

Montenegrin culture became the main currency of debate between what were in essence two competing Montenegrin national movements, one placing Montenegrins within a broader Serbdom, and the other placing them outside. Such questions as "Whose is [Petar II Petrović] Njegoš?" and "Whose is [Mihailo] Lalić?" provided an emotionally-charged shorthand for the broader issue at stake.¹²⁵ Did excluding such figures from the Serbian canon constitute an illegitimate division of the Serbian cultural whole? Or did including them represent a Great-Serbian grab at another nation's past? The latter current gathered strength (and official support) towards the end of the 1960s, as can be seen in some speeches delivered at the Symposium on Montenegrin Culture held in January of 1968, and in the Platform on Culture passed by the Montenegrin Central Committee in December of 1970.¹²⁶

Albanians

While the regime's post-Ranković change of course was in some sense a precondition for all the national movements of the late 1960s, the causal link was strongest by far in Kosovo. Ranković's ouster, followed by dramatic revelations of police abuses in the province, led to fundamental changes in its government: most important, the large-scale recruitment and promotion of cadres from the Albanian majority. (Albanians made up 67.1% of the province's population in 1961, and 73.7% in 1971. During the 1960s, approximately 70% of Yugoslavia's Albanians lived in Kosovo.) The proportion of Albanian members in the Kosovo party had grown steadily in the post-war period - from 30% in 1945 to approximately 50% in the mid-1960s - but until 1966 effective control had remained in the hands of Slavs. The change in political climate came at the same time that a large pool of educated Albanians emerged from the Albanian-language schools established after the Second World War. Combined, these two factors made possible a steady "Albanianization" of the province's elite in the ensuing decade.¹²⁷

At the same time, a series of changes both symbolic and practical allowed the Albanians of Kosovo to strengthen links with their conationals in Albania - links that the Yugoslav regime had earlier (especially after the 1948 Tito-Stalin split) regarded with great suspicion. Public display of the Albanian flag was allowed in practice from 1967, though not officially sanctioned until 1969.¹²⁸ From the spring of 1968, the term *Šiptar* (derived from the Albanian *Shqiptar*),

formerly used to designate Yugoslavia's Albanians as opposed to those of Albania, was replaced in Serbo-Croatian official usage by *Albanac*, formerly restricted to citizens of Albania. This change had a dual significance: it abolished a term that had acquired derogatory overtones, and it emphasized the unity of Albanians inside and outside Albania.¹²⁹ And in April of 1968, Kosovo officially adopted the form of Albanian literary language codified in Tirana (one based mainly on the southern Tosk dialect, whereas Kosovo Albanians had formerly used the northern Gheg). Perhaps most important, educational exchanges began bringing textbooks and teachers from Tirana to Priština (where university faculties, formerly a branch of the University of Belgrade, became independent in 1970). This meant that the following decade's explosion in higher education would take place under considerable influence from Tirana.¹³⁰

The beginnings of reform appear to have fed rather than assuaged Albanian discontents. In November of 1968, violent demonstrations broke out among students in Priština, and spread to other Kosovo cities as well as to Albanian-populated areas of western Macedonia. Some of the demonstrators demanded that Kosovo be given republican status - an idea that Albanians, including some officials, had voiced earlier that year during discussions of the upcoming constitutional amendments. Some went further, calling for Kosovo and Yugoslavia's other Albanian-populated areas to be joined to Albania. Though the demonstrations were put down by force, an atmosphere of heightened tension between Kosovar Albanians and the province's Slavic inhabitants persisted.¹³¹ Slavic emigration from the province resulted in a net drop in its combined Serb and Montenegrin population in the decade between the censuses of 1961 and 1971.¹³²

IV. E. Serbian Reactions: Dilemmas of Decentralization

What was the impact of the events of the late 1960s on Serbs' conceptions of themselves and their place in Yugoslavia? The impact of other peoples' national movements depended primarily upon their national and geographical relation to Serbs. In the traditional Serbian national thought dominant until the Communist period, Macedonians, Montenegrins, and Slavic Muslims had all been claimed as members of the Serbian nation. Though their "loss" could officially be dated to 1945, the process of separation was in a sense completed by the events of the late 1960s. To some Serbs, this implied a disintegration of the Serb nation. The Croatian movement could appear threatening for different reasons. As Yugoslavia's second-largest people

