as early as 1919 Radić accused Serbia of being a hotbed of Bolshevism and insisted that Croatia was, instead, striving for "Croat peasant democracy" (Biondich, 2000, p. 168). By 1923, however, as part of a European speaking tour, Radić championed his cause to the Comintern's Peasant International Congress in Moscow (Lampe, 2000, p. 138). Given that after 1917 the royalist regime in Belgrade became a refuge for fleeing Russian Whites, Radić's quasi-socialist leanings elicited far more panic than his inconsistent nationalism. After all, the Communist Party of Yugoslavia was already by 1921 illegal, after a botched attempt on the life on the then Prince Regent's (Djokić, 2007, p. 52). Nevertheless, the point about federalism is an important one and will be picked up in the following section.

[66] Dragiša Cvetković was the Yugoslav Prime Minister and representative of the royalist regime, while Vladko Maček was the successor of Radić at the head of the Croatian Peasant Party (HSS) and *de facto* leader of the Croatian nationalist movement within the first Yugoslavia.

percent of the population and the Orthodox 33 percent, the county went to Croatia. The Muslim 33 percent made no difference" (Banac, 1988, p. 376).

That the national question had been used to *side line* the political question(s) of the Yugoslav state, and to simply parcel out zones of control for a new elite was made clear by Maček himself when he explained: "The first and foremost question is the Croatian question. To Croats this is the most important *political* question. The question of dictatorship, civil liberties and political freedoms comes second, even if it is of the utmost importance" (Djokić, 2007, p. 89).[67] This was a political question that had been evacuated of all its political content, in other words, as politics came to simply mean the territorial aspirations of the respective nationalist camps.

Yet the question remains: if the emergence of the state in the Balkans was from the onset shaped by the dominance of a predatory class of political oligarchs, where did the federalist impulse so popular among significant portions of the population emerge from in the first place? It was not, as has been commonly argued (especially in studies of the first Yugoslav period), an early expression of nationalist tensions. Rather, the history of the federalist ideal has its own trajectory and it is constitutive of a critical *counter-trend* to the development of the state in the Balkans. Too often reduced to a historical footnote, the Balkan federalist tradition represents an autochthonous critique of the region's dominant political practices. Though the literature on the phenomenon is limited, I am attempting to demonstrate that my own analysis of the historical development of Balkan state is rooted in an actually-existing political and social movement. Beginning with the following section, and continuing throughout the remainder of this text, it will become clear that while genuine, indigenous, democratic move-

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[67] Banac's point that the essential pattern of South Slav politics had been solidified by the early 1920s was also evoked by the dissident Milovan Đilas, the erstwhile right-hand of Tito. His description of the failures of the "Titoist" regime bear a striking resemblance to Banac's analysis while still drawing attention to the fact that "nationalism" itself was not the issue at stake in Yugoslavia. This from a conversation in 1981 with Robert Kaplan: "Our system was built only for Tito to manage. Now that Tito is gone and our economic situation becomes critical, there will be a natural tendency for greater centralization of power. But this centralization will not succeed because it will run up against the ethnic-political power bases in the republics. *This is not classical nationalism but a more dangerous, bureaucratic nationalism built on economic self-interest* [emphasis mine]. This is how the Yugoslav system will begin to collapse" (Kaplan, 1993, p. 75).

ments have been generally weak and often short-lived, their theoretical contributions have been paradigmatic and therefore an integral part of any genuine critique of the state and political economy in the Balkans.

The Balkan Federation

From the end of the 18th century up until the middle of the 20th century, a different kind of political ideal for the Balkans continued to be developed and redeveloped, despite statist-nationalist pressures. The "Balkan radicalism of the time," embraced a "democratic system of governance, universal suffrage, and social cohesion over the more conservative demands subsequently adopted by European liberalism" (Hassiotis, 2011, p. 212). Though relatively marginal, from a political theoretical standpoint, these contributions provide the historical basis for arguing that the Balkan state was for decades a project *becoming* rather than an inevitability. Thus, casting light on the various debates around the idea of a Balkan Federation is, as Edin Hajdarpasić has argued elsewhere, also an effort at "a different kind of political imagination, one that denormalizes the nation [and state] as a 'natural' unit of humanity and instead views it as one of many transitory forms of human political organization" (Hajdarpasić, 2008, p. 730).

Indeed, part of the reason why the Balkan federalist project must be reclaimed as a relevant point of analysis is that this tradition has been marginalized by largely the same forces that have constituted the long succession of local post-Ottoman regimes. In fact, the destruction of *any other* kind of liberation project was and remains critical to the triumph of national-chauvinist ideology in the Balkans. Hassiotis argues that the

> ...lack of interest [in the Balkan Federation] may be partially due to the fact that the relevant sources are both inadequate and scattered; but it has mainly to do with ideological factors: the fact that the subject has been ignored by Balkan national historiographies, which have tended to focus on developments in individual countries, and the final renunciation of the ideal of Balkan unification in the 1940s. In contrast, the study of European federalism developed more after the Second World War, presumably spurred by the momentum created by the birth of

the European Economic Community and its subsequent development into today's European Union. On the other hand, the very concept of Balkan unity is probably a contradiction in terms as regards the prevailing perception of the region, which sees its peoples as beyond the pale of European civilization, perpetually spoiling for a pitiless internecine fight (Hassiotis, 2011, p. 210).

Even a cursory survey of the debates concerning the movement(s) for Balkan federalism reveal determined efforts by its authors and advocates to grapple with questions that still plague the region: nationalism, minority rights, and economic and social development. Yet their analysis also demonstrated a keen awareness of the structural factors underpinning all of these inter-related problems; by rejecting the essentialist binaries being peddled by the then nationalist intelligentsia, these Balkan federalists and radicals brought into question the very nature of political authority and the legitimacy of the state as a form of social organization. In the process, the Balkan federalists developed the first modern *political* conception of the Balkans as a space not defined by imperial or nationalist violence but popular participation and agency.

Incidents like the Timok rebellion as well as an understanding of the sordid origins of the new "national" elites meant that Balkan radicals were from the onset highly ambivalent about the idea of "national liberation." As in later Marxist and anarchist analyses, "liberation," if it was to be substantive, had to mean a concrete change to the existing political, social, and economic conditions of the majority of the population; namely, the peasantry. Replacing one exploitative regime with another seemed futile or worse. In the early 19th century, rebellious peasants held out more hope for a change in the attitudes and practices of the Porte than in the benevolence of a new set of local overlords. If educated political radicals were nevertheless committed to an anti-Ottoman project, they took a markedly different position from the latter-day nationalist establishment(s).

Dimitrije Tucović described the "social democratic" position of the early 1900s: "Our patriotism is not the patriotism of the ruling classes, who want only a larger army and larger loans for armaments but are not prepared to divide this burden equally, according to ability, to

spare the poor and not rob them of their necessities for life" (Tucović, 1950, pp. 186-187). Of particular concern for the Balkan radicals was the question of the state. Tucović argued that the "aspirations of the peoples of south eastern Europe can only be realized through the alliance of economic forces, the dissolving of artificial borders, the realization of complete equality...[and] the defense against collective dangers" (ibid, p. 37). Nor were Tucović and his peers confused about the role that nationalism had come to play in establishing the dominance of the state in the Balkans: "We want the freedom of our people without destroying the freedom of others. This objective can only be accomplished through the creation of a single political unit in the Balkans in which all peoples will be completely equal, without regard to which ruler ruled where centuries ago" (ibid, p. 173).[68] By the early 20th century, these local radicals had come to view the state and the nation as the most significant obstacle to the emancipation of the peasant and working peoples of the Balkans.

However, this analysis began a century earlier. Even then, radicals started to realize that exclusionary nationalism seemed to go hand-in-hand with political centralization and thus would replace imperial authority merely with a more local despotism and limited the potential number of allies in the prolonged anti-imperial and liberation struggle. Rigas Feraios (1757-1798), a Greek and one of the first pan-Balkan revolutionaries, was an exemplar of this approach when he called on "all Turkish subjects, Christian or Moslem, white or negro, to rise simultaneously in revolt 'from Bosnia to Arabia'" (Stavrianos, 1942, p. 35). Feraios devoted considerable portions of his writing to the case for solidarity among the varied imperial subjects of southeastern Europe, maintaining that they shared far more in common than set them apart, as early nationalist agitators were already claiming, and that they could likewise share a

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[68] As with their conservative opponents, the radicals were prone to grandiose declarations but often short on substantive policy. It is not clear what Tucović meant by a "single political unit," for instance, and whether this may have been some federal, yet nevertheless, statist republic. Actual *anarchists* were few and far between in the region, after all. However, his concern, first and foremost, with *abolishing* borders and empowering peasants still represents a radical departure from the prevailing statist-nationalist narrative. Thus, I argue, the Balkan federalists must be conceived of as having been a genuinely alternative political movement, regardless of how undeveloped some of their own ideas may have been.

common future, that they could commonly decide. A century later, however, the Serbian socialist Svetozar Marković (1846-1875) was still in the process of negotiating the contradictions of statism and nationalism in the liberation struggle—with the task having become only more imminent with the rise of actual nation-states. Stavrianos writes:

> In a book published in 1874 entitled *Srbija na Istoku* [Serbia in the East], Markovich [sic] developed the thesis that national unity and freedom could be attained only by a general revolution and the establishment of a Balkan federal republic. In an article in *Rad* [Work] on December 1, 1875, Markovich defined his aims as "liberation and federation," at first with the Bulgarians and ultimately with all the Balkan peoples. "This," he continued, "signifies the socialist negation of nationality! The practical importance of socialism for the internal and external political development of the Serbian people is the following: internal social transformation on the basis of the people's sovereignty and communal administration, revolution in Turkey, and federation of the Balkan Peninsula." When in 1874 a conservative Bulgarian newspaper in Constantinople complained that the Serbians were carrying on propaganda in Bulgarian areas, Markovich [sic] replied that it was immaterial whether or not this was the case because, "Our common aim is the liberation of the Serbian and Bulgarian people and we do not wish to quibble over whether a 'Serbian' or a 'Bulgarian' Morava will form the frontier between Serbia and Bulgaria. In the final analysis, the liberated people will themselves decide whether a frontier is even necessary" (ibid, pp. 116-117).

Structurally speaking, federalism seemed to be the obvious theoretical and practical answer for the new Balkans. For the radicals of the 18th, 19th and 20th centuries who held out genuine hope for post-imperial social transformation, a transition away from the despotic centralism of empires and states seemed integral to this process, and thus they gravitated towards federalism as, at least, a rhetorical silver bullet.

Hence, the project for a Balkan Federation became by the end of the 19th century an almost exclusively radical-socialist movement. While originally embraced by imperial benefactors (primarily the Russians) and later a corpus of newly-minted nationalist elites, their commitment to the federalist ideal extended only as far as their parochial territorial and political ambitions. In practice, nationalization, the manufacturing of ethnic and national identities by these elites, was the preferred policy for maintaining (statist) power and marginalizing autonomous, popular mobilization. In turn, both imperialists and nationalists quickly came to oppose Balkan federalism (ibid, p. 35). As I have shown, even when they officially embraced

"pan-Slavism," which is to say some manner of "multi-national nationalism," political elites in the first Yugoslav state remained committed anti-federalists and anti-democrats; in short, they rejected any meaningful mitigation of their patrimonial hold on power. They fermented national conflicts, but not because of ideological reasons. They did so with an eye towards preserving particular institutional and economic arrangements—oligarchic and kleptocratic ones.

Federalism was a concrete, emancipatory alternative that was in the collective imagination of the Balkan radicals inextricably linked to economic justice and political autonomy, for individuals rather than territories and amorphous ethnic collectives. Competing nationalisms, even if viciously genocidal and nominally oppositional, were still operating within the logic of the nation-state paradigm. Nationalism could offer no exit from the state because it was itself a product of the state. The federalist ideal, much as the democratic ideal, even if they have subsequently become a means of administering the state, were in the beginning deeply anti-statist concepts. Or, at the very least, they are concepts which began and could be genuinely said to exist *outside* the state and to thus offer, once more, a future outside the state. The reasons for the Balkan nationalist regimes' anti-federalist and anti-democratic tendencies, then as now, are thus specific to the particular evolution of the state in the region.

It is unsurprising then that the state socialist regime that did the most to work, even theoretically, towards the "withering away of the state" was the Yugoslav regime of the Socialist *Federal* Republic of Yugoslavia. In the SFRJ, the withering away of the state was directly linked to the establishment of worker's self-management, featuring "[w]orker's councils…Further, since the state itself was intended to wither away, [the] political leadership attempted to shift responsibilities to the worker's commune—or opština (opčina)—which was meant, in turn, to raise its own funds, sets its own budgets, and provide workers with necessary social services" (Liotta, 2001). As both the original Yugoslav movement and the later

Yugoslav socialist movement grew out of the Balkan federalist movement, in coming to power at the end of the Second World War, the leadership gathered around Tito had ideological experience in dealing with the centralist ambitions of the Stalin regime and could relatively easily pivot on this local history. While Tito and his supporters had also been brought up with and subsequently created an anti-democratic (or at least, *ademocratic*) political culture, it is significant that, unlike their predecessors, they could not reject either federalism or democracy as a matter of policy.

However, that federalism in the SFRY was ultimately *emptied* of its democratic character was also a product of Yugoslav and Balkan history. Why this emptying occurred, as it pertains to the post-1945 period, will be discussed further in Chapter III. This chapter, however, has established the significance of the historic evolution of the region prior to 1945. Clearly, the emptying of the democratic ideal, more broadly, had been a generational elite-driven project even prior to the authoritarian turn of Yugoslavia's communist regime. The socio-economic inequalities these practices engendered were far more readily identifiable than the theoretical organizational principles underlying them. Like many Marxist revolutionaries, the Yugoslav communists became steeped in commitments to social and economic justice, while believing that substantive *democratic practice* could be circumvented or otherwise implemented in stages. The result was highly ironic: some degree of socio-economic emancipation was obtained by large segments of the population but the essential character and logic of elite administration remained largely the same–and eventually the result was the same as well: violence, war, and dispossession.

Emptied of its democratic conscience, after Tito's death Yugoslav federalism was undone by the parochial and kleptocratic tendencies that had previously become institutionalized under Ottoman, Austro-Hungarian, and early nationalist regimes. The democratic vacuum created by these regimes could not be filled by the *performance* of democratic practice. A fac-

simile of worker's self-management and democracy took root and largely pacified popular discontent. Emboldened by greater arsenals and more robust media and propaganda networks, a new generation of elites, as in the 19th century, used a period of crisis in the 1980s to channel *emerging* popular demands for substantive political rights into nationalism. The results at the end of the 20th century were the same as they had been at the end of the 19th century: the emergence of new states, inhabited by terrorized, traumatized, and impoverished populations, led by a class of kleptocratic elites who used nationalism to subvert popular political power. It was not ancient ethnic hatreds that had resurfaced; it was local state making practices.

Precisely because of the disastrous culmination of this historical trajectory, the original moment of "intervention" represented by the Balkan federalist critique is all the more important to consider. At the moment of the inception of institutionalized, statist nationalism in southeastern Europe, a genuine alternative was being articulated, one that although quiet in comparison to the canon fire of state-building astutely warned of the dangers awaiting the peoples of this region if then still emerging patterns of development continued unchallenged.

Conclusion(s)

Because Ottoman and post-Ottoman class dynamics in the Balkans were different from those in Western Europe, the state form also necessarily took on a different shape in the continent's southeastern corner. Confronted by a brutal oligarchic and kleptocratic political economy, Balkan radicals embraced the ideal of federalism. Their federalist ideal, that became the catalyst for later Yugoslav movement(s), was at heart radically democratic and anti-statist. Traditional peasant communes were here not the markers of rural idiocy but the foundations for political association based on traditional bonds of communal solidarity and participation.

This ideal emerged as a response to and was thus locked in perennial conflict with the parasitic practices of political elites in the Balkans. To these elites, the state was the means to

preserve the privileges they had accumulated through a long history of clientelistic dealings with the central authorities of the Ottoman and Austro-Hungarian empires. Sovereignty meant the preservation of predatory land tenure, tax-farming, and brigand practices. These elites engaged in calculated campaigns of "nationalization" through violence and terror. Nationalism subverted class hostilities between the new elites and their overwhelmingly peasant populations into ethno-national conflicts between Christians, Muslims, Serbs, Croats, Bosniaks, Bulgarians, Greeks etc. The basic economic model of the late Ottoman period, accumulation through dispossession, thus persisted for generations as a kind of elastic authoritarianism; changing in ideological veneer but not in character.

As these regimes most feared the actualization of an autonomous, popular movement with class objectives, the universe of "national questions" expanded as substantive debates about political and economic practice were marginalized and censured. Nevertheless, a Yugoslav state emerged in 1918 to tremendous popular excitement in the region. Yet the foundations of the state were unstable and the meaningful development of democratic practices could not fit with the desires of the elite establishment to maintain absolute political and economic control. Soon, with the masses increasingly sidelined, partisan squabbles opened the door for the proclamation of a royal dictatorship. With the democratic option seemingly definitively defeated, the remaining political cliques again resorted to nationalist claims to cement their respective power bases. The then recent yet widening Serb-Croat chasm of the 1930s was brought to an end not through compromise or the re-emergence of a democratic opposition but through fascist invasion. The maelstrom of war, however, also brought with it new *political* opportunities.

Chapter III: The Self-Managed Society & the Authoritarian State

<u>Introduction</u>

A chapter concerning itself with political developments in the SFRJ is almost inevitably a study in the country's dissolution. Yet the state's unravelling was not an inevitability and theories of history that marginalize the importance of four decades of unprecedented economic and social development make for a poor explanatory frameworks. To understand the dissolution of the second Yugoslavia we have to consider how the country's unique governing system was able to produce simultaneously both a radical democratic ideological order and a deeply oligarchic elite power structure willing to dissolve the society as a whole.

In the first phenomenon, the radical democratic ideological bases of the state, I see a pronounced "break" with previous periods of development in Yugoslavia. But this break was not deep enough to prevent the reappearance of earlier oligarchic tendencies. Or more specifically, that the authoritarian structures of the socialist state dominated the polity's weak proto-democratic institutions, thereby allowing a new generation of elites to adopt still older models for the suppression of popular, democratic politics, those discussed in the second chapter. Because what returned in Yugoslavia was *not* the national question, as such, but rather a particular conception of the state, one that could only come to fruition through virulent nationalist politics.

Yugoslav political elites in the 1980s were confronted by a similar problem as their predecessors in the early 19th century. Growing socio-economics tensions between privileged elites and increasingly impoverished masses were leading to the emergence of class conscious, popular politics. In the 19th century this took the form of ideas about the Balkan Federation and similar communalist projects; at the end of the 20th century this concerned the question of workers self-management. As in the 19th century, however, local political oli-

garchs discovered that the *appearance* of a participatory political project could be used to (re)legitimize and keep in place existing authoritarian and exploitative practices or at least some version thereof.

Thus, nationalism was reanimated by republican leaders in the SFRJ after 1974 not because there were "unresolved national tensions" per se but because such nationalist narratives were useful in undermining a set of competing, democratically-inclined political ideals that grew out of the experiences of the workers' self-management system. In effect, the nation-state was twice invented in the Yugoslav lands for the same reason: to use the fiction of the nation to obscure the brutality of the dominant political-economic paradigm. Namely, one in which the state serves as the primary tool in a persistent process of accumulation through dispossession and the "defence" of the nation and the state become the ideological pillars of a project to strip citizens of any meaningful, autonomous political power.

The concept of the "self-managed society," developed after 1948 by Edvard Kardelj, Milovan Đilas, and Boris Kidrič[69] profoundly altered the role of the state in the Yugoslav political imagination. Though developed within the context of an authoritarian, one-party state, significant efforts were made by committed ideologues within the Communist apparatus to substantively implement a "self-management" (*samoupravljanje*) regime, one that had dramatic economic and political consequences.[70]

This program proved to be genuinely popular among the Yugoslav masses, so much so in fact, that from 1958 onwards, the "liberal"[71] wing of the League of Communists of Yugo-

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[69] Boris Kidrič (1912-1953) was another Slovene Partisan and while influential on the early formation of the self-management regime, due to his sudden and early passing I primarily focus on the role of Kardelj and Đilas in this chapter.

[70] Here I should note that I am aware that there is an entire literature on "Communist federalism" that I do not consult. This choice is deliberate as I am trying to focus on what was particular and peculiar to the Yugoslav communist experiment, especially as it relates to the question of democratic administration, and not to provide for a comparative study of federalism (or nationalism) in the Second World.

[71] As will become clear, the use of the term liberal here has little to do with what is in the West understood as Liberalism. If anything, Yugoslav Communist "liberals" tended to be even more radically anti-capitalist than the established leadership of the Party. Many of these so-called liberals and their younger associates continued with this line after the dissolution of the SFRJ and have gathered around magazines like *Novi Plamen* (New Flame)

slavia (LCY, formerly the Communist Party of Yugoslavia), including later dissidents like the *Praxis* group, pushed not for the abolition of socialism in the SFRJ but its substantive implementation. Thus, by the early 1960s, a genuine, local "New Left" began to emerge. The central pillars of the New Left program included the deepening of the self-management experiment, the breaking up of the LCY's monopoly on political decision making and the eventual "withering away of the state" (Zukin, 1975, pp. 252-253).

However, this was a program tremendously unpopular with conservative, oligarchic elements within the leadership of the LCY. It was this conflict between the so-called liberal and conservative wings, both within the LCY and outside of it, that constituted the central political debate of the second Yugoslav period. Moreover, it was precisely the latter-day marriage between the conservative, authoritarian wing and then marginal nationalist critics that led to the destruction of the SFRJ self-managed experiment and the emerging self-managed society as a whole. This was a marriage founded in a seemingly minor yet crucial ideological symmetry: the idea that actual democratization represented a mortal threat to the state and/or the nation and, above all, the elite who purported to govern and speak in the name of both.

I argue that it was not the self-managed attempt to "wither away" the sate *itself* that created this conservative-nationalist reaction. Rather, as Kardelj himself insisted (genuinely or not), I point to the fact that in "downloading" the functions of the state to worker's councils and communes, the Communist authorities never dissolved the *actual* monopoly of power held by the LCY. The result was a facade of direct democracy, as the *Praxis* group argued, that obscured the elitist power structure, whose internal fracturing *actually* undid the state;this, despite a popular (and growing) consensus among ordinary Yugoslavs that the polity should be preserved, including the worker self-management system, although substantively democratized. Ultimately, it was this din for the genuine democratization of Yugoslav social-

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and a host of other leftist organizations and publications. In practice, the term liberal should here be read as left, progressive, radical or perhaps "substantively communist."

ism that pushed members of the authoritarian political establishment, as in periods prior, to adopt (and unleash) extremist nationalist movements as their own; their own means, that is, for maintaining power in the face of shifting political conditions.

It is also important from this onset of this chapter to acknowledge the "global context" in which much of this particular segment of the discussion takes place. Arguably the central year of this chapter is 1968, a moment synonymous with global upheaval: from Mexico to Vietnam, from the United States to France and Yugoslavia too, as I shall argue. Immanuel Wallerstein has referred to the 1968 movement(s) as a "global revolution" (Wallerstein & Zukin, 1989). Indeed, Yugoslavia's leftist agitators certainly thought of themselves as part of a broader, global coalition of young progressive at odds with their respective ruling establishments. Authoritarianism and exclusion were global themes of the era—not unlike certain aspects of the contemporary period. Naturally, local struggles took on local dimensions; the democratic shortcomings of the country's self-management system, for instance, were of central concern in Yugoslavia, even as the country was held up as a model by many radicals and progressives in Europe and North America. But for my purposes, Yugoslavia's "participation," or rather the participation of its progressives, in the democratic wave(s) of 1968, as I argued in Chapter I, only further cements the theoretical necessity of re-conceiving the polity's development in terms of democracy and class rather than nations and ethnicities. This is especially important precisely because of the disastrous end of this revolution; by the early 1980s, as I will begin to make clear in this chapter, it was clear that the "spirit of 1968" had been defeated in the SFRJ. But unlike in Mexico, for instance, the true counter-revolutionary bloodletting in Yugoslavia would not begin until the 1990s. And though the events are separated by nearly two decades, it is nevertheless my contention that the defeat of the 1968 protest movements in Yugoslavia had as its (in)direct result the catastrophe of 1990s.

As such, the purpose of this chapter is two fold. First, I will trace the emergence of the communist movement in Yugoslavia in the context of the historical experiences discussed in Chapter II and thus illustrate how, though making sharp departures from the first Yugoslav state, the SFRJ was nevertheless profoundly influenced by the creation of the original Balkan states, the previous regime and the intervening war years. Secondly, I will argue that the New Left analysis developed within Yugoslavia after the war by and large correctly identified the nature of political conflict within the new polity. By shifting their gaze towards questions of political participation, New Left activists and intellectuals revealed the existence of a deeply reactionary and conservative elite establishment within the LCY for whom the idea of actual democratic self-management was anathema despite a professed commitment to peasant and working class emancipation. In short, much like their predecessors, large segments of the new elite feared democratic participation would loosen their grip on power and in the process of resisting the implementation of meaningful self-managed mechanisms they actively conspired to destroy the self-managed society as a whole in order to preserve their authoritarian state model. I argue then that once constituted on thoroughly anti-democratic principles in the 19th century, the state in the Balkans was slow to evolve in different directions, despite moments of seemingly radical ideological rupture in the 20th century.

The Origins of the Communist Movement in Yugoslavia

What was first called the "Socialist Labour Party of Yugoslavia (Communists)" was founded in 1920 in Vukovar, Croatia, then part of the KSHS. In the first national elections, in November 1920, the Communists won just under 200,000 votes, approximately 12.4% of the final tally, a number that translated to 58 seats in the new Assembly. While sixteen other parties won seats in this election, the Communists came in a surprising fourth overall. In December 1920, the Royalist authorities took the first steps to ban the party and by 1921 the organisation had gone completely underground (Ramet, 2006, p. 55).

Why were the Yugoslav authorities so concerned by the emergence of the Communists? The answer is a mixture of both domestic and international factors. To begin with, Communist-led revolutions had already toppled or come into serious conflict with monarchist authorities in both Russia and Hungary. In Yugoslavia too, the Communists along with Stjepan Radić's Croatian Peasant Party (HSS) immediately emerged as the most vocal critics of the monarchist regime. As the third and fourth largest parties in the new Parliament, respectively, the royalist authorities were eager to suppress this nascent opposition movement precisely because both parties were critical of the state's monarchist foundations. Both the Communists and the HSS wanted to move Yugoslavia towards an increasingly republican model, while the King from the onset seemed to view the Parliament as a temporary feature of the new state. Unsurprisingly then, the Communists were banned and Radić spent most of his career in government prisons.

Of course, the ambitions of the Communists went far beyond mere republicanism. The Party envisioned itself leading a peasant-worker revolution of a Bolshevik kind in Yugoslavia, a fact that had by 1920-21 already resulted in one major split within its membership. The revolutionary wing rejected the suggestion that Yugoslavia was not yet a society ripe for working-class revolution and that social reform was best accomplished by working through the legislature. The moderates left, eventually forming the short-lived Socialist Party of Yugoslavia while the remaining members continued on as the Communist Party of Yugoslavia (CPY).

Despite their differences with the regime, ironically, the original Communists were fierce centralists who rejected federalist proposals of the sort advocated for by the HSS. The reason for this was that a significant portion of the CPY leadership had been radicalized during the Great War (1914-1918) and had been politically educated in revolutionary Russia. What Ivan Avakumović refers to as the pre-Marxist radicalism of Svetozar Marković, that initially inspired the formation of the (later) profoundly un-radical Radical Party of Yugosla-

via,[72] had been coloured by shades of anarchism and had propagated in favour of federalist solutions (Avakumovic, 1964, pp. 5-14). Significant changes occurred within the Balkan socialist movement between the end of the 19th and the early part of the 20th century, however, and once the CPY emerged it began to take deliberate steps to distance itself from the agrarian, communalist radicalism of Marković and his followers; an agenda that had envisioned, among other things, the Balkans united in a quasi-anarchic federation of free peasants, as discussed in Chapter II.

Unlike radicals like Marković, the Communists held that the purpose of the peasantry was not to inspire the working class with their existing communalist and insurrectionary tendencies but rather simply to be progressively turned into class conscious proletarians. The CPY leadership thus held an essentially Bolshevik (and later Stalinist) line up until the 1948 schism with Moscow. Josip Broz Tito's ascendancy to the party's highest post makes this clear. After his imprisonment on the Russian Front during the First World War, he became a member of the Red Guard, the Communist Party of Russia and later the Soviet secret police, the NKVD, and married a Russian woman along the way. Tito spent years travelling back and forth between Moscow and the Balkans working for the Comintern in various capacities. He rose to the rank of Secretary-General only in 1937 and this only after having been sent by Stalin himself to purge the CPY—a project that included the execution of the former Secretary-General Milan Gorkić in Russia and his posthumous expulsion from the Party (ibid, p. 121).[73]

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[72] The Radicals began as a party in the Kingdom of Serbia ostensibly committed to liberalizing the Serbian state. After 1918, they became one of the leading political parties in the first Yugoslav state, increasingly a pro-monarchist, centralist and Serb party. After the royal dictatorship was announced in 1929, significant members of the Radical leadership became advisors to the King's new government. A party by the same name was founded in the 1990s by Vojislav Šešelj and represented the extreme right of Serbia's then nationalist turn. While there is no direct connection between the two parties, significant numbers of the original Radical party membership ended up joining the monarchist, and later quisling, Četnik movement during World War II, whose ideological commitment to a "Greater Serbian" state was then revived during the 1990 by Šešelj's Radicals, a line that continues to be espoused to this day by the party's adherents.

[73] Interestingly, Gorkić is mentioned (though by his birth name, Josip Čižinsky) as a celebrated BiH anti-fascist in a 1972 text entitled *Marxism and Anti-Fascism in Bosnia-Herzegovina, 1935-1937* (*Marksizam i antifašizam u Bosni i Hercegovini 1935-1937*) with no mention made of his purge from the CPY. The text is fascinating for two reasons: first, in a context in which the sovereignty of BiH within the SFRJ was not entirely secure (due to irredentist claims by conservative Serbian CPY/LCY officials, in particular) the book is clearly an attempt to

Important differences existed between the two parties, however, and would significantly structure the emergence of the Yugoslav party state after World War II. The Yugoslav party spent the years before the Axis occupation assassinating various government ministers and organizing underground, waiting for the right moment to launch their revolution. In this respect then, like their Russian compatriots, the Yugoslav Communists were essentially a collection of militant vanguardists, operating in an economically underdeveloped and overwhelmingly agrarian society, suppressed by an autocratic monarchist regime. Despite their ostensible ideological commitments to popular power and participation, the party was in practice itself a deeply authoritarian enterprise. Moreover, as this so-called Communist movement was operating in a distinctly non-capitalist society, one lacking strong bourgeois parliamentary traditions, once in power, their enlightened "proletarian dictatorship" quickly revealed itself as simply authoritarian—albeit with ideologically democratic pretensions. Nevertheless, when world war once again came to Yugoslavia, a major transition began to occur.

As I have noted earlier, the polarization that marked the inter-war period in Yugoslavia only in the last years of that state began to take on ethno-national characteristics. Thereafter things accelerated quickly; after a group of Bulgarian, Macedonian, and Croatian far-right nationalists assassinated Alexander I in 1934, the political situation in the country began to spiral out of control. The notorious *sporazum* of 1939 was followed by the signing of a pact with Nazi Germany in 1941 that subsequently triggered a coup by the Yugoslav military, which was itself followed by the fascist invasion of the country. On April 6th, 1941, the combined forces of Germany, Italy, and Hungary invaded; by April 18th, the Kingdom of Yugoslavia had ceased to be.

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establish a distinct and organic Marxist lineage in the republic. Secondly, it speaks to a desire on the part of the then LCY to rehabilitate members of the communist movement in pre-war Yugoslavia. A project that was necessary precisely because of the widening differences between the pre-war and post-war parties (Cengle, 1972, p. 15)

While years of underground organizing and agitation had ably prepared the young Communist cadres for a guerrilla campaign against the fascist occupation, in the end it was not the Partisans who first rose to oppose the invaders. Instead, it was predominately a Serb peasant insurrection that first took up arms, responding to the attempted genocide of Serbs on the part of the Croatian fascist quislings that occupied the majority of BiH territory—the *Ustaša* (partially responsible for Alexander's assassination) at the helm of the newly dubbed Independent State of Croatia (NDH). From the onset, the Communists who had waited for the "ideal" moment to begin their planned uprising and had expected it to have an urban and working class character, were forced to adapt their strategies. Hoare writes that as the "Serb peasants arose spontaneously to defend themselves...so the Communists were dragged in and placed at the forefront of a popular rebellion, one over which they had only limited control. In this way, a traditional Serb peasant rebellion arose hand-in-hand with a modern Communist insurgency" (Hoare, 2007, p. 250).

The chaotic fighting of the next four years was at times marked by fluid alliances but generally took on the shape of Communist Partisans on one side with fascists and quislings on the other. While the Serb nationalist *Četniks*, monarchist and nationalist guerrillas from Serbia proper who began attempting to ethnically cleanse BiH territories for eventual incorporation into a post-war Greater Serbian state, were initially opposed to the Nazis and *Ustaša*, by 1942 they were in a *de facto* alliance. The two extremist camps conspired together to cleanse their imagined "Greater" homelands of various undesirables—primarily Muslims and Jews and where appropriate, Croats and Serbs, respectively (Hoare, 2006, pp. 156-162).[74] Faced by

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[74] It should be noted that a division of the *Waffen SS* nominally meant to be a Bosnian Muslim unit also existed. However, the leadership of the division remained German and Croatian. In 1943, several hundred of the enlisted men mutinied in occupied France and were summarily executed. By 1944, the division was disbanded. Subsequently, much has been made of the existence of this troop by Serb nationalist historians, in particular. But as Hoare argues: "…recruitment of Muslims [into the SS] threatened to leave Muslim homes, villages and towns undefended. The Division's absence from [BiH] for training during 1943 simply facilitated Chetnik [sic] and Partisan attacks on Muslim areas. This acted as a catalyst for the defection of large segments of the Muslim population from the quislings to the Partisans and hence the eventual Communist triumph in [BiH]" (Hoare, 2013, p. 54).

seemingly incorrigible bloodletting on every side, masses of ordinary Yugoslavs began to join the ranks of the only consistent resistance movement and certainly the only one that took an anti-nationalist, all-Yugoslav line—the Communist Partisans.[75]

The overwhelming popularity of the Partisan forces during the war and in the immediate period thereafter was most clearly attested to by the massive influx of peasants into what had, prior to the war, been a largely urban-working class party. Marija Obradović notes that before the war, the "[CPY] was a small cadre party of 'professional revolutionaries' originating from the worker class" (Obradović 2013, 379). Though the Party numbered nearly eighteen thousand youth members in 1940, the influx of peasants during and after the war would permanently skew the class basis of the movement, from urban working class to peasant and what Obradović, citing William G. Lockwood, calls "worker-peasants": "villagers incorporated into industry while still maintaining a partial economic base in private agriculture and still enmeshed in a system of social relationships largely located in their villages of residence" (ibid, pp. 387-388). In 1945, there were 141,066 peasants in the new CPY and by 1945 the number of "worker-peasants" had grown to nearly 500,000 (ibid, p. 379). Combined with the fact that *three-fourths* of the pre-war membership died during the war, the CPY that emerged in 1945 was necessarily dramatically reoriented, even if its own leaders did not immediately recognize this (ibid, p. 380).

With CPY membership now reflecting the class background of the overwhelming majority of the population of both BiH and Yugoslavia as a whole, Hoare notes that it is "ambiguous just who were the revolutionaries and who the conservatives in the Bosnian war of the 1940s. For all their desire to break down communal barriers, wipe out superstition, emanci-

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[75] Despite the growing peasant influx into the ranks of the Partisans, anti-fascist organizing remained robust and sophisticated in the cities as well. The four volume collection *Sarajevo u Revoluciji* ("Sarajevo in the Revolution") provides a series of fascinating first-person accounts by many of the organizers themselves in one such urban setting. Among these, Munira Karahasanović–Serdarević's chapter *Za Narodnooslobodilački Pokret* ("For the National Liberation Movement") describes in detail the evolution of the movement from pre-war underground activities to war-time organizing, the role of young intellectuals and, in particular, the role of women in the movement from her own first-hand experiences (Karahasanović-Serdarević, 1977). Incidentally, Ms. Karahasanović–Serdarević happens to be my grandmother.

pate women and build a modern day society, the Communists were the ones fighting to pre-

serve Bosnia-Herzegovina's centuries old multi-ethnic coexistence and restore Bosnia-

Herzegovina's traditional internal and external borders; both the coexistence and the borders

having come under massive assault under the Yugoslav kingdom and the NDH" (Hoare, 2007,

p. 308). This fact would also constitute the backbone of a growing rift between the Yugoslav

and Soviet Communists.

What subsequently became known as the "Yugoslav Revolution," that is the National

Liberation Movement (or Struggle) (NOP/NOB) of 1941-1945, was marked by a delicate rela-

tionship between the leadership of the "vanguard party" and popular, mass mobilization. Like

the October Revolution in Russia, the Yugoslav Revolution took on a socialist-communist

character within the context of a wider conflict. This meant that the popularity of the Yugo-

slav Communists was tentative—not all Partisans were Communists and officially the libera-

tion war effort employed a "National Front" strategy.

The Federal People's Republic of Yugoslavia (FPRJ) was established at the end of the

war, which according to the Treaty of Vis (1944), was to be ruled in tandem by the royal gov-

ernment in-exile and the victorious "National Front" until the first post-war elections could be

held. This poll was held in November 1945 and though it was boycotted by the opposition

parties and held in an environment in which the CPY already moved quickly to stamp out dis-

sent, it nevertheless appears to have cemented the genuine popularity of the war-time National

Front forces (Banac, 1988, p. 18). Despite their overwhelming mandate, and pronounced au-

thoritarian tendencies, the regime that emerged in Yugoslavia post-1945 both practically and

ideologically remained invested in a kind of "managed democracy," in which a truncated

mass politics always appeared on the dangerous verge of becoming genuinely autonomous.

Ironically then, in the first Yugoslav state, the country shifted from a constitutional

monarchy to a royal autocracy, where the royalist regime openly professed distaste for and

eventually completely eliminated democratic institutions. In the second Yugoslav state, however, for much of its tenure, the regime maintained an ideological commitment to radical, participatory democracy, while significant elements within the ruling establishment worked to limit and reverse the effects of the self-management experiment. While the ideological basis of the state radically shifted between the two periods, in keeping with what I argue is the dominant historic cleavage of the Yugoslav social space, the progressive-conservative split centred on the question of democracy and the state. Those who were proponents of democratic, participatory socialism wished to see the deepening of the self-management project and thus were critical of centralized state power, while anti-democrats in the ruling establishment took a typically statist and later nationalist line. I examine the evolution of this struggle in the next section.

A New Ideology

With their political supremacy assured after the November 1945 elections, the CPY leadership turned to the task of rebuilding a country utterly devastated by war. In the process, they discovered that their seemingly unassailable political dominance of the new Yugoslav state was considerably more precarious than first thought. After 1948, both as a result of geopolitical and local *realpolitik* as well as a diversity of views within the party itself, the regime's chief architects realized that Yugoslav socialism, if it was to survive, required an ideological renaissance.

Darko Suvin argues that the period between 1945 and 1952 was one of "postwar reconstruction and consolidation, [and the] centralist fusion of Party and State" (Suvin, 2013, p. 173). After the break with Stalin, however, the leadership of the CPY realized that "Yugoslavia 'could not build socialism' in the way she had started building it, that is, on the Soviet model" (Rusinow D., 2008, p. 61). This meant in practice that the hard-line Stalinist stance the party had taken in the immediate post-war period, in the name of state consolidation,

would have to be altered. What was required, in turn, was a way to both purge the party of "Stalinist elements" and to win back the popular support that had marked the war years.

The collectivization schemes modelled on similar Soviet attempts that the party had used to modernize agricultural production in the country (discussed in the previous chapter) had already led to serious rifts among the bulk of the peasantry and the party (Bokovoy, 1998) and in 1950 led to actual armed conflict in the Cazin region of the Bosnian *Krajina* (Glenny, 2011).[76] While there was a brief attempt on the part of the CPY in the immediate aftermath of the Tito-Stalin split to out-orthodox the Soviets (by insisting on even more rapid collectivization and industrialization), the strategy was untenable, as Bokvoy argues, once it became clear that the largest segment of the population, the peasants, were prepared to violently resist this process. The masses had won the war and brought the party to power and now, squeezed on all sides by hostile foreign powers, the CPY simply could not afford to lose their support.

Due to their official ideological commitments, even the most conservative elements within the CPY could not argue against what was clearly a shift in the popular opinion of the party's policies. Nor could they deny what had been, arguably, the most critical element of their war-time success: the autonomous and participatory structure of liberated areas such as the so-called Republic of Užice (Serbia) and the Bihać Republic (BiH). As Suvin notes, "the revolution was fought by a great majority of the people as a war for national liberation and justice," and "[w]hile sparked and firmly led by a hierarchic network," he continues

> …the struggle was by both design and chance conducted from below upwards, for freedom and against the totally corrupt and murderous authority of the old class systems – monarchist and fascist. The partisan army, the local Liberation Councils, the youth and women's organizations, even the rapidly expanding and still largely undercover Communist Party were parts and expressions of that plebeian

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[76] Importantly, despite the ethnically-charged nature of much of the war-time fighting in BiH, as Glenny notes, the uprising was a multi-ethnic affair of Bosniak and Serb peasants against local authorities. Relatedly, in a recent text, Srđan Šušnica provides an achingly beautiful account of the proud tradition of multi-ethnic anti-fascist organizing in the Bosnian Karjina, but in particular among the region's Bosnian Serbs. A tradition that was violently dismantled, in the words of his grandmother, by "bearded Četniks and priests" in the 1990s (Šušnica, 2015). Her words recall vividly the images of "patriotic bandits" at the end of the 19th century, discussed at length in Chapter II.

singularity in occupied Europe: a people (or group of peoples practicing *fraterni-té*) freeing itself by its own forces, with postwar power not coming on the muzzle of foreign tanks (ibid, p. 173-174).

However fleeting, the experience of popular sovereignty within the context of the war had radicalized political expectations of the masses.[77] Thus, despite themselves being steeped in a deeply authoritarian culture, in order to preserve their own tentative grip on power, the CPY authorities had no choice but to shift towards a political model more resembling the wartime efforts in Yugoslavia than the prevailing Stalinist orthodoxy. While the conservative, statist elements within the party momentarily accepted this decision, as the progressive wing of the CPY seized this opening to push through what would eventually flower into the self-management system, the essential post-war *problematique* of the Yugoslav state began to take shape: how substantive was socialist democracy in the FPRJ/SFRJ actually going to be?

On the one hand, "[as] Kardelj summarized it, the lesson from the 'Cominform conflict' was to shun 'the deformation of any Communist Party which identified itself with the State and with the police apparatus' so as to avoid its fallout, where 'the working masses had been isolated from government and separated from the execution of power'" (ibid). "The only way out," Suvin argues, "was in reviving the people's power of the partisan days – that is, self-management…[in so doing] the privileges of the 'bureaucratic caste' were in good part revoked. Between 1950 and [the] end of 1952 professional Party functionaries were reduced from 11,900 to 4600" (ibid).

However, Vladimir Unkovski-Korica notes in a close study of the debates within the CPY amid the search for a new social model, that as early as 1949 there emerged a cynical conflation between anarchism and the self-management system within the conservative camp (Unkovski-Korica 2013, 117). By 1968, the anarchist spectre had taken on an established role in the (now) LCY imagination—"anarcho-liberalism." While the term was in one sense little

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[77] Kardelj acknowledges as much himself: "Self-management in Yugoslavia was born during the National Liberation War and has since the very beginning been one of the factors in and forms of the socialist revolution" (Kardelj, 1976, p. 103).

more than Communist *newspeak*, the attempt by the LCY to conflate all democratic critique with a fictitious synonym for both naiveté and bourgeois reaction aptly captured the regime's conundrum. As part of their ideological liberation from the Kremlin, the Yugoslav Communists needed a terminology to both critique Stalinist orthodoxy and to protect themselves from Soviet counter-criticism. The latter invariably painted the Yugoslavs as Western stooges and/or undisciplined rogues, a critique that mirrored earlier Soviet attacks on their assorted leftist critics in Russia and Eastern Europe (Rajak, 2011). By comparison, formulating a critique of Stalinism was easy; the true masterstroke by Kardelj et al was coining a term to capture why their peculiar and curtailed brand of democracy was genuine "rule of the people," or self-management in other words, and why everything else, everything to its proverbial left, was propaganda (or worse).

For my own purposes, and as I suggested in Chapter I, the term's conceptual ambiguity is part of its informative potential. The argument by Kardelj and his cohort that anarchism and liberalism could in any way be conflated points to their profound discomfort with genuine popular self-management. The sequestering of as massive an ideological terrain as suggested by the LCY's adoption of the term "anarcho-liberalism" tarred even the most sympathetic critics and critiques of the regime with the same traitorous brush. The practical result of this, as I argue below, was a disastrous purging policy of the party's most democratically-inclined cadres; an initiative that (in)directly led to the country's dissolution two decades later. But theoretically, the fact that such a policy even existed reaffirms one of the central contentions of this text: that even in periods where there was an official commitment to democracy, the actually existing state and its representatives in the Yugoslav lands operated primarily to deny political agency to would-be citizens. How this denial was accomplished (or maintained, for that matter) in a period in which democratic self-management was ostensibly a primary ideological tenant of the state is key to understanding the centrality of this phenomenon in the social development of southeast European politics as a whole.

To wit, as Srđan Cvetković chronicles, in suppressing the student protests in 1968 and associated movements, the conservative LCY authorities transformed "anarcho-liberalism" into their preferred term for the domestic, democratic opposition (Cvetković, 2011). From the onset then, the substantive democratizing of Yugoslav society was represented, by the conservative political establishment, as an attempt by shadowy bourgeois elements to initiate the "counter-revolution" which would attempt "to undermine, by weakening the state, the leading role of the socialist forces and thus prepare the way for anti-socialist forces" (Yugoslavia's Way: Program of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia, 1958, p. 120). In the end, this counter-revolution would be led, not by the "anarcho-liberals," but precisely by the conservative and reactionary factions within the LCY whose desire to preserve their privileged positions within the state led them to dissolve the society as a whole.

Though he was in some respects the face of the progressive wing of the party, Kardelj played no small part in creating this anti-democratic climate. In the 1958 LCY program, largely written by Kardelj and Veljko Vlahović, the authors expound on the intricacies of the self-management system as well as the process whereby the state would progressively wither away but also the acute dangers faced by this new socialist experiment. "The socialist state…is and must be a state of a special type, a state which is withering away" the program declared (ibid, p. 116). "With the development of the socialist democratic system," the authors went on to explain, "the role of state administration begins to diminish in the direct management of the economy, in cultural and educational activities, health service, social security, and so on. The management of these activities is more and more transferred to various social self-managing bodies, independent or interlinked in respective democratic organizations" (ibid). The "socialist democratic system," was the emerging self-management model that was progressively meant to evolve from a strictly economic program a general socio-political principle (Unkovski-Korica 2013, 119). While the state would continue to "perform a number of functions…in the performance of these functions [the organs of state] appear less

and less as organs of political authority and more and more as social organs of the various working collectives in the enterprises and of territorial communities[78] of working people as producers and consumers" (Yugoslavia's Way: Program of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia, 1958, p. 117). Certain "organs" of the state would take longer to wither away (e.g. "security, justice, national defence") but the self-management model was clearly the beginning of the end of the monopoly of violence.

However, the spectre of counter-revolution remained, though now five years after the death of Stalin, and with Yugoslavia firmly on the receiving end of US financial and technical aid (Bockman, 2011, p. 82) it was an internal rather than external threat. In moving forward, the authors warned, the LCY

> will in the further construction and development of the social system untiringly combat two tendencies in the social life of Yugoslavia, both equally dangerous and harmful in present times: first, the tendency of anarchist underestimation of the role of the state, pseudo-liberal attacks on its socialist character and any undermining of its political strength in the struggle against the bourgeois counter-revolution and social demoralization; second, the tendency of transforming the state into an all-embracing social force, a force above society which would in fact liquidate the direct social influence of the working masses on the policies of the state leadership—that is, the tendency of state idolatry (Yugoslavia's Way: Program of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia, 1958, pp. 117-118).

Clearly, Kardelj and his camp were attempting walk a fine line between advancing their vision of a self-managed socialism, to counter accusations of their acting as an anti-state element and, in turn, to warn against the authoritarian tendencies of their conservative critics. It is perhaps unfair to chastise Kardelj for *writing down* what was certainly a pan-party policy document, one meant to fuse the views of both camps into a coherent manifesto but the ideas fleshed out in the 1958 Program were ones largely repeated throughout his own, individual, works. Moreover, in 1962, Kardelj himself very nearly fell from power completely, as a con-

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[78] "Territorial communities" is a striking means of avoiding making reference to the Yugoslav state, the respective republics or the various nations and peoples that comprised the Yugoslav Federation. It is demonstrative, I think, of a continuous attempt on the part of Kardelj and his cohorts to keep thinking beyond the state and to engage in thorough ideological examinations of the problem of coercive state power for a socialist society. Moreover, it proves that such theoretical debates were viewed as important and imminent tasks.

servative reaction in the LCY blamed a recession at the beginning of the decade on "excessive liberalization" within both the leadership and the state as a whole, in Tito's own words (Rusinow D. I., 1977, p. 111). In expounding on the evils of "anarcho-liberalism," Kardelj had given his enemies the ideological fodder with which to marginalize him in turn.

One should recall, however, that a decade earlier, a similar fate had befallen Milovan Đilas, who after rising to the post of President of the Federal Assembly in 1953 barely held the position for four months before he was removed and would thereafter spend the next thirteen years or so in and out of prison. Đilas had committed the sin of alerting the reading public in Yugoslavia to the emergence of a new class of political oligarchs, who used their positions within the state apparatus only to enrich themselves and their associates and who were quickly becoming a dominant faction within the ruling establishment (ibid, pp. 81-87). Like Kardelj, Đilas appears to have been a "true believer" in the Yugoslav experiment and had expected the turn towards self-management to substantively deepen the democratic character of the socialist project in the country. Yet unlike the "court's ideologue," as Rusinow labels Kardelj, Đilas drew his conclusions on the Yugoslav self-management project's unravelling early and forcefully and, as a result, paid a tremendous personal toll for it.

Kardelj recovered from his brush with Tito's wrath, however, and in his last major work devoted considerable attention to revealing the supposedly secretly reactionary tendencies of what he labelled the "ultra-leftist" current among segments of the international but especially local intelligentsia. Clearly directed at the participants of the *Praxis* group[79] Kardelj

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[79] The Praxis School was a group Marxist humanist scholars from Belgrade and Zagreb, primarily, whose 1964-74 journal *Praxis* was the leading voice of left-democratic critiques of the Yugoslav regime. The ability of the Praxis-organized Korčula Summer School (1963-74) to attract leading international scholars, from Marcuse to Habermas and Fromm, to engage in (what to the authorities) were thinly veiled attacks on the legitimacy of the LCY's leadership, and for the Praxists to continue these activities at their various teaching engagements in Western Europe and the United States, were for Kardelj clear evidence of their inherently bourgeois-leanings. After the purges of the late 1960s and early 1970s, the group, along with virtually the entirety of the left opposition all but disappeared from Yugoslav public life. Those that later reappeared, like Mihailo Marković, did so as nationalists of the most virulent sort. Here is Marković's explanation of the war in BiH from a 2005 interview: "I recognized patriotism as a fact, as a real political force. PRAXIS was a universalistic, cosmopolitan journal. As early as the 1970s, we recognized that that Croats wanted to leave Yugoslavia, something that we accepted. It

sought to explain why the CPY/LCY had "already from 1941…objectively taken the most revolutionary positions" possible on all the relevant socio-political questions in Yugoslavia (Kardelj, Pravci razvoja političkog sistema socijalističkog samoupravljanja, 1977, p. 72).

The section matter-of-factly entitled "Ultra-Leftist Critiques of the Political System of Socialist Self-Management" argues that the insistence on "the ruthless criticism of all that exists," famously cited in the first edition of the *Praxis* journal (Petrović, 1964), is more than an *anarchist* perversion of coherent Marxist analysis. In short, having supposedly lost their position as a privileged class within the developing self-managed society, this nominally radical intelligentsia purports to critique the Yugoslav project as deeply bureaucratized and authoritarian. In turn, Kardelj continues, these radicals implore the workers to launch a general insurrection against their rulers and so to themselves truly begin to implement a substantive self-management regime. This is a ruse, however, as the invocation to transform into a mobilized and insurrectionary mass actually expels the workers from participation in the existing administrative structure of the self-management system and thus opens the door for the intelligentsia themselves to seize the apparatus of state. Once in power, this clique will reveal *itself* as the true authoritarians as they will inevitably recreate the worst statist excesses of previous Stalinist regimes *and/or* provide the entry for foreign bourgeois elements to infiltrate and thus dismantle the Yugoslav project—given that as visiting scholars in the West, many had already joined the payroll of these governments anyway (Kardelj, 1977, pp. 62-75).

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was more difficult to understand why the smaller nations wanted to do the same. Macedonia's wish to break away was also accepted. Izetbegovic [sic] had a political goal and fought for a withdrawal, because he wanted the war, one in which the Serbs also revealed negative features. Where did these features come from? The anthropologist Jovan Cvijic writes of a 'Dinaric' type in the southern mountainous regions – a type with a huge will towards independence and a willingness to overreact when this is threatened. And this to a immeasurably violent degree." Asked whether this was his explanation for Serb war crimes: "Yes. This is the only way I am able to explain it. Many knew it. The Muslims also knew it. When they fired one or two grenades, they got twenty in return. One could almost speak of a kind of exaggerated retribution, but it must be added that this was from a sense of justice. These are intelligent, imaginative people, who cannot work so hard, because in the mountains there's no land, in other words they're not used to work. They never end any piece of work, but blame others for their sluggishness and poor working morale. They are a little embittered, something that in the heavy conflict that, as we know, took place in the 1990s, may have found expression" (Jens-Martin Eriksen & Stjernfelt, 2005). How exactly the transition from Marxist humanism to primitivist nationalism took place among these individuals is a process that would require a degree of speculative psychoanalysis I am not prepared to engage in at this time. But Marković's comments here speak of a profound transformation all the same.

Curiously, while Kardelj seems to reserve tremendous animus towards these supposed traitorous anarchists, little specific attention is paid to the already deeply entrenched and corrosive influence of the Yugoslav *nomenklatura*, as Obradović refers to it, or what Đilas labelled as the *new class* (Djilas, 1957). Relatedly, no similarly pointed deconstruction of either the nationalist or statist tendencies within the LCY is offered other than frequent but unanalysed references to "nationalism" and "techno-bureaucratism." Given that critiques of this phenomenon had surfaced time and again from the early 1950s onwards, why was a similarly robust discussion absent in Kardelj's last major treatise when, arguably, the "direction(s)" of the Yugoslav experiment were already abundantly clear?

New Class, Old Forms

By the end of the 1960s, the relative opening of the political climate in the country culminated with the 1968 student mobilizations, the official response to which made clear the boundaries of what was permissible political action in nominally self-managed Yugoslavia. In the intervening years, the likes of Đilas and Kardelj experienced individual consequences for their perceived liberal excesses, as did conservatives like the head of the state security agency, OZNA, Aleksandar Ranković for daring to impinge on Tito's ultimate authority.[80] But the student protests in 1968 altered the political dynamic altogether. However half-hearted, the self-management project produced a generation of young people who, quite separately from the ruling establishment, were developing their own radical interpretations of what socialist democracy meant and, most importantly, who were beginning to organize. To understand the origins of this new radical democratic awakening, however, it is first necessary to explain what it was about *actually existing* self-management that this generation of students and intellectuals found so disturbing.

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[80] It has never been definitively established what Ranković did to be purged from the ruling apparatus in 1966, though it is widely speculated that he had Tito's private quarters bugged and was, presumably, interested in politically blackmailing the Marshall. This story itself, however, may have masked Tito's ulterior desire to curb the growing influence of the Yugoslav secret services in the operation of the state, and contra his own power, a network with which Ranković was known to be closely aligned with.

The original impetus behind the self-management idea had come from the lack of "[objective conditions]…for the emergence of any kind of centralized administrative and government system and even less for centralized management of labour, economy, social and other fields," during the war (Kardelj, 1976, p. 104). "What was needed then," Kardelj wrote in retrospect, "was the maximum degree of initiative, self-organization and independent assumption of responsibility on the part of all sections of the national liberation movement, of everyone in every area and settlement on liberated territory" (ibid).[81] In truth, the "lack of objective conditions" had not prevented the Communists from *attempting* to impose a rigid Bolshevik style regime during the first years of their rule. But after the Tito-Stalin split, a general revision of the entire social order was necessary—including historical revision of the sort cited here, that Kardelj spent most of his post-war life authoring.

The pillars of the self-management system were laid between 1948 and 1950 (Unkovski-Korica 2013) and were fully formalized under the 1953 constitution (Curtis, 1990). The idea was that the socialist democratization of the factory would be replicated at the political level, through a delegate system that harkened back to the old Bolshevik slogan of "all power to the Soviets!" Kardelj explains the basic work-place model:

> In basic and other organizations of associated labour, the worker makes the decisions on the most important questions (such as the business operations of the organizations and its material and financial situation, earning and distribution of income and plans and programs, normative enactments—by-laws regulations and so on) at assemblies of workers, through referenda and other forms where the worker personally assumes a stand, as well as through his delegates in the workers' councils.
>
> The workers' council comprises delegates of workers from all phases of the production process in an organization. It drafts the by-laws and proposes business

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[81] Despite his loathing for the "ultra-left," Kardelj is here all but plagiarizing Peter Kropotkin's writing on anarchist federalism and mutual aid, among other prominent anarchist theorists of whom Kardelj was certainly aware. Rather than being a source of confusion, the rhizomatic network of Partisan cells that marked the war years was precisely the model that ensured the success and popularity of the Communist war effort. Yet the Communist leadership made its first post-war task the dismantling of these proto-democratic structures, a process they had to reverse yet again after the Tito-Stalin split. The result of these confused policies, as I argue in this chapter, was an essentially schizophrenic and unsustainable conception of the state in Yugoslav political life.

policy, elects and recalls executive staff, sees to it that the workers are kept informed and so on.

The executive staff (director and so on) represent the organization of associated labour and are responsible for guiding the production process and business operations within the frameworks of policy laid down and of decisions made by the workers and self-management organs. Within their own sphere, executive staff members are independent and are accountable for their work to the workers and workers' council (Kardelj, 1976, p. 104).

With the factory floor thoroughly democratized, it remained only to build outwards, across all relevant spheres of society. Kardelj continues:

In the sphere of the political system, the working class must have the leading role so that no one can arrogate the right to manage affairs in its place; associated labour must be directly incorporated into decision-making at all levels, meaning that political power should be a function of organized, associated labour on the basis of self-management. In order to achieve this, the Yugoslav assembly system must be developed above all on the basis of delegations from the work organizations, meaning the basic organizations of associated labour, the local territorial communities and so on. The essence of the delegates' system, thus conceived, is that the interests of the working people should directly be represented in the assemblies by those very people who are themselves involved in those interests because of the jobs they hold in the work organizations, the local territorial communities, the communities of individual agricultural and other producers, the communities of interest and so on. If such a democratic assembly is to be put through in practice, it must be closely associated politically, organizationally and in terms of everyday work with the base of societies and it is to that base that it must be accountable (ibid, 107).[82]

Despite arguing earlier in the text that Yugoslavia had "basically" accomplished a "new type of democracy, more progressive and humane than the one called parliamentary democracy" (ibid, 106) it is striking that Kardelj speaks of the political aspects of self-management in the *future* tense. Moreover, as with his other writings, the text is peppered with frequent references to the counter-revolutionary critiques of the bourgeois "ultra-leftists." The reason why Kardelj could never critique the conservatives the way he could critique the liberals, as I noted earlier, was that his position within the LCY depended on the

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[82] Or as another text described it, self-managed socialism was "a social system based on socialized means of production in which social production is managed by associated direct, producers in which income is distributed according to the principle of each according to his work, and in which, under the rule of the working class, itself changed as a class, all social relations are gradually liberated from class antagonisms and all elements of exploitation of man by man" (Narayanswamy, 1988, p. 2052)

support, if not the love, of the conservative camp. As self-management's chief ideologue, Kardelj always skirted uncomfortably close to becoming a dreaded "anarcho-liberal" himself in the eyes of the conservative establishment. To prevent this, the Slovene seemingly went out of his way to create an ever-more ominous and powerful spectre of "anarchy" in the collective imagination of the LCY leadership. The result was a radical program, still-born in practice.

Curtis notes that the opening entailed by the 1953 constitutional changes was from the onset an "uneven, changeable phenomenon in Yugoslavia. A meeting of party leaders at the north Adriatic island of Brioni that year resolved to strengthen party discipline, amid growing concern that apathy had infected the rank and file…Over the next several years, the party tightened democratic centralism; established basic party organizations in factories, universities, and other institutions; purged its rolls of inactive members; and took other measures to enhance discipline" (Curtis, 1990). In practice, self-management, on both the factory floor and at the political level, lacked substance. As one observer noted at the time, "non-participation" was the predominate attitude taken by most workers to this truncated self-management regime (Comisso, 1981). The distinctly "managerial" character of the system lent "substance to the charge that 'Statism' reduc[ed] worker influence" (ibid, 21). Moreover, "the fact that when they [did] get involved…[workers were] frequently unsuccessful in getting their interests satisfied [posed] ominous overtones for the system" (ibid).

The lack of substantive self-management was further exacerbated by the emergence of an increasingly market-oriented "socialism" in Yugoslavia, wherein the political managers took on the role of "capitalists." Kardelj and Kidrič had envisioned that in the transition away from centralized planning, the role of the LCY would be "reduced to planning only the proportions of the economy, leaving enterprises to operative based on these proportions and 'the law of supply and demand.' Thus, as Kardelj envisioned in 1954, enterprises would, 'through free competition with other enterprises on the market,' become interested in achieving 'the

best result results as regards quality and quantity of goods, lowers costs of production and good marketing.' Thus, the market, another form of decentralization, would replace state intervention in the economy…By the 1960s, the Yugoslavs would abolish central planning, introduce commercial banking to allow for enterprise-drive investment, and open their economy of the world market" (Bockman, 2011). Even a cursory analysis of the realities of "market socialism," however, demonstrates not the existence of a "free association of producers," but rather patristic, oligarchic corruption unleashed especially after the 1974 constitutional reforms. Three short case studies are instructive here.

In 1978, Slobodan Milošević's first major political appointment was to become the head of one these new commercial banks, Beobanka, one of the largest financial institutions in Yugoslavia. By the time he was in the process of orchestrating the dismantling of the Yugoslav Federation in 1990, the then President of Serbia used his contacts at the Belgrade bank to move approximately 1.5 billion USD to offshore accounts in the Republic of Cyprus (Sell, 2002, pp. 187-189). Radovan Karadžić, Milošević's man in BiH, was by contrast a petty criminal. He and his close associate Momčilo Krajišnik, then an economist working for the Sarajevo energy giant Energoinvest, were in and out of prison throughout 1984 and 1985 for real estate fraud and embezzlement (Cohen, 1996, p. 49).

For his part, Fikret Abdić, a war-time Bosniak collaborator of the Serb nationalist camp, made his fortune as the head of another industrial giant, Agrokomerc. In 1987 it was revealed that the management of Agrokomerc, including Abdić, had been involved in an elaborate Ponzi scheme—borrowing in excess of a billion Yugoslav dinars from local banks, using the money for bribes and posh residences and inflating the actual performance of the firm. The scale of the corruption is difficult to understate: "The profit of the entire Bosnian economy for two and a half years was roughly equal to the money Agrokomerc owed when the scandal was discovered" (Andjelic, 2003, p. 55). While it has since been speculated that the

"Agrokomerc Affair" was an early attempt to weaken the position of prominent Bosniak leaders by Serb nationalists, (e.g. Hamdija Pozderac, then Vice President of the SFRJ, who lost is his post in the process), Fikret Abdić became a willing accomplice of the Karadžić regime once the fighting actually began. From his fortress in Velika Kladuša, with the aid of the Agrokomerc factories, he created the "Autonomous Province of Western Bosnian" (later referred to as the Republic). The Province/Republic was a Karadžić-backed para-state and as a result of his activities there, Abdić was later sentenced to 20 years in a Croatian prison for war crimes committed in the greater Bihać area.

In short, economic criminality in the 1980s and war crimes in the 1990s should be understood along the same continuum, as the latter were really only the most extreme version of the former, in most cases perpetrated by exactly the same people. Earlier, when a democratic opposition still existed, these practices could have been challenged, even reversed. By the 1980s, however, the entire structure was beset by the competing, autarkic and corrupt interests of the republican cliques: "More devastating for the specific ideology of *Yugoslav* socialism was the fact that the economic crises of the 1980s provided fuel for increased regionalism (often ethnically constituted) and a further weakening of the federal centre as a decision-making force…by 1986 federal policy-making had essentially ceased" (Pedrotty, 2010, p. 340). I suspect part of the reason why 1980s Yugoslav popular culture has become such an invigorated topic of scholarship in the past decade is precisely because of the dearth of lasting democratic political movements during the same time. No one has yet made this connection, as far as I know, but the themes expressed in programs like *Top Lista Nadrealista* (*Top List of Surrealists*) and the music of bands like *Zabranjeno Pušenje* (*No Smoking*) and *Bijelo Dugme* (*White Button*) among the most popular entertainment acts of the era, are clear commentaries on the growing culture of corruption and dispossession and the need for a return to authentic Yugo-

slav, revolutionary principles.[83] That this popular reaction never quite manifested itself as an actual political movement is a testament to the thorough nature of the anti-liberal purges in late 1960s and early 1970s and the growing ability of republican leaders to deflect responsibility for economic stagnation after the 1974 constitutional reforms.

On this note, Sharon Zukin was able to observe as early as 1975 the crucial role that institutional fragmentation played in Yugoslavia's elite-dominated regime. By fragmenting political and economic authority not only across six republics but also across individual enterprises, the ruling establishment was able to keep socio-economic struggles local—not unlike earlier Ottoman system designed to prevent peasant insurrections. Yet as citizens were *encouraged* to identify not as Yugoslavs but as members of individual nations, the only category capable of persistently mobilizing mass movements proved to be nationalism. Originally, discouraging "Yugoslavism" was meant to reflect the consociational aspects of the new Yugoslav state—as a free union among nations and working peoples. Unlike during the royalist years, Yugoslavism would not become a byword for Serb hegemony, the Communists insisted, and insomuch as it existed at all, Yugoslavsim would be a synonym for federalism and socialism (Miller, 2007, pp. 96-97). Therefore, the attempt to stifle the "natural" national and ethnic feelings of the respective peoples of Yugoslavia was itself a combination of Stalinism and Greater Serbiansm essentially, the logic went. Yet by preserving the nation as an active category while simultaneously preventing the emergence of substantive socialist models of association (e.g. self-management), workers' "grievances which should cut across national-ethnic and enterprise lines" remained suppressed until they were ultimately hijacked and reimagined as ethno-national hatreds by those seeking to preserve the oligarchic character of the regime (Zukin, 1975, p. 257).

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[83] Dalibor Mišina has dealt with Yugoslav popular culture in the most explicitly political terms and makes a similar point in his text *Shake, Rattle & Roll': Yugoslav Rock Music and the Poetics of Social Critique* (2013).

Moreover, as both Comisso and Narayanswamy note, precisely because the Yugoslav regime insisted on a fiction of self-management, actual independent labour unions were absent in the SFRJ even as the society was becoming increasingly exposed to market pressures. As Narayanswamy argued "a system of self-management of enterprises is certainly desirable [but] its consequences can often be perverse in the absence of an established democratic mechanism of coordinating economic activity, which is not the case in Yugoslavia, which is not only dominated by a one-party system, but like its centralized neighbours, is also a country where unions cannot exist independently of the power apparatus" (Narayanswamy, 1988, p. 2054). Instead, what prevailed was a system of political clientalism and dependence in the context of a particular brand of "state capitalism." Though strikes became a near-constant feature of life in Yugoslavia and BiH in particular in the late 1980s, these were almost always isolated "wild cat" manifestations, lacking the ability (and perhaps desire) to organize "general" actions. Everywhere there was talk of democracy yet nowhere was it applied.

The aforementioned "perverse consequences" came to the surface especially after the 1974 constitutional reforms, which decentralized the country's administration among six republics and two autonomous provinces as a panacea for substantive democratization. As Yugoslavia entered a prolonged period of economic crisis in the late 1980s, "high unemployment, overinvestment, regional autarky, record inflation, poor export performance, dwindling foreign currency reserves and mounting indebtedness" combined to form the basic ingredients for a volatile mixture (ibid). Worst of all, Yugoslavia was "a country with not only wide inequalities in income, productivity and culture between north and south, but also with considerable divisions among the different nationalities. Serious conflicts of interest are bound to exist and if these are not allowed political expression, it is difficult to see how they can be meaningfully resolved" (ibid). After 1974, this "conflict of interests" would become one not only between managers and workers, elites and masses, but also one among the respective and in-

creasingly autarkic republican cliques, who then used these popular grievances for personal ends.

It is important to note that while the question of nationalism does appear in analyses of Yugoslav politics and economics in post-World War II period, it is almost in an inverse relationship to how familiar the authors were with the intricacies of the state's administration. Narayanswamy's short but lucid description of the country's economic woes is striking precisely for the fact that it introduces nationalism as a final, almost off-hand "spark" in an already glowing tinderbox. The majority of his analysis is concerned with officials "worried about the prospect of [keeping] social peace if living standards…continue to slide. They have dropped 50 per cent in four years" (ibid). Like Đilas and Zukin, what Narayanswamy identified was not that nationalism *itself* would undo the Yugoslav Federation but that nationalism would be *used* to subvert growing popular resentment against entrenched and corrupt political elites. To explain how this became viable strategy on the part of the elite, a closer look at the events leading up to the 1974 constitutional changes and the political climate thereafter is necessary. [84]

Protests & Purges

The 1974 constitutional reforms were the direct result of popular democratic agitation in Yugoslavia, both during the 1968 student protests and the so-called 1971 "Croatian

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[84] Sharon Zukin's study of the practice(s) of Yugoslav socialism is notable for the subtle commentary on the political climate in the country at the time. Demonstrating considerable familiarity with local politics, and a professed "bias toward participatory democracy and economic equality," (Zukin, 1975, p. 265) Zukin makes no mention of the student protests of 1968, the *Praxis* group or otherwise "anarcho-liberal" currents in a section specifically devoted to "anti-*samoupravljanje* concepts," as described by Dr. Najdan Pašić, then head of the Belgrade University Faculty of Political Science. Zukin via Pašić only notes three such phenomena: "etatism" (likened to Stalinism), "representative government," (bourgeoisie liberalism though with no mention of the "ultra-left") and "interest groups" (those engaging in predatory business practices within Yugoslavia's controlled market) (ibid., pp. 67-71). Only later in the text does she cite the presence of certain "utopian" tendencies among the youth, the student strikes and the *Praxis* journal (ibid., pp. 142-152) and later explicitly identifies herself as being sympathetic to their "utopian" critique of the Yugoslav system; a system characterized in practice by corruption and authoritarianism, where repressed, popular socio-economic concerns usually only find expression through nationalist discourses thus only further destabilizing the system, she argues (ibid., pg. 257). In short, Zukin's analysis is another prescient account identifying nationalism as a symptom rather than a cause of the slow unraveling of the socialist system in Yugoslavia, driven primarily by anti-democratic, oligarchic political tendencies.

Spring." Yet while the country's administrative divisions were significantly altered and de-centralized, the 1974 constitution failed to substantively democratize the Yugoslav state. Thereafter, however, the spectre of popular revolt became an inescapable political reality in the polity, a fact through which I read the country's unravelling two decades later.

In most authoritarian contexts, popular revolt is always a principal danger for the ruling regime but rarely does this possibility actually taken on an established ideological "shape." That is, protests are usually the work of almost generic terrorists, reactionaries and counter-revolutionaries in such regimes. But the danger of the Yugoslav Left, that is, the "anarcho-liberals" was precisely that they "took literally" the 1958 *Program of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia* (Vodovnik 2012, 449). In other words, groups like the *Praxis* collective "demanded the total de-professionalization of politics, the spreading of self-management to all levels and spheres of society, the introduction of workers' councils at the regional, republican and federal levels, and even the introduction of participatory democracy through the abolition of the party itself" (ibid., p. 441). In other words, the "anarcho-liberals" were dangerous precisely because they were ideologically-committed communists and in advocating for communist policies exposed the reality of *Communist* rule in Yugoslavia—political oligarchy and corruption.

To my knowledge, the most thorough account of the actual activities and positions of this Yugoslav New Left, aside from the contents of the *Praxis* publications, is Fredy Perlman's account of the 1968 student strikes (Perlman, 1969). Perlman's account is especially important because unlike most critics of the regime, he actually was an anarchist—a leading figure in the movement in the United States until his death in 1985. In the mid-sixties, Perlman obtained an MA and a PhD at the University of Belgrade and upon returning briefly in 1969, set about composing the text of *Birth of a Revolutionary Movement in Yugoslavia*, the dissemination of which was, unsurprisingly, prevented by the local authorities.

Perlman focused his analysis on the tension(s) between official LCY ideology and actual practice: "In June 1968, the gap between theory and practice, between official proclamations and social relations, was exposed through practice, through social activity: students began to organize themselves in demonstrations and general assemblies, and the regime which proclaims self-management reacted to this rare example of popular self-organization by putting an end to it through police and press repression" (ibid). The primary target of the protests, Perlman argued, were the technocrats, Đilas' "New Class," who through their control of individual enterprises and political offices had established themselves as a new exploiter class of students and workers in the ostensibly post-revolutionary Yugoslav state. He explains:

> The paradox can be stated in more general terms: social relations already known to Marx reappear in a society which has experienced a socialist revolution led by a Marxist party in the name of the working class. Workers receive wages in exchange for their sold labor (even if the wages are called "personal incomes" and "bonuses"); the wages are an equivalent for the material goods necessary for the workers' physical and social survival; the surplus labor, appropriated by state or enterprise bureaucracies and transformed into capital, returns as an alien force which determines the material and social conditions of the workers' existence. According to official histories, Yugoslavia eliminated exploitation in 1945, when the Yugoslav League of Communists won state power. Yet workers whose surplus labor supports a state or commercial bureaucracy, whose unpaid labor turns against them as a force which does not seem to result from their own activity but from some higher power — such workers perform forced labor: they are exploited. According to official histories, Yugoslavia eliminated the bureaucracy as a social group over the working class in 1952, when the system of workers' self-management was introduced. But workers who alienate their living activity in exchange for the means of life do not control themselves; they are controlled by those to whom they alienate their labor and its products, even if these people eliminated themselves in legal documents and proclamations (ibid).