(almost twenty percent of the population), Croats could jeopardize the state's existence in a way that Montenegrins or Macedonians could not. Moreover, any moves toward Croatian independence revived memories of Serbian suffering in the fascist Independent State of Croatia. Kosovo's central place in the Serbian national myth meant that in the Serbian national imagination the Albanian movement was arguably the most traumatic of all. Indeed, of all the era's national movements, only the Slovene one can be said to have left Serbs relatively unmoved. There were several reasons for this striking contrast to the pattern of the late 1980s. Unlike Macedonians, Montenegrins, and Muslims, Slovenes were not claimed as Serbs. Unlike Croats and Albanians (and, again, Muslims) they did not live intermingled with Serbs. Finally, Slovenia's assertion of republican prerogatives against the federal government - which at many other times would have set Slovenia and Serbia on a collision course - was perfectly acceptable to the Serbian leaders of the late 1960s (whose policies are discussed below).

The regime's retreat from its earlier promotion of socialist Yugoslavism - a retreat that accelerated with the condemnation of Ranković's "unitarism" - also had a particular meaning for Serbs. Socialist Yugoslavism, which had seemed to offer an alternative to the discredited concepts of Serbian nationalism and nationally-conceived Yugoslavism, was now itself discredited. The *theory* of socialist Yugoslavism as "a necessary internationalist supplement to democratic national consciousness," as set out in the 1958 Party Program, remained essentially unchanged in the years after 1966. Party *practice*, however, accelerated a trend observable since the early 1960s: a shift from actively promoting Yugoslavism as an antidote to resurgent nationalisms, to ignoring it except when condemning the unacceptably unitarist forms that sometimes surfaced during public debates. The Yugoslav option was under suspicion for all, but especially for Serbs. The central element of the Party's new practice was its consistent and active discouragement of the idea that calling oneself a "Yugoslav" was a progressive, internationalist, or socialist stance. Without entirely forbidding the Yugoslav option, the Party discouraged it as at best an expression of naiveté, at worst a mask for Serbian assimilationist ambitions. The very format of the 1971 census emphasized the Yugoslav category's loss of status: the word "Yugoslav" was placed in quotation marks, and demoted to the end of the national list.¹³³

Even more important than the national movements of other peoples and the regime's reversal of its promotion of Yugoslavism was the constitutional process of political

decentralization. The decentralization was welcomed by one important center within Serbia: its party leaders. These were the "Serbian liberals," led by Marko Nikezić and Latinka Perović, who held power from November of 1968 until Tito engineered their fall in October of 1972. (The originally derogatory "liberal" label stems from Tito's charge that these leaders had allowed too much leeway to opposition intellectuals.¹³⁴) During their time in office, the liberals mounted a sustained effort to disentangle Serbia from Yugoslavia, and Serbian from Yugoslav identity.¹³⁵ Identifying Serbia with Yugoslavia, the liberals argued, exposed Serbia itself to the twin dangers of economic neglect (because Serbia's economic interests were wrongly assumed to be identical with the federation's); and political interference (because the federation assumed in Serbia and especially in Belgrade the right to intervene in affairs that in other republics were considered internal).¹³⁶ Therefore, the premise that political centralism worked to Serbia's advantage was false: Serbia, as well as other republics, would benefit from decentralization. Acting on this belief, the liberals threw Serbia's support behind the radically decentralizing constitutional amendments of 1971.¹³⁷ They also refused to play the role of defender of Yugoslavia against the Croatian national movement, insisting that Serbia sought "neither special rights, nor special obligations" within Yugoslavia.¹³⁸

Just as they insisted that Serbia was not called upon to guard Yugoslavia, the liberals rejected any idea that Serbia could or should act as the protector of Serbs in other republics. For instance, in a speech delivered in Sarajevo in 1970, Nikezić asserted that the Serbs of Bosnia-Hercegovina and Croatia enjoyed equality with the other peoples living there, and so any ambition on Serbia's part to act as their protector would be "pure nationalism."¹³⁹ The liberals' orientation was embodied in their slogan, "A modern Serbia." Besides emphasizing their focus on the republic of Serbia, rather than the nation of Serbs, this slogan reflected the liberals' belief that modernization - based on but not limited to economic development - would ultimately resolve all of Serbia's and Yugoslavia's problems, including the national ones.¹⁴⁰