In other words, the contradictions of the incomplete socialist revolution in Yugoslavia expressed themselves in 1968 in the form of a politically-frustrated insurrection of youth and workers. A nominally revolutionary communist regime, the LCY's ideological commitment to liquidating capitalist class relations in a non-capitalist society, or at least one lacking developed liberal-democratic political institutions, meant that socialist Yugoslavia (re)produced merely differently constituted yet equally (if not more) exploitative and alienating class rela-

tions. Youth and workers in 1960s Yugoslavia were inundated by claims of their ability to wield radical democratic political and economic power yet simultaneously confronted by the existence of a deeply segmented and unequal society—between the political class and all the rest.[85] In short, LCY apparatchiks both at the local, republican, and federal level appeared to be a class unto themselves. Moreover, as Perlman argues, reasonably well versed in the basic elements of Marxist political analysis, many young people could not but identify the existence of this "new class" as merely a *different* kind of exploitation.

With a robust legal-political structure readily evident, however, democratically-inclined youth and workers in Yugoslavia needed only to insist on the *actual* implementation of the LCY program to find a model for their movement and, accordingly, to find themselves at odds with the authorities. The 1968 protests were, arguably, the biggest crisis the regime in Yugoslavia had faced since the Tito-Stalin split and, in retrospect, it was perhaps the most crucial episode in the state's slow unravelling. This is not to say that the SFRJ's demise was inevitable but it is to privilege the struggle over substantive democratization as the central conflict leading to the Federation's eventual destruction.

To this point, one should consider Perlman's (perhaps aspirational) description of the Yugoslav student movement's implications:

> The conquest of state power by a political party which uses a Marxist vocabulary in order to manipulate the working class must be distinguished from another, very different historical task: the overthrow of commodity relations and the establish-ment of socialist relations. For over half a century, the former has been presented in the guise of the latter. The rise of a "new left" has put an end to this confusion; the revolutionary movement which is experiencing a revival on a world scale is characterized precisely by its refusal to push a party bureaucracy into state power, and by its opposition to such a bureaucracy where it is already in power (ibid).

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[85] This remains a lasting legacy of the period. This is Gordan Duhaček's commentary on the catastrophic May 2014 flooding in the region and the incredible grassroots relief efforts in the aftermath: "The floods that have hit Bosnia and Herzegovina, probably the worst in its history, have showed once again that that country is actually not divided between its three constituent peoples…The biggest, and for the future of BiH the most destructive division, has for years been the one between two groups: the political class and all the others" (Duhaček, 2014).

It is tempting to dismiss the relatively localized student protests at universities in Belgrade, Zagreb, Ljubljana and Sarajevo as merely a quaint local manifestation of a global youth awakening in the famed year of 1968, however, one with few real political implications. Yet this is to ignore the lasting political changes and *implications* (as feared by the authorities) the '68 protests inspired in Yugoslavia that culminated in the wholesale constitutional rearrangement of the state in 1974. These truncated changes, however, allowed for a final mutation of the Yugoslav regime that would ultimately extinguish the self-managed society as a whole.

Perlman, for instance, describes in great detail the pains Tito himself went to, to intervene and bargain with the students. While blaming the "various Djilasites, Rankovicites, Mao-Tse-Tungites" who had apparently infiltrated the students' ranks for the brunt of the disruptions, the marching, chanting, and university occupations, the Marshall nevertheless concluded that the youths had drawn inspiration from *his own* efforts to reform the system: "I've come to the conclusion that the vast majority of students, I can say 90%, are honest youth…Our youth are good, but we have to devote more attention to them…The revolt is partly a result of the fact that the students saw that I myself have often asked these questions, and even so they have remained unsolved. This time I promise students that I will engage myself on all sides to solve them, and in this the students must help me." But as *Drug*[86] Tito was now on the case, this "help" would not actually require much in the way of participation: "And finally I turn to students once again: it's time to return to your studies, it's time for tests, and I wish you success. It would really be a shame if you wasted still more time" (ibid).

Tito's intervention was not limited to patronizing letters in student newspapers. After the protests had drawn to a close, the regime systematically began to crack down on what they identified as the source(s) of the students' inspiration. While dozens of trials of students and faculty followed in the immediate aftermath, the "anarcho-liberal" threat soon struck again

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[86] Literally "friend" but used as "comrade."

(Cvetković, 2011). In 1971, concern among a segment of Croatia's intelligentsia with the republic's seemingly marginalized standing within the Federation bubbled over into what has subsequently become known as the "Croatian Spring" but was at the time primarily referred to as MASPOK (*masovni pokret*—mass movement). The name here is significant because it points to, at heart, a politics of process rather than identity, as it has subsequently become known as.

In Serb and Croat nationalist mythologies, the events of 1971-72 are proof positive of either the inherently fascistic character of the Croatian people or their unbridled desire for sovereign statehood in the face of Serb/Communist authoritarianism. Yet the mass protests, as well as the flurry of intellectual output at the time, "mixed anticentralist, reformist, democratic socialist, liberal and libertarian elements," a combination from which it is difficult to extract any firm conclusions (Job, 2002, p. 75).[87] But the response of the Yugoslav authorities, nevertheless, demonstrates what they feared MASPOK *could* become if left unchecked. In this respect, it is clear that the threat from MASPOK did not come from the right, that is its nationalist dimensions, but rather from the left.[88]

While the idea of mass politics of *any sort* clearly terrified the Yugoslav regime, as in the aftermath of 1968, it was the "liberals" in Croatia who suffered the wrath of the conservative establishment—not the other way around. In fact, not only were the Croatian liberals purged but virtually the entirety of the liberal wing of the LCY. By the end of 1972, Savka

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[87] Confusion, as should be obvious, was a frequent feature of proto-democratic politics in the region, throughout the 19th and 20th centuries, something I earlier established in the discussion in Chapter II. This is unsurprising, as I have argued, given the continuous efforts of elites to curtail the autonomy of Balkan civil society.

[88] I believe there are useful comparisons to be drawn between the MASPOK period in Croatia and the Quiet Revolution in Quebec. In both instances, there was the perception of marginalization on the part of a regional majority in the context of a larger federal state in which they were a minority. In both instances, the protest against this perceived marginalization was asserted through a spectrum of political options. Moreover, in both instances, the essential critique of the marginalized group was eventually accepted by the respective federal authorities. The difference is in the treatment of the proponents of these respective projects. In Canada, while extremist groups like the Front de libération du Québec (FLQ) were actively dismantled, legitimate opposition groups like the Parti Québécois (PQ) were allowed to persist, indeed, flourish—the events of the October Crisis notwithstanding. In Croatia, as in Serbia and much of the rest of the SFRJ, a determined conservative reaction destroyed a generation of progressive leaders, a process in the wake of which the entire political system underwent a rapid period of stagnation and corruption from which it would never recover. In short, the destruction of democratic opposition in Yugoslavia once again proved paradigmatic to the region's further development.

Dabčević-Kučar, Miko Tripalo, and Latinka Perović were only some of the more prominent Croatian and Serbian liberals, respectively, who found themselves expelled from the League after the events of 1968 and 1971.[89] The purges would extend throughout the universities as well. Most of the *Praxis* group were removed from public life through some combination of unemployment, imprisonment, or exile and by 1974 the famed journal itself printed its final issue (Cvetković, 2011).

With the liberal opposition essentially extinguished, the old guard of the LCY, namely Tito and Kardelj, sought to rollout a hollowed out version of the original left critique of the regime. The 1974 constitution institutionally, radically decentralized the state but with few political reforms beyond this. The result was disastrous, creating precisely the kind of parochial and centrifugal incentives that the document had sought to undercut. Instead of taking up the cause of democratic self-management, the constitution effectively transformed the individual republics into autarchies in which the most logical means to assert power for republican elites became the cynical stoking of nationalist sentiments. Moreover, by purging the genuinely reform oriented cadres, "second or third rate leaders put in place by Tito himself were left to steer the country through the extraordinarily difficult period after his departure from the scene in 1980. Although their dearth of political capital and skill was not immediately apparent as a result of the complicated mechanisms of collective leadership, which ensured their constant rotation and lack of accountability, it was only a matter of time before more charismatic and effective leaders came to the fore," with disastrous consequences, I might add (Irvine, 2008, p. 169).

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[89] Dejan Guzina observes that only one republic, Slovenia, managed to avoid the purging of its reform minded leadership. "In the case of Slovenia, only the top echelon of the 'liberal' party was replaced. On the other hand, Tito thoroughly overhauled the party structure in Serbia and Croatia, presumably because he saw obedient party leadership in these regions as vital to the stability of the country. His sparing treatment of Slovenia gave it 20 years of uninterrupted political development, which helps explain its high level of political culture and tact during the crisis of the 1980s, and its relatively smooth transition from communism to a more democratic regime. The same period will be remembered in a totally different light in Croatia and Serbia. While constant internal political frictions characterized political life in Serbia, Croatia witnessed a full re-bureaucratization of social life. In both cases, communist as well as post-communist leaders were totally unprepared for the challenges that the collapse of the system posed" (Guzina, 2000, p. 31).

Here I can also make clear an important distinction between my argument and portions of the existing literature that have also honed in on the role of the left in the dissolution of the Yugoslav regime. I disagree with Karlo Basta, for instance, when he argues "between the late 1940s and 1971, the Yugoslav leadership considered state socialism, rather than nationalism, to be the greatest danger to the regime and the country" (Basta, 2010, p. 96). It is certainly true that "statist" tendencies were of concern to segments of the LCY and that nationalism was a still more remote threat but as I argue in this chapter, the biggest threat remained the one on the left. Recognizing this fact is critical because otherwise we arrive at essentially Dejan Jović's analysis—a scholar Basta cites approvingly on several occasions in his discussion. In his text, *Yugoslavia: A State that Withered Away*, Jović goes to great lengths to argue that the second Yugoslav state was not undone by "ancient ethnic hatreds" but rather the inevitable result(s) of (specifically) Kardelj's anti-statist ideology. As Jović declares in the introduction to his text: "At the core of the Yugoslav problem… was the long-lasting (but not much debated) question: can a state survive if based on an antistatist [sic] (and antinationalist) ideology? Is a Socialist state a contradiction in terms? Does more Socialism mean less state? And—does any further advancement of socialism in fact lead to the weakening of a state? Although the Kardelj concept offered some answers to these questions, it ultimately failed to resolve this basic dilemma" (Jović, 2009, p. 3). These questions are worth unpacking as a concluding point to this chapter.

The deduction Jović arrives at is that the Yugoslav (Federal, at least) state *really did* wither away and that the post-1974 breakdown in "elite consensus" was the product of an irrational state administration. The people who stepped in to fill this vacuum were local nationalists and a new generation of centralists, chief among these, Slobodan Milošević. In Jović's account, Milošević is a critic of the 1974 constitution but not a Serb nationalist: "In his first phase, Milosevic was probably a Yugoslav nationalist, but he never became a Serb nationalist, as many call him today. Never, indeed, did he want to form a Serb national state. His attach-

ment to Yugoslavia, even to the point when Yugoslavia had become just a name and nothing more, was the main reason why he in the end lost popularity and the elections (2000)" (ibid, p. 65).[90] Likewise, Milošević's relationship(s) with nationalist ideologues like Dobrica Ćosić, Vojislav Šešelj, and Radovan Karadžić (among others) becomes here merely a coincidence. Milošević the centralist may have embodied the critique of the nationalists, Jović suggests, but he was not of them himself and did not aspire to their objectives. Josip Glaurdić, Chip Gagnon, and Marko Attila Hoare all dismantle this historically revisionist line as a matter of facts but for my purposes I want to stress how *theoretically* empty Jović's argument is as well.

The problem in Yugoslavia was not that the state was based on "anti-statist" principles but that the state's ideological commitment(s) to participatory democracy were shallow. The Yugoslav state did not "wither away," it merely divided its power bases from one to six, thus creating not a democratic federalism but authoritarian oligarchy. A socialist state may indeed be a contradiction in terms but this contradiction was revealed *not* by Kardelj but by his left-wing critics, to whom Jović makes little reference. Indeed, there is a long-lineage of anti-statist, federalist, and socialist critiques of statist regimes going back to Bakunin and the anarchists and even other Marxists like Rosa Luxembourg and the Italian autonomists that argued just this: "[We] are convinced that liberty without socialism is privilege, injustice; and that socialism without liberty is slavery and brutality" (Bakunin, 1867). Most importantly, as I explored in the second chapter of this text, these critiques were also espoused by numerous Balkan radicals throughout the 19th century. These interventions, however, are also not cited by Jović and he thus arrives at the position that the only existing (and perhaps possible) critiques of the perceived failures of the Kardelj program came from the likes of Milošević the centralist and the constellation of republican nationalists who (occasionally) opposed him. Yet a deeper analysis of what actually concerned Kardelj in his writings reveals the existence of a

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[90] Marko Attila Hoare provides for a thorough critique of Jović's work on his personal blog, where interested readers can follow a weeks-long debate between the two on the merits of the latter's claims and Hoare's concern with Jović's views especially in light of his position as an advisor to the then President of Croatia (Hoare, 2014).

clear left-populist threat that though perhaps weak in numbers, in influence fundamentally reshaped the political bases of the Yugoslav state. It was precisely when the left opposition was silenced, when meaningful critiques of the state were marginalized, that the cynical duels between the respective oligarchies began to unravel the Yugoslav state—among which Mi-lošević's aim to reconstitute Yugoslavia along centralist but also clearly Serb nationalist lines and failing this, to create a Greater Serbia, is clearly the flagship process.[91]

Jović's shallow and uninterested reading of the subtleties and varieties of democratic thinking (e.g. intra-socialist debates) leads him to a thoroughly reactionary position, a defense of the Milošević regime, despite his initially promising attempt to read the Yugoslav dissolu-tion through the lens of intuitional failure(s) rather than ethnic conflict. This is why I began this chapter by making a subtle distinction: the authoritarian structures of the socialist state dominated the polity's weak proto-democratic institutions and civil society, thereby allowing a new generation of elites to adopt still older models for the suppression of popular, democrat-ic politics. This process, however, did not go unnoticed or unchallenged by progressive crit-ics, no more than it did in the 19th century, as discussed in Chapter II. New Left activists both within and from outside the official party structures attempted to chart a new course, a path towards meaningful participatory democratic practices in Yugoslavia.

The consistent "failure," however, of these would-be radicals to subvert the authoritar-ian and oligarchic state-building tendencies of Balkan elites cannot simply be chalked up to their weakness. While it is true, as I state above that, the authoritarian structures of the state dominated the Yugoslav polity's weak proto-democratic institutions and civil society, the cen-tral question is why these latter practices were so weak and further weakened so consistently in the first place. As I have argued from the onset of this text, the problem in the Balkans has

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[91] Incidnetally, the question of whether Milošević was "actually" a Serb nationalist is quite beside the point. As I discussed in Chapter II, it is entirely possible for political opportunism and ideological nationalism to coexist simultaneously.The purpose of my critique of Jović's analysis, as noted, is to highlight the unduly neglected role of left-wing critics in the evolution and eventual dissolution of the second Yugoslav regime.

always been one of sustained practice and praxis. Accordingly, it is not that Balkan demo-

crats, radicals, and progressive were any less capable of envisioning freer and fairer societies

than their Western counterparts. Rather, the difference, and therefore the persistent problem of

the development of Balkan democracy, is rooted in the inability of regional radicals to *main-

tain* their political activities and energies against the stifling efforts of conservative and reac-

tionary ruling elements. Or, as I framed the question in Chapter I, the strength of the Western

democratic tradition in contrast is fundamentally tied to its persistent, oppositional, and plebe-

ian character.

In this respect, as I also suggested in the introduction to this text, my continued focus

on episodes of revolt and resistance in what otherwise appears like a consistent and brutal

march towards authoritarian statism in southeastern Europe serves a two-fold function. These

episodes are both an important historical proof of the possibility for a different Balkans *then*

as much as they are evidence that each *contemporary* and *future* moment can likewise be

filled with democratic potential. The crucial requirement, however, for the mobilization of

this democratic potential remains the willingness and ability of significant groups of citizens

to act towards that end. During the second Yugoslav period, the combined, albeit disparate,

efforts of the New Left effectively demonstrated the power of a differently articulated vision

of politics to affect and move even (or perhaps especially) a society dominated for decades, if

not centuries, by various exclusionary and authoritarian tendencies.

As it concerns the eventual reaction, however, to the social movement initiated by the

New Left it is important to stress that it was not that the nationalist question returned to Yugo-

slavia as such, but rather that a particular oligarchic conception of the state could only come

to fruition through virulent nationalist politics. The nationalist project obscured the real oli-

garchic and kleptocratic interests of the elite but was nevertheless carried through with intent

and catastrophic consequence by committed and willing nationalist executioners. In short,

four years of panicked scrambling to curtail the possibilities for autonomous, mass politics left its mark—especially on the newly liberated "new class," after the 1974 changes. As Irvine suggests, even if the portrayal of MASPOK as a nationalist movement is overstated, it is nevertheless true that the movement showed the political possibilities created by mass mobilizations or, at least, the appearance thereof. Although democratic mobilization against authoritarian regimes has never been easy, for the by then soundly marginalized left opposition, the possibility to animate the necessary movement in the newly fragmented Yugoslavia was an especially difficult prospect, and particularly so in the wake of the anti-progressive purges. But for the new generation of republican elites, growing up in post-1974 SFRJ, the tactically deployed appearance of spontaneous people's gatherings was precisely the safe, empty stamp of "democratic legitimacy" their regimes needed to preserve their political fiefdoms. Thirteen years later, Slobodan Milošević would begin his rise to top of the Serbian political pyramid on the back of just this realization.

Conclusion(s)

In the second chapter I explained the particular class origins of the state in the Balkans. In this chapter, I continued the discussion by examining how the ascendant Yugoslav Communist's revolutionary program began from a fundamentally mistaken assumption: the existence of bourgeois property relations and political institutions. Moreover, the party's final seizure of power occurred in the maelstrom of war and in its first decade of rule it was forced to undergo dramatic ideological reinvention. While individual ideologues within the party insisted on the inherently democratic nature of their project, the imprisonment and purging of critics and dissidents soon revealed the leadership's true nature. The second Yugoslav regime may not have been *anti-democratic* in the same sense the first had been but it was certainly *non-democratic*.

While the introduction of a truncated model of workers' self-management opened the door for unprecedented political critique it also ushered in new, managerial elites who, seeking to preserve their privileged posts, went about dismantling the possibilities and proponents of genuine participatory structures. Soon enough, in the midst of the institutionally fragmented Yugoslav state and in the wake of a series of purges of genuine reform oriented movements these technocrats rediscovered the potency of using nationalist grievances and mobilizations to preserve their own positions.

As Latinka Perović wrote in 1993, "[in] the name of the rationality of the state, the authorities set up the instrument of violent centralization and unification; an imaginary average common interest was set out as a norm, but such stiff norms could satisfy no one. So violence became a continual necessity for the state. The logic of the violence was: [either] the state would be uniform—meaning toughly centralized—or it would not exist" (Perović, 1993, p. 423). For a small cadre of committed ideologues, the "rationality of the state" had particular (and peculiar) philosophical meaning. For the caste of elites their models created, however, in the absence of genuine democratic institutions, it merely became an opportunity for siphoning funds and privileges.

The reign of this new class, especially after the death of Tito in 1980, would become a kind of reversion of political forms; a return to the state form in the Balkans as it had come to exist in the 19th century. Essentially a parasitic class, in seeking to diffuse growing popular dissatisfaction of their political and economic mismanagement, the new elite was in the 1980s confronted by a stark choice. Either they could give into the growing popular demand for meaningful democratization and thereby preserve the Yugoslav state (and perhaps even the self-management system) or they could create the conditions for their personal preservation but as a result almost certainly destroy Yugoslav society as a whole. In choosing the latter, on the back of reanimated nationalist mythologies and in the horror of war, technocrats blos-

somed into war lords and a new round of kleptocracy or accumulation through dispossession

began, otherwise euphemistically referred to as "national liberation."

Chapter IV: The Political Undone

Introduction

In 1984, the XIV Olympic Winter Games were held in Sarajevo, capital of the Socialist Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina (SR BiH), the central republic of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (SFRJ). Less than ten years later, the city, the republic, and the state of which both had been a part were in flames. There is, in truth, no factual mystery in how this occurred. Historians, journalists, and political scientists from both the West and Yugoslavia itself have documented the country's dissolution and dismantling in pain-staking detail (Silber and Little 1996, Udovički and Ridgeway 2000, Ramet 2006, Glaurdić 2011, Becirevic 2014). The conduct of the wars of succession that followed (1991-1999), in particular the organized campaigns of genocide and ethnic cleansing, were witnessed, recorded, and described by hundreds of international observers. Today, those interested can relive the events of the war in horrific detail via the thousands of hours of footage available on the internet, either through official organs like the International Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) or video services like YouTube. The *how* of Yugoslavia's collapse is a settled matter, as far as the major questions are concerned; the *why* on the other hand is a matter of perspective(s).

In this chapter I will once again focus on the marginalization of popular participation in BiH, this time in the final years of the SRFJ's existence and through to the emergence of its initial successor states, a period ranging from 1980 to 1992. I will demonstrate that the marginalization of popular participation in the failed democratization of Yugoslavia in the late 1980s was arguably the crucial element leading to the country's violent disintegration in the 1990s. Though I am tracing the dissolution of one state and the creation of several new ones in its wake, this chapter will nevertheless demonstrate the persistence of broader formative political and economic tendencies in the region. The nationalist project originally conceived in the 19th century returns in this chapter as a central analytical theme, along with the political

economy of dispossession that the rise of these nationalist politics was meant to obscure, then as now. Moreover, I will show how it was the events between 1968 and 1974, specifically the purges of the democratic reformist elements within the LCY discussed in Chapter III that directly led to the rise of centrifugal nationalist forces in Yugoslavia after the death of Marshall Tito in 1980.

From a theoretical perspective, which will begin this part of the text as a whole, this chapter takes up Sheldon Wolin's concern with transformative moments to make sense of the changes that occurred in the last decade of Yugoslavia's existence. Wolin argues that genuine "[democratic] possibilities depend upon combining traditional localism and postmodern centrifugalism," that is, that the opening of the political process means also the unleashing of the variously suppressed tendencies within individual societies—progressive and otherwise, alike (Wolin 1996, 604)**.** While Wolin is an advocate of progressive, participatory democratic tendencies he astutely acknowledges that the moment of opening also has more sinister manifestations.

This chapter will largely follow his argument that, in these transitional moments, the emergence of nationalist movements serves to "absorb the political into the pursuit of homogenous identity that is sometimes quickened through such purgatives as ethnic cleansing or the imposition of religious orthodoxy" (Wolin 2004, 32). I will contribute to this argument, however, an important addendum: the process of "absorption"—or what I have earlier referred to as the displacement of class-tensions into communal violence—functions as the *preservation* of most of the significant aspects of the existing regime. In other words, nationalism, at least in the Yugoslav case, served (and serves still) as the ideological veneer for maintaining persistent authoritarian structures and practices and preserving the economics of dispossession. Accordingly, as Gagnon suggests, the emergence of nationalist mass movements in the last days of Yugoslavia's existence was not the unleashing of democratic, popular will but the engi-

neering of elite interest dressed in populist chauvinism. In BiH, the collapse of authoritarian socialism was marked by the triumph of the "champions of the archaic," as Wolin describes them. But contra Wolin's theory, in Yugoslavia and BiH, I stress that the nationalists were not a retrograde segment of the "demos," they were, by and large, the old authoritarians, albeit in new robes, attempting to preserve their posts and, in essence, the old system.

While aspects of this process have been acknowledged in the existing literature, the broader theoretical and political implications thereof have remained unexplored. First, as noted, this elitist putsch meant the unravelling of the ideological socialist project but not the authoritarian state as such. The end of ideological socialism, and the worker self-management project more precisely, however, did mean the undoing of the democratic-reformist project in Yugoslavia as a whole. As discussed in Chapter III, despite its authoritarian similarities to the first Yugoslav state, the ideological commitments of the Yugoslav Communists to nominal workers' democracy nevertheless opened hitherto unknown spaces for democratic experimentation in the region. The suffocation of these democratic potentialities by the then authorities led directly to the crisis of the 1980s and 1990s but has, more importantly, *persisted* into the post-war period, in BiH especially. In this respect, this chapter explores a further mutation of the Balkan and BiH authoritarian state—or perhaps its lasting elasticity—as likewise explored in earlier chapters; imperial authoritarianism giving way to royal autocracy, giving way in turn to socialist authoritarianism, dissolving into successive variations of nationalist authoritarianism.

The chronology of events discussed in this chapter will hone in on three interrelated dimensions of the transitional moment at the end of the 1980s that are of particular significance for this text as a whole. First, I want to stress the importance of the decimation of the democratic-reformist tendency within the LCY after 1968 and the profound vacuum of capable leadership this left in the Communist establishment in a period of intense economic and

political crisis. Related to this is also the hollow nature of the 1974 constitutional reforms in Yugoslavia, which "federalized" the country without ever democratizing it, as previously discussed. This chapter will demonstrate, however, that profound consequences nevertheless followed in Yugoslavia as a result of these constitutional changes, only that these were of a decidedly reactionary nature. Finally, the reader should make particular note of the rise of *institutionalized* nationalism in Yugoslavia and BiH in this period, in particular after 1990. While important to the analysis provided in this chapter, these observations are perhaps still more important for the discussion that will take place in Chapter V. After all, it was precisely the political and economic practices that came to dominate Yugoslavia between 1987 and 1992, and that led the country into the abyss of war, that were institutionalized in BiH with the signing of the Dayton Peace Agreement in 1995. In turn, it is the "political moment" ending this chapter, which though unsuccessful in averting catastrophe in 1992, nevertheless serves as the atom of critique of the constitutional regime established at Dayton and discussed at length in the next chapter. In short, as far as the idea of BiH as a polis rather than a failed state is concerned, the period examined in this fourth chapter spells out both its power and its weakness to alter events in the starkest of terms.

Theorizing Regime Collapse (and Renewal)

To being with, however, the events discussed in this chapter need to be contextualized within the broader theoretical debates informing this text, in particular, as it concerns the previously mentioned "elasticity" of the authoritarian state in the Balkans. How is it possible for a regime to collapse, only for it to be "replaced" by the adherents of the old order in new ideological clothing? This is the central theoretical question of the final two chapters of this text (i.e. this chapter and the subsequent one). Implicit in this formulation is the argument that in both the transitional moment (between Yugoslav republic and sovereign state) in the early 1990s and since the advent of internationally-backed peace, BiH has failed as a democratic polity. While this notion is taken for granted in significant portions of the critical (and jour-

nalistic) literature on the country, as a theoretical claim it requires further scrutiny. After all, in both 1991 and since 1996, BiH has had all the trappings of a functional democratic parliamentary regime; why then have substantive democratic practices repeatedly failed to take root in this country?

To make sense of the particular confrontations and events that framed the final days of the Yugoslav state, it is not merely sufficient to identify the key actors or the key dates. To make sense of this period, especially in the context of the broader thesis of this text which posits the nation-state construct in the Balkans as a vehicle for elite driven depoliticization, it is necessary to explain why BiH's encounters with formal democracy were (and have remained) stunted.

Throughout this text, I have argued that a substantive definition of democracy is a participatory one. Moreover, an appropriately participatory conception of democracy necessarily contains an essential insurrectionary gene, driving *plebes* to not merely oppose particular elites but, in the final analysis, which allows (and motivates) them to construct their own popular, political institutions. At the very least, a participatory democratic project demands of "citizens"—or those on their way to becoming genuine political beings—a commitment to being a relevant political factor, as a collective, thereby preventing their complete (collective *and* individual) exclusion from the political process and winning for themselves at least the prospect of genuine *representation*—again, both as individuals and as communit(ies).

However, with respect to both the dissolution of the Yugoslav state, and the post-war period in BiH, the shallowness of democratic practice was/is not merely a lack of popular participation but a lack of popular *agency* or, indeed, popular *antagonism*. Here I am explicitly harkening back to Chantal Mouffe's conception of "agonistic democracy" as relevant to distinguishing between the presence of democratic *institutions* and the exercise of substantive democratic *practices* in a society (Mouffe 2000). In fact, institutions and practices are in

many cases quite separate from one another; and, indeed, the toppling of autocratic regimes has always depended on the possibility for democratic practices and movements to exist and to flourish despite *and in opposition to* official regime institutions and structures. In other words, a genuinely participatory conception of democracy *depends* on moments of antagonism.

I argue that these moments of antagonism, however, were absent (or severely limited) in both in the early 1990s, and since the conclusion of the Bosnian War, and that as a result BiH has been left with nominally democratic institutions but little in the way of democratic practices, among either the citizens or the elites. Among the democratic theorists informing this work, Sheldon Wolin is most concerned with the problem of institutions emptied of their democratic substance. To Wolin, however, the ideal of democracy is so volatile, in a sense, that virtually any attempt to harness its creative energy is to suffocate it. But as I argued in Chapter I (and as I shall return to in Chapter V and the Conclusion), I am not entirely prepared to so decisively dismiss the vitality of democratic parliamentarianism even if, in the end, my own considerations are deeply coloured by a profound anti-statist theme. Nevertheless, Wolin's critique of "constitutionalism" is significant because, like Mouffe, he ably illustrates the necessity of a revolutionary, antagonistic spark to any experiment, to any moment of democratic potential.

Accordingly, Wolin insists that "democracy is inherently unstable, inclined towards anarchy, and identified with revolution" (Wolin, Norm and Form: The Constitutionalizing of Democracy 1994, 37). He continues that "any conception of democracy centered on the citizen-as-actor and politics-as-episodic-activity is incompatible with the modern choice of the state as the fixed center of political life and the corollary conception of politics as organizational activity aimed at a single, dominating objective, control of the state apparatus" (ibid, 39). In the end, he reminds the reader that democracy "needs to be reconsidered as something

other than a form government: as a mode of being conditioned by bitter experience, doomed to succeed only temporarily, a recurrent possibility as long as the memory of the political survives" (ibid, 55). On these two points, on democracy as something other than a "form of government" and as "recurrent possibility," Wolin is at his most relevant for this portion of my discussion.

In a sense, as I will show in the next two chapters, BiH's evolution into a genuinely democratic polity has been forestalled precisely via the suppression of substantive democratic practices into mere "government"; so supressed, in fact, that the leading elements of the previous, authoritarian regime continue on in power as "democrats," with virtually all other elements of the previous epoch (or, at least, some horrid mix of socialist and nationalist authoritarianism(s)) untouched. Despite this, the possibility for political intervention exists; it requires, however, moments of genuine popular antagonism. Indeed, as I have stressed throughout this text, alternatives have always existed—from the Balkan Federation to the anti-war movement I will discuss in this chapter.

The challenge, however, and in this sense the uncompleted historic task of the Bosnian and Herzegovinian *plebes* has been to become the leading, antagonistic agents of transformation in their society. In other words, to ensure that it is not merely (and again and again) a case of regime change but of social transformation. For this there no substitute and the next two chapters are important in demonstrating that even when elite consensus has come down on the side of adapting and adopting the trappings of democratic parliamentarianism as it is known in the West, for instance, without a popular antagonistic dimension, even ostensibly democratic institutional arrangements quickly succumb to oligarchic and kleptocratic tendencies.

<u>And after Tito…</u>

With this theoretical preface established, we can now better understand the proceeding historical and political analysis. By most accounts, in his waning days, the man Tito expected would replace him at the helm of the SFRJ ship of state was Edvard Kardelj. Unfortunately for Tito and perhaps Yugoslavia as a whole, Kardelj died a year ahead of the Marshall himself, in February of 1979. After Tito's death in May 1980, and in the wake of the 1974 constitutional changes, "one bland figure followed another…Few Yugoslavs could name these anonymous leaders, and few still cared about the men who, as Winston Churchill once said about an opponent 'had a lot to be modest about'" (Sell 2003, 38). The LCY's lack of vision was perhaps best articulated by a popular regime slogan of the time: *I nakon Tita, Tito!* (And after Tito, Tito!). "Waiting in the wings, however" Louis Sells notes, "was the first politician in Yugoslavia who not only understood that Tito was really dead but was prepared to act on the basis of that discovery" (ibid).

By the end of the 1980s, in Yugoslavia's poorest corner, the Socialist Autonomous Province of Kosovo (along with Vojvodina, a province within the Socialist Republic of Serbia) tensions between the majority Albanian and minority Serb population had begun to fray. The largest non-Slavic community within the South Slav state, Kosovo's Albanians had a difficult relationship with Belgrade dating to the early part of the twentieth century. On the back of an Albanian autonomist insurrection against the Ottoman authorities in 1912, Serbia, Montenegro, Greece, and Bulgaria launched a joint invasion of the remaining Turkish possessions in southeastern Europe. The subsequent treaties of London and Bucharest (1913) effectively finalized the end of the Ottoman Empire on the European mainland. Kosovo, which like BiH had an ethnically mixed population of Albanians, Serbs, Turks, Roma, and others, was award-

ed to the Kingdom of Serbia[92] and the territory remained politically wedded to the Serb state until the end of the 20th century.

For the Belgrade elite, Kosovo thereafter became the centre piece of an ideological mythology about the millennial dream of preserving Serbian national and political identity in the wake of the Ottoman conquest in 1389 (Djokic 2009). For the Albanians, however, who were now suddenly subjected to many of the same abuses as the Muslim population in BiH in this process of Serbian expansion, the advent of Serbian rule began a period of political marginalization. With the arrival of Communist rule, however, things changed, especially after the 1974 reforms. Kosovo was thenceforth "almost a full federal entity: It had its own national bank, parliament, government, and police, and thanks to increasing Albanization and the greater numbers of qualified Albanians now able to do [public service and government jobs], Albanians were more or less in full control of Kosovo. Apart from its own assembly, its deputies sat in both the Yugoslav federal parliament and the Serbian one" (Judah 2008, 57).

Among Serbia's most conservative functionaries and intellectuals though, like Dobrica Ćosić and the membership of the Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts (SANU), Kosovo's newly acquired autonomy was a fundamental betrayal of what Serbia had paid for in blood and treasure: not only the reclamation of the nation's spiritual heartland in Kosovo in 1913 but the wider pan-Slavic project, in 1914-18 and then again in 1941-45 (Jović 2009, 228-234). As discussed in Chapter II, this narrative imagined Serbia as Yugoslavia's Piedmont, following the views of Peter I and Alexander I, and drew its ideological inspiration not from the Balkan federalist tradition but rather the pre-war Serbian nationalist one (Magaš 1994). Ćosić

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[92] Likewise ethnically mixed Macedonia, the ownership of which triggered the Second Balkan War, was also awarded to Serbia after the conflict's conclusion. Again, violence in the service "nationalization" followed: "We find here, as everywhere else, the ordinary measures of 'Serbization'—the closing of schools, disarmament, invitations to schoolmasters to become Servian [sic] officials, nomination of 'Serbomanes,' 'Grecomanes,' and vlachs, as village headmen, orders to the clergy of obedience to the Servian Archbishop, acts of violence against influential individuals, prohibition of transit, multiplication of requisitions, forged signatures to declarations and patriotic telegrams, the organization of special bands, military executions in the villages and so forth" (The Balkan Commission of Inquiry 1914, 181).

and his cohorts left and were driven out of the LCY for their views, especially after the fall of Aleksandar Ranković in 1966 but continued to operate on the margins of public life in Serbia.

Despite the fact the vast majority of the Serbian Communist establishment willingly embraced the '74 reforms (Jović 2009, 95-125), and continued to do so well after the fact, after Tito's death, and in the grips of general economic crisis, space emerged in Yugoslavia for a new kind of political project. As discussed in Chapter III, the purging of the LCY's reformist cadres between 1968 and 1971 deprived the country's highest political bodies of capable, democratically inclined leadership while simultaneously demonstrating the potency of mass-based politics. In March 1981, a small protest at the University of Priština, in Kosovo's capital, by students concerned with the school's ineffectual administration grew quickly and then took a dramatic turn. Infiltrated by Albanian nationalist activists demanding full republican status for the province, the students were met with truncheons and, soon enough, tanks. Tim Judah writes that the authorities claimed that "57 [people] died in clashes but the real figure could have run into hundreds. Purges of Kosovo's communist party started and a new period of repression set in, albeit one in which, until 1989, Albanians were still in charge. In the eight years following the demonstrations, more than half a million people were at one time either arrested or questioned" (Judah 2008, 58).

For all its experiments with self-management, Yugoslavia was in 1981 still a fundamentally authoritarian state. As a result, and as in 1968 and in 1971, the regime responded with disproportionate force to popular demands for change. After the events in 1981, Kosovo became a virtual police state, reminiscent of the quasi-Stalinist period between 1945 and 1948 and not the relatively open society the rest of the country had become by that point. While rock 'n roll and punk became the soundtrack of a new, youthful urban culture in Sarajevo, Belgrade, Zagreb and Ljubljana, Priština and Kosovo become cauldrons of discontent. But as

difficult as the situation had become in the province, it was not until 1989 that Kosovo assumed truly national, that is, state-wide significance for Yugoslavia.

<u>…Milošević</u>

Kosovo's dominance of the front pages, however, was preceded by nearly a decade of catastrophic economic decline. The Yugoslav self-management regime was nominally preserved but further emptied of any substantive character post-1974. But the political stability and considerable economic growth the country enjoyed during Tito's time at the helm quickly began to unravel after his death. Beginning in 1980, the country was gripped by a series of economic crises, of both domestic and international origin, that dissolved the seams holding the federation together. Amidst an already global recession, Yugoslavia's GNP growth plunged from 6.3% between 1974-79 to around 0.8% in the period from 1980-89. The estimated unemployment rate jumped from 8% in 1973 to just over 15% by the end of 1989, while average retail prices grew between 1980-89 by a startling 108% (Dyker and Vejvoda 2014, 30). Inflation skyrocketed throughout the 1980s and by 1989 reached a dizzying peak of 2,655% (Andjelic 2003, 198).[93] For all its political tumult, the period after 1968 was arguably Yugoslavia's "golden era." This not only came to an end after 1980 but was replaced by a series of economic scandals that exposed the deep rot within the Communist establishment, such as the Agrokomerc affair. The revelation of the Ponzi scheme that brought down Agrokomerc, the agricultural giant from Velika Kladuša, took with it large segments of the then ruling BiH elite, at both the republican and federal levels. The incident, and all that it suggested of the elite's corrupt priorities, had significant consequences when Yugoslavs and Bosnians, in particular, went to the first democratic polls in 1990.

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[93] On a technical note, I am aware that Dr. Andjelic's name is, in reality, spelled *Anđelić* but for the sake of consistency, I am using the spelling used in the major work of his that I cite throughout this chapter. The same is true of a number of other authors cited herein.

As early as 1983, however, the authors of a CIA intelligence brief wrote that two "grave problems now challenge both the new leadership's abilities and the post-Tito leadership system [in Yugoslavia]: an economic slowdown exacerbated by efforts to deal with a financial crisis, and the re-emergence of ethnic strains, most seriously evident in demands by the Albanian minority, that bring into question the validity of existing constitutional mechanisms for compromising ethnic differences."[94] But the "principal problem," the authors went on, "is the weakness of the national leadership left in place by Tito. Trapped in a political system that requires elusive consensus on all important decisions, the leaders in Belgrade are increasingly hostage to rival regional interests" (Central Intelligence Agency 1983). The unravelling of Yugoslavia's socio-economic order was such that in 1987, high placed functionaries in the government publicly contemplated using the army to prevent strikes from endangering the "constitutional order" (Glaurdić 2011, 19). In other words, a military coup was being entertained by the Yugoslav leadership for reasons more to do with socio-economic unrest than nationalism.

The emergence of a leadership capable of addressing the country's growing economic crisis was not only undermined by the prevailing authoritarian political order and the purges of 1968-71 but the deeply fractured constitutional system established by the 1974 constitution.

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[94] This dissertation rejects the "ethnic thesis" explaining the dissolution of Yugoslavia. Nevertheless, it is certainly the case that the SFRJ's authoritarian regime proved itself ripe for nationalist subversion. Collectivist rhetoric, whether Marxist, fascist, and/or nationalist, is essentially of a type, as Fred Dallmayr argues, in that it marginalizes and negates the primacy of individual autonomy with various totalizing concepts (the proletariat, the state, the nation) (Dallmayr 2001, 63-64). Thus, Yugoslavia's organic multiculturalism transformed from ideological pillar (e.g. "brotherhood and unity") to anathema within the course of a single generation precisely because the essential authoritarian character of the regime *did not* change, even as the ideological line shifted from socialist to nationalist. In this respect, it makes sense that Wolin, Dallmayr, and scholars concerned specifically with the question of multiculturalism, like Will Kymlicka (see, for instance, his text *Multicultural Citizenship: A Liberal Theory of Minority Rights*), all emerge from a broadly liberal tradition. Ironically, while in practice the existence of multicultural liberal societies is clearly the result of colonialism (and all its accompanying horrors), these same societies have also proven able to expand their concept of (at least nominal) citizenship, and its privileges, to formerly excluded peoples. The primacy of autonomy has its own pitfalls, of course (i.e. Margret Thatcher's dictum that "there is no such thing as a society"). Nevertheless, the liberal individualist-autonomist tradition has proven itself capable of evolution precisely on this account and, the collectivist one, in turn, unable. It is why, in short, so much of this dissertation is concerned with explaining why change *did not* and *has not* occurred in BiH and why, as Chapter V will argue, genuine democratization in the country will entail a deliberate turn against collectivism and its corresponding political structures.

Precisely when Yugoslavia was in need of economic and political coordination, it was beset by political provincialism and economic autarky. Worse was to come, however.

The clearest articulation of a post-Tito political program (if not an economic one) was published in September of 1986 in the form of a so-called "Memorandum" of the aforementioned SANU. Though Dobrica Ćosić was not one of its sixteen authors, the man who would in the 1990s became known as the "Father of the [Serb] Nation" was nevertheless instrumental in its composition (Ramet 2006, 320). Josip Glaurdić is worth citing at length for his lucid analysis of the text's significance in 1980s Yugoslavia:

> The memorandum, an unfinished draft of which was smuggled to the press in September 1986, was basically a collection of radical Serb grievances against the Yugoslav federation. Although it did not delve deeply into possible recommendations for change, the ramifications of its critique of Yugoslavia were abundantly clear. It perceived "the status of Serbia and the Serb nation" within Yugoslavia as economically and politically unequal. It claimed that the autonomous provinces of Vojvodina and Kosovo prevented the Serbs from "having their own state, as do all other nations." It labelled the situation in Kosovo [e.g. the perceived decline in the region's Serb population] as "genocide" waged against the Serbs by the Albanians and called on the Serbs to mount a "resolute defense of their nation and their territory." The memorandum extended its reach beyond Kosovo and Serbia by alleging that "except for the time under the Independent State of Croatia, the Serbs in Croatia have never been as jeopardized as they are today" because of discrimination and assimilation. The ones to blame from the whole Serb tragedy were, naturally, the most prominent leaders of post-World War II Yugoslavia—the Croat Tito and the Slovene Edvard Kardelj—who enabled their republics to "accomplish their nationalist agendas" of subordinating the Serbs. Although the memorandum did not provide anything truly novel in the development of the Serb nationalist platform of the early and mid-1980s, the fact that it was crafted by the most august body of Serbia's intellectuals signified a tremendously high level of entrenchment of Serbia's society and its intellectual elite in the nationalist discourse. With the memorandum, the movement to redefine Yugoslavia based on Serbian national interests now had its ideological and popular foundations. The last missing piece of the puzzle—a real political leader—came not even a year later in the form of Slobodan Milošević (Glaurdić 2011, 17-18).

Slobodan Milošević was in the summer of 1987 the right hand man of Ivan Stambolić, the then President of the Presidency of the Socialist Republic of Serbia. Otherwise a "regular party technocrat who had come to high politics largely through connections [e.g. Stambolić's

patronage] and without any real backing from Serbia's national or party base," Milošević nevertheless possessed something many of his establishment colleagues lacked (ibid, 18). He had a strategist's mind and was the first to realize that he could "govern by the use of the masses" (Sell 2003, 37). Between the economic unrest that had become characteristic of the country's day-to-day life by that point, as well as seething tensions in Kosovo, Milošević only had to look out his window to see the potential entailed by the growing processions of disaffected citizens.

It is worth addressing at this point why Milošević did not opt to turn himself into a radical leftist in the mould of the New Left movement that had similarly destabilized Yugoslavia in the late 1960s. After all, both the Kosovo situation and Yugoslavia's general economic malaise, theoretically, offered a platform for radical populism. Yet what is evident, especially after the fact, is that Milošević like most of the remaining Yugoslav political establishment was, at heart, an autocrat. Even if intended only as an ideological veneer, his potential embrace of economic populism would inevitably have entailed a degree of substantive democratization that was simply unacceptable to him personally. Moreover, it would have been unacceptable to the LCY establishment more broadly, as had been established in both 1968 and 1971, while simultaneously doing little to distinguish Milošević from a virtual army of Communist apparatchiks likewise invoking the need for a deeper socialism in Yugoslavia. Finally it would have failed to take advantage of the opportunity presented by the nationalist dimensions of the Kosovo crisis.

A far more potent program would be one that *combined* the range of popular concerns then percolating through Serbia, on the back of which profound political changes could be made (or not) as the leadership saw fit. As a result, the "awareness that nationalism was the easiest and most profitable way to gain political authority in a society deeply destabilized by a severe economic and political crisis, became the crux of Milošević's political strategy"

(Glaurdić 2011, 19). In effect, he had rediscovered an approach from the 19th century: nation-alism as a faux-social contract yet emptied of its substantive, participatory character. This is why Gagnon argues that the stage-managed mass rallies which accompanied Milošević's rise to power from 1987 to 1989 were an exercise in profound demobilization rather than civic empowerment (Gagnon 2006, 53-86).

Still, Milošević astutely measured his approach, adding ingredients slowly to create a compelling narrative by way of which he would progressively seize power in Yugoslavia. In April 1987, Stambolić dispatched Milošević to Kosovo to calm the growing unrest among the province's Serb population. In the wake of the SANU Memorandum, described above, the perceived plight of the local Serb population had become a *cause célèbre* for Serbia's con-servatives and nationalists, including Serb activists in Kosovo itself. Milošević was sent to Kosovo by Stambolić and told to assert the party line on "brotherhood and unity," and leave (Glaurdić 2011, 20). Instead, Milošević returned from Kosovo as a champion of the Serb na-tionalist cause. When a town hall meeting was cut short due to street clashes between a large group of Serb protestors, who had come explicitly with the intention to cause a riot by their own admission, and local police, Milošević went out to speak to the crowd, as the cameras rolled. After failing to calm the tumult from the steps he was to speak from, Milošević entered the crowd, and pleaded with a distraught senior to tell him what had happened. Informed that "women and children" had been beaten by the police after a crowd of "Albanians had infil-trated" the gathering, Milošević turned and began to walk away. His eyes fixed on the hori-zon, he shook his head: "no one will beat you. No one will beat you!" The exchange was beamed into every home in Serbia that very night by the republican broadcaster (BBC 1995).

Over the next two years, Milošević would only continue to hone this image as a man of the people while the essential elements of his performance (and politics) remained static. After his return from Kosovo, the situation in Serbia rapidly deteriorated, with media attacks

on the Albanian population as well as attacks on Albanian-owned businesses becoming more and more frequent. Serbia's Communist brass was horrified and attempted to regain control of the situation, only to find that Milošević's loyalists had already deeply infiltrated the party and the media (Glaurdić 2011, 21). Again Glaurdić ably summarizes the events that followed in the fall:

> By September, the media machine was in action. Stambolić and his associates were exposed to a ceaseless barrage of criticism for their failures to "stop the years of humiliation" in Kosovo and were in the end ousted at the infamous (and televised) Eighth Session of the Central Committee of Serbia's [LCY]. By publically and so ruthlessly getting rid of his former mentor and his cadre, Milošević firmly took control of Serbia's political elite and secured a strong public mandate for decisive policy in Serbia and Kosovo. A vigorous campaign of consolidation of power, famously named the "anti-bureaucratic revolution," commenced…Within weeks virtually all the media outlets (down to individual journalists) and the organizations of the political and economic system (down to low-level party functionaries or enterprise managers) were cleansed of the opponents of Milošević's line…Milošević demanded unquestionable loyalty, and by the end of 1987 he had it in Serbia proper (ibid, 22).

One should note here especially the characterization of what was essentially a coup by Milošević as a progressive "anti-bureaucratic revolution." The term was coined by Milošević's camp to undercut the argument that what was being formed via these mass rallies was actually a Serb nationalist movement aiming to take over Serbia and Yugoslavia, by extension. Instead, Milošević and his supporters argued, that the protests were the people's revolt against the corrupt "New Class" of career apparatchiks. In fact, they countered, the toppling of governments in Kosovo, and then Vojvodina, and Montenegro were part of a broader effort to *reclaim* the genuinely socialist character of the Yugoslav state. In a sense, Milošević was using the New Left critique described in Chapter III, but as with the 1974 constitutional reforms, emptied of all its substantive content, to install himself in power. In a perverse sense then, Milošević's strategy proved just how compelling the New Left critique of the Yugoslav regime had been and how transformative its potential might have been had it not been so utterly dismantled after 1968.

By the end of 1989, Milošević formally rose to the post of President of Serbia after which, almost immediately, he revoked Kosovo's autonomous status, guaranteed by the 1974 constitution. The re-centralization of Yugoslavia as a whole was to follow, as Milošević's coalition of Serbian nationalists and party conservatives sought to roll the clock back to 1966, before the fall of Ranković and the before the emergence of the New Left heresy. As Judah notes, at the end of 1989, Milošević controlled four votes on the eight member state presidency of Yugoslavia but he would never gain the crucial fifth vote he needed to seize control of the body outright and with it, the country (Judah 2008, 67). Instead, in response to his scheming Yugoslavia would be irrevocably split between east and west and soon enough it would dissolve into war as well.

In the wake of Milošević's dismantling of Kosovo's autonomy, Slovenia's comparatively democratically-inclined Communist authorities, as established earlier in Chapter III, began to sound alarm bells. As the country's most prosperous and, arguably, most politically liberal republic, Slovenia had no interest in a Yugoslavia dominated by Milošević and his retrograde associates. In response, Milošević attempted in December of 1989 a similar coup in Slovenia as he had earlier orchestrated in Vojvodina and Montenegro. The desired street demonstrations never materialized, in response to which Milošević convened instead the 14th Extraordinary Congress of the LCY in Belgrade in January of 1990—a body now stacked with his loyalists—to deal with the Slovenian leadership.

Milošević shifted his presentation for the occasion somewhat, accusing the Slovenes of denying Serbia its constitutional right to deal with matters of domestic concern in the appropriate matter. Every motion the Slovenes made to the delegates concerning the human rights of the Albanians in Kosovo, freedom of assembly, and Yugoslavia's integration into Europe proper were summarily voted down by Milošević loyalists from the Serbia, Vojvodina, Kosovo, and Montenegro delegations (Glaurdić 2011, 71). Confronted by a body now

dominated by reactionaries, and joined by the Croatians, the Slovenes openly called for the LCY to abandon its role as the country's "vanguard" and to allow free and fair elections to take place. After this too was rejected by Milošević's camp, the Slovenes left the congress in protest, followed by the Croatians and then the Bosnians and the Macedonians. For all intents and purposes, the LCY was effectively dissolved on January 22, 1990; "the party which had ruled Yugoslavia for nearly half a century finally disintegrated" (ibid, 72).

The Western Confederacy

As so often before, substantive change to Yugoslavia's governing order came some-what inadvertently. The turn towards democratic elections in Yugoslavia came not because of a popular revolt against the authorities, as in Poland or Romania for instance, but as a response of the ruling Communist establishments in the country's western republics, dismayed at Milošević's deliberate campaign to seize power in the SFRJ as a whole. Popular will, in this respect, had very little to do with it. In BiH, at least, the democratic character of the subsequent elections and the victor's rule was likewise of a highly dubious nature. Moreover, the character of public discourse in Yugoslavia by 1990 had become so poisoned by Milošević's chauvinism, and his media spin, that substantive debates about democratic governance, economic reform, and popular participation all but disappeared anyway. Instead, as the individual republics went to polls—and importantly, no federal elections were held in turn—the differences between Belgrade, its satellites, and the rest grew more pronounced.

Yet the conduct and results of the 1990 campaigns reveal also the profound chasm that existed between the then dominant nationalist narrative (and its latter-day mutations) and the perspectives and expectations of ordinary Yugoslavs. In Slovenia, the first democratic elections in April of 1990 actually preserved in office the ruling League of Communists of Slovenia (ZKS), now redubbed the United List of Social Democrats. Milan Kučan, who was up until then the Chairman of the ZKS, was elected as the first democratic president of Slovenia.

While the parliamentary results were somewhat more ambiguous, they nevertheless produced a strong mandate for Slovenia's left-liberal parties, including the Social Democrats.

Given what had transpired only months earlier at the LCY Congress, the results of Slovenia's vote were clearly an endorsement of Kučan's democratic-reformist vision for Yugoslavia—especially as talk grew in the western republics, and Macedonia, of a "confederal" model for the new, ostensibly democratic Yugoslav state. As late as the spring of 1990 then, the leaders of Yugoslavia's western republics, even those elected on popular mandates sought to negotiate with Belgrade, even as Milošević's authoritarian ambitions grew. As Glaurdić notes "pre-election polls in Slovenia showed 52 percent of Slovenes supported the transformation of Yugoslavia into a confederation, 28 percent supported Slovenia's independence, and only 8 percent supported Yugoslavia's remaining a federation" (ibid, 88). Slovenia, Croatia, and BiH (and Macedonia) would only make decisive moves towards independence once Milošević made transparent his willingness to use extreme violence to preserve a version of the Yugoslav state that no one but the most hard core of Serb nationalists supported.

In Croatia, the parliamentary elections that same month likewise failed to produce a landslide endorsement of nationalist politics, though unlike in Slovenia, the majoritarian electoral rules would effectively produce just that. The newly formed Croatian Democratic Union (HDZ) won 41.9% of the vote, while the successor list of the League of Communists of Croatia (LCC) followed with 35% of the vote. The Serb nationalist Serb Democratic Party (SDS) managed only a meagre 1.6% of the vote precisely because Serbs in Croatia voted, en masse, not for the Belgrade-backed SDS but the LCC successor bloc (Stojanović 2014). Despite winning only a plurality of the popular vote, the HDZ won 55 of 80 of the seats in the new Croatian parliament—nearly 70% of the mandate, in other words. As in Slovenia, popular support was still clearly in favour of a single Yugoslav state, albeit with significant institutional changes: "51 percent of Croatia's citizens [supported] a confederation, 11 percent their repub-

lic's independence, and 27 percent a federation" (Glaurdić 2011, 88). After Zagreb and Ljubljana's call for confederal reforms was sharply (indeed, violently) rebuked by Belgrade, however, the HDZ would use its super-majority in the republican parliament to turn Croatia right, sharply so, akin to the manner Milošević had already done in Serbia (Gagnon 2006, 131-177).

BiH and Macedonia did not hold their own elections until November of 1990, while Serbia waited until December. Milošević's cabinet, however, was in the spring already preparing to carve the country up, privately and publically. Weeks ahead of the Slovenian and Croatian elections, Borisav Jović, Milošević's closest advisor, and the Serbian president had already hatched a plan to expel Slovenia from Yugoslavia altogether. Macedonia would likewise be allowed to leave, even more quietly than the Slovenes. Croatia, however, and BiH were in for very different treatment. On March 29, 1990, Zoran Sokolović, the president of the National Assembly of Serbia, made his leadership's views transparently clear: "If some believe that a confederation is possible or even unavoidable, they cannot count on the present internal borders. In that case, all historical stakes and all aspirations would come into play" (Glaurdić 2011, 89). The message was clear: if the western republics would not allow Milošević to roll-back the constitutional order in Yugoslavia to a pre-1966 moment, then Yugoslavia would not exist at all. Instead, Greater Serbia, as imagined by Ilija Garašanin and other 19th century Serb expansionists, would inherent all the lands in which ethnic Serbs lived or had once lived or were *supposed* to live in. Indeed, before any other republic had an opportunity to secede from what remained of the SFRJ, Milošević acted:

> In September 1990 Serbia promulgated a new constitution that recognised the "sovereignty, independence, and territorial integrity of the Republic of Serbia". In March 1991 Milosevic [sic] declared that Serbia no longer recognised the authority of the Yugoslav Presidency, that it was forming its own independent armed forces and that "We have to ensure that we have unity in Serbia if we want as the Republic that is biggest, which is most numerous, to dictate the further course of events. Those questions of borders are, therefore, state questions. And borders, as

you know, are always dictated by the strong, never by the weak. Consequently, what is essential is that we have to be strong." In June 1991 Croatia declared independence while Germany publicly reaffirmed its support for a unified Yugoslavia. In October 1991 Mihajlo Markovic, [sic] deputy president of the SPS, stated that "there will be at least three units in the new Yugoslav state: Serbia, Montenegro, and a united Bosnian and Knin Krajina."[95] Later that month Borivoje Petrovic, [sic] Vice-President of the Serbian Parliament, claimed that all Serbs must live in a single state and that it was all the same "whether the new state is called Yugoslavia or the 'United States of Serbia'." In November 1991 the JNA conquered the Croatian city of Vukovar. In December 1991 Germany recognised the independence of Croatia and Slovenia (Hoare 2003, 551).

In other words, as BiH went to the polls in November 1990, events outside of the republic had already deteriorated to such an extent that voters and citizens in the Yugoslavia's heartland were essentially presented with a *fait accompli*. Yugoslavia, as they had known it, was all but dead. Unlike in Slovenia and Croatia months earlier, to say nothing of the rest eastern Europe, for many in BiH the elections in November of 1990 were not about the shape and administration of a new political order. Belgrade had already made its view of a confederal Yugoslavia painfully clear. Instead, the 1990 elections in BiH were a desperate, collective attempt to brace for the coming storm amid a slew of bad and worse options.

Contextualizing the 1990 Elections in BiH

The November 1990 polls in BiH were the first genuinely multi-party elections in the country since December of 1938.[96] As in 1938, the 1990 polls took place in the context of deteriorating political relations *outside* of BiH. Nevertheless, events in Belgrade (and Zagreb and Ljubljana) were of imminent concern for the republic and would only grow in importance in the subsequent two years.

What remained of the Communist establishment's grip on power in BiH in the spring of 1990 was definitively dismantled after the elections in Slovenia and Croatia. "As a sign of

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[95] Knin having been the capital of the *Republika Srpska Krajina* (RSK) in Croatia (1991-1995).

[96] In one sense, it could be argued that the last nominally "free and fair" elections in BiH had taken place in 1927, as discussed in Chapter II. I omit the 1945 elections on account of their clearly "managed" character by the then Communist authorities.

their commitment to democracy and change, but also a sign of their weakness, [the League of Communists of BiH (LCBiH)] gave up control over the state" (Andjelic 2003, 156). Nearly half a century of Communist rule in BiH thus ended with a whimper and not a bang—and as a result of events outside of its borders. The ground rules (and norms) of democratic competition, conduct, and participation in BiH, however, were not yet established and what followed over the next two years was the patching together of a virtually incoherent political "system." Nevertheless, I will demonstrate that this incoherence did serve a purpose: it preserved the interests of the elite establishment in BiH or, at least, the segments of the establishment that would successfully transform themselves from Communist apparatchiks to nationalist firebrands in the coming months and those who would enter the political fold from the margins at the same time.

The first question that had to be decided was whether "ethnic parties" (like the HDZ and SDS in Croatia) would be allowed to compete in BiH's polls. In reality, as Andjelic notes, the matter had already been settled. As the BiH Constitutional Court deliberated whether to uphold a ban on ethnic parties enacted by the Communists in the dying days of their rule in BiH, the HDZ BiH, SDS BiH, and the Party of Democratic Action (SDA) already operated openly and publically (ibid, 156-159). Despite this, public opinion polls showed overwhelming support for a ban—70% according to one survey (Stojanović 2014, 2). After the Constitutional Court ruled to lift the ban, the (still Communist dominated) BiH Parliament briefly considered launching a referendum on the question. Nothing of the sort took place but the idea constituted a "flirtation with democracy" (Andjelic 2003, 158). The question of whether BiH's citizens would have upheld the ban in a referendum is impossible to answer, of course. Nevertheless, Andjelic is correct to suggest that the opportunity to *design* rather than merely respond to the new order in BiH may have opened an entirely different trajectory for the country after the summer of 1990, when the Court made its decision. Moreover, the fear tactics which helped win the elections for the nationalists are likely to have been far less effec-

tive in the event of such a referendum. Instead, they would have proven precisely why the ban was necessary in the first place. Instead, the injunction was lifted and ethnic institutionalization rapidly accelerated.

The basic elements of this process, what we might term "political nationalization," however, were established well before the events of 1990. "Built into the 1974 [constitutional reforms] were ethnic and self-determinist provisions. An 'ethnic key' was created, which became an incentive structure in itself for national identification and division" (Toal and Dahlman 2011, 28). Quite simply, the notion of "political nationality" had been a professional factor among BiH's elites for nearly two decades by the time of the 1990 polls. As such, after 1974, BiH's Presidency (like the Federal Presidency) became a multi-person body whose head (i.e. "the President"), by way of convention, rotated according to ethnicity (e.g. one mandate was headed by a Serb, the next by a Croat, the next by a Bosniak and so on). "In effect," writes Gagnon, "this ethnic key created an incentive structure whereby elites and prospective elites were ensured positions in bureaucracy. This was based on their self-identification in four categories: Muslim, Serb, Croat, or 'Other'…Any change in the status of republics would threaten to disrupt this balance within the elite though there would be minimal impact on the wider population" (Gagnon 2006, 73).

In other words, there were institutional reasons why BiH's political class had a vested interest in the national question, even in the Communist period, as Gagnon notes. For ordinary Yugoslavs and Bosnians and Herzegovinians, overt ethno-national identity mattered only in so much as they harboured political ambitions, something few did. "This institutionalization of the ethnic key," he writes, "is one element that explains why, in social science polling, [LCBiH] members were much more likely to have nationalistic feelings than the wider population: 29 percent vs. 8 percent. It also helps explain why, despite the fact that ethnic ties were not a major fault line among the wider population itself, they remained important for elites

and aspiring elites; it also helps explain the denunciations coming from the [LCY] leadership in the 1970s and 1980s of the trend especially among young people, and especially in [BiH], of declaring themselves Yugoslavs" (ibid, 73-74).

In a very real sense then, a chasm existed between the priorities of the public and the elite. For the elite the question of ethnic and national affiliation became a means to secure their privileged positions. For the public, in addition to the usually hollow rhetoric of self-management which characterized the Yugoslav system, the official insistence on ethnicity as a relevant category only further muddied their political perspectives. For a time, the veneer of socialist ideological rigidity was able to mask the corrosive effects of this policy. The conse-quences only became fully realized, however, once it was necessary to establish a new politi-cal order and the exclusion and ambivalence of the public from the reform process allowed for intra-elite clashes to substitute for meaningful political debate and thereby lead the country to catastrophe. While in the rest of Communist Europe the talk was of democracy and people power, in Yugoslavia, once the most "liberal" of Second World states, it was increasingly of nationalism and, soon enough, war.

As the old guard's anti-nationalist line waned (that is, as Tito and Kardelj progressive-ly disappeared from political life and thereafter their political priorities) and any potential democratic reformers were purged and side-lined, the public's ambivalence about the "nation-al question" came under tremendous pressure. Ethnicity became a salient political category as it allowed the "New Class" to lay claims to government posts on the basis of their professed national identity. In the event that they should ever need to be removed, an appeal to ethnic persecution was readily at hand.[97] That few would be swayed by such arguments was actually quite beside the point. The *spectre* of mass politics was terrifying enough to the Communist

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[97] To this day, for instance, such a narrative pervades debates about the events surrounding the Agrokomerc scandal in BiH's Bosniak community. The fall of Hamdija Pozderac, then President (of the Presidency) of BiH, is frequently attributed (either partially or entirely) to a Serb(ian) conspiracy against Yugoslavia's Bosniaks. Given the events of the 1990s, this claim has taken on even further emotional resonance in certain quarters.

authorities and as they scrambled to foreclose the possibilities for as much, they created a system ripe for opportunistic exploitation of a different, more reactionary sort. In their desire to create a "new democracy" in Yugoslavia, the Communists destroyed actual progressive democratic elements in their movement, while empowering the nesting nationalists in their midst. That the regime institutionalized ethnic and regional fragmentation was meant to be proof of Yugoslavia's democratic credentials, both domestically and internationally. In reality, this policy, and the 1974 constitution which defined it, was to be the country's ruin. As described in Chapter III, after the events of the MASPOK in Croatia and the 1974 changes, the essential structure of a future nationalist politics was readily available in both Yugoslavia and BiH. It only required the ignition Milošević provided.

As BiH's old system unravelled, the new nationalist actors moved to make explicit what had formerly been implicit (and at least somewhat tempered): the nationalization of politics, the new ideological veneer. Dominant throughout this process, as before, was the supremacy of the old elite, however. Even as the LCBiH began to bleed members and many of its functionaries began to venture overtly into the orbit of the nationalists, the change was in a sense cosmetic (Andjelic 2003, 193).[98] This is especially evident with two decades of hindsight: despite regime collapse and war, the roster of political actors in public life in BiH remains virtually unchanged. Where time and circumstance have been a factor, the progeny has continued instead (e.g. Bakir Izetbegović, Zlatko Lagumdžija, and Milorad Dodik are all the sons of former variously placed notables). Today, the former LCBiH, now reformed as the Social Democratic Party of BiH (SDP), shares the political stage with a litany nationalist and other civic parties—though their fortunes have declined dramatically after the 2014 General Elections. Nevertheless, the candidate lists today are in many cases virtually identical to those

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[98] Incidentally, it was in the period after the first elections in 1990 that the (now well known) expression "*nova-stara vlast*" ("the new-old government") first reached mass circulation, thanks especially to the news broadcasts of YUTEL, the lone anti-nationalist TV station in the country, backed by the then Prime Minister of Yugoslavia, Ante Marković.

from 1990. And as in the old regime, the fiercest competition is not for public support—as the fractured, ethnicized Dayton electoral system, mirroring the one from 1990 forecloses the need for general support—but ministry and public utility posts, from whence resources and patronage flow (Kurtović 2013).[99]

As proof of this continuity, Andjelic notes how, despite the imminence of major structural changes, debates in July and August of 1990 concerning the future shape of the legislature were largely ignored by the nationalists (Andjelic 2003, 158). From the onset, this suggested that as before the highest law-making body in the land was to be a mute parliament. Besides, of the two houses in the new parliament, the 110 member Chamber of Districts (or Municipalities) was organized on majoritarian principles so that urban centres like Banja Luka (population 195,139) and rural districts like Ljubinje (population 4,162) would have equal representation (ibid, 158). These arrangements dramatically empowered the conservative, rural areas of the country over the more liberal urban centres (specifically Sarajevo and Tuzla) and effectively ensured a blockade of any progressive breakthroughs in the proportionally-constituted Chamber of Citizens. Instead, the real attention focused on the executive—the Presidency—from which the division of patronage and power could be centrally directed. Here it was decided that the old conventions would be made binding electoral features: the Presidency would be composed of seven members, two Muslims, two Serbs, two Croats, and one Yugoslav. "At the same time," Andjelic adds, "the election results would be valid only if the ethnic structure of those elected was in the range of 15 per cent of the last ethnic census" (ibid, 159).[100]

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[99] One should also note that the proverbial floor crossing by former Communist apparatchiks (and would-be elites) towards the respective nationalist blocs was often sheer political opportunism. Milorad Dodik, for instance, was initially a member of Marković's SRSJ before he became a celebrated chauvinist in the mid-2000s. Even Radovan Karadžić, ostensibly the paragon of BiH's Serb nationalist cause, was as late as 1989 entertaining joining the nascent Green Party and appears only after the Croatian elections to have definitively settled on the nationalist course (Donia 2015, 50). Despite the catastrophic violence that followed, there appear to have been few genuine nationalists in the bunch, even at the highest echelons of the respective nationalist parties.

[100] I find it quite fitting that Wolin reserves special animus for the role of the Presidency in the denial of the demos' political aspirations, albeit within the context of the American constitutional system. There is, nevertheless,

In this sense, the deck was already institutionally stacked in favour of the nationalists. It was an example, as Wolin notes, of how ostensibly democratic constitutions nevertheless narrow the experience of the political; "…a constitution in setting limits to politics sets limits as well to democracy, constituting it in ways compatible with and legitimating the dominant power groups in society" (Wolin 2004, 34). The nationalists designed a system wherein even voting could only really produce results that favoured them. Unsurprisingly, they subsequently emerged as the only realistic alternative to the old regime (ibid, 160). Despite attempts by the Yugoslav Prime Minister Ante Marković to create a "reformist" opposition bloc to the growing tide of nationalist parties across the SFRJ, he was far too late to the game. His Alliance of Reform Forces of Yugoslavia (SRSJ) did not compete in the Slovene or the Croatian elections and despite attracting some support in BiH, the party was only another in a fractured mess of "civic" and otherwise leftist parties that split the anti-nationalist vote. In the new Chamber of Citizens, the lower house of the new bicameral legislature, the SRSJ came in fourth with just under 9% of the vote. The SDA won the most votes, at 31.5%, the SDS followed with 26.1%, the HDZ with 16.1%, and the LCBiH at 12.3% (Stojanović 2014, 11). Behind the SRSJ were a host of smaller parties, all who received less than 2% of the vote. The majoritarian system in the Chamber of Districts only compounded the domination of the nationalists. Despite the fact that the LCBiH and SRSJ received 180,589 *more* votes in the second house than in the first, they only received five representatives compared to twenty-eight in the Chamber of Citizens.

In the Presidency races the SDA, SDS, and HDZ, respectively won all six posts, plus the post reserved for the Others which was won by the SDA's Ejup Ganić, an ethnic Bosniak originally from the Sandžak region of Serbia. Vote splitting between the LCBiH and SRSJ

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a BiH-based parallel to his claim that the Presidency is the "cruelest [sic] symbol of the impotence of the demos and, fittingly, the highest office of constitutional democracy" (Wolin 2004, 34). The BiH Presidency in 1990 and was meant to represent the best and brightest this society had to offer, after decades of Communist repression. Instead, as I note, the very worst elements in society seized the highest office in the land.

had its most disastrous results here. Had the two parties run joint candidates, they would have won seats from both the Serb and Croat lists. Had the "civic" parties more broadly correctly understood the nationalist threat and formed one united list, they would also have won at least one seat from the Bosniak, that is, Muslim list. Oddly, only on the "Others" list would an anti-nationalist front not have made any difference, as Ganić dominated the field with 32.2% of the vote.[101] But as Peter Emerson and Jakub Šedo note, like in Croatia, the electoral system exacerbated the already problematic political context of the elections: "The electoral system…almost certainly did *not* represent the will of the people, for while 'votes were cast most overwhelmingly for ethnonational parties, public opinion polls…showed overwhelming majorities (in the range of 70 to 90 per cent) against separation from Yugoslavia and against an ethnically divided republic'" (Emerson and Šedo 2010, 11). "In a word," they conclude, "the 1990 electoral system was one cause of the Bosnian war, just as the 1992 [BiH independence] referendum was another" (ibid).[102] Rather than defusing the situation, the institutional arrangements of BiH's first experiment with electoral politics in more than half a century actualized a self-fulfilling prophecy about impending nationalist victories while simultaneously and categorically misrepresenting the majority's preferences.[103]

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[101] Strangely, the second place candidate, Ivan Čerešnješ, who won 16.4% of the vote, ran under the banner of the SDS—or rather as a "candidate endorsed by the SDS," as he stressed to me in an email exchange. Two aspects of this candidacy are odd: one, Čerešnješ was Jewish rather than Serb. Secondly, not only did Čerešnješ remain in Sarajevo once the actual fighting began, while the rest of the SDS leadership resettled in Pale to direct the siege of the city, but he rose to the post of head of the Jewish community in BiH. In that position, he was instrumental in organizing the evacuation of thousands of the city's residents and was later awarded the French Legion of Honour for his services. After the war, Čerešnješ resettled in Israel. Mr. Čerešnješ explained his affiliation with the SDS logically: he was approached by all three of the major parties to run under their banner, as they all believed having Jewish Bosnians in their ranks would soften the accusations of nationalism, in particular, by the internationals. He opted for arms-length affiliation with the SDS because they were the only ones apparently willing to explicitly acknowledge the Holocaust as a significant and formative event in Yugoslav history, and to (nominally) distance themselves for World War II-related historical revisionism.

[102] I should note that I disagree with the latter portion of this statement. As I will demonstrate, by the time of the 1992 referendum on BiH's independence, it was clear that Belgrade was only waiting for an official "cause" to begin its assault on the republic, as it had already begun the war in Slovenia and Croatia a year earlier. Thus, to label the 1992 referendum as a "cause" of the war in BiH is to virtually ignore the entirety of the broader context of late-Yugoslav politics, as this chapter has shown.

[103] The other big question mark that remains largely unaddressed in this context is the question of voter fraud. To the best of my knowledge, very little research has been done on this question, even though the conduct of the campaign took place in an incredibly charged and volatile environment (Andjelic 2003, 156-184). Anecdotal

Meanwhile, as the civic parties struggled to articulate an alternative vision, and to come together to realize it, the nationalists not only formed a coalition but coalesced their visions to such an extent that "it was difficult to distinguish the party programs; only the names of the parties and their respective ethnic groups were different" (Andjelic 2003, 166). Despite declarations of a new-age version of brotherhood and unity, all three of the main nationalist blocs worked hard to make their audiences understand the consequences of defeat. The respective leaders insisted that "*the political conflict was about 'either/or'* whereas issues related to the socio-economic situation of the country were of lesser importance." As time went on, the rhetoric became even more alarmist: "'less than two months before the elections, the rhetoric of blood and soil, of bright past and the spirit of ancestors prevailed'…Another observer describes the electoral campaign as 'a state of general insecurity and citizens' fear with regard to the outcome of the then crisis of BiH society'…Other authors from BiH also claim that the ethnic parties created a sense of 'collective xenophobic fear' and of 'general anxiety'" (Stojanović 2014, 12). All the while, the leaders of the respective parties attended each other's rallies and spoke of the ancestral friendships and bonds between the Muslim, Serb, and Croat peoples, and promised a functional coalition government after the elections.

Stojanović argues that voters in BiH were thus effectively presented with a prisoner's dilemma. Even if they personally preferred the civic or reformist parties, they were convinced that their neighbours would vote for their "own," meaning their respective nationalist parties. In such a scenario, the prospective voter and his or her ethnic group would be left "unprotected" in the event of any future conflict.[104] If they were ambivalent about their own identity, it

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evidence, both from the literature and personal correspondences, suggests that fraud, in various forms including vote buying, may have been a more significant factor than previously assumed.