In their concentration on Serbia - not Yugoslavia or Serbdom - the liberals represented a minority view among Serbs. In sharp contrast to the liberals, many Serb intellectuals (using the relative freedom that the liberal regime allowed them) expressed a preoccupation with unity, and the fear that unity was being lost. The intellectuals generally fell into two domains. Some cast their concerns primarily in the language of Yugoslav unity. These people, who might be called

"persistent Yugoslavs," simply refused to accept the regime's retreat from Yugoslavism, often openly reproaching the regime with having abandoned its earlier ideals. They included members of the Partisan generation who asserted that Yugoslavism offered the only safeguard against a repetition of the massacres of the Second World War, and younger people who argued that Yugoslavia's national conflicts were over forever, and traditional national identities simply irrelevant to the modern age. Some continued to espouse Yugoslavism as a form of Communist internationalism, seeing in the national mobilizations of the late 1960s proof that socialism had not yet triumphed in Yugoslavia. All, irrespective of their theoretical grounds, shared the conviction that the regime's new policy represented a turn for the worse.¹⁴¹

Others spoke primarily in the language of Serbian unity, voicing a preoccupation with the division of Serbs among different federal units, and the position of Serbs outside Serbia. The contrast between their views and those of the persistent Yugoslavs, while significant, should not be overstated. Some prominent individuals expressed elements of both positions. Thus, many spokesmen for Serbian unity saw themselves as committed Yugoslavs, forced into the defense of Serbdom only because others were undermining Yugoslavia. They were saying, in essence, that if Serbs were not to find unity in Yugoslavism they must find it in Serbdom. At this time, Serbian particularism in the pure form that would make Great Serbia rather than Yugoslavia its ideal, and judge 1918 a tragic mistake, remained a strictly marginal phenomenon. A traditional national program based on Church and monarchy remained impossible. It was excluded not only by the constraints of official censorship, but also by the mindset of the debate's participants, who were almost always Communists and frequently former Partisans.

Nevertheless, for the first time in socialist Yugoslavia's history, a particularist "Serbian" position was emerging in public competition with the Serbian-Yugoslav one. It emerged primarily in cultural terms, especially in a few controversies involving the use of the Cyrillic alphabet and linguistic issues more generally. The 1967 "Proposal for Consideration" (*Predlog za razmišljanje*) offers an example of this phenomenon. The Proposal was the response of a group of Serbian writers to the Croatian "Declaration on the Name and Position of the Croatian Literary Language" (which, as noted above, called for the official recognition of a Croatian literary language as opposed to the "Serbo-Croatian or Croato-Serbian" enshrined in the Novi Sad Agreement of 1954.) The Proposal began with a complete acceptance of the demands set out in the Croatian Declaration. The authors declared that they recognized each nation's

"inalienable right" to choose the name and control the development of its own language, and that on this basis they would accept the Declaration's call for linguistic separation. Having done so, however, they asserted the claims of the Serbian language, demanding that Belgrade Television "stop playing the unauthorized role of a central Yugoslav studio, and introduce Cyrillic in its local broadcasting," and that Serbs in Croatia (and Croats in Serbia) be guaranteed the right to "independent development of national language and culture." ¹⁴²

An interesting feature of these post-Ranković controversies was that the figures putting forward a specifically Serbian program, when attacked for Serbian nationalism, sometimes defended themselves by invoking the anti-unitarist rhetoric associated with the Party's condemnation of Ranković. For example, one of the Proposal for Consideration's signers responded to official denunciations by asserting that calling those who signed the Proposal Serbian chauvinists was absurd, "because it's known what Serbian chauvinism is: Serbian chauvinism is unitarist-hegemonist."¹⁴³ When Yugoslavia's leaders made "Serbian nationalism" synonymous with "unitarist Yugoslavism" by the form of their attack on Ranković, they certainly did not intend to strengthen traditional ("particularist") Serbian nationalism. Nevertheless, their policy had this effect. This effect was reinforced by the simultaneous process of democratization which weakened the Party's control over cultural and literary associations – association which for Serbs as for other nations of Central and Eastern Europe had historically been among the most important carriers of national tradition.