[104] By November of 1990, it was certainly possible to speak of conflict and disintegration as the Croatian-wing of the SDS had already in August of that year begun setting up several so-called "Serb Autonomous Oblasts" (SAOs) which would eventually merge to form the RSK. Indeed, as early as 1989, operatives from Serbia were (illegally) active on the territory of BiH (Andjelic 2003, 115-118). By March of 1991, full-fledged war engulfed Croatia and Slovenia, while various paramilitary organizations were active in BiH by the end of 1990. The citizens of BiH would watch, with a growing sense of unease, as the situation deteriorated, until finally all-out war came to BiH as well, in April of 1992.

increasingly seemed like the others were not and would vote accordingly.[105] Members of the Serb community, in particular, may have been left with this impression after the SDS in Croatia won less than 2% of the vote, while the HDZ ended-up with a legislative super majority (ibid, 12). Perversely, and though they spoke out of both sides of their mouth when it came to the question of violence, the nationalists increasingly seemed like the "safe" bet for many BiH voters, in every sense of the term. Had there been time to play the "game" a second, third or fourth time, Stojanović speculates, socio-economic and thus non-nationalist concerns may eventually have won out. As it was, however, "the ethno-nationalist parties won as much as 74.7% of the vote; the turnout was of approximately 75%. In no other post-communist country, including the other Yugoslav republics, did the political parties that explicitly relied on ethnic differences obtain such a large popular consensus" (ibid, 9-10). Institutional arrangements were a significant factor, as noted, but so had been the cynical campaign orchestrated by the respective nationalist camps—and the broader and generational marginalization of the *demos* in BiH. Thanks to the provisions of the Dayton constitutional order, which effectively mirrored the worst elements of the 1990 system, this has remained the dominant reality of BiH politics since 1995 as well.

The unravelling of the old order and the battle to decide the shape of the new one was a fundamentally schizophrenic experience for the citizens of BiH. It had not been their actions that brought down the previous regime, though they harboured a plethora of concerns about the Communists' increasingly catastrophic mismanagement of the economy in particular. The only other alternative, however, was at best confusing and, at worst, dangerous. How could the nationalists who were in Croatia and Serbia (and the political airspace between) at loggerheads campaign and govern in harmony in BiH? How could they pledge to preserve the country's mosaic of peoples in victory, yet simultaneously speak of dark consequences in defeat?

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[105] I will argue in Chapter V that the worst aspects of this system have been preserved in the post-war Dayton constitutional order. It is therefore unsurprising that Asim Mujkić uses the exact same metaphor as Stojanović, the Prisoner's Dilemma, to describe the country's post-war political system (Mujkić 2008, 185-198).

The Communists meanwhile were anti-nationalists but they had led the country into crisis in the first place and now there was so much more than unemployment to fear. Stojanović is correct to argue that a vote for the nationalists was, in a sense, rational in this context. But the fundamentally *irrational* context of the elections and the situation in Yugoslavia more broadly at the time is likewise salient.

Indeed, as the polling data on the nationalist party ban suggests, if anything, the citizens of BiH had more foresight than their elites; they would have preferred to foreclose the possibility of an ethnic question altogether. But if the institutional arrangements post-1974 had pushed the cart down the hill, then Milošević's tactics in Serbia drove it off the cliff altogether. In BiH, there was a collective, vested elite interest not merely in preserving the "nationalized" institutions of the '74 constitution but expanding them to such an extent as to virtually foreclose all other options. Some, like Milošević's proxies in the SDS, moved more decisively and with greater purpose in this direction. Insomuch as we speak of an engine of dissolution in Yugoslavia, we speak of Milošević's nationalist project and all its middle-managers. Nevertheless, whether they imagined new states, old states, fractured states, or centralized states, all of the respective nationalist actors in BiH acted to cement the ethno-national as the exclusive category of political and social identity in these new polities. None of the three parties that collectively won 75% of the vote had any interest in representing the interests of BiH's *citizens* or facilitating their participation in a genuinely democratic process.

A House Divided

The four works that have most influenced this dissertation (those of Andjelic, Glaurdić, Gagnon, and Mujkić) end their analyses just before the actual war in BiH, in the case of the first three, or begin just after it, in the case of Mujkić. Marko Attila Hoare's indispensable survey of the conflict itself notwithstanding (Hoare 2004), I think this a significant omission. In a sense, the actual war and the horrors of ethnic cleansing, genocide, and mass

rape that accompanied it were for its duration the end of political conduct, at least, for the majority of the population. The most salient contribution of this text, however, has been to demonstrate how this *extinguishing* of the political in the late 1980s and early 1990s was the product of far longer, far more complex patterns of social development in BiH and the Yugoslav lands as a whole. Specifically, how the (re)emergence of nationalist politics in the 1980s closely mimicked the emergence of the nation-state in the Balkans in the first place. That is, that the advent of the nation-state form was an attempt on the part of authoritarian and parasitic elites to preserve themselves in power in moments of profound social transition; and that this was as much the case in the Balkans at the end of the 19th century, as the Ottoman Empire collapsed, as it was at the end of the 1980s, as the second Yugoslav regime began to decline.

Nevertheless, as it concerns the omission of the war, the authors cited here suggest to us that Carl von Clausewitz's famed dictum, "war is politics continued by other means" is only true if by "politics" we understand a distinctly non-political exercise thereof. More to the point, the politics of war tends only to benefit social elites while making victims of the majority of the populace. As I argued in Chapter II, the establishment of nation-states in the Balkans was always a coercive project, a project intended to foreclose the possibilities for political participation more generally. It was, in short, a project intended to marginalize the democratic potential of ordinary peoples, while facilitating their plunder by state (and nation) building elites.[106] As noted, the reanimation of this project in the 1990s thus followed a virtually identical trajectory.

I reiterate this point in order to contextualize the period that followed the 1990 polls in BiH and why this dissertation will likewise largely avoid any detailed discussion of the subsequent war (as I avoided, to a lesser extent, discussing the period between 1941-1945). Granted, the November 1990 elections in BiH produced a landslide victory for the national-

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[106] In Chapter V, I will also make an argument about why the state building process in the Balkans, while similar in essential form, was quite distinct in type with the process as such, especially as it transpired in Western Europe and in settler-colonial societies like Canada, the US, and Australia.

ists, what followed, however, was not coherent government but a cyclone of centrifugal political brinksmanship, leading to complete and utter chaos—both in terms of public administration and the day-to-day lives of ordinary citizens—albeit chaos with a perverse "methodology." As virtually all of the scholars cited in this chapter note, the causes for the post-1990 crisis in BiH were rooted in the self-interested and anti-democratic conduct of the ruling nationalist parties and represented a profound betrayal of the expectations of BiH's voters. Almost as soon as the results of the elections were made public, the nationalists' promises of co-existence, co-operation, and accommodation were forgotten. As were, perhaps most importantly for my analysis, their pledges to democratize BiH society.

First was the division of spoils. After nearly three months of negotiations, a working arrangement for the division of responsibilities between the SDA, SDS, and HDZ was agreed to by the parties. In the meantime "[eight] out of [BiH's twelve] banks worked with negative equity, but the government did nothing. This meant that most of the economy faced imminent collapse. The ruling parties, however, cared only about how to appoint new managers for the state companies from the nationalist ranks, while the question of whether the company was successful did not bother them" (Andjelic 2003, 193). The whole process, of course, was conducted on the basis of a rigid ethnic key. Whatever competence had remained in the skeletal structures of the Communist ruling apparatus now dissolved. "Thus, when the ministries were divided, the parties assumed full control over certain portfolios, which were delegated to their minister regardless of the opinion or policy of their partners in the government…The government officials were responsible not to the Prime Minister, the Parliament or any state institutions. The result was the fragmentation of power." "This," Andjelic notes, "on top of the power vacuum of the late communist era, eventually resulted in lawlessness and chaos" (ibid, 192). Above all, the further deterioration of economic conditions in the country made the politics of fear, on which the nationalists depended to remain in power, more and more effective.

As street protests of destitute workers and seniors became a near daily occurrence, so did the increasingly more chauvinist mutual accusations of the respective parties.

The brazen plunder of public resources that accompanied this process of fragmentation was immediately evident. In a sense, the criminal class had risen to power. Radovan Karadžić, who had spent a significant part of the 1980s serving time for embezzlement, was now the leader of the second largest party in the republican parliament. His co-defendant, Momčilo Krajišnik, was now Speaker. The HDZ's Jure Pelivan "the former National Bank Governor who had been sacked and imprisoned during the Agrokomerc scandal" became Prime Minister. Meanwhile, Alija Izetbegović, the new President of the Presidency and head of the overall election winning SDA, spent five years in prison, accused by the then Communist authorities of having been part of a radical Islamist cell.[107] Fikret Abdić, then still part of the SDA and the party's other Presidency representative, had likewise been imprisoned as part of the Agrokomerc affair (ibid, 191-192). Moreover, and in all three cases, the SDA, SDS, and HDZ's most loyal foot soldiers were composed of small-time criminals (ibid, 209, Andreas 2008, 20-41). At the same time, Milošević illegally looted the federal treasury to the tune of approximately 2.6 billion Deutsch Marks in order to buy hard foreign currency for his upcoming war

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[107] Whether Izetbegović actually was a Muslim radical has remained a lingering controversy of the post-Yugoslav period. Even at the time, Edina Becirevic argues, his trial and imprisonment were symptomatic of a (Serb) nationalist putsch within the Communist establishment of Yugoslavia (Becirevic 2014, 25-26). This point ties into a broader discussion about the SDA, however, and specifically whether the party's program was comparable to those of the SDS and the HDZ, especially their later war-time, that is, genocidal mutations. To my mind, Andjelic has the right of it: "…the main concern of the SDA was not [BiH] but the number of Moslems appointed in the various institutions…Although one can find many examples of how this party behaved with more tolerance than the other two partners ruling [BiH], the nationalistic character of the Moslem leaders prevented them from adopting a wiser policy, which could have produced a solution for the future" (Andjelic 2003, 204). This became a problem especially after the fighting actually started and the SDA was left to cobble together a government of national [sic] unity. The SDA's authoritarian, Bosniak-nationalist vision was ill suited for the defence of a polity (and specifically, the conduct of an armed forces) that contained large numbers of Serbs and Croats. Criminal and extremist elements in the SDA ranks, in particular, were instrumental in an assortment of war crimes perpetrated against the Serb and Croat populations of BiH, including the capital where the chain of command was arguably at its firmest. Though there is no evidence that the SDA leadership ever pursued a coherent campaign of ethnic cleansing and/or genocide, like the SDS and HDZ to a lesser extent, crimes against humanity certainly took place on the party's watch. As Hoare notes, what BiH needed, and initially had, was an Army of the Republic of BiH (ARBiH) akin to the all-Yugoslav Partisan cause rather than an armed-wing of the SDA (Hoare 2004). Though hobbled by various defections in the early days of the war, the multi-ethnic character of the ARBiH was, in the end, most hurt by the policy of forced *Bosniakization* pursued by the SDA. And certainly, since the war, the SDA has been a central player in the political-criminal plunder of what has remained of the public coffers and common goods of the country.

efforts, to pay off various underlings, and secure momentary social peace in Serbia, primarily in the form of workers' back wages and pensions (Andjelic 2003, 198). As noted in Chapter III, the economic criminality of the 1980s in Yugoslavia led directly to the war crimes and crimes against humanity of the 1990s—the underlying political economy, based on accumulation through dispossession, was the same, as were its architects.[108]

With the opposition decimated at the polls, Andjelic argues, and state posts divided in turn, the surreal spectacle of "governance" that followed served only to enable the final step of nationalist dominance: the political and territorial division of BiH and Yugoslavia as a whole. As war engulfed Slovenia, then Croatia, and finally seemed on the brink of swallowing BiH whole, the country's citizens could only look on in despair: "The incompetence of the nationalists was universal, covering all parties and all regions" (ibid, 195). The only possible points of agreement among the triumvirate were three-fold: the nationalists acted in lock-step to keep the remnants of the Communist establishment from re-assuming a sliver of control, even when and where they were constitutionally and legally entitled to as much. Secondly, they likewise formed a united front in keeping the "Others" from taking any government or ministerial posts, again, even when this was constitutionally and legally required (ibid, 196). Finally, framing the entirety of their conduct was a commitment to preserving the state's authoritarian structures, while simultaneously dismantling the remnants of the self-managed economy and transforming them into the party's fiefdoms. The post-1974 liberalization of media and information was therefore deeply problematic for the new nationalist establishment:

> The nationalists attempted to change or destroy many features of the previous rule
> as a logical consequence of the new political system. But they also attempted to de-

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[108] I am reminded of a popular anecdote that ably captures the overt criminal elements of the war and the processes leading to it. A HDZ militia enters a bus, packed with fleeing refugees somewhere in Herzegovina. They demand that everyone on board the bus deposit all their cash and valuables into a sack that is being passed around. Scrambling, a woman at the back of the bus stands up with a Croatian passport in her hand. "But gentlemen," she cries, "I am a Croat!" The commander of the unit smiles politely and answers, "Ma'am, this is a robbery not a border crossing."

stroy the parts of the system that worked well. To make the situation worse, and unpopular even among their own voters, they did not hide their principles of ethnic division, which they employed everywhere…The example of one of the few systems still functioning in [BiH]—the state owned media—shows the improbability of such rule. The new parties in power wanted to return to the previous system of controlled information. Strong criticism and descriptions of mediocrity in the highest ranks of the new government was not something the leaders wanted to hear. Therefore, they passed a new law on information. This would enable them to behave like the chiefs during the hardest communist period and very much like the leaders in the rest of the Serbo-Croat speaking republics. Also, they discussed constantly the possible ethnic division of radio channels (ibid, 208).

The BiH Constitutional Court struck down the decision and the media, at least in Sarajevo, remained relatively independent throughout the war years, especially the youth station Radio Sarajevo and the *Oslobođenje* (*Liberation*) newspaper. Nevertheless, the episode revealed that democratization, in any meaningful sense of the term, was not part of the nationalist's regime "change" strategy. Moreover, as various journalist associations cried foul, and were supported in turn by masses of citizens, the incident demonstrated that "the very same people who had voted for the nationalists six months earlier" did not in actuality support their *policies* (ibid, 208-209). Indeed, it was now clear that nationalist rule was an entirely different beast from their lofty campaign promises (even if sinister hints had, arguably, been apparent all along).

The Communist ruling establishment had betrayed their ideological commitment to worker's democracy over the course of their half-century of rule in Yugoslavia. In contrast, the idea of democracy was so marginal to the nationalists' promised changes that it is truly senseless to speak of the period of nationalist rule as democracy "unleashing" seething intercommunal tensions, a popular journalistic trope of the time. The democratic experiment in BiH was completely hijacked by the nationalist parties who worked actively to create the conditions for violence rather than political change. The only thing unleashed by the elections in 1990 was the political-criminal underclass that had since 1974, and 1980 in particular, ef-

fectively emptied the LCY and its respective republican wings of what little democratic-reformist energy remained its ranks after the 1968 purges.

How marginal the idea of democratic change had become is shown by one particular scene from the opening session of the new parliament:

> At the opening session of Parliament, the SDS deputy claimed he 'could take an oath only on the Bible and swear allegiance to the Serb people.' When the agreement on the text was finally within the reach of Parliament, another issue was raised. The SDS deputies wanted it written in Cyrillic, a demand which was followed by the HDZ stipulation that it should be translated into Croatian, even though the only difference in the whole text was in a single letter in the word meaning democracy: *demokratija* and *demokracija* (ibid, 196).

Similar farcical clashes consumed the parliament for the remainder of its life. As violence escalated in neighbouring Slovenia and Croatia, and it became clear that Belgrade was intent on using force to accomplish its aims (and that, in turn, the Yugoslav National Army (JNA) had fallen completely under Milošević's control), the SDA and HDZ deputies (with the support of the Communists) began to lay the groundwork for a BiH independence referendum. The SDS, in turn, finally revealed the operations that they had thereto conducted in secret with the Belgrade regime, declaring unilaterally a series of SAOs, as they had done earlier in Croatia. By October 1991, the SDS had left the BiH parliament all together and formed what they called the "Assembly of the Serb People in Bosnia and Herzegovina." In November, they organized a referendum (unrecognized by the official BiH organs) in which SDS supporters "voted to remain part of the rump Yugoslavia" (Nettelfield 2010, 67). Claiming a mandate to proceed accordingly, the SDS declared a "Republic of the Serb People of Bosnia and Herzegovina" (later redubbed simply as *Republika Srpska* (RS)) and instructed its lieutenants to form a network of crisis staffs across the country, even in areas where ethnic Serbs were not in a majority, as Nettelfield points out (ibid). These cells became the organizational pillars of the subsequent campaign of expulsions and murder that followed the SDS's seizure

of control in eastern BiH, with the backing of the JNA and various armed paramilitary groups from Serbia and Montenegro.

All of this played out as Milošević met with the new Croatian President Franjo Tuđman in March of 1991 and struck what has since become known as the "Karađorđevo Agreement" to divide BiH between Serbia and Croatia (Roe 2005, 33-37). Karađorđevo was a repeat of the 1939 Cvetković–Maček Agreement discussed in Chapter II and (after its collapse) was followed by the Graz Agreement struck between Karadžić and Mate Boban, the Zagreb-backed head of the HDZ. Boban came to the helm of his party in the wake of Karađorđevo, as the HDZ declared its own "Croat Community of Herceg-Bosna," later the "Croat Republic of Herceg-Bosna," at the behest of the Zagreb government. The HDZ's BiH branch split in two, one aligned with Sarajevo, the other with Zagreb and, in practice, Karadžić's SDS (Pejanović 2004, 7). The Zagreb-backed wing, in turn, purged the HDZ BiH of its "Bosnian sympathizers." This dramatic shift in policy, part of Tuđman's desire to carve out of BiH a "Greater Croatia," led to the so-called "Bosniak-Croat Civil War" (1992-1994),[109] a sub-conflict of the wider war in BiH and Croatia. This clash ended in the collapse of the "Herceg-Bosna" project but was, as in eastern BiH, marked by a determined campaign of expulsions and extermination, primarily of areas with significant Bosniak populations by the assorted HDZ militias. As in 1939, Karađorđevo, Graz and the entirety of Tuđman's BiH policy demonstrated the fundamentally symbiotic relationship between the nationalist establishments in Zagreb and Belgrade.

Squeezed on all sides, the Sarajevo government declared an independence referendum for February 29 and March 1, 1992. Urged by the SDS to boycott the vote, many Serbs stayed home but the result was nevertheless clear: on a turnout of 63.4%, 99% voted for independ-

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[109] A misnomer, as noted, because the forces aligned with the Sarajevo government, that is with BiH included Croats and Serbs. Granted, the majority of the BiH Army forces were Bosniaks though not necessarily (or almost certainly) "political" Bosniaks (e.g. the SDA). As such, it is perhaps more accurate to refer to this as the war between Croatia and BiH, as the HDZ was clearly backed by Zagreb and the latter had effectively invaded the now sovereign BiH, as Serbia had earlier done the same via its proxies in the SDS.

ence. The day after, March 2, 1992, SDS-manned barricades sprung up all over Sarajevo (Pejanović 2004, 54). On the hills surrounding the city, JNA guns and various Belgrade-backed paramilitaries began digging in. Milošević and Karadžić knew the Sarajevo government lacked anything even vaguely resembling an army. The idea, as it had been in Croatia and the towns and villages of eastern BiH, was to blitz the city. Once the capital fell, the rest of the country would follow. The SDS had made its plan clear in its so-called "Six Strategic Goals" memorandum discussed in their new Assembly. The document called for:

1. State delineation from the other two communities.

2. [A corridor] between [Semberija] and Krajina.

3. Establishment of a corridor in the valley of the Drina River, meaning the elimination of the Drina as a border between two Serb states.

4. Establishment of a border on the rivers of the Una and Neretva.

5. Division of the city of Sarajevo into Serb and Muslim parts, and the establishment of state authority in each part.

6. Outlet for [the RS] to the sea (Nettelfield 2010, 68)

All of these objectives required the mass expulsions and murder, in short, the genocide of the country's non-Serb population. Neither Milošević nor Karadžić counted on military defeat and, least of all, on political resistance on the part of ordinary Bosnians and Herzegovinians.

A Political Moment

In response to the deteriorating political situation, late March and early April 1992 marked the "month of Valter"— a series of massive month-long demonstrations and actions, drawing crowds of fifty thousand and more, that appealed for peace, and the preservation of "brotherhood and unity" in BiH.[110] The protests were named in honour of Vladimir "Valter" Perić, a Yugoslav Partisan guerrilla originally from Serbia, who had died during the liberation of Sarajevo, on April 6, 1945. A 1972 Yugoslav film about his exploits made Valter an icon

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[110] A portion of my analysis in this section appears also in my article "Princip, Valter, Pejić and the Raja: Elite Domination and Betrayal in Bosnia-Herzegovina" in *the South-East European Journal of Political Science*, Vol. I, No. 3, 2013.

of the city, especially the climatic final scene. To the stirring melody of the film's main theme, and while gazing upon the capital from a nearby hill, the German officer who spent years hunting Valter explains to a superior, newly arrived from Berlin, that he had finally found the crafty Partisan. "Tell me his name immediately!" the newcomer declares, to which the veteran officer responds "I will show him to you." "Do you see this city?" he asks, *"Das ist Valter."* The romantic ideal of the city itself as a place of resistance, of multiculturalism, of brotherhood and unity, of Yugoslavism distilled, was precisely the answer required to counter the fatalist and essentialist narratives of the militant nationalists. It was also a desperate interjection of radical political potential on the part of ordinary citizens into the cataclysmic confrontations of the ruling elites.

In other words, it was a "fugitive moment" of the sort imagined by Wolin.[111] To him, such moments "activate the demos and destroy boundaries that bar access to political experience. Individuals from excluded social strata take on responsibilities, deliberate about goals and choices, and share in decisions that have broad consequences" (Wolin 2004, 38). But they are dangerous to elites because these genuine democratic experiments are "born in transgressive acts, for the demos could not participate in power without shattering the class, status, and value systems by which it was excluded" (ibid, 37). In Sarajevo in 1992, this meant a popular turn against the entire edifice of kleptocratic nationalist rule. To Wolin, in the liberal-capitalist regimes of the West, experiments with the political are made "fugitive," that is fleeting, through the process of economic and political alienation, (what he refers to as "constitutionalization") and the state's monopoly of violence (ibid, 41-44). According to this radical democratic thesis, and as detailed in Chapter I, capitalist economics and modern statism in reality foreclose so much political potential that free elections are allowed precisely because their ability to significantly alter these realities is minimal. Nevertheless, while broadly sympathet-

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[111] The importance I ascribe to these events stands in dramatic contrast to the available literature on the subject, proving once again, I believe, how marginal the "democratic thesis" I advance in this dissertation has been to existing scholarly treatments of BiH's descent into war.

ic to this thesis, I argue that a tremendous amount of significant contestation takes place within these "minimal" parameters all the same. In BiH, where political-economic practices were neither liberal nor capitalist, the elite resorted to an appropriately "primitive" response in order to *preserve* these arrangements. As a result, the political moment in BiH was made "fugitive" not through constitutionalization or alienation but through violence. Or more specifically, through several competing would-be monopolies of violence. The political, if we follow this logic to its terrible conclusion, became a refugee.[112]

On April 4 a small, spontaneous protest by 40 some-odd students "demanding the resignation of all political parties" grew overnight to a protest of a hundred thousand people (Pejic 2012). The crowds were being encouraged by the production crew, staff, and reporters of *Radio Televizija Sarajevo* (RTS) who much to the irritation of the entire political establishment began airing a live, uninterrupted feed of the convergences. At the centre of the decision to air this coverage was the production director of RTS, Nenad Pejić, who decided that the moment for "objective journalism" was long passed; the only opportunity to avert bloodshed now rested with the people of BiH rising up against their political leaders. The same alliance of citizens and journalists who had months earlier mobilized to rebuff the nationalists' attempts to seize control of all of the country's media outlets in the first place was now in the streets again, attempting to prevent a war.

"For [BiH's] political parties," Pejić writes in retrospect, "this was the greatest threat ever posed to them. An organic movement was spontaneously demanding their wholesale resignation" (ibid). Aggressive and direct phone calls from both Radovan Karadžić, and Alija

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[112] Figuratively and literally. An incredible auto-biographical short film by Zdravko Grebo illustrates this point in poignant detail. Entitled "The Letter" (*Pismo*) it juxtaposes images of the crushing of the 1968 student protests, the 1992 anti-war protests, and the war-time Siege of Sarajevo. The film focuses on the life of Dr. Grebo, a prominent student activist in the 60s, an outspoken anti-nationalist in the 90s, and one of the hundreds of thousands of Sarajevans who remained in the city during the war. There is virtually no dialogue in the film, as the viewer is left to make their own sense of the transitions between student utopianism and war. The film not only traces the same chronology of significance as this dissertation, it much more ably speaks to the catastrophic ideological an *emotional* disillusionment that the end of Yugoslavia represented for an entire generation (Grebo 1992). Dr. Grebo remains a paradigmatic voice of critique in contemporary BiH.

Izetbegović followed with both accusing Pejić of attempting to orchestrate a coup d'état—against Yugoslavia and BiH, respectively. Instead of terminating the broadcast as demanded, Pejić managed to have both men agree to a debate in the RTS studios, along with the presence of a European mediator, the (interim) leader of the HDZ, Miljenko Brkić,[113] as well as General Milutin Kukanjac of the JNA. The subsequent negotiations were not broadcast, instead another Yugoslav-era Partisan film was aired, the classic *Neretva*. "Never in my life have I witnessed negotiations that were so important," Pejić describes, "and were being conducted by individuals that were so irresponsible. Their bigotry, verbal traps, accusations, threats, and half-truths were appalling. They immediately dived into accusing and attacking each other while hundreds of thousands of citizens demanded peace on the streets of Sarajevo" (ibid). Pejić's desperation only increased: "At one point [Karadžić] wanted to leave the studio...I held him by his suit as he stood up from the chair. Shortly afterward, [Izetbegović]...wanted to leave as well, so I grabbed him too. I held onto their suit jackets and implored them not to leave. By this point, their security details were on full alert and, like faithful dogs, they were ready to defend their masters. But both...sat down and my sweaty palms released their suit jackets, leaving a little wrinkle on each" (ibid).

The SDA and SDS leaders' debate was taking place as in the streets the crowds stormed and occupied the legislature and as the first shots began to ring through the city. In a RTS evening news broadcast from April 4, 1992, the sound of ambulance sirens mixes with the chanting of protestors. In an impromptu scene, the actor and writer Josip Pejaković[114] is seen, microphone in hand, in a large crowd, imploring the viewers at home to come into the streets. "We have been left to ourselves," he declares, "...we must show them that we can come to an agreement...we must come to an agreement, as we always have. Come to the gov-

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[113] At this moment, Stjepan Kljuić had already been replaced by Zagreb as the head of the HDZ but Boban had not yet taken the helm, in turn.

[114] Pejaković ran for the Reformists as a candidate on the "Others" list in 1990, coming in third and winning approximately 19% or about 317,000 votes.

ernment buildings, do not be afraid. You miners...you hungry masses, come! We won't give up Bosnia! We won't!" The crowd picks up Pejaković's invocation and chants with him. A bystander is seen leaning into the microphone, shouting "Long live the Partisans!" (RTS 1992). In a sense, the "self-managed" ideals of the Yugoslav period had only grown stronger in BiH, at least, as the horrific realities of nationalist administration set in. Precisely because "actually existing" Communism and nationalism had betrayed the democratic aspirations of ordinary Yugoslavs, it was now finally not only possible but, indeed, absolutely imperative for the citizens to intervene in the politics of the state with radical *political* aspirations.

They had begun too late, however. Perhaps a year earlier, in March of 1991, when similar protests gripped Belgrade and demanded the ouster of Milošević, a pan-Yugoslav citizen insurrection might have charted out a different course for the now doomed polity. But Milošević had used tanks to put down the uprising and confronted by such incredible violence, the people of Serbia and Yugoslavia as a whole retreated, understandably, in fear. On April 6, 1992, as a massive procession marched down Sarajevo's main artery, Karadžić's snipers, holed up along with the rest of the SDS leadership in the Holiday Inn building across from the parliament, fired. Panic ensued, the crowds scattered, as Karadžić et al fled the city, for the last time. The same day, the European Community (EC) and the United States both formally recognized the sovereignty of BiH (Pejanović 2004, 57). The impeding siege of the city that began that night was not fully lifted until the end of February, 1996. In truth, the war had begun weeks earlier, however, as entire villages were levelled and thousands expelled by the SDS and their allies across central and eastern BiH. But with the capital surrounded, the war had finally, fully, officially begun in Yugoslavia's central republic.

The chief architects of Yugoslavia's unravelling and BiH's cataclysm had met the last, desperate intervention of the republic's citizens with sniper fire. No other alternative was left to them when they were confronted by the organized agency and power of the country's citi-

zens. The elite project to seize and thereafter completely dominate, politically and economi-

cally, BiH and Yugoslavia could only be accomplished through violence. While significant,

this last-ditch popular attempt to sack the entirety of the BiH political establishment must also

be understood in the context of the discussion in the preceding three chapters; namely, the

century and a half long history of nation-state construction in the Balkans. The political and

democratic potential of BiH's citizens had for so long been suppressed that its re-emergence

in the final moments of Yugoslavia's existence was too weak and too late to dismantle the

incredible apparatus of fear, violence, and plunder that had been created in Belgrade (but also

Zagreb and Sarajevo). The movement was "fleeting," in the very worst sense of the ideal

Wolin imagines. Nevertheless, in different circumstances, 1992 might have been the begin-

ning of a revolution and not the beginning of a war—a fact not to be lost sight of as it con-

cerns the potential for democratic change in BiH hereafter.

Conclusion(s)

Alternatives to Yugoslavia's bloody disintegration existed as alternatives to the rise of

the predatory and authoritarian nation state in the Balkans had existed all along. Whether it

was the Balkan federalist tradition, the New Left project in the 1960s and 1970s, or even the

final citizen insurrection of 1992, different paths did present themselves. But as I have at-

tempted to demonstrate throughout this dissertation, there also existed the committed and ca-

pable agents of reactionary statism and nationalism. As so often before, these actors proved

more successful, through a variety of means, in imposing their vision of the social order to be

on the people of BiH.

This statement, however, should not be read as a fatalist one. The weakness of BiH's

democratic tradition is the result, in the final analysis, of particular and peculiar social and

institutional arrangements, with deep historical roots as I have shown. Various aspects of the-

se authoritarian and kleptocratic arrangements have mutated but nevertheless persisted over

the past century or so. At the same time, the state-nationalist project in the Balkans has engendered a tremendous amount of resentment among its victims, the overwhelming majority of the population, regardless of presumed ethnicity or nationality. Much as one can speak of the "internal contradictions of capital accumulation" in capitalist societies one can speak of the internal contradictions of capital (and power) accumulation in a decidedly non-capitalist polity like BiH. Time and again, these contradictions have resulted in spectacular insurrections against this ruling order. Time and again, these insurrections have failed to make meaningful *political* changes. But these broken aspirations have nevertheless left behind their bones, on the basis of which a new a democratic analysis is possible and necessary.

In the closing chapter of this dissertation, I will show how the hitherto failed political experiments of the Yugoslav and Bosnian and Herzegovinian peoples nevertheless offer the analytical framework not only to critique the post-war constitutional and political economic order in BiH but how they also represent the concrete atoms of genuine democratic transformation.

Chapter V: Towards the Polis in BiH

<u>Introduction</u>

The final result of the reactionary triumph in Yugoslavia after the flawed 1974 constitutional reforms, and the purge of the LCY's democratic-reformist elements, was the country's complete dissolution. No other republic paid as high a price for this disastrous turn of events as BiH. The 1992-1995 war in BiH left nearly a hundred thousand people dead, half the country's population displaced, and virtually the entire economy destroyed. The conflict was marked by the worst atrocities on the European continent since the Holocaust. Moreover, these organized campaigns of genocide, ethnic cleansing, sexual violence, and dispossession left deep tears in the country's social fabric, which two decades hence have yet to be fully stitched together again.

The international community's intervention in the war, the apex of which was marked by the signing of the Dayton Peace Accords in Paris on December 14, 1995, nevertheless represented an opportunity for a genuine democratic reboot of the BiH polity. Two decades later, making sense of the failure of the "Euro-Atlantic" project in BiH is only possible if we recognize Dayton not as a break but a *continuation* of the same policies that destroyed the Yugoslav federation in the first place. Salvaging the potential for democratic politics in BiH today, however, will require more than merely another reboot; it will require a paradigmatic break with virtually all dominant socio-political practices and institutions in the country.

This chapter will be divided into three broad sections. First, I will explain the technical aspects of the contemporary Dayton constitutional order in BiH. I will contrast this with the results of the system in practice, focusing on the "anti-political" dimensions of the *actually existing* Dayton regime. Owing to its fundamentally anti-political character, in the next section I will explain why "reform" of such an order is categorically impossible through a survey of the most significant constitutional reform efforts in BiH since the end of the war. The final

section of the chapter will assert the necessity for a radical and popular *political* intervention into the politics of BiH in order to achieve meaningful, substantive change. In other words, an argument for the kind of political intervention that has concerned me throughout this text; a "moment," as Wolin would refer to it that nevertheless represents an opportunity to genuinely transform even the most elastic authoritarian and oligarchic regime.

The admittedly provocative central contention of this chapter, namely, the structural impossibility of "reform" of the Dayton system, should be addressed in some manner from the onset, however. When I suggest that meaningful democratic change in BiH requires the intervention of popular, participatory movements—of the sort witnessed in the country in the summers of 2012 and 2013, and the spring of 2014—I am following James Scott, David Graeber, and Sheldon Wolin's arguments concerning the need for social upheaval in the pursuit of genuine political democracy. Like Wolin, I argue that democracy requires revolution, "the wholesale transgression of inherited forms," as democracy "was born in transgressive acts, for the demos could not participate in power without shattering the class, status, and value systems by which it was excluded" (Wolin 2004, 37). The primary transgression necessary in contemporary BiH is a turn against the entire nation-state complex as it exists, including its kleptocratic political economy, and an articulation of a politics of participation and civic autonomy.

The thesis proposed in this chapter is a radical one. Indeed, this chapter (much as the text as a whole) aims to "grasp the root of the matter,"[115] that is, the origins of the catastrophic socio-economic situation in BiH on the one hand, and the seemingly dominant political apathy of the country's public, on the other (Marx 1843). The peculiar political economy that has shaped the formation the state in the Balkans, in which the use of nationalism has obscured the process of accumulation through dispossession, has been the primary explanatory frame-

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[115] In the sense of Marx's famed definition of what it means to be "radical."

work of this dissertation. It is this process that has impoverished the people of BiH, on the one hand, and necessarily alienated them from genuine political agency, on the other.

But the "anarcho-liberal" perspective of my analysis, as I referred to it in Chapter I, also offers a way to think about BiH's future, rather than merely the countrys past. From an ethical standpoint, given the preceding analysis, the question of "what is to be done?" necessarily arises. The answer(s) or rather, the conceptual framework to raise new kinds of questions, *political* questions, above all else, is the primary contribution of this project. Accordingly, the following analysis is "prefigurative," in the sense that it aims to describe the means for establishing a kind of political order in BiH that does not yet exist (and, arguably, has never existed before, at least, not in its entirety).[116]

However, this prefiguring, like the analysis of the problem in the first place, is made on the basis of a historically constituted conception of the political, of the possibility of a participatory kind of democracy, as argued for by Wolin, Graeber, James and others, that has significant conceptual currency for contemporary BiH. Between the reality of BiH as it is, a failed state, and BiH as it could be, a polis, is the question of how a society can transform from the former to the latter. The task of this chapter is to both insist on the importance of this question and to offer one potential trajectory. It is to argue, in other words, that if authoritarianism is elastic, so too is the potential for genuine democratic transformation; though often dormant, it is never quite extinguished.

The Dayton Constitutional Order

The contemporary constitutional order in BiH is a highly fragmented ethnically-marked consociational regime or what has been elsewhere referred to as a "complex federal-

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[116] Here I am explicitly borrowing the idea of prefigurative politics from the canon of contemporary anarchist studies, not only in the sense of advocating for a political order that does not yet exist but also that the "organizational form that a [movement] takes should embody the kind of society we wish to create" (Graeber 2013, 23). This is to me the unavoidable conclusion of the thesis Wolin advances and, in this respect at least, the anarchist dimensions of Wolin's radical democratic project are clear. I develop the significance of Wolin's anarchism for this thesis further in the conclusion.

ist" system with robust ethnic power-sharing provisions (Banović, Barreiro and Gavrić 2013, 23). Within all relevant public institutions, the country's three "constitutive peoples" (Bosniaks, Serbs, and Croats) enjoy political primacy and are appointed, selected, and elected according to their declared ethno-national identity. The state is composed of two autonomous entities, plus one special district: the Federation of Bosnia-Herzegovina (FBiH), the *Republika Srpska* (RS), and the District of Brčko, respectively. The FBiH occupies 51% of the state's territory and its population is composed primarily of the country's Bosniaks and Croats. The FBiH is further sub-divided into an additional ten "cantons," which with the exception of two ethnically mixed units, have either an explicitly Bosniak or Croat majority population (ibid, 52). The RS comprises 49% of the state's territory and is home to the overwhelming majority of the country's ethnically Serb population. The city of Brčko, sitting in the northeast of the country, strategically splits the RS into two sections,[117] and is its own self-administered unit (though technically a part of *both* the Federation and the RS), with an ethnically mixed population. Accordingly, the Federation's administration is highly fractured, like that of the central state itself, while the RS is significantly more centralized.[118] Finally, the country as a whole is divided into a 143 municipalities—a noteworthy increase over the pre-war number of 109[119]—for a population of less than four million, and an area smaller than that of the US state of West Virginia or the Canadian province of Nova Scotia.

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[117] In a sense, this "split" is the *raison d'etre* for the Brčko District. With a mind to the secessionist and obstructionist politics of the ruling Serb nationalists in the RS, the District was created by the international community to split the RS into so-called eastern and western portions. The idea was to deny the government in Pale (later, Banja Luka) a contiguous territory and thereby prevent or, at least, complicate any planned future exit from the post-war BiH state.

[118] Though lacking the Federation's cantons the two halves of the RS are nevertheless quite distinct. The western half is economically dependent and dominated by the regional capital Banja Luka. The eastern half, from Bijeljina in the north to Trebinje on the southern tip of Herzegovina, is significantly poorer, less populated, and developed (International Crisis Group 2011).

[119] Since the "inter-entity boundary line" was drawn through the middle of neighbourhoods (and occasionally, even individual homes), the increase in municipalities is almost entirely the result of existing administrative units being divided along ethnic lines. In some cases, this "split" was accompanied by ethnically-tinged name changes: such as a Foča being renamed Srbinje—literally "place of Serbs"—and Sarajevo's RS-based far-suburbs redubbed as "Serb Sarajevo." After a 2004 BiH Constitutional Court decision, this practice was dropped. Nevertheless, the now renamed "East Sarajevo" remains distinct from Sarajevo proper, while places such as Bosanski Novi and Bosanski Brod had their pre-war regional prefixes dropped (i.e. "Bosnian" was used to distinguish

Sarajevo is the country's capital and the seat of the central government, composed of a two-house legislature, the Council of Ministers (theoretically akin to the Prime Minister's office and cabinet in the Westminster system, that is, an executive within the legislature) (ibid, 42), and a three-member presidency. All of the institutions at the state, entity, and cantonal level are staffed through the use of formal and informal ethnic keys and quotas. Atop the institutional pyramid sits the Office of the High Representative (OHR), an internationally-appointed post, tasked with monitoring the "peace implementation process." The High Representative has wide-ranging powers that include the ability to create and overturn laws, sack elected and non-elected officials, and even the ability to change the state's symbols, as then High Representative Carlos Westendorp did in 1998 with BiH's flag and coat of arms. Collectively known as the "Bonn Powers" this wide jurisdiction of the OHR has been controversial both within BiH and in the academic literature, as previously discussed in Chapter I. Nevertheless, the OHR remains an integral part of the BiH constitutional system, albeit significantly less involved in day-to-day politics after 2006 and, in particular, since the arrival in 2009 of the current High Representative, the Austrian Valentine Inzko. This administrative retreat is primarily the result of shifting international priorities rather than domestic changes. Since the OHR essentially depends on the consensus and support of the international community to act, embodied by the Peace Implementation Council (PIC), BiH's declining geopolitical priority has meant a diminishing of the OHR's capacity to act (Bassuener, et al. 2014). The results of this "policy shift" will be discussed in the next section.

On the whole, the "significant role of the international community" in the country's administration, writes Florian Bieber, has made BiH "de facto a protectorate that is characterized by a loose federation with a weak central government" (Bieber 2006, 40). Moreover,

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them from similarly named towns across the border in Croatia and was not an ethnic label), thus becoming simply "Novi Grad" and "Brod," respectively. Within most cities and towns, many streets had their names changed (or "returned") to more accurately reflect the ethnicity of the new majority. Thus, the western half of Mostar is a maze of Croatian kings and priests, while east Mostar bears the names of Ottoman-era begs and ayans. Many major thoroughfares, however, continue to be named after Tito, including in the capital.

with "[fourteen] constitutions and governments with legislative powers, the political system of [BiH] is both inherently complex and asymmetrical. Ultimately, this unusually convoluted structure of governance has rendered the country unstable and dysfunctional" (ibid). I would add, however, that the most salient result of BiH's contemporary constitutional order, its convoluted structure in particular, is the profound lack of a functioning law and order regime, that is, a coherent Weberian monopoly of violence (Andjelic, Is Bosnia a Functioning State? 2014). This fact is also a significant variation on the theme of constitutions supressing and containing popular participation, as per Wolin and as discussed previously in Chapter IV (Wolin 1994). While constitutions serve to evacuate the political from politics, the BiH case reminds us that on occasion the constitutionalizing process also fails to result in "conditions favorable to the development of the modernizing state" which Wolin claims is ultimately their primary purpose (ibid, 39).[120] The constitutional process can also be instrumental to the proliferation of disorder, factionalism, and violence, precisely the phenomena these "social contracts" are meant to curb, when there is no single, dominant state project. As such, Wolin is correct that constitutions are necessary for the construction of states (rather than poleis) but he neglects to explore what happens when competing constitutional and state projects meet. It is precisely in such conflicting and "weak state" scenarios that the use of nationalism becomes important as an elite tactic against both competing state projects and emerging popular alternatives. In effect, contemporary BiH is an example of what happens when competing state projects exist under the rubric of one constitutional order, one which perpetuates rather than eliminates sectarian strife, but a regime in which elites nevertheless work collectively to suppress the *demos*. Accordingly, the absence of a Weberian monopoly of violence—and the en-

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[120] On this point, most political scientists would concur; that constitutions primarily serve to institutionalize and standardize the basic operations of the state. There is also a broader debate to be had here concerning the "nature of rights and liberties" but such a discussion is an unnecessary digression in this context. I acknowledge that constitutions serve functions *other* than merely "evacuating the political"—hence my earlier stated unwillingness to completely abandon the parliament as Wolin appears to—but for the purposes of this theoretical analysis, this is their most salient feature.

tire complex of the Weberian state more broadly—is absolutely conceptually integral to understanding the post-Dayton regime in BiH and thus requires particular attention.

In place of one authoritarian order as in the communist period, or even six or eight distinct republican regimes as it was after 1974, today in BiH alone there exist more than a dozen distinct legal and political jurisdictions. In even the most prosperous and democratic states, this level of surplus bureaucracy would fundamentally impede rational governance. In an ostensibly post-authoritarian and post-war society like BiH, however, the proliferation of these administrative layers has served as an incubator for the preservation of the most destructive and corrosive elements of past regimes. In this respect, the territorial and political fragmentation of BiH appears clearly to have cemented the dominance of the country's pre-war political oligarchy, with few changes in its roster since the late Yugoslav period.

Moreover, not only has this aspect of the Dayton constitutional order significantly complicated effective and transparent governance. It has also made the airing of grievances—whether in the street or at the ballot box—virtually impossible. It is rarely clear who citizens should "blame" for the faults they encounter in their society. For instance, in the FBiH "education and justice policy is implemented by one federation ministry, as well as ten cantonal ministries. This is highly questionable in terms of functionality since four cantons do not have more than 60,000 inhabitants and are economically stagnant (the cantons of Bosnian Podrinje and Posavina have ca. 30,000 inhabitants each and only three municipalities per canton)" (Banović, Barreiro and Gavrić 2013, 54). However, even in the event that a guilty party can be identified, such a significant portion of the population is now employed in the public sector, in which continued employment depends on the patronage of the parties in question, that the incentives for change are few and far between. According to one set of figures, every third employed person in BiH works in some sector of the public administration (Zelenika 2014). To be exact, the figure is upwards of 180,000 individuals in a country with an unofficial un-

employment rate of approximately 40% (Veselinović 2013). And since government jobs are the highest paid in the country, we can reasonably conclude that those employed in the public administration are in most cases the primary breadwinners not only for their immediate but also their extended families. Those individuals have an active interest then in preserving their patrons in power, even though these same political oligarchs have economically and socially devastated the society as a whole. In other words, despite failing to deliver much in the way of public goods, complex institutional incentives abound to maintain the current constitutional and political *status quo*.

In this respect, the lack of a coherent constitutional system and the wider corruption and criminality that permeates BiH's political and social life is both the result *as well as* the product of the broader political economy of the region, discussed in previous chapters, and the still recent war. While designed by the international community, the Dayton Agreement fundamentally *endorsed* the *local* elite's preferred political arrangements (Biserko 2011). As a result, Dayton was only ever an armistice, despite uniquely incorporating a constitution and an overarching vision for the country's democratization. The internationally-backed agreement, however, did little to dislodge or reform the domestic structural factors that led to the previous state's dissolution. Today, though the infrastructure for large-scale war has been dampened by the death of Franjo Tuđman in 1999 and the ouster of Slobodan Milošević in 2000, the chaotic "division of spoils" regime from the 1990-1992 period nevertheless persists. Thus, as Eric Gordy notes in addressing the political-economic dimensions of the Dayton regime: "[contemporary] politics in Bosnia and Herzegovina is characterized by political structures generated by outside actors, ostensibly with the goal of assuring peace and the development of democracy, but in practice maintaining ethnifying monopolies in politics and providing cover for impoverishing neoliberal monopolies in economics" (Gordy 2014, 111).[121]

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[121] In the grand scheme, Gordy's assessments of contemporary politics in BiH and the role of international actors are astute and correct. Nevertheless, I should note that in my chapter in the same volume cited above I suggest

But as I argued in Chapter I this "policy approach" ultimately undermines its own ability to continue. Today, BiH is not in immediate danger of inter and intra state conflict, as in the 1990s, but the prospects for *social* conflict are legion. Thus, even from a strictly "security" standpoint, Dayton's effects have been dubious at best. Though the last paramilitary groups were dismantled around 2000 (Bieber 2006, 40-41), and a unified armed forces created in 2006, subsequent efforts at police and judicial reform have been a resounding failure (Marijan and Guzina 2014). Meanwhile, as noted, BiH's contemporary political economy is still characterized by clientalism, endemic corruption, and still largely primitive modes of accumulation (Divjak and Pugh 2008, Eminagić 2014). The worst patterns of corruption from the pre-war period have now had added to them the results of various forms of war and post-war profiteering. Hence, post-war political and economic affairs have remained dominated by a combination of pre-war political actors and former war lords. Despite a democratic veneer, the primary governance model for virtually all of the major political parties in BiH remains the authoritarian tendencies of the old LCY (Bieber 2006, 41). As the ICG noted in the last report the organization published on BiH, this system, rather than the "ethno-national question" defines life in the country:

> [An] informal "Sextet" of party leaders in effect controls government and much of the economy. A multi-ethnic coalition persists, election to election, with only minor adjustments. Membership is earned by winning opaque intra-party competitions in which voters have little say…Sextet power is further buttressed by control of hiring, investment and commercial decisions at state-owned firms, a situation that chokes private investment and growth (International Crisis Group 2014, 4).
>
> Nevertheless, while the performance of nationalist politics obscures more salient political economic trends, the country's respective nationalist blocs continue to be the clearest architects of BiH's dysfunction. This is to say, as a form of critique it is insufficient merely to argue that the nationalists in question are not actually committed to the principles they es-

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that the "neoliberal" analytical framework may not be as useful in the case of BiH as it is in, say, Latin America (Mujanović, The Baja Class and the Politics of Participation 2014). In Chapter II I likewise note that though contemporary dispossession practices in the Balkans *are* part of global patterns of neoliberal policy, they are *also* a local phenomenon, the result of local class dynamics.

pouse. It is still necessary to demonstrate the corrosive effects of institutional nationalism in BiH because this logic is so deeply embedded within the constitutional order. Therefore, to argue against the privileging of ethno-national provisions in BiH, especially given the historical context this dissertation has stressed, requires further exposition. After all, as in 1990, the dominance of nationalist politics in BiH is the direct result of a system of constitutional provisions that explicitly insist upon the citizens' self-identification in exclusively ethno-national terms. Given the centrality of the ethnic principle in contemporary BiH then, and *aside* from the political-economic dimensions in question, how does this system operate in reality?

To begin with, the concept of ethnicity is so integral to the Dayton regime that it is virtually impossible to be simply a citizen of BiH. The preamble to the constitution (technically, Annex 4 of the Dayton Peace Agreement) effectively establishes a hierarchy of political rights, listing the state's inhabitants as: "Bosniacs [sic], Croats, and Serbs…(along with Others), and citizens of BiH" (The General Framework Agreement: Annex 4 1995). The ordering is not accidental: the "constitutive people," namely the Bosniaks, Croats, and Serbs possess political rights which are not granted to either the Others (that is, to various ethnic and national minorities, such as the Roma) or to citizens of BiH who wish merely to identify as "Bosnian and Herzegovinian." As Asim Mujkić suggests, from the perspective of democratic consolidation, this constitutional order replaces the ideal of the polis with that of the Ethnopolis:

> The subversive mechanism of Ethnopolitics consists in practice of *presenting ethnos as demos*, where *ethnos* act like *demos* thus…becoming an imaginary community of belongingness and connection of the kinship as collective subject of the representation, decision-making and law. The function of representation, decision-making and the establishment of legal [frameworks] become discriminatory on [the] basis of kinship. Unlike [the] civic conception *inclusive* greater participation of greater number [of citizens], Ethnopolitics [are]…constituted…by means of legal democratic procedure, as *exclusion*; citizens are divided into autochthonous and other, foreign group(s) (A. Mujkić, We, the Citizens of Ethnopolis 2008, 20).

By now, the most famous articulation of this inequality principle concerns the case of Jakob Finci and Dervo Sejdić. In 2009, Finci and Sejdić, of Jewish and Roma ancestry respectively, won a landmark case against the state of BiH at the European Court of Human Rights

(ECHR). Finci and Sejdić argued that barring non-constitutive peoples (that is, anyone other than self-professed Bosniaks, Serbs, or Croats) from the state presidency, as well as a host of other institutions, was a flagrant violation of BiH's commitments to various international human rights treaties. The Court agreed and ruled that BiH would have to amend its constitution to remove the offending articles (Claridge 2010). Despite initial European threats in the run-up to the 2014 elections that unless reforms were implemented, the elections would not be recognized, the Court's decisions remain unimplemented. Also unimplemented were the EU's threats of electoral non-recognition.

The case is only the most famous instance, however, of an institutionalized practice of legally sanctioned discrimination that is characteristic of the Dayton constitution. Likewise unimplemented are a host of local court decisions concerning school segregation, primarily in Herzegovina (Jelin 2012). In Mostar, no local elections have been held since 2009 because the respective Bosniak and Croat ruling blocs cannot agree on a suitable quota system (Jukic 2014). Yet even among the respective constitutive peoples there are no absolute rights, and access to political representation is perennially contingent. The Serb member of the state presidency, for instance, is chosen exclusively from the RS—Serbs in the Federation, of which there are several thousand, cannot vote for this position. Likewise, Bosniaks and Croats in the RS cannot vote for their respective ethnic representatives on the state presidency. Just as often "binding" ethnic quotas are simply ignored by the relevant authorities, as in the town of Zvornik in eastern Bosnia, where despite requirements for the presence of Bosniaks in the municipality's administration, the relevant staff is entirely Serb, and blocks any required changes to this composition (Klix 2015).

Occasional attempts to subvert this system of ethnic-exclusivity have been met by only more radical demands for ethnic institutionalization. The so-called "Croat Question" is a perfect example. Since 2006, the HDZ BiH has complained that since there are no ethnic

checks of voters at the ballot box itself, Bosniaks can, should they choose, vote for the Croat rather than Bosniak member of the state presidency from the single list ballot in the FBiH. As a result, from 2006 to 2014, the Croat member of the state presidency was Željko Komšić, then a member of the multi-ethnic SDP, rather than the exclusively Croat nationalist HDZ. Komšić, the HDZ argues, received more votes than there are Croats in all of BiH, so he was clearly an "illegitimate representative" of the Croat people of BiH, elected primarily by Bosniak voters. The HDZ's candidate won in 2014 but the problem persists, they argue. The fact that Komšić received twice the number of votes of the Bosniak candidate in 2010, however, and more than any other candidate for that matter, does not factor into this logic. Yet if we suppose that BiH had a single-member presidency then in at least one post-war election, the one in 2010, in a country where Croats comprise less than 20% of the population, the majority (the Bosniak community) would have chosen a minority candidate for its highest post. By the same token, in 2014, it was the Serb candidate who received the most votes overall, precisely because Mladen Ivanić, the then opposition-backed candidate, managed to convince a sufficient number of Bosniaks and Croats in the RS that he was a more moderate choice than the ruling SNSD's Željka Cvijanović (Mujanović, Bosnia-Herzegovina Post-Election Review: Fleeting Victories Abound, 2014). If we move the clock forward to 2018, this would mean that in a country in which the Bosniak community comprises almost half the population, in a hypothetical single-member presidency, an ethnically Bosniak candidate will not have been elected since 2010.

But the nationalist perspective categorically cannot make sense of why the supposedly homogenous Bosniak community would trust their fate to a Croat (or a Serb or simply a self-declared "citizen"). The idea that it was precisely *because* of Komšić's anti-nationalism that so many "Bosniaks" (and Croats and Serbs) voted for him is anathema to the HDZ's preferred constitutional arrangements. As it is, for that matter, to the nationalist camp as a whole, which is why the first post-war census, in 2013, was conducted like an election campaign where re-

spondents were expected to "certify" their belonging to an ethnic community, almost as if to do so was to allow the scrapping of electoral politics altogether (Al Jazeera 2013). Among the respective nationalist blocs there was a virtual panic especially after the results of an early trial census were released which revealed that as much 35% of youth respondents identified themselves not as one of the constitutive peoples but as "Bosnians and Herzegovinians" (Radio Sarajevo 2012). The final results are not yet known—and indeed are being actively delayed by the ruling establishment it appears—but there is a distinct possibility that in the two decades since the end of the war there will now be more "Bosnians and Herzegovinians" than Croats in BiH, the result of which can only be a constitutional crisis as with the Sejdić-Finci case. One would think a state whose own citizens are legally discriminated against cannot long persist yet persist it does, at least for the time being.

For the HDZ it was therefore necessary to spin all of these developments not as proof of growing anti-nationalist sentiment in BiH—or at least the proverbial exhaustion of the Dayton regime's ethnic quota system—but as evidence of "discrimination" against the Croat community. What will resolve all of the "gerrymandering" in question, however, according to the HDZ, is a "third entity"—an exclusively Croat entity, like the RS—conveniently composed almost exclusively of the HDZ's Herzegovina heartland, from which only "legitimate" (i.e. nationalist, HDZ) Croats will be elected (Rupčić 2014). Or, failing this, ethnically-marked ballots, whereby only "documented" Croats, Bosniaks, Serbs etc. will be allowed to vote for their respective candidates. In this narrative, Dayton's ethnic logic is only flawed in that it is *insufficiently* rigid and exclusionary. In the end, what the nationalist bloc(s) seem to be after is not merely "apartheid cartography" as Campbell labels the post-war BiH system (Campbell 1999) but apartheid, *tuto completo*. But this apartheid regime is also merely a tool to obtain their true objective: totalizing power and control, albeit necessarily fractured among a patchwork of ethnically-constituted fiefdoms. Indeed, the fracturing of the BiH legal appa-

ratus, as I have previously noted, is in fact an integral part of the country's oligarchs' strategy; BiH's fragmentation ensures the persistence of their authoritarian rule.

Given the pronounced legal vacuum BiH seems to exist in, internationally and domestically, it is perhaps appropriate that the constitution itself is not legible to the state's citizens. I mean this quite literally as there is no official translation of the Dayton constitution in the local language(s) (Banović, Barreiro and Gavrić 2013, 22). Nor has there been any attempt made to remedy this fact since the "Dayton Agreement, including the Constitution of Bosnia and Herzegovina, has never been published in the Official Gazettes of the State and/or the Entities" (Ademović 2010). This is not merely an example of government oversight; it is proof of a concerted effort to eject public participation as a whole from the politics of the state and thereby to effectively eject the political and the potential for autonomous, popular political action from the society as well. Indeed, the only way such a policy makes sense is if there is essentially an ideological commitment to exclusion within the BiH political establishment.

After all, despite the existence of a robust "vital national interest veto," (Banović, Barreiro and Gavrić 2013, 55) Byzantine administrative levels of checks and balances and absurdly fractured territorial enclaves all meant to "protect" the respective ethnic communities from one another, the peoples of BiH, whether Bosniak, Serb, or Croat are uniformly impoverished. Taken in conjunction with the broad historical survey of the political economy of nationalism in the Balkans provided in this dissertation, it would seem that "nationalism" as a phenomenon, rather than being the solution, is a constitutive aspect of the exclusionary tendencies of elite politics in the region. Accordingly, the entire convoluted system of ethnic representation that defines the Dayton constitutional order exists, above all, to exclude *citizens* rather than individual ethnic communities from participation in the state's administration. And while this is also a regional phenomenon for many of the same factors examined in Chapters I through III, nowhere is this pattern more pronounced than in BiH. In this respect,

Dayton is a fundamentally anti-political constitution and this, rather than its "constitution within a peace accord" dynamic, is what makes it truly unique. As Mujkić notes, owing to the rigid ethno-national provisions of the Dayton constitution, combined with the kleptocratic tendencies of the country's elites, BiH is today a polity in which "[under] the cover of the legitimacy conferred by free and fair elections, citizens as individuals are stripped of any political power" (Mujkić 2007, 113).

My critique of Dayton's version of (un)representative democracy has in effect returned me to the radical democratic critique of Wolin, Scott, and Graeber that I laid out in Chapter I. In essence, I am concerned with how it is possible to reform an anti-political constitutional order? In the next section I argue that such a feat is practically and conceptually impossible. Dayton cannot be reformed because its logic does not allow for the political agency and equality of genuinely reformist actors to act in such a capacity. Therefore, change of any sort will only be possible in BiH through a radical intervention, a radical assertion of just that missing ingredient: popular *political* agency. Given the legal-constitutional constraints in the country, however, this movement will, at least initially, have to be extra-institutional and anti-systemic; in other words, revolutionary.

The (Impossible) Task of Reforming Dayton

The problems with Dayton were evident, almost from the onset. An ICG report on the fourth anniversary of the agreement's signing is almost indistinguishable from reports being written today, twenty years later:

> Today Bosnia and Herzegovina has three *de facto* mono-ethnic entities, three separate armies, three separate police forces, and a national government that exists mostly on paper and operates at the mercy of the entities. Indicted war criminals remain at large and political power is concentrated largely in the hands of hard line nationalists determined to obstruct international efforts to advance the peace process. In many areas, local political leaders have joined forces with police and local extremists to prevent refugees from returning to their pre-war homes. The effect has been to cement wartime ethnic cleansing and maintain ethnic cleansers in power within mono-ethnic political frameworks. The few successes of Dayton – the

Central Bank, a common currency, common license plates, state symbols and customs reforms – are superficial and were imposed by the international community. Indeed, the only unqualified success has been the four-year absence of armed conflict (International Crisis Group 1999, ii).

Nor were these problems limited to Dayton, per se. In the first chapter I noted that from the onset of the Yugoslav crisis, and the fighting in BiH in particular, the international community promoted partition—not democratization—as the primary framework for peace. Each of the peace plans laid out by the European and American negotiators "proposed [the] partition of Bosnia," David Campbell points out, "into ethnic–national cantons [which] meant that the first peace proposal for Bosnia embodied, prior to the outbreak of open and widespread conflict…the very nexus between identity and territory upon which the major protagonists in the later conflict relied" (Campbell 1999, p. 404). Such proposals were only ever "charter[s] for ethnic cleansing," as Josip Glaurdić later notes, adding that such plans were only inducments to "*create* new ethnic realities on the ground," meaning new "Bantustans" where once there had been mixed and pluralistic communities (Glaurdić 2011, p. 290). "Federalist" solutions that took as their basis historical, regional, or ecological boundaries, rather than exclusively ethno-nationalist ones, were rejected out of hand (Crampton 1996, 359).

The international community's chief concern in BiH was to bring the fighting to an end. In giving each of the warring factions a taste of their ultimate aims, the Dayton pact was signed and maintained. The SDS received a highly autonomous entity, the HDZ several similarly autonomous cantons, while the SDA preserved ostensibly a single, sovereign BiH state. Likewise important was the now stunted ability of Belgrade and Zagreb to make and sponsor the war in BiH. But while the respective nationalist camps had been variously motivated to attempt to preserve their respective gains at Dayton, thereafter their interest in any sort of future reform or negotiation disappeared. Once it became clear just how favourable Dayton's ethno-fragmentation was to the aims of nationalist rule, the reformist babe was effectively suffocated in its crib.

Granted, the introduction of the OHR and the Bonn Powers in 1997, discussed earlier, represented a major "innovation" within the Dayton constitutional order but the move likewise illustrated the desperation of the international community to mitigate what they had in 1995 used bombs and troops to accomplish. Aware of the necessity for basic democratic legitimation of the new constitutional order, American and European administrators insisted on new elections in September of 1996, less than a year after the formal conclusion of the war. The result was predictable, but still no less tragic. With each of the three primary ethnic communities dominated by a single, militarized, authoritarian, and nationalist bloc, the elections merely affirmed the power of the war's architects: the SDS, the HDZ, and the SDA. Fragmented and organizationally stunted before the war, the reformist and civic forces in post-war BiH had no chance of electoral success. As in 1990, what informed voters' choices in 1996 was fear. Even if the war ought to have made non-nationalist parties more preferable than ever, few were willing to trust their personal and communal security to movements lacking armed militias. Of course, as before, those militarized chauvinist blocs were the *cause* of the problem in the first place but in 1996 it was too soon to expect an exit from the prisoner's dilemma just yet.

The results of the 1996 elections made it clear that if BiH was to function as a state in any sort of semi-rational capacity, it would require the consistent intervention of the international community. The elected nationalist leaders had no interest in such a project. And though, after 2000, nominally reformist, civic, and leftist parties (e.g. the SDP, the newly-formed Democratic Front (DF), Our Party (NS) etc.) recaptured their voting base in subsequent polls (approximately 20-30% of the electorate in any given in election) they have struggled to implement their policy preferences. Quite simply, there are so many institutional advantages that nationalist parties enjoy, that it is virtually impossible to overrule their wishes, even if their segment of the vote is in some cases as little as 12% of the vote.

Indeed, this figure corresponds to the average percentage of the vote the HDZ has captured in the two most recent elections, 2010 and 2014, respectively. In 2010, the SDP, as the election's largest vote-getter, and over the course of a convoluted and protracted negotiation process, managed to keep the HDZ out of the ruling coalition at the state and Federation-level. In response to this, and the SDP staffing the assorted "Croat" posts in the respective governments with ethnic Croats from their own ranks and the ranks of several smaller Croat parties, the HDZ completely blockaded the legislative process. The SDP was decimated at the 2014 polls but a similarly social-democratic splinter group, the DF, largely swallowed up this left vote, in turn. The result has been almost identical: the HDZ effectively demands the entirety of the Croat-designated government apparatus (at both the state and Federal level) for itself which, in practice means that a *third* of all ministries belong to the HDZ even though they won less than *one-seventh* of the total vote (Oslobođenje 2014). In a sense, the HDZ's position is flagrantly anti-democratic, even in a merely electoral sense. By insisting that "Croat" is a term interchangeable with "HDZ member," the party negates not only the rights of non-HDZ Croats to enter government but also seeks to invalidate the electoral process, more generally. Ultimately, their argument is that the DF's 15% is always and forever less than the HDZ's 12%—clearly an effective strategy given current constitutional arrangements.

This strategy is replicated by each of the nationalist blocs. For instance, after 2006, the SNSD replaced the SDS as the main Serb nationalist party in the country. After nearly a decade of absolute SNSD rule, a coalition of parties centred on the SDS managed to greatly reduce the SNSD majority in the RS assembly, to replace them as the Serb representatives in the governing state-coalition, and to win the Serb seat on the state presidency. In response, Milorad Dodik, the SNSD leader, President of the RS, and chief advocate for post-Karadžić Serb nationalist politics in BiH, has launched an unadulterated smear campaign of the SDS through various SNSD-affiliated media, including the entity-broadcaster *Radio Televizija Republike Srpske* (RTRS). "Opposition" members from the RS, that is non-SNSD politicians, have been

labelled as "pro-Bosnians" (a cardinal sin in the canon of Serb nationalist politics in BiH) by the regime in Banja Luka for working with parties in the Federation to pass legislation—of any sort. As proof of their commitment to the preservation and protection of the Serb ethnic corpus, SNSD members now routinely leave parliamentary sessions in Sarajevo to protest, essentially, the existence of a parliament in which they are not part of the ruling majority—but from which they continue to receive salaries (SRNA 2015). Meanwhile, in an attempt to entrench their rule at the entity level, at least, Dodik's party is currently in the process of passing a draconian "media law," much as the nationalists previously attempted to do in the early 1990s. The proposed legislation has already been condemned by the relevant EU and OSCE authorities as a flagrant attack on freedom of speech (and freedom of assembly, in truth) for its attempt to grant the RS police sweeping "surveillance" (that is, censorship) powers over traditional and social media but the law is nevertheless likely to pass (OSCE 2015).

The SDA, meanwhile, has spent the past two decades fending off repeated incursions into its electorate by an assortment of up-start challengers. Haris Silajdžić's Party for BiH (SBiH) temporarily replaced the SDA as the preferred Bosniak-choice, signified by the war-time Foreign Minister's (and former SDA member) tenure as Bosniak member of the state presidency between 2006 and 2010. The SDA was back in control, however, by 2010, with Alija Izetbegović's son, Bakir Izetbegović, now at the helm. Since 2009 though, the SDA has had to contend with the growing popularity of the country's biggest media mogul, Fahrudin Radončić, and his Alliance for a Better Future (SBB). The SBB had their best showing to date in the 2014 polls, with Radončić receiving the second most votes in the race for the Bosniak seat on the state presidency, and his party coming in second in the FBiH and fifth in the state parliamentary elections, respectively.[122] The SDA's election slogan was telling: "In Unity there is Strength." In other words, like the HDZ's monopoly over the Croat ethnic identity, to

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[122] In keeping with my point about the wholesale corruption of the political establishment: Radončić was arrested in January 2016 on suspicion of witness tampering and interfering with on-going police investigations. His arrest has brought the state and Federal governing coalitions to the brink of collapse.

be a Bosniak means to support the SDA—or so claims the SDA. And like the SNSD's attacks on the SDS, the SDA has moved decidedly to block the SBB from participation in all relevant state, entity, and cantonal organs.

In short, the nationalist strategy is everywhere the same and it is, rather clearly, an attempt to hollow out what little remains of the institutional democratic process in BiH altogether. Nationalist hegemony over electoral preferences of the respective ethnic communities means essentially extinguishing the need for elections. If the SDA is the only "legitimate" representative of the Bosniak community, and the HDZ and SNSD the only legitimate representatives of the Croat and Serb communities, respectively, and the constitutional system effectively designates a third of all posts to each community, in turn, then why even bother voting? Granted, a party like the SDS might occasionally be replaced by a newcomer like the SNSD or the SDA by the SBiH, but the systemic logic remains unchanged. Despite being brought to power with American funds (and tanks) as a "moderate" alternative to the SDS, Milorad Dodik and the SNSD have since their initial episode in power (1998-2002) completely morphed into a hard core nationalist party (Toal 2013). Within Dayton's logic, however, this makes perfect sense. As explained, genuine reform parties have meagre prospects for winning and holding power. Nationalists, on the hand, monopolize the process, even when their electoral returns are minimal. The Dayton constitution thus empowers the very actors the international community otherwise (correctly) bemoans as the country's biggest problem. Indeed, as the experience of the SNSD shows, so great is the reactionary pull of Dayton, that even once reformed minded parties *have to change* their politics if their wish to remain in power.

Of course, the primary counter to this dreary assessment, and the one preferred by various international observers and administrators in BiH, is that the choice, in the end, is in the hands of BiH's citizens. If they would only vote, *en masse*, for genuinely reformist parties,

then change *would*, in fact, happen. The problem with this logic, however, as I have shown is that the institutional barriers to reform-oriented parties enacting policy are so high as to make this suggestion essentially moot. A party like the DF, for instance, would have to win a landslide of the sort simply unheard of in even the freest, fairest, and most functional democratic regimes, in order to enact its program. The nationalists, meanwhile, only have to win a plurality among the already ethnically fragmented, conservative-nationalist electorate to maintain their totalizing grip on the levers of power. Realizing the absurdity of the situation, the US, in particular, has since 1995 intervened on several occasions, sequestered the respective nationalist big men (frequently on air bases, following the precedent established at Dayton) and urged local leaders to implement varying sets of reform proposals. A brief review of these attempts will reveal, however, the futility of the effort.

Major revisions of BiH's post-war constitutional order have nearly occurred on three separate occasions: in the spring of 2006, over the course of 2008, and the fall of 2009. These still-born attempts have hence become known as the "April Package," the "Prud Agreement," and "Butimir Process," respectively (Bieber 2010). Both the April and Butimir proposals were US and EU-backed initiatives, while the Prud Agreement was a local venture, initially signed by the leaders of the SDA, HDZ, and SNSD. The April Package was the only one that ever came up for a vote in the BiH parliament where it was defeated, narrowly, by two votes (Keil 2013). The 2009 Butimir proposal was essentially a rehash of the April deal and focused primarily on the reform of existing institutions, the strengthening of the central state, especially as it concerned the EU and NATO integration process. The second time around, the idea failed to make it past the concept stage and was dismissed out of hand by all of the local leaders, albeit for sharply opposed reasons. Importantly, in both cases, all negotiations were held behind closed doors and consisted entirely of meetings between party apparatchiks and American and European diplomats. No civil society groups of any sort were invited or included in the process.

In keeping with the historic ambitions of nationalist elites, the 2008 Prud Agreement, the lone local initiative, primarily focused on further ethno-territorial divisions, specifically the creation of a third, Croat entity. Again, the negotiation process was open only to high-placed party functionaries and this time only to those belonging to the SDA, HDZ, and SNSD. The international-led efforts in 2006 and 2009 at least included members from the other parties in the country; effectively, every party that had elected members at any level of government was included in the negotiations. Though an initial agreement was signed in 2008 in Prud, a small village in northern Bosnia on the border with Croatia, as soon as aspects of the deal were actually published in the press, the project was scuttled (Biserko 2011). The substantive reform commitments in the initial agreement were, at best, vague. Most were merely promissory notes to enact loosely defined reforms at some undesignated later date (Ustavna Reforma 2008). Nevertheless, an expressed commitment to "territorial organization of the central level of authorities" was interpreted in the media as the creation of the oft-promised third entity, something the HDZ, in particular, was not keen to deny.

A media firestorm ensued, with bombastic rhetoric on all sides, and claims that the agreement was a prelude to renewed violence as similar fragmentation had preceded the war in 1992. Similar narratives dogged the agreements in 2006 and (subsequently) 2009 (and, really, all attempts at reform in the country since) but as a locally-agreed, primarily territorial pact, this hysteria completely unravelled the Prud project. The HDZ, as noted, was not keen to reign in the speculation but neither were the SDA or SNSD. Indeed, the ensuing scandal allowed everyone to wash their hands of whatever had or had not been agreed to. After all, the SDA could not afford to be seen to have sold out Bosniak national interests by agreeing to further fragmentation of BiH, while the SNSD could not politically afford being the party to surrender large swathes of the RS to create a Croat entity. The HDZ, though arguably receiving the best deal of the three, could not agree to a Croat entity composed solely of western Herzegovina—once the SNSD position hardened in the glare of media scrutiny that is—and

especially once it became clear that the agreement was dead in the water. In short, each side could blame the other and nothing would have to change.

What coherent statement can be made on these three disparate attempts at reform? To begin with, the two-vote failure in 2006 must be understood in the context of what was actually agreed to: minor changes to the operational logic of the state parliament and the implementation of a coherent, central mechanism for carrying through EU and NATO reforms. Had it passed, the constitutional regime in BiH would have largely remained the same as it is today. It *might* have *begun* a longer process of reform but even this is not borne out by existing practices. After all, what rewards would these parties reap as a result of successfully implemented reforms in BiH? They already dominate the electoral process and, if anything, substantive changes to the legal-rational order of the state would almost certainly result in their fall from power. One observer notes this explicitly, citing the nearby precedent in Croatia. Noting that the "[BiH] leadership has blocked any reforms that would even give Bosnia official EU candidate status," Benjamin Pargan argues that "[this] stubborn blockade has been reinforced by a case in neighbouring Croatia, where former Prime Minister Ivo Sanader was arrested and sentenced to ten years in prison for corruption. The image of a former government leader in handcuffs has left a lasting impression on his counterparts in Bosnia-Herzegovina, by showing them what could happen if the Bosnian judiciary began investigating corruption, with the EU's support" (Pargan 2014).

In other words, there are few (if any) institutional incentives in BiH to encourage leaders to implement meaningful political changes. In this respect, the perennial fixation on "reforms" in contemporary BiH is little more than a continuation of the practice of elastic authoritarianism. Today, it is the ideological veneer of electoral democracy and Euro-Atlantic integration that has supplanted the one time commitments of the country's elites to the King or the workers. But the essential authoritarian character of BiH's elites, their commitment to ex-

tinguishing political participation in socio-political decision-making, and their persistent parasitic economic practices, remain.

Still, prominent scholars in the field, like Bieber, insist that "[any] realistic process of constitutional reform will have to take place through the existing Bosnian institutions" (Bieber 2014). As noted earlier, this position rests primarily on the necessity of voters in BiH to "bring into power parties with radically different politics…but so far there is little evidence for this." Bieber presumably means that there is little evidence that voters would vote for such parties. Yet as I argued earlier, the far bigger issue is that such parties have massive institutional barriers to contend with in terms of actually implementing their preferred policies. Besides, given the institutional incentives within the system *not to implement reforms* as described above, the electoral changes Bieber imagines as the only possibility in BiH are truly unlikely. The same class of elites who dissolved the Yugoslav state and opted for war rather than actual democratic change in the 1990s will now, two decades later, suddenly reverse their positions when the stakes are comparatively much smaller. Not only does such a narrative expect these leaders to (unnecessarily) reverse their positions, in fact, but to enact reforms that will almost certainly result in their personal imprisonment.

Given the broader constitutional and political economic regime I have described in this chapter, the odds of such a dramatic turnaround of fortunes is truly slim. But if we cannot expect changes to come from within such a system, what alternative is there? As with the Balkan federalist project in the 19th century, the New Left movement in the second Yugoslav state, and the short-lived but nevertheless significant anti-war mobilizations in BiH in 1992, meaningful political change in this country depends vitally on the intervention of extra-institutional actors. In BiH, this means the participation of masses of ordinary citizens in the creation of a new social order by way of their radical insertion into the existing exclusionary

political processes of the state. In other words, it depends on the citizens' creation of and par-

ticipation in genuinely political moments and movements.

The experience of such past episodes or moments has shown that the failure of popular

democratic movements leads to catastrophe: war, in almost every instance. Not because their

failure leads to war *per se*, that is, but because their *defeat* at the hands of more reactionary

elements within BiH and Balkan society leads to the domination of the latter over the society

as a whole. This triumph, however, as I have shown especially in the second and fourth chap-

ters, *creates and depends on* episodes of horrific violence in which accumulation through dis-

possession most easily leads to this reactionary elites' enrichment. Thus, the primary cleavage

in BiH politics is not, and has never been, an ethnic one but an ideological one; a cleavage

between politics as either an exclusionary or inclusionary process.

Whether the former can ever triumph over the latter is not a question that anyone can

answer definitively. Nevertheless, in the next section I will argue that the conditions for an-

other political moment in BiH are ripe and that the country's citizens now stand on the preci-

pice of historic opportunity for substantive social change.

Political Vignettes

BiH's existing constitutional arrangements are not sustainable. The international

community's strategic patience is exhausted and without this much needed outside assistance

the country's political system simply cannot operate. Above all, however, BiH's existing con-

stitutional arrangements cannot persist because they have left too many of the country's citi-

zens economically impoverished and politically marginalized. While many subsist on the vast

clientelistic networks that dominate the country's economy and politics, few are willing to

work to preserve these practices, in the end. And the end of these practices, I contend, is far

closer than the existing literature would suggest. Since 2012, three dramatic protest waves

have shown how weak the state in BiH is and how much political change can be accom-

plished by relatively small but organized groups of citizens. Dayton is, in short, an institutionally and politically spent mechanism and new battle lines are being drawn in BiH; not between the country's ethnic communities, however, but between the political-economic elites, on the one hand, and the vast impoverished majority, on the other.

In the first chapter I mentioned the events in June 2013 and February 2014, respectively. The protests, however, beyond their immediate causes were far more important for their transformative and educational aspects. They were transformative in the sense that they finally (re)introduced into the political discourse in post-war BiH the possibility and viability of mass politics. They were educational in the sense that they began to show citizens what concrete objectives could be won through such an approach. Above all, whether initially concerning personal identification numbers, as in 2013, or shuttered factories, as in 2014, these social mobilizations found themselves confronting a constitutional order that categorically refuses to represent their interests. In a sense, it is precisely the "moderate" demands of these protests that has been their most important feature; when even requests for the most basic form of citizenship are denied, when state documentation cannot be issued to new born children, it becomes clear that one has been dispossessed of more than merely their material welfare. Indeed, it becomes clear that in a political sense one has been denied their very personhood.

With respect to the synopsis already provided in the first chapter let us nevertheless review the facts of the incidents in question—in short, what finally drove people into the streets? In 2011 the BiH Constitutional Court passed a largely technical decision concerning the harmonization of personal identification documents. The ruling was part of a broader set of decisions necessitated by the country's complex administrative and institutional borders, further complicated by the practice of post-war name-changes, discussed earlier, war-time expulsions and refugee returns. The central element of the 2012 decision concerned the issuing of the "Unique Master Citizen Number," better known by the local acronym "JMBG," a doc-

ument akin to the Canadian Social Insurance Number. The court insisted on the drafting of a

new law and set a final deadline for implementation for February of 2013 (Vaša prava BiH

2013). Immediately, representatives from the SNSD demanded that the new law should des-

ignate distinct numerical codes for JMBG cards issued in the RS. The SDA and SDP rejected

this proposal and insisted that the new JMBG should contain no regional or ethnic markers—

like the country's licence plate regime for instance. No agreement was reached in time for the

February 2013 deadline. As a result, children born after February 28 received no JMBGs,

without which they were effectively undocumented persons. Specifically, a child born after

February 28 could not receive a passport. And without passports, children in need of medical

treatments not available in BiH were essentially left to die.

The protests that broke out in June of that year were peaceful and optimistic. Initially

organized by parents of ill children needing documents to leave the country, they soon

swelled and became a general social mobilization comprised of students, workers, and pen-

sioners. Thousands gathered in front of the state parliament in Sarajevo and demanded the

adoption of a new law. Protesters called for an end to the politics of division and chauvinism,

creating a human chain around the building and refusing to allow the dignitaries inside to

leave until they passed the appropriate legislation. Opting to use their bodyguards and police

to flee the scene instead, the callous and uninterested behaviour of the fleeing politicians left

the crowds aghast. Eventually a new law was passed but, by most accounts, BiH's famously

loathed leaders had sunk to a new moral low in the eyes of significant portion of the public.

At the time, some observers called the gatherings a sign of a growing "civic consciousness" in

post-war BiH. In retrospect, a minor, albeit important, manifestation of a more seething dis-

content would have been a more accurate description (Maksimovic and Armakolas 2013).

Eight months later, on February 4, 2014, several hundred workers gathered in front of

the cantonal buildings in Tuzla. A city once one of the leading industrial centres in Yugosla-

via, the residents of post-war Tuzla now live in the shadows of cavernous and empty factories and chemical plants. The protest was only the most recent in a years-long confrontation between the workers and the local authorities. Shady privatization schemes had left the factories shuttered, asset stripped, and the workers destitute. As before, the authorities refused to meet the workers. The angry confrontations between the crowds and the police that followed were broadcast on national television that night. The protests were nothing new but their militant tone was distinct—not only from the tone of the JMBG protests—but from most political discourse in BiH, in general. The footage of infuriated workers attempting to push past officers guarding the cantonal buildings showed that popular discontent in the city had reached a fever pitch. Small, peaceful solidarity summits sprung up the next day, in Sarajevo and elsewhere, but largely fizzled out. But in Tuzla itself the crowds continued to grow and by February 6, there were at least six thousand people in the streets, workers and students, women and men alike. The small cordon of riot police guarding the cantonal building could do little to holdback the crowds at this point. That night, Bosnians and Herzegovinians watched Tuzla erupt; in the ensuing clashes between the crowds and police, a hundred officers were injured and nearly a dozen cars torched.

The next day, February 7, protests erupted all over the country. In Tuzla, the crowds finally breached the police lines and torched the seat of the canton. The same occurred in Sarajevo where the crowds went on to further sack the state presidency building, torching police cruisers along the way. In Mostar, the newly refurbished cantonal building was torched along with the headquarters of the HDZ and SDA. Similar scenes played out in more than a dozen other towns and cities across the country and in Brčko, locals even held the mayor hostage at one point. Four cantonal premiers resigned amid the chaos, as well the Director of Police Coordination, essentially the country's top police officer (Domi and Mujanović 2014, 23). For the first time since the end of the war, BiH was headline news around the world and helpfully scrawled on the walls of the burnt out husks of the government buildings in Tuzla and Saraje-

vo were the proverbial theses of the events in question. In Tuzla "death to nationalism!" in Sarajevo "sow hunger, reap fury."

While the protests occurred primarily, though not exclusively, in the Federation entity, aggressive pre-emptive policing in the RS was proof enough of the local authorities' fear of wider ramifications. Two years earlier, a small protest movement sprung up in Banja Luka to save one of the city's few remaining green spaces, known informally as Picin Park. The issue started when a local businessman, known for his close association with Milorad Dodik, was granted permission by the city to bulldoze the park and build an office tower. Outraged, locals and activists began organizing weekly "protest walks," insisting that the "park is ours!" It was a powerful sight, this display of civic resistance, bereft of nationalist rhetoric or symbolism, and contingents of activists from Sarajevo, Zenica, and Tuzla, were soon arriving in Banja Luka to aid their neighbours across the "inter-ethnic boundary line." Everyone involved recognized the significance of the marches as the organizers noted in a manifesto, writing "We are in a time when the ruling oligarchy confirms that we, the ordinary people, are the biggest losers of the war and the transition. The oligarchy puts profit above people under the banner of national interest, personal interest above justice, and terror in place of equality." They then went on to declare their intention to change matters: "We citizens declare that we are not irrelevant, that the authorities are afraid of 'the street!' We are in solidarity on the basis of the differences by which they mean to divide us!" (Mujanović, Institutionalizing Crisis 2014, 159). In short, it was the intent of the Banja Luka marchers to disrupt politics as usual in their city and thereby the country as a whole.

In response, the police initiated a concerted campaign of intimidation, questioning, and variously accusing organizers of breaching the public peace while rarely formally charging them with any crimes. Minor infractions were met with vicious police assaults while both the city and entity government made it clear that the planned project would go ahead, regard-

less of the public outcry (Isović 2012). Like the JMBG protests a year later, the smaller protests in Banja Luka exposed that the political establishment in BiH was uniform its commitment to rule by fiat. The sight of armed police officers shoving and threatening mothers with strollers and dread-locked students was a public relations nightmare for the Dodik administration. Apparently having learned the lesson to not even allow matters to get to this point, when news broke of solidarity rallies in the RS in February 2014, the authorities reacted quickly. Attempts at rallies in Banja Luka, Zvornik, and Bijeljina were met with immediate arrests and a sharp increase in police presence in all public squares (Radio Televizija BN 2014, Jašarević, Banja Luka 2014).

BiH's political establishment as a whole, however, had a great deal to fear: not only had some of the country's primary political institutions been torched by angry crowds but the act was overwhelmingly endorsed by the population at large. A February 12 poll revealed that 98% of those surveyed in the Federation and 78% of those polled in the RS supported the demonstrations (Klix 2014). Most importantly, however, the protests were followed by the creation of grassroots, participatory, public assemblies, initially organized by a small group of students and workers in Tuzla but later expanded to Sarajevo, Zenica, Mostar, and elsewhere, and later attended by thousands of citizens. Not only had the citizens of BiH turned against their leaders, they had begun to create new decision-making institutions: the directly democratic, citizen assembly, or what they simply called the plenum.

Theoretically, two points are worth noting. First, whether consciously or not on the part of the participants, the tenor of the protests nevertheless recalled James Scott's assessment of the role of popular insurrection in the creation of democratic regimes. As noted previously, Scott argues that most "of the great political reforms of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries have been accompanied by massive episodes of civil disobedience, riot, lawbreaking, the disruption of public order, and, at the limit, civil war. Such tumult not only accompa-

nied dramatic political changes but was often absolutely instrumental in bringing them about." "Representative institutions and elections by themselves," he concludes "sadly, seem to rarely bring about major changes in the absence of the force majeure afforded by, say, an economic depression or international war...Ordinary parliamentary politics is noted more for its immobility than for facilitating major reforms" (Scott 2012, 16-17) Thereafter, as a concept, the plenums became the material articulation of Wolin's vision of the political as "moments of commonality when, through public deliberations, collective power is used to promote or protect the well-being of the collectivity" (Wolin 1996, 31). The plenum was the actualization of the political moment or at the very least, one very concerted attempt to establish something very close to it. In short, the actions of the people of BiH during this period, though dramatic and frightening from the perspective of the international community's "peace implementation," were nevertheless deeply rooted in a substantive articulation of the democratic tradition.

In the coming weeks, citizens who attended the summits not only had an opportunity to air their grievances with the existing authorities but, more importantly, they were invited to participate in the formation of a new kind of political project altogether. In short, to participate in the attempt to create a series of institutions that would become the atoms of a new political society in which decisions were made collectively and directly, through deliberation and debate. In the plenums, people came as individuals, not as representatives of parties or, worse still, of "nations." Everyone had an opportunity to speak, everyone had an opportunity to respond, and everyone had an opportunity to share their concerns with the collective. The plenum name invoked the memory of the old Yugoslav workers' councils. But in place of the mere performance of equality, these latter day assemblies attempted to be a "a public space for debate, without prohibition, and without hierarchies…the plenum will have a working method [but] it will not have leaders" (Tuzlanski.ba 2014).[123] Facilitators were present to

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[123] As described at length by in Graeber's work, the similarities to the organizational and participatory methods used by the "Occupy Wall Street" activists here is not accidental. Central to creating a more participatory politi-

teach the rules of engagement in these new forums but the agenda was set by the participants themselves.

Accordingly, the agenda and the demands the plenums did produce were of an almost exclusively socio-economic nature: they called for reviews of existing privatizations, annulments of pending privatization schemes, confiscation of illegally obtained properties, the resignations of all local leaders, and often, a general return to workers self-management (Kilibarda, Jašarević, et al. 2014). While each set of demands was unique, clear themes emerged, ones that cut across ethnic lines. The demands in Prijedor (RS) were virtually identical to those in Bihać (FBiH); predominantly Croat Mostar was no different from predominantly Bosniak Sarajevo. Everywhere, the citizens demanded investigations of what they perceived to be the ill-gotten goods of the country's elites and the ouster of all local governments—where corruption was most readily visible to all concerned parties. In other words, given the opportunity to engage in meaningful, grassroots, participatory political discourse, the citizens demonstrated that the constantly evoked "national question" that supposedly defined BiH as a social space melted away. What concerned them, what defined their lives was not their presumed ethno-nationality but their material deprivation. And in this miserable abyss, ordinary Serbs, Croats, Bosniaks and all others alike could recognize each other as equals and allies.

Much as the citizens formed a united front, for a few days at least, so too did the politicians —against the citizens, that is. In the days following February 6 and 7, the leaders of the SDA, HDZ, and SNSD attempted to spin the protests in virtually identical language. The

cal culture is challenging hierarchies and challenging the fetishization of leadership. I have had to explain on numerous occasions now, to various audiences, that the eventual "failure" of the plenums was not due to their "lack of leadership." Quite on the contrary, the lack of leadership was a critical element in *educating* ordinary citizens in the basic praxis of social movement organizing. The point of the plenums was not to lift up "new leaders" but to illustrate how collective action could intervene and perhaps even replace top-down modes of organization (e.g. parties). Moreover, the plenums aimed to allow citizens to imagine themselves as the agents of change in BiH, rather than "their leaders." In this respect, at least, there are methodological similarities between participatory ideals of the Occupy movement and the "Bosnian Spring," but also the Egyptian Revolution and perhaps even the Ukrainian Euromaidan protests, as I have noted elsewhere (Mujanović, Democracy blooming at the margins: Bosnia-Herzegovina, Ukraine and Taiwan 2014).

cause of the protests, they explained, had not been the dissatisfaction of the citizens per se but the involvement of "foreign centres of power"—a phrase that was repeated by all three parties. The SDA claimed the protests were an elaborate plot to marginalize the Bosniak people, the HDZ claimed the same in the name of the Croats, and the SNSD, of course, echoed the same with respect to the Serbs (Istinomjer 2014). As usual, each side blamed the other but the construction was identical, almost word-for-word. Confronted by social insurrection, the nationalist blocs could only appeal to their usual narratives. One should not overstate how transformative those days in February were but the sense that the paradigm had shifted was nevertheless strong. I recall here again the TV interview with a senior citizen in Sarajevo observing the damage to the cantonal buildings in the days after the protests because it illustrates the point so finely. Asked by the interviewer whether the torching of the building could be justified, even with the dire situation in the country, the man responded without hesitation: "the only mistake [the protestors] made was not to suffocate everyone inside there, there was no point in burning [the building]. Wipe the criminals out, there is no other way" (Jašarević, A senior citizen on protests in BiH 2014).

Despite the partisan backlash, the plenums persisted and began to win concrete demands. Aside from an initial wave of government resignations, the remaining cantonal authorities in Tuzla, Sarajevo, and Mostar were forced to take immediate measures to scrap the so-called "white bread" policy, essentially severance packages that were being paid out years after individuals had left government (Al Jazeera Balkans 2014). The plenums also demanded that "expert governments" should replace those that had resigned and in Tuzla, at least, this too came to pass. But though the insistence on expert governments can be found throughout the various plenums' demands, the tactic was a controversial one. To whom would these new administrations be accountable? What could such governments possibly accomplish in the six or seven months left before the 2014 elections? And what authority did the plenums have to seek the ouster of democratically elected governments in the first place? These questions are

worth addressing precisely because they point to more complex and contradictory tendencies within the plenum movement in BiH and the difficulty of attempting to expand the democratic experience in the country as a whole—today as in the past.

<u>Contesting Democracy</u>

The radical democratic critique of representative democracy, in this dissertation spelled out by Wolin, Scott, and Graeber, concludes that the latter is largely a hollow interpretation of the participatory democratic ideal. Representative democracy, as Arendt and Wolin remind us, lacks *isonomy*. But happens when a radical democratic movement confronts a duly elected government? Whose conception of democracy, in such a scenario, is more legitimate?

One of the main tenets of liberal-democratic and representative regimes more generally is the stress on the importance of elections. Because an unpopular government can always be replaced with the use of the ballot, the fact that an administration persists in a democratic regime is inherently a reflection of the legitimacy of its rule. Moreover, while individual governments can lose popularity, the performance of this administration does not diminish the validity of the electoral method. Indeed, it is precisely the use of elections that allows unpopular governments to be replaced, ideally, as often as necessary. As such, as I have already noted, even many critics of the Dayton regime in BiH have tended to conclude that the country's electoral system nevertheless allows for the prospect of democratic change. Extra-parliamentary actions, social insurrections in short, are not required in BiH, as in other representative democracies, because the ballot box allows for peaceful, electoral change.

Wolin, Scott, and Graeber dismiss the electoral system for a variety of reasons. As I discussed in Chapter I, these theorists point to the deeply anti-democratic roots of electoral democracies, the distrust of plebeian rule by the architects of the liberal-democratic tradition in Europe and the Americas, and, then as now, the influence of moneyed and corporate interests in diluting or otherwise "directing" the opinions of the masses in supposedly "free" elec-

tions. While I share much of their ambivalence about the democratic credentials of representative democracy, I have nevertheless attempted to show why the triumph of nationalism in the Balkans has made even liberal-democracy "too free" a form of government for local elites, historically speaking. Thus, as I noted in the first chapter, in BiH at least it would be a markedly *political* breakthrough if genuine liberal-democratic norms and institutions could be established.

In this chapter, we have returned to the original critique of representative democracy, albeit in the specific context of BiH's peculiar constitutional regime. Namely, I have shown how profoundly institutionally disadvantaged non-nationalist parties and actors are in the existing Dayton regime in BiH. Indeed, the ethnic category so dominates existing political conduct in BiH that individual, autonomous citizenship is virtually impossible. As Asim Mujkić argues, collectivist nationalism has so poisoned political discourse in BiH that even in the context of the country's nominal electoral regime, one still cannot actually be nor even vote for a non-nationalist—at least not one with much hope of implementing policy. And even in the event of potential reforms, such as increased representation for the "Others," the Dayton constitutional order as a whole is so inextricably wedded to the negation of political citizenship that no meaningful change can possibly emerge from within its machinery. In short, because Dayton insists on immutable ethnic differences as the defining quality of the BiH social space, and entrenches them accordingly, it is a constitutional order that actively negates the ability of its citizens to create different kinds of associations, especially, political associations. So to imagine a different kind of BiH, even a more strictly orthodox liberal-democratic incarnation of the state, is to insist on a radical demand. And, moreover, it is to demand the dismantling of the existing Dayton regime, whether this is immediately evident to all "reformers" in question or not.

In this respect, the insistence on "expert" governments in the wake of the February protests demonstrates how even the most politically aware citizens in BiH have still not quite come to terms with the nature of politics in their country nor its historic origins. At the heart of the expert thesis was the belief that the central problem with contemporary BiH is one particular corrupt elite generation and, moreover, that the task of the protesters was to as quickly as possible expel and then replace this elite with a new, responsible and accountable class of leaders. Yet by failing to grasp the systemic nature of the problem in BiH, and the historic patterns that had led to the current situation, in what was otherwise a moment of great democratic triumph, the finally mobilized citizens of BiH effectively called for their own continued marginalization. Granted, the proposal of experts at helm of the respective cantonal governments was an attempt to break the partisan gridlock of the existing system and to stave off the accusation that what the plenums were doing was essentially a coup against the state. But rather than immediately moving to transfer power to a different group of government officials, in the hope that *their* rule would be more benevolent, the BiH plenums might have instead considered attempting to substantively expand the possibilities for popular participation in the political process.

Though I argue that the potential for reform *within* the Dayton constitutional order is virtually non-existent, the central contention of this dissertation is that change has always been possible and necessary from without. Given that most of the ire during the February protests was directed at local authorities, a concrete suggestion for the plenums to offer thereafter might have been the implementation of participatory budgeting practices, at the municipal and cantonal level. Most famously implemented in certain low-income neighbourhoods in the Brazilian city of Porto Alegre, and since expanded to dozens of locales around the world, participatory budgeting significantly changes the power dynamics within communities by allowing ordinary citizens the opportunity to identify, study, and implement large-scale public

works projects that are required in their communities (Wampler 2007).[124] A participatory regime in BiH would not instantly transform the country, as such, but it would address the central missing element of existing political practices in the country: namely, the near total exclusion of ordinary citizens from the decision making processes of elites. After all, the February protests were a radical assertion of popular agency that then, in a very theoretically mature way, sought to become permanent, rather than a mere explosion of fury. But this impulse was undone by a tendency within the *demos* themselves in BiH that ascribes the ideal of good and just governance to the benevolence of elites, rather than the agency of citizens.

In this respect it is quite telling that the plenums *did not* propose something like participatory budgeting but instead opted for "expert rule." In short, even within the context of a democratic political *moment*, the citizens of BiH were not able to create the foundations for a more permanent democratic *movement*. This fact, in turn, returns me to the project of wanting to identify what it is that actually creates the conditions for substantive, participatory democratization. Here we should return to Wolin et al to ask: how are genuinely political democracies established? For that matter, how did even liberal-democracies come to exist in the first place? Even if we grant that the latter are less than perfect political utopias contemporary liberal-democracies are nevertheless objectively freer, more democratic, and more permissive of popular agency that the current Dayton regime in BiH. So, what are the origins of these societies and what is it that BiH society, in turn, needs to replicate some version of the same? In both cases, the answer is the same: revolution.

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[124] Terry Maley has astutely reminded me that in some cases, the implementation of participatory budgeting was virtually at the behest of the ruling Workers' Party of Brazil and thus not strictly a grassroots initiative. The point is well made. I would only argue that because the Workers' Party itself was the product of decades of social movement and anti-regime agitation in 1970s and 1980s Brazil, and is still today a kind of "union" of separate progressive wings and movements in the country, even their intervention in the process was relatively "popular." The still more recent scandals concerning former President Lula da Silva, however, remind us how strong the pull of patrimonialism is, so much so that even genuinely popular movements can succumb to its pull, especially once they are institutionalized within the state apparatus. This also further highlights one of my central claims in this text that democracy remains perennially a *work in progress*.

The primary difference between the Balkans and BiH, in particular, and the Western liberal-democratic regimes in question is not that nationalism is a more prevalent phenomenon in this region, per se. Indeed, with the exception of the war in the 1990s, violence in the Balkans was almost always embedded within wider, European conflicts. The reason why nationalism has become the dominant ideological tool of the political and social elite in BiH, however, is because here, unlike in the West, popular revolutionary upheavals have never managed to "win" reforms and political concessions in quite the same fashion as elsewhere. There have been major revolts here, of course, important insurrections, as I have argued, that have demonstrated the capacity of Balkan peoples to develop different modes of association. It is worth reviewing these quickly to better establish why these Balkan upheavals nevertheless failed to make genuinely revolutionary changes to the essential character of the region's political and social economy.

The advocates of the Balkan federalist tradition immediately recognized the dangers of the nation-state project and the cynical attempts of imperial strongmen to transform themselves into national liberators in the 19th century. In the wake of the collapse of the Ottoman Empire, these revolutionaries experimented with various combinations of republicanism, anarchism, socialism, and peasant communalism in their attempts to reveal the reactionary tendencies of the respective "national liberation" movements of the region, from Greece to Serbia, and create alternatives to them. They failed, however, and what followed was the coercive un-mixing of peoples in the Balkans as a whole, from Bulgaria to the Yugoslav lands to Greece, and the establishment of ethnically cleansed "national homelands."

But at helm of these news states remained an old, imperial class of "big men", whose only means of accumulation was violence; primitive accumulation remained the essential character of the Balkan economies, even after the collapse of imperial exploitation. For the next seven decades, from 1871 to 1941, the Yugoslav peoples invariably drew closer and

were riven apart, in turn, by the catastrophic confrontations of their respective national elites and the interference of various imperial powers. Despite shifting borders and collapsing political regimes, the overwhelming majority of ordinary people in the Balkans remained excluded from meaningful political participation; the region's authoritarian character remained elastic. Whether their fates were sown in Vienna or more locally, they remained no less able to dictate events. In short, no genuine democratic revolution emerged amid the proliferation of nominally popular nation-states.

After the Second World War, however, the Yugoslav Communists reanimated the Balkan federalist ideal and within the context of an otherwise authoritarian regime, ordinary Yugoslavs flirted with radical democracy over the course of the evolution of their new self-managed economy. But in the late 1960s, a new generation of radicals began to challenge the authoritarian and anti-democratic aspects of this supposed "workers' democracy." This Yugoslav New Left wanted the substantive implementation of Marxist principles—the dictatorship of the proletariat, as Marx imagined it, not of the party. But the mass protests growing out of this critique in 1968 and 1971 were violently crushed by the regime and, moreover, led to the wholesale dismantling of the reformist establishment within and outside of the ruling LCY. Truncated democratic reforms followed in 1974 but these did little to substantively alter the authoritarian nature of the regime, except to fracture it along the country's republican borders.

By the late 1980s, Yugoslavia was once again in crisis but this time there was no New Left to call for progressive reforms. Instead, Yugoslavia stumbled into "democratization," led not by actual democratic reformists but by authoritarians, who merely swapped their communists credentials for nationalist costumes to preserve their positions and thereby, as in the post-Ottoman Balkans a century earlier, drove the Yugoslav peoples to war. As before, the previous regime effectively remained in power and used chauvinist rhetoric and the ensuing violence not only to further enrich themselves personally but to prevent the emergence of any

alternate mode of political association. Desperate citizen-led protests in the early 1990s showed that the nationalist narrative (and construction) of the dissolution of Yugoslavia was orchestrated from above and that ordinary Bosnians and Herzegovinians had the ability to "intervene" for themselves in the political process of their country. But this democratic interruption was aborted or, rather, prevented through the use of nationalist violence. Once again, the construction of nation state in the Balkans coincided not with democratization but with war, dispossession, and authoritarianism.

The BiH that emerged from the dissolution of Yugoslavia was truly a historical tragedy. In a sense, the most reactionary tendencies of all the previous epochs discussed earlier have today come to their fullest expression. The country is absurdly fractured, politically and socially, and dominated by opportunistic nationalists to such an extent that the very idea of citizenship has been extinguished—the Ethnopolis has completely eclipsed the polis. Kleptocratic economic tendencies still persist, of course, and as before fundamentally define the society. While the Dayton constitutional order segregates Bosniaks, Croats, and Serbs from each other, and negates their right to rise above these chauvinist labels, Dayton-era elites work in tandem to dispossess all of them collectively of what little material wealth and political agency was not already destroyed by the war. BiH, like in the 1920s and early 1990s, is once again a nominal electoral democracy; yet as in those prior periods, owning to the triumph of reactionary, ethno-nationalist kleptocrats, BiH teeters persistently not on the brink of becoming a true polis but collapsing into itself completely, into the pandemonium of communal fratricide.

These dominant reactionary kleptocratic tendencies invariably produce contradictions and in every instance create the conditions for general social revolt. Typically, the architects of this regime have used nationalist indoctrination and propaganda not only to stave off social revolt but, in moments of crisis, to redirect social resentments at the elite into fratricide. But the moment of crisis is nevertheless a moment of contestation and potential, and today, as BiH

enters yet another period of profound social discontent, there is an opportunity to redirect this energy in turn, not into communal violence, but into collective revolt. The exhaustion of the Dayton constitutional order is truly a moment pregnant with potential—both political and re-actionary. The collapse of the Yugoslav state has left profound cleavages in BiH society but the post-war period has also given us grounds to reconceptualise this experience not as the product of ethnic animosities but, as this dissertation argues, of reactionary elite manipulation, with a very specific and, indeed, sophisticated political-economic agenda. It is this agenda against which the ordinary citizens of BiH must now turn in a mobilized and participatory manner if they desire genuine change.

Taken together, the park protests in Banja Luka, the JMBG protests in Sarajevo, the country-wide insurrection in February of 2014, and the subsequent proliferation of the plenum movement all strongly suggest that there is a new political dynamic emerging in BiH, akin to other historic episodes of potential change. The plenums eventually petered out due to police pressure and, above all, the catastrophic flooding in May of that year that forced the organiz-ers to shift their priorities from political organizing to humanitarian relief. Still, even if we think of the plenums as a "failure," the Dayton constitutional order itself is no closer to reme-dying its internal contradictions. This particular political moment may have subsided and the articulation and exploration of a common civic project likewise may have only been tempo-rary, for the time being. But it is precisely for this reason that Wolin, I believe, insists on call-ing substantive democracy a "fleeting" experience. BiH did not (and in any case, cannot be expected to) become a democratic utopia overnight. Especially since, to use Wolin's termi-nology, the protests in February 2014 were the first genuine and sustained political moment of any meaningful consequences in more than two decades. One such moment was unlikely to ever be sufficient to transform the society as a whole. Nevertheless, an example was offered of the kind of activism and association that was possible in BiH; an effort that if sustained over many such moments, and coalesced into a broader movement, one that could, in the final

analysis, chart a new course. We should recall that, in a sense, February 2014 was itself the culmination of one such movement or wave that had begun in 2012 with the park protests in Banja Luka, continued with the JMBG protests in 2013, and then finally erupted in Tuzla in 2014. It was already proof, I argue, that if the authoritarian method was elastic, so too was the possibility of participatory intervention and mobilization in BiH, especially once a certain kind of momentum was built-up.

Moreover, we now have a small but growing democratic catalogue; recent experiments with concrete attempts to create different, better democratic associations. They have failed to transform the society as a whole but they have shown ordinary citizens—that is, the great majority of citizens who are excluded and alienated from virtually all of the country's existing political institutions and processes—their ability come together, to strike fear into their elites, and, above all, to win concessions from them. And that fear was, indeed, struck into the hearts of the elites is not only proven by their collective panicked scrambling at the time of the protests, but also dramatic post-protest investments in repressive police armaments (S. Mujkić 2015). This new recognition and anticipation of further civil unrest by the country's elites suggests, as Scott would use the phrase, that we appear finally to be past the concern with merely "decorous" forms of protest in BiH.

These acts, these small concessions, are the first steps in building a growing movement that, in its individual episodes, may be fleeting but, as its final product, can produce a society transformed. This is certainly what the history of representative democracy suggests to us about the nature of democracy, as a whole. The "class compromise" at the heart of the Western liberal democracy—between its popular and aristocrat elements—would not be possible if the plebeian classes, over the course of centuries of struggles and frequent defeats, had not, in the end, been able to shift the political paradigm of their societies from feudal absolut-

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ism to democratic representation.[125] To be clear, the historic ruling classes in the West were no more benevolent in their rule than the Balkan big men of the time. But the masses of the West, however, were more successfully able to contest the rights and abilities of their elites to rule at will and, in the process, they won for themselves, on the whole, a more participatory and democratic tradition of governance. And, more importantly, the struggle to preserve and expand what democratic citizenship means in the 21st century continues in even the most prosperous, equal, and free societies in the world. Because democracy remains fleeting, a society that aspires to the ideal of *isonomy* must remain in perpetual pursuit of and be in the habit of exercising this *political* power, usually, directly against the interests of its elite and the state.

Several important conclusions follow from this analysis for the citizens of contemporary BiH. To begin with, let us start with the conceptual necessity of confronting and dismantling ethno-nationalist narratives and note that as it concerns the potential for any future democratic polis in BiH, this task is constant and unavoidable. Nationalism is, was, and shall remain the primary tool of the Balkan elites in their attempt to politically and economically dispossess ordinary Bosnians and Herzegovinians, and Yugoslavs more broadly.

The primary way to confront the nationalist threat, however, is not to insist on what currently passes for "republicanism" in BiH. By this I mean the popular tendency among certain Bosnian and Herzegovinian "patriots" to insist that the only legitimate constitution in BiH is the 1992 constitution of the Republic of BiH. Not only is there no practical hope of reviving this constitution but, more importantly, it ignores the deeply problematic aspects of this same document. More specifically, the 1992 constitution was nothing more than the 1974 constitu-

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[125] Martin Breaugh makes a similar argument in *The Plebeian Experience* when reviewing the emancipatory struggles of the Roman plebeian classes. They won a degree of political power, and thereby began a "discontinuous insurrectionary" tradition in Western democratic practice, through the "will to emancipate themselves. They sought to assert their own desire for freedom without being compelled to act by a tutelary power intent on bending them to its aims of political domination" (Breaugh 2013, xxi). Breaugh subsequently traces a similar approach through to the English Jacobins and the Paris Commune and argues that genuine "political freedom" for the "many" has always been accomplished through a degree confrontation and conflict between the "plebeians" and the elites.

tion of the SRBiH with the "socialist" terminology dropped. In other words, it was the same ethnically fractured mess that produced the post-1990 chaos that later led to the country's war and fragmentation. Indeed, the prevalence of this revanchist tendency and similar Yugonostalgic narratives is only further proof of the need for democratic forces in BiH to articulate genuinely new political horizons.

In this respect, there is no substitute for the plenum movement's ultimate success; namely, the insistence on concrete and exclusively socio-economic reforms. While BiH's current territorial and political fragmentation is absurd, it cannot be the task of grassroots protest movements to draw new maps. Indeed, BiH's "apartheid cartographies" will be undone, in the end, not by the drawing of new boundaries per se but by convincing ordinary Bosnians and Herzegovinians that the existing borders are irrational and not in their own best interests. The plenums, however, did much more to accomplish this than any Euro-American constitutional reform initiative precisely because they took as their central unit of analysis the country's broader socio-economic situation, not its territorial and ethnic divisions. If the entities and cantons disappeared tomorrow, ordinary Serbs, Croats, and Bosniaks would be no more (or less, for that matter) comfortable living next to each other than if these same territorial units were to persist for another generation. As I have argued throughout this text, BiH's central problem is not one of ethno-national conflict, as it is a problem of particular political-economic relations and practices and a likewise particular and peculiar history of state formation in this region.

Thus, in the final analysis, a new social contract in BiH is only possible if it is struck by ordinary Bosnians and Herzegovinians themselves and this, in turn, will only be possible when they recognize some essential likeness in each other. The most obvious and most historically important similarity, aside from their shared language and culture, is these peoples' collective dispossession by their professed national leaders. Thus, as the protests in Banja Luka,

Sarajevo, and February 2014 have shown, the best way to endear ourselves to each other is to consistently and, when necessary, forcefully assert the right of ordinary citizens to participate in the everyday conduct of politics. Though it was most likely a function of the fractured logic of the Dayton regime, here too the February protests fundamentally struck the right note. By focusing their ire primarily on local leaders (e.g. the cantonal administrations and in Mostar specifically the HDZ and SDA), the protesters effectively deflated the nationalist canard that the protests were actually an attack on the respective ethnic other. This is easily proven by the flood of solidarity statements made not only by ordinary Bosnians and Herzegovinians all over the country, but also by various organizations and associations across the region. Let us take as just one example this remarkable letter written by the Police Union of Belgrade at the time of the February demonstrations:

> A "Bosnian Spring" has begun to spread in Bosnia – a far reaching front of violent protests of the unemployed, the hungry, the neighbors whose rights have been trampled upon in the Federation and Republic of Srpska. Before those desperate people stand our professional colleagues, and it's their bodies that will take the anger directed at the incapable and corrupt government. The law of Communicating Vessels is not just a phenomenon in physics, but also in geopolitics; so that it is quite possible that the river Drina will not be wild enough and deep enough to stop the protests and demonstrations. It is completely reasonable that a similar scenario can be seen in [Serbia], where there are also many destitute, unemployed, or employed people not receiving salaries, with corruption at all levels, and political manipulation of citizens. And then again, us, the police officers, just like our colleagues in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Republic of Srpska, would find ourselves between a rock and a hard place; would find ourselves in a situation in which we would be defending, with our bodies and our lives, the very institutions that have led us into this hopeless situation that holds for hundreds of thousands of residents in Serbia. Police officers' rights have also been trampled upon, and they are also on the edge of poverty, cheated at every step by every person who happened to reach the leadership position of the Ministry of Interior with the help of political intrigue (Kilibarda, Statement by the Belgrade Police Union 2014).

The themes of dispossession, corruption, and destitution are identical in BiH and Serbia and for this reason even the police in Belgrade are able to effectively endorse a popular insurrection against the powers that be "across the Drina." This remarkable document, and many others like it, proves how effective a genuinely political strategy of popular democratic mobilization can be even in societies as deeply divided as BiH and the wider post-Yugoslav

space. When we begin to think in long term historical terms, one should recognize that it is precisely this kind of approach that allows for lasting social transformations that, in the short term, will necessarily be punctuated by individual fleeting episodes of revolutionary upheaval. But there can be no substitute for democratic practice. It is precisely these fleeting political moments, as Wolin calls them, that allow for the "the wholesale transgression of inherited forms." Democracy, we must recall, "was born in transgressive acts, for the demos could not participate in power without shattering the class, status, and value systems by which it was excluded." And only in such a context can those "moments of commonality when, through public deliberations, collective power is used to promote or protect the well-being of the collectivity" be brought to fruition.

Thus, those episodes of defeated and aborted revolts—from the Balkan federation to the 1992 anti-war protests to the plenums—are not proof that insurrectionary strategy is doomed to failure but, quite on the contrary, that it is the only approach that has ever produced genuinely democratic results or, at the very least, the potential for lasting transformation. It has been their defeat, not their attempt, by kleptocratic and reactionary elites that has resulted in disaster time and again in the Balkans. Accordingly, only the final triumph of these collective popular interventions can hope to create a different, participatory, democratic Balkans and BiH. This lesson is especially important today when perhaps more so than at any other point in BiH's history it is clear that reform or change of any sort cannot and will not come from within the existing system. It is thus the responsibility of ordinary Bosnians and Herzegovinians to create and enact a social order worthy of the democratic label. And, as the experience of the "expert governments" post-February 2014 demonstrates, to truly work for the expansion of democratic practices not merely regime change.

<u>Conclusion(s)</u>

In February 2014, I had an exchange with a fairly high placed diplomat working in the EU administration in BiH. I was then part of a small and informal group of scholars and activists, originally from BiH and otherwise intimately acquainted with the region, who had set for themselves the task of "shaping" the media narrative about the protests in the country. Given that we were not in BiH itself at the time, this felt like the most concrete contribution we could make to, what we all hoped, would be the start of a lasting movement for change in the country. On this occasion, I debated with the diplomat how the protests could and should change the prevailing EU policy in the country. Specifically, I said, it was necessary for the various international representatives in BiH to meet with delegates from the plenums and thereby make clear to the political establishment in BiH that the international community was no longer willing to tolerate their obstructionism. The plenums, I added, were the new "stakeholders" the international community had been looking for.

I received a very respectful hearing and had a meaningful exchange with the person in question. I was told, however, that the protestors and those of us supporting them from abroad would do well to avoid making the whole situation sound a little too much like the French Revolution. Though I am sure my interlocutor did not mean the statement to be quite so dramatic, I have since come to consider it as a striking articulation not only of precisely what is necessary in contemporary BiH but what has likewise been historically missing in the development of the state in this country.

This closing chapter, like the dissertation as a whole, has not argued for the summary execution of BiH's political establishment as in those days between 1793 and 1794. Instead, I have tried to establish the case for a dynamic interpretation of democracy, in order to contrast its robust history and theory in the West with its stunted fate in the Balkans. The analysis I offer in this dissertation is radical but only because the situation in BiH, the primary subject

matter of this project, is itself so radical. The situation in BiH is radically reactionary, it radically supresses the democratic rights and potentials of the Bosnians and Herzegovinian peoples, and radically robs them of their political and economic agency and welfare. I suspect that if it were possible to reform such a system, it would not exist in the first place. No society, no matter how divided or traumatized, would long suffer such abuse. And as I have argued throughout this dissertation, such a *status quo* has historically and is today likewise maintained only through the threat and use of violence.

In this respect, BiH is no different than any other democratic society in the world. One cannot expect a society to develop deep democratic norms and institutions, without first going through a deep, generational process of democratization. Wolin, Scott, Graeber and other radical democrats are absolutely right to bemoan the fate of liberal democracy in the current neoliberal era. There has been a retreat of democratic rights in the West since the end of the Cold War, at least, if not earlier. But the potential for reform within these societies still exists precisely because earlier popular revolutions established the broader conceptual, ideological, and political-economic foundations of these states and these, in turn, continue to lend themselves to the expansion of democratic potential and participation. Even in nearby Greece, which has not been entirely immune from many of the patterns that have beset the rest of the Balkan region as I discussed in Chapter II, today there has been a tremendous democratic breakthrough, amid an otherwise terrible socio-economic crisis, almost exclusively due to the Greek peoples willingness not only to confront their own elites but the elites of the EU as a whole.

In short, popular revolutions leave behind the ideological DNA for freer societies. Democracy is a practice, a practice of the *demos* that while perhaps only possible in episodic bursts must nevertheless be strung together into a coherent tradition if a society is to ever resemble anything akin to a polis. And even in little lands, nestled between empires and moun-

tain ranges, there are histories of revolt which we can recall to inspire and inform new democratic movements.

Conclusion

"Ce n'est pas une révolte, c'est une révolution." - François Alexandre Frédéric de La Rochefoucauld's response to Louis XVI on the fall of the Bastille, 1789.

This project has attempted to (re)conceptualise the foundations and functions of the state in BiH. My central research question asked why popular participation in the politics of the country has been such a marginal phenomenon—both in the sense of electoral participation and mass protests. The absence of such manifestations is especially conspicuous today in light of the nearly universally professed revulsion, among the citizens of country and scholars alike, at the prevailing social and political status quo in BiH. In other words, I have sought to ask why the citizens of BiH do not more frequently *act* on the anger and disgust they otherwise so readily profess to feel with respect to their leaders and the country's dominant ideological paradigms. As a broader historical thesis, I have asked why ordinary Bosnians and Herzegovinians have consistently been the victims rather than the agents of the seismic changes that have politically shaped the land between the Una and Drina rivers over the past century and a half.

The answer(s), fleshed out over the course the preceding five chapters, have centred on how the state in BiH (and the ideal of the nation-state, in particular) came to suffocate the ideal of popular agency, the ideal of the political, and the idea of the polis. In a sense, I have in this analysis come to increasingly juxtapose the idea of democracy with the idea of the state. More specifically, as it concerns BiH but arguably the region as a whole, I have suggested that the state has never been "of and by" the people, in any real sense of the term, despite the prevalence of populist nationalist (and Communist) rhetoric to that effect. While this work has primarily focused on the case of BiH, as a research project it is one with relevance for the whole of southeastern Europe, as has already been made clear, in particular, by the discussion and much of the scholarship cited in Chapter II (Banac 1988, Kitromilides, 1989,

Mazower 2002, Kanin 2003, Hoffmann, 2010). Accordingly, as Siniša Malešević reminds us: "Notwithstanding the conventional historical narratives that depict the establishment of independent polities in the South East [of] Europe in the 19th century as 'national revolutions', an overwhelming majority of the population, just as the most active participants in these uprisings, had little or no sense of what nationalism is" (Malešević 2012, 300). Indeed, I have argued that the twinned appearance of statism and nationalism in the Balkans was no accident; nationalism was a manufactured ideological product of the local elite, meant to obscure the classed interests and the broader political economy shaping the then emerging state form towards the end of the Ottoman period.

As a result, it is in the conceptual and temporal space between imperial collapse and the advent of "national sovereignty" in the south east of Europe at the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century, that the crux of the central problematic of this project lies. It was then that popular participation was first evacuated from the "moment of founding," as Sheldon Wolin calls it, and the nation-state became a decidedly *anti-political* mode of social organization. Thereafter, the (re)appearance of the "national question" always corresponded with moments of political transition, when it was necessary for elites in the Balkans to ensure that the new social order(s) would remain fundamentally exclusive. That is, that politically, oligarchy would remain the ruling principle, and the economic mode likewise "primitive."

This, however, is to frame my project in negative terms—the Balkan state as *unlike* the state form in the West. Yet as a comparative project, as one analysing the contours of certain social practices in certain places, this text transcends its "area studies" dimensions and becomes a contribution to political and democratic theory, more broadly. Most importantly, in this respect, I have specifically stressed popular participation as the central ingredient of substantive political democracy. Yet because popular participation has been actively supressed in BiH by generations of elites, the BiH state has in turn consistently veered towards failure and

collapse and not the ideal of the polis; I have referred to this as the elastic quality of Balkan authoritarianism. Here it is important to unpack precisely why I fixate on participation and the ideal of the polis more broadly, as the key analytical categories for assessing the evolution of the state in BiH.

To begin with, in elevating participation as the essential element of democracy, I have relied on a constellation of "radical democratic" theorists—Wolin, Scott, and Graeber, primarily—who situate participation and agency as the central atom(s) of a substantive conception of democracy that exceeds the boundaries of existing electoral practices and perhaps even the modern state form as a whole. Their works, however, are primarily critiques of representative models of democracy. Yet as Asim Mujkić argues, though deemed as variously "truncated" by radical democrats, even representative democracy has proven "too free" for BiH's contemporary elites, who have consistently worked to empty the existing electoral regime in the country of all its genuine democratic potential. I have explored at length why the radical democratic critique nevertheless holds currency for a space in which the state form remains so comparatively "primitive." In this respect at least, I have sought to go beyond Mujkić's critique to explain the origins of the contemporary illiberal regime in BiH from a comparative-historical perspective, an analytical approach that has consciously followed the historicist method of the radical democrats; in short, the question of the state and the demos in BiH understood through a *longue durée* approach as noted at the onset of the text as a whole.

As I argued in Chapter I, the conception of democracy I have advanced, on the basis of the radical democratic critique, is one *ranging* from anarchism to liberalism. Yet given the deeply anti-statist tendencies of Wolin, Scott, and Graeber, in truth, anarchism rather than liberalism is the proverbial spectre haunting this work. Indeed, even Wolin, as arguably the most "conservative" of my primary intellectual inspirations, essentially concedes that democracy—in the political sense in which he understands it—may very well be impossible within the con-

fines of the state; "I propose accepting the familiar charges that democracy is inherently unstable, inclined toward anarchy, and identified with revolution and using these traits as the basis for a different, *a*constitutional [sic] conception of democracy" (Wolin 1994, 37). This is not an accepted axiom of political theory more broadly and ought to be recognized as a profoundly anarchist thesis. Yet the intellectual proximity between Wolin's corpus and anarchist theory remains virtually unexplored with few notable exceptions.[126] Isaac Abrams notes that this is likely due to anarchism's "bad reputation" in the academy and popular imagination both, where this particular intellectual tradition is deemed largely synonymous with chaos and terrorism (Abrams 2013, 8). Nevertheless, in rejecting the state as an appropriate "vessel" for popular democratic energy, Wolin firmly gestures towards his anarchist affinities.

Owing to the hegemonic role of the state in contemporary political thinking, and in political science as an academic discipline, it is difficult to think outside of and beyond its contours without risking a degree of ostracism. Yet one inevitably confronts what Richard Day calls the "hegemony of hegemony" (Day 2005, 8) when conceiving of the state as a social construct or at the very least as an entity shaped by contradictory and complex historical patterns. This is especially the case when the concern is with one particular state or states in one particular region, as it is in this text. Still, the conceptual and physical hegemony of the state functions as a tremendous filter; even Scott argues: "We are stuck, alas, with Leviathan, though not at all for the reasons Hobbes had supposed, and the challenge is to tame it." To

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[126] While the breadth of his work and canonical stature within contemporary theory have made Wolin a subject of consideration unto himself, there have also been important attempts to read his scholarship within broader theoretical traditions, akin to my own likening of his work as anarchist. William Connolly and Aryeh Botwinick, for instance, attempt to draw his thought closer to the orbit of postmodernist scholarship, while simultaneously acknowledging Wolin's expressed rejection of the label (Connolly and Botwinick 2001, 13-16). Wolin rejects postmodernism largely because he views it as a retreat from collective agency, from the idea of commonality and citizenship which is so central to his work. In this respect, however, it is interesting to consider the work of Todd May, who attempts to draw parallels between anarchist and poststructuralist critiques of the state (May 1994). Without addressing his work directly, in a way May makes a stronger case for Wolin's truly "radical" politics— in particular the rejection of the state—by revealing the formative theoretical influence of anarchist theory on postmodernism and poststructuralism, a strand that has been noted by other anarchist scholars since then (Rousselle and Evren 2011). Which is to say, insomuch as Wolin *appears* like a postmodernist for his critiques of centralized state power, his belief in the power of popular, participatory agency moves him far closer to the domain of anarchist philosophy, something which, as noted, Todd May's work implicitly recognizes.

Scott the state has become indispensable not because it is that which allows human civiliza-

tion in the first place, as Hobbes insisted, but rather that the machinery of control, surveil-

lance, and domination that has become characteristic of the modern state is today so vast and

so powerful that individuals cannot actually contest its power, at least not in the sense of over-

turning it as a form. Indeed, he adds that even to control this modern Leviathan may prove to

be a "challenge…well be beyond our reach" (Scott 2012, xvi). In this respect, Scott and

Wolin are both clearly informed by the American context, that is, by the US' "lone" super-

power status after the end of the Cold War. Accordingly, each of them couches their anarchist

sympathies with reference to the growing power of the American state, and expresses doubt

that such an "empire" can ever be democratized. Wolin writes starkly of the transformation of

the American republic, arguing: "Superpower's constitution depends upon a symbiotic rela-

tion between two elements, one political, the other economic. The first is empire and consists

in large measure of military might…The second element is the globalizing corporation. It

brings to foreign countries economic goods and services as well as the softening power of cul-

tural influences and products. As these elements take hold and develop, the 'homeland' is

transformed, from a self-governing, predominantly inward-looking political society into a

'home base' for international economic and military strategies" (Wolin 2008, 132).

In short, both men write extensively of the withering away of substantive democratic

practice in one of the birthplaces of contemporary republicanism, meaning that if Wolin ges-

tures towards anarchist affinities and Scott concurs, as I contend, but nevertheless insists on

the impossibility of actually replacing the state, we appear to be at a theoretical impasse.

A detour is offered, however, by Graeber whose anarchist politics focus on the prac-

tice of creating and sustaining genuinely participatory movements (Graeber 2013). I argue

Graeber "reminds" Scott of his own historical research (e.g. *Weapons of the Weak, Domina-

tion and the Arts of Resistance, The Art of Not Being Governed*) and Wolin of his extolment

of the wonders of the Athenian polis, and thereby suggests that the "balance of power" between the state and individuals is no more unequal today than it was during Hobbes' time. Violence and the machineries of violence, as Charles Tilly notes, have always been a constitutive element of the state (Tilly 1985). Indeed, despite the rise of totalitarian regimes during the 20th century, popular revolutions have remained a recurrent historical phenomenon. After all, the still young 21st century has been *defined* by revolutionary upheavals and their repercussions. From the Colour Revolutions of the early 2000s to the Arab Spring of 2010-2011, popular insurrections have markedly transformed global politics since the "End of History." As Scott himself acknowledges "most revolutions are not the work of revolutionary parties but the precipitate of spontaneous and improvised action ('adventurism,' in the Marxist lexicon)…organized social movements are usually the product, not the cause, of uncoordinated protests and demonstrations, and… the great emancipatory gains for human freedom have not been the result of orderly, institutional procedures but of disorderly, unpredictable, spontaneous action cracking open the social order from below" (Scott 2012, 141).

In other words, the grand unifying principle of this text, tying the radical democrats to BiH and the Balkans more broadly, is the recognition of the necessity of a revolutionary impulse for genuine democratic politics. It may be, in the final analysis as Wolin suggests, that democracy cannot be "constitutionalized," that it cannot be made static and institutional, and that it shall be forever fugitive, forever to be experienced only in moments (Wolin, 1994). Even so, even those fugitive moments cannot be established without consistent confrontation between the demos and the elite, as Martin Breaugh likewise argues in a recent work (Breaugh 2013). It is in this respect then that democratic theory is not only significant for our thinking about BiH's future as a polis but that BiH as it actually exists offers something to democratic theory, in turn. Indeed, despite its comparatively reactionary and chauvinist constitutional arrangements today, as I have recalled throughout this text, the peoples of BiH have also consistently articulated a different kind of politics; popular attempts at participatory,

progressive, egalitarian modes of social organization can be found at every critical juncture of BiH history and are featured in each chapter of this text as well.

The importance of these episodes is perhaps best illustrated by Hannah Arendt's work or rather the *context* of Arendt's philosophical works. Earlier I made mention of Arendt's use of the term isonomy; to her, the "notion of no-rule…expressed by the word isonomy, whose outstanding characteristic among the forms of government, as the ancients had enumerated them, was that the notion of rule…was entirely absent from it. The *polis* was supposed to be an isonomy, not a democracy" (Arendt, On Revolution 1990, 30).

Arendt's fascination, if not necessarily outright commitment to such a radical conception of the polis is striking because one could argue that her work is informed by two key theoretical themes: the polis but also totalitarianism. That is to say, not unlike Wolin and Scott, Arendt throughout her work juxtaposes the comparatively participatory Athenian polis, with the mechanized domination and murder of the 20th century totalitarian state. Yet unlike Wolin and Scott, it is precisely *because* of the totalitarian state, and because of the rise of totalitarian ideologies, that Arendt reaches back to the polis to articulate a different vision of politics. A conception of democratic politics as existing beyond and before the state, existing after genocide and in spite of genocide. In this respect, the *context* of Arendt's work is intimately important to this text as it suggests that the need for theory is only heightened, rather than mitigated, by episodes and periods of extreme violence.

Giorgio Agamben, who has continued to write on this theme, follows Arendt in articulating a similar dialectic between participatory politics and the spectre of the genocidal state (Newman and Lechte 2012). For both Arendt and Agamben, the state in a fundamental sense culminates in the death camp. In this respect, the Holocaust is a "state of exception," as Agamben would term it (Agamben 2005), but it is not *exceptional* per se in the broader history of statism. In other words, not every state initiates a genocide but every genocide requires a

state. Yet Arendt also clearly believes that politics and the political is not only possible after genocide but that it is, indeed, the only real means of approaching what is today termed as "reconciliation." Which is once again to say that it is in this conceptual space that radical democracy and BiH encounter each other; only radical assertions of popular agency can restore a sense of *community* to societies that have been riven asunder by extreme episodes of violence, depoliticization, and, indeed, *dehumanization*.

Today, democracy in the West is threatened not only by neoliberal corporatism but by the rise of the so-called New Right, two phenomena which have only relatively recently come to be understood in tandem (Antonio 2000, Walia 2013). The literature on the rise of neoliberalism in the West is dominated by the idea of a "shift" from a more equal, more just, more democratic post-World War II "welfare state," to the contemporary oligarchic and predatory neoliberal state (Pierson 1994, Svallfors and Taylor-Gooby 2002). Regardless of whether that particular claim of a shift is true or not, in BiH, at least, primitive accumulation, kleptocracy, oligarchism, and chauvinism have from the onset been the driving motors of the state formation process. Thus, though I have spent the brunt of this text *distinguishing* the path of the state formation process in the Balkans from social patterns and practices in the West, to the determinant of the Balkans by and large, in this respect we nevertheless see a merging of roads. Progressive political movements, in the West as much as in the Balkans, are obstructed by essentially comparable phenomena: dispossessive economic practices buttressed by reactionary social politics. And though, again, the economic practices of Balkan "big men" are not quite neoliberal, as I have argued, and Balkan nationalism(s) are likewise particular, the terrain for comparison is nevertheless fertile.

Here then I would suggest that what the Balkans and BiH, in particular, can offer democratic theory and social movement theory and practice, is an arguably far longer experience of organizing progressive, popular movements in the face of tremendous centrifugal re-

actionary pressures. It is not to say that the democratic activists and theorists in the Balkans have been more successful in their efforts than their Western counterparts; indeed, that claim seems almost self-evidently untrue and has been discussed at length throughout this text. But it is to suggest that there is fruitful intellectual and theoretical ground to be surveyed with respect to the question of the political from the perspective of societies where participatory experiments and experiences have been limited. Indeed, it is precisely these limited experiences that are potentially instructive. I would suggest that the Banja Luka park protests, the Sarajevo JMBG protests, and the 2014 protests and plenums across BiH are as spectacular and significant as any popular democratic initiative in the world, given the tremendous reactionary obstacles embedded into the BiH political system, there to *prevent* precisely such manifestations. There have been larger protests, of course, and more successful electoral performances by radical democratic movements elsewhere. But rarely have such movements had to confront the legacies of a very recent war and genocide or, even more importantly, active segregationist, apartheid-like institutional arrangements.

Clearly, BiH as a state, and the citizens of BiH as democratic agents, have a tremendous amount to learn from the struggles of the people of South Africa against the apartheid regime in that country. There is a tremendous amount to be learnt, as I suggested in the conclusion of Chapter V, also from the on-going struggles of the citizens of Greece and their confrontation with the European and international financial establishment. Indeed, to return to Hannah Arendt, there is much to be learnt in BiH from Germany's post-war denazification as well. But there is likewise much that BiH can offer to the broad canon of democratic theory. And so much of that educational potential is contained in the three episodes, the three moments of contemporary popular insurrection that I have discussed at length in the latter part of this text.

After all, the idea that in a society less than twenty years removed from a war that left a hundred thousand people dead, one would witness mass anti-government protests, the culmination of which was the creation of popular, grassroots civic assemblies, experimenting with direct democracy as a means of public administration sounds almost like a utopian fantasy. Likewise romantic is the image of a human chain around a state parliament as an attempt to sway the voting of MPs—it is a scene ripped almost straight from the pages of Alan Moore and David Lloyd's hugely influential *V for Vendetta* graphic novel and its later film adaptation. No less impressive is the sight of activists from a country as fractured as BiH travelling for hours to attend a protest to protect a small park, in the capital city of an "entity" founded in suppression and violence. There are dozens of similar, near daily incidents that I have not discussed here that are no less significant in expanding the horizons of the possible in BiH. Nor is the now increasingly obscured history of the Balkan federalist tradition or of Yugoslav self-management or the Yugoslav New Left that I have attempted to highlight without its important and still relevant contributions.

These are all perhaps small and "fugitive" episodes in the grand scheme of comparative democratic revolutions but for BiH, and the region as a whole, they are of awesome significance. Indeed, the task of sober historical analysis is incomplete without recognition of the paths not taken and the paths yet to be taken. Western scholarship on Latin American in the 1980s, for instance, was dominated by Cold War era narratives about global geopolitical confrontations between the Soviet Union and the US. By the mid-1990s and into the 2000s especially, the central question of Latin American studies, at least as far as politics was concerned, was the spectacular emergence and triumph of anti-neoliberal movements—in the streets and at the election box. In the span of a decade, Latin American, as an area of study, was transformed in the eyes of Western academics from a blood-soaked, imperial backwater, to mandatory reading for anyone interested in democratic renewal, economic and social justice, and social movement theory.

The contemporary Balkans feel like they are on the cusp of a similar explosion of social and intellectual energy—from the "Bosnian Spring" to the on-going tumult in Macedonia, something new is stirring in the south east of Europe. For scholars to do intellectual justice to the creative energy of the contemporary Balkans will mean resisting the well-worn moral and analytical potholes of previous generations of academics. A cursory overview of contemporary attempts at Balkan affairs analysis reveals, on the one hand, a lasting and disturbing predilection for ethnic narratives (Borger 2014). On the other side are no less inaccurate and simplistic narratives, attempting to jam all events in region into some formulaic catch-all worldview that completely negates local experiences and the agency of the Balkan peoples themselves, typically in favour of grand geopolitical accounts (Joseph 2015). Even ostensibly "leftist" versions of the latter of these approaches, as Marko Hoare argues, have historically tended to slip into the worst forms of solipsism and revisionism (Hoare 2003). On this point in particular, a historical tangent seems apt.

During the first half of the 19th century, the Balkans were, like today, a growing hotbed of discontent. And then as now, outside observers often struggled to make sense of how (and if) these local struggles fit into broader European, and international, dynamics. Bakunin and Engels took particular interest in the situation in the Balkans as part of a broader analytical turn in the European radical and revolutionary community after the (perceived failure of the) 1848 revolutions. That same year, the Russian Mikhail Bakunin, not yet a committed anarchist, participated in the first Slavic Congress in Prague, a disparate summit of liberals, reformers, nationalists, and radicals committed to fermenting anti-Ottoman revolts in the south east of Europe and, more broadly, with drafting a wider "pan-Slavic" liberation program. Writing in its wake, Bakunin's *Appeal to the Slavs* urged the Slavs of Europe, from Russia to the Balkans, to put aside their faith in imperial benevolence and benefaction and implored instead the "*democrats of all countries, to unite our forces, to come to an understanding and to organize*" (Bakunin 1848). The text, as E.H. Carr notes, was significant, as it was "the first

occasion on which, exactly seventy years before November 1918, the destruction of the Austrian Empire and the building of new Slav states on its ruins was publicly advocated" (ibid). While avowedly anti-imperialist in orientation, Bakunin's text was still murky on what to replace the imperial order with—though ever the propagandist, he quickly dubbed the still-hazy arrangement, "the Universal Federation of European Republics" (ibid).

While Bakunin still held out hope in 1848 for radical republicanism in the Slav lands, built on the back of an insurrectionary peasantry and formed into a union of states, Engels took a distinctly more pessimistic position. Engels' 1849 texts, *The Magyar Struggle* and *Democratic Pan-Slavism*, are treatises focused on the supposedly inherent "counter-revolutionary" nature of the Slavs and envisioned a "general war which will...break out [and] will smash this Slav Sonderbund and wipe out all these petty hidebound nations, down to their very names. The next world war will result in the disappearance from the face of the earth not only of reactionary classes and dynasties, but also of entire reactionary peoples. And that, too, is a step forward" (Engels, The Magyar Struggle 1849). The texts were scathing in their analysis and have remained controversial for the manner in which Engels blurred the line between Marxist anti-nationalism and German anti-Slavism, a crucial dimension of Bakunin's subsequent response.

Engels used *Democratic Pan-Slavism* to attack the undeveloped ideas of Bakunin and his association with the cause of pan-Slavic nationalism, insisting that peoples "which have never had a history of their own, which from the time when they achieved the first, most elementary stage of civilization already came under foreign sway, or which were *forced* to attain the first stage of civilization only by means of a foreign yoke, are not viable and will never be able to achieve any kind of independence" (Engels, Democratic Pan-Slavism 1849).[127] To Engels, the Slavs were "the special enemies of democracy" and committing himself further,

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[127] Henry Kissinger made a similar argument about BiH specifically, claiming that it had "never existed as an independent nation [sic]" thus leading him to favor partition as the only plausible solution to the 1992-1995 war (Holbrooke 2011, 365).

argued that in the wake of the events of 1848, it was clear that "the *Slavs one and all* put themselves under the banner of the *counter-revolution*" (ibid). Clearly, the negation of the democratic potential of the Balkan peoples is not a recent phenomenon.

Though it would take him more than twenty years to manage a systematic response, by 1873 Bakunin had matured into a self-declared anarchist. His opus, *Statism and Anarchy*, informed in large part by the dismissive stance taken by the German communists of the democratic struggles of the peoples of south eastern Europe but also those resisting Russian imperial hegemony, represented a frontal assault on Engels' (and Marx's) theories of revolution and social change more broadly. In this latter incarnation gone were Bakunin's flirtations with republicanism and the state altogether:

> This fiction of a pseudo-representative government serves to conceal the domination of the masses by a handful of privileged elite; an elite elected by hordes of people who are rounded up and do not know for whom or for what they vote. Upon this artificial and abstract expression of what they falsely imagine to be the will of the people and of which the real living people have not the least idea, they construct both the theory of statism as well as the theory of so-called revolutionary dictatorship.
>
> The differences between revolutionary dictatorship and statism are superficial. Fundamentally they both represent the same principle of minority rule over the majority in the name of the alleged "stupidity" of the latter and the alleged "intelligence" of the former. Therefore they are both equally reactionary since both directly and inevitably must preserve and perpetuate the political and economic privileges of the ruling minority and the political and economic subjugation of the masses of the people (Bakunin 1873).
>
> Not having forgotten the vicious denunciations from '49, Bakunin offered a sharp rebuke of Engels' characterization of the Slavs as the "special enemies of democracy." Specifically, Bakunin challenged the whole notion of an enlightened dictatorship of the proletariat and likewise the corollary of "unenlightened" peoples:

> Let us ask, if the proletariat is to be the ruling class, over whom is it to rule? In short, there will remain another proletariat which will be subdued to this new rule, to this new state. For instance, the peasant "rabble" who, as it is known, does not enjoy the sympathy of the Marxists who consider it to represent a lower level of culture, will probably be ruled by the factory proletariat of the cities. *Or, if this*

problem is to be approached nationalistically, the Slavs will be placed in the same subordinate relationship to the victorious German proletariat in which the latter now stands to the German bourgeoisie [emphasis mine] (ibid).

Contrary to their claims, Bakunin argued, the German Marxists had not solved "the national question," they had merely exposed themselves as being no less susceptible to the provincial prejudices of the time. Indeed, all they had done, the Russian anarchist suggested, was inherit bourgeois-nationalist prejudices and couched them in revolutionary language. And in any case, by insisting on state capture as one of the chief objectives of their program, the Marxists made inevitable the rule of the few over the many—the "vanguard" over the workers, the Germans over the Slavs, the Christian Slavs over the Muslim Slavs etc. In other words, Bakunin accused Engels of ignoring the ways in which structural violence was reproduced when ostensibly ideological changes were not accompanied by genuinely transformative political *practices*—a central argument of this project and this portion of it, in particular.

Yet despite its overtly problematic dimensions, Engels' account is important for this work because it illustrates why ostensibly "backwards" regions of the world are no less deserving of critical analysis. After all, Engels' account of the Slavic lands amounts to little more than a disinterested dismissal; he has concluded that the Slavs are a reactionary peoples but he is uninterested in *why* that might be. In this respect, the anarchist tradition is arguably more properly "historically materialist." As I noted in Chapter II, this tendency has been emblematic of the Marxist approach more broadly which, notwithstanding later Maoist "innovations," has tended to neglect the revolutionary and democratic potential of predominantly agrarian societies. Yet while Mao and his adherents insisted that the peasantry could and were a revolutionary class, their analysis was preceded by almost a century, by anarchist critiques from the likes of Bakunin and Kropotkin, even Nestor Makhno the Ukrainian anarchist guerrilla whose peasant army fought for "free territories" against both the Bolsheviks and the White Army (Skirda, 2004). For the anarchists, every society could be transformed through a genuinely emancipatory program and, like the Serbian radical Svetozar Marković, they argued

that predominantly agrarian societies were perhaps even more likely candidates for social revolutions, as there the idea of communitarian (if not explicitly communist) life was a reality rather than a theory. And insomuch as reactionary tendencies also persisted in these societies, these phenomena had to be understood in political and historical terms, as Bakunin sought to do, and not as essential "national" characteristics as Engels saw it.

Contemporary southeastern Europe is no less reactionary than it was in the time of Engels and in some respects perhaps even more so. It is precisely for this reason that my assessments of the region and of BiH in particular are informed by Bakunin and the anarchists, rather than by Engels. This is because even today the Balkans' particular and peculiar state formation processes and subsequent socio-political evolution remain poorly understood; tending often towards little more than essentialism, generalization, and myth. This text has been attempt to remedy this fact, albeit with a specific focus on BiH. But more broadly, the case for (and necessity of) a critical assessment of the social dynamics of the region remains to be made. Such an approach will reveal, I argue, that the potential for a different kind of narrative of Balkan history, and program for the region's future, is significant.

A century and a half later, many of the essential contours of Engels-Bakunin debate still divide not only the international left but scholars of democratic transitions more broadly; who is to lead, how are they to lead, when should they act, and how—in short, what is to be done? With even the world's richest economic and political bloc in the throes of multifaceted and compounding crises, questions concerning the origins and prospects for democratic renewal are as imminent in Sarajevo and Skopje, as they are in Brussels and Berlin. And while I am wary of threatening analyses which liken the EU's current challenges to the dissolution of Yugoslavia (Feffer 2015), as an intellectual exercise the comparison is provocative, even apt. Political unions burdened by unresponsive and often un-democratic institutions quickly veer towards dissolution in times of economic crises, as competing constellations of actors attempt

to carve out of the wreckage their future domains. Moreover, much as in Yugoslavia, the defence of Europe "whole and free" has mostly fallen to the widely discredited Brussels establishment (Collignon 2015). Technocrats make for poor democrats, however, and in seeking to preserve the union, what is required is much the same as what was required in Yugoslavia and is required still in BiH. Namely, "it is only…the rise of entirely new social movements, that can interrupt the growing hegemony of the authoritarian Right in the region. It maybe that sanctions will help curb the level of authoritarianism in the short-term, but it is only the emergence of a more vital form of indigenous democracy which will revive the prospects for the region" (Rowlands 2016).

The rift between Engels (and Marx) and Bakunin concerning the fate of 19th century Europe only widened with time, as did the cleavages between the communists, that is Marxists, and anarchists more broadly. As an ideology and as a form of criticism, anarchism faded into obscurity after a period of frenetic activity between the end of the 19th century and 1939, the end of the Spanish Civil War. In the 1990s and 2000s anarchism made a significant return, however, as anarchist organizing principles and strategies (participatory democracy, chief among them) came to significantly influence the growing confluence of "anti-globalization" movements across the world (Graeber and Grubačić 2004). A kind of persistent "anarchist intervention" has been noted in virtually all significant social uprisings since then—from the "left turn" in Latin America to the Egyptian Revolution, from the Euromaidan in Ukraine to the Rojava Revolution in northern Syria. Ironically, in the Yugoslav lands, the radical democratic potential of anarchist political thought was recognized only by the one regime most committed to discouraging its spread—the one headed by Josip Broz.

Fittingly, as I noted in chapters I and III, it is precisely Tito's chief ideologue's dreaded "anarcho-liberalism," referring here to Edvard Kardelj's work, which today seems like such a rich conceptual terrain on which to begin seriously investigating what the democratic

ideal has and can mean in the Balkans. It is one ultimately, as I argued earlier, ranging *from* anarchism *to* liberalism. If I have stressed in this concluding comment the anarchist portion of this "range," it has been only to acknowledge and investigate the potentially rich contributions of this particular and unduly marginalized philosophical tradition to the broader democratic canon. Indeed, the anarchist intervention or accent of this text has been instrumental to the claim of this work concerning the necessity of a political conception of democracy. And though the notion of democracy as ranging from anarchism to liberalism suggests a vast theoretical space, I have attempted to demonstrate throughout this text why it is precisely in this undiscovered country that the conceptual terminology for a different view of BiH and the whole of south east Europe (part of which I have attempted to illuminate here) is to be found.

Much as democratic theory has been largely absent in the literature on the Balkans, a fact I mentioned at the onset of this conclusion, so have the Balkans been absent in the annals of democratic theory. In a sense, notwithstanding my work here, the encounter that I am proposing has yet to occur. Nevertheless, there is a "research project" coming into view. Part of its contribution lies in smashing the bulk head of radical democratic theory into "post-conflict" studies and seeing what fruitful potentialities and affinities arise. And part of the contribution of this new project is in what I have spent the majority of this text working out: the explanatory lessons of the development of democratic practices in the West for the under-development of such norms in the Balkans. Much scholarship, of course, remains to be done on this front. Nevertheless, the opposite is likewise unduly neglected in the Western academy: the Balkan insurrections, revolutions, movements, and struggles that I have only lightly scratched the surface of in this text, and their contributions to our understanding of the democratic experience more broadly. In this respect, the works of Asim Mujkić, Damir Arsenijević, Edin Hajdarpašić, and Larisa Kurtović offer particularly fruitful avenues for further scholarship and consideration.

As a broader point, what I am proposing is that studies of post-authoritarian and post-conflict societies would do well broaden their theoretical and historical horizons. Contemporary crises and challenges are not merely the products of recent antecedents; there are almost always complex historical dynamics at paly and to truly understand and make sense of their significance it necessary to switch out on occasion our scholarly lenses. This text, for instance, has tried to conceive of BiH as a polis rather than a failed state, which is in one way just to say that I have tried to use (radical) political theory rather than a security studies approach to discuss the country and its democratic prospects.

Elsewhere, I have suggested a similar approach might offer lessons for the conflicts in Ukraine and Syria (Mujanović 2014, Denison and Mujanović 2015). And if we expand our conception of who can be a democratic agent, and in what context, new sorts of democratization strategies may emerge, allowing us to think differently even about the highly institutionalized and conservative processes (and studies) of EU accession (Cooley and Mujanović 2015). The latter point especially will continue to have significant ramifications not only for BiH but for Serbia, Montenegro, Macedonia, Albania, and beyond the Balkans for Turkey, Ukraine, Moldova, Belarus, and even Georgia, all of whom have expressed to various extents a desire to one day be EU member states.

More broadly, however, the approach I have used in this text has a still wider thesis: vibrant democracies are developed from within, not from the outside. To truly emerge, they require generational confrontations between the *demos* and the *plebes*, on the one side, and elites and oligarchs on the other. That in certain societies the rule of the latter over the former is maintained through more "primitive" ideological (and material) means than in others does not negate the validity of the central thesis. In the particular case of still "transitional" societies like BiH's, institutional arrangements also matter, of course, but until the exercise of democratic administration becomes popular and collective, even the fairest and most ideal in-

stitutional arrangements will prove insufficient to the task genuine social transformation, where the few do not absolutely and utterly dominate the many.

Despite all of the "potential" I have fixated on in these concluding comments, it has been my experience that often, especially following some heated political exchange, even well-meaning and educated Bosnians and Herzegovinians will remark to me "ah, but what can we ["ordinary people"] do?" or worse still, will utter some formulation of the phrase "we're all just waiting for the second half [of the war]." I would offer as a parting thought then that, if nothing else, the task of this work has been to attempt something akin to an appropriately stinging retort to these cynical, even if in the context, understandable sentiments. As it concerns BiH's future, as much as the contested lessons of its past, I have tried only to make legible to my colleagues, my friends, my family, and my communities the incredible political and social insight so succinctly captured by Samuel Beckett: "All of old. Nothing else ever. Ever tried. Ever failed. No matter. Try again. Fail again. Fail better." Properly understood, it suggests to us that even if the second half remains to be played, so too remains the structure and the very nature of the game as a whole in our hands to change.

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