Among the figures who expressed their fears that unity was being lost both in Yugoslav and in Serbian language, the most prominent by far was Dobrica Ćosić. His views at the time are important both because of his unparalleled influence as an articulator of Serbian national thought, and as the representative of a trend. In a famous speech delivered at the Serbian Central Committee's 14th Plenum in May of 1968 Ćosić (who had been a member of the Committee since 1965) challenged the foundations of the Party's national policy with an impassioned attack on Yugoslavia's growing decentralization.¹⁴⁴ In the public mind, it was this Plenum that marked Ćosić's transition from establishment defender of Yugoslavism – the role he had played in the polemic with Pirjevec – to opposition champion of Serbian unity.

What caught the Serbian public's attention was his protest against the Party's policy in Kosovo.¹⁴⁵ In an obvious challenge to the Party's condemnation of Ranković, Ćosić insisted

that Serbian policy toward Serbia's national minorities had been "democratic and internationalist" since 1945 (in other words, *not* just since 1966). Discrimination, he insisted, was going the other way: Albanian Party cadres were not doing enough to control Albanian nationalism and stem the emigration of Serbs and Montenegrins. Ćosić insisted that he supported equality for Serbia's minorities, an equality to be achieved by such measures as increased funding for their cultural activities. He maintained, however, that their national equality should not be conceived in state or territorial terms. The current "bureaucratic-statist understanding of the equality of Šiptars in Serbia and Yugoslavia" was contributing to Albanian irredentism, and would logically end in the region's being joined to Albania.¹⁴⁶

Though Kosovo was crucial to the visceral impact of Ćosić's argument, his speech is misunderstood if it is interpreted only as a protest on behalf of that province's Serb minority. In fact, Ćosić objected just as strongly to the growing autonomy of Vojvodina, where Serbs were in the majority.¹⁴⁷ Through his attack on provincial autonomy, Ćosić repeated the core of the argument he had applied to republican autonomy in his 1961 polemic with Pirjevec. Decentralization, he said, was leading to "bureaucratic nationalism" and to the exaltation of the state (meaning the federal units) over the individual. In a passage that would become famous, Ćosić predicted that if state-based nationalisms were encouraged in Yugoslavia the Serbian variant would revive also, with fateful consequences:

The process of national formation into unified states and social communities in the Balkans is not yet finished, and if certain developmental tendencies here and abroad continue in their traditional direction "the national question" will remain the torment and the preoccupation of generations to come....If in Yugoslavia traditional, i.e. nationalistic-statist policies and particularist orientations endure and conquer, if the democratic forces of socialism do not win the final victory over bureaucratic and petty bourgeois forces and elements, then the Serbian people also might be inflamed by an old historic goal and national ideal - the unification of the Serbian people in a single [literally "unified," *jedinstvenu*] state. No political imagination is needed to foresee the consequences of such a process.¹⁴⁸

The Central Committee issued a statement distancing itself from Ćosić's speech and at the next Party elections (held in November of 1968) he was dropped from the Committee.¹⁴⁹ Within a year, however, he gained a new and influential pulpit when he was elected president of the *Srpska književna zadruga* (Serbian Literary Cooperative), a venerable publishing house dedicated to the promotion of Serbian culture.¹⁵⁰ During Ćosić's presidency, the *Zadruga*

became a nucleus for intellectuals concerned with the "Serbian question" in Yugoslavia.¹⁵¹ (In fact, during Ćosić's presidency the Zadruga's Board included several of the people who in 1986 produced the Memorandum of the Serbian Academy.¹⁵²) The *Zadruga* under Ćosić was a constant target of political attack: Tito criticized it almost obsessively.¹⁵³ The *Zadruga's* literary activities hardly seemed to merit so much attention; it attracted political criticism mainly as the platform from which Ćosić reiterated his protests against decentralization, cast now in cultural rather than political terms.¹⁵⁴

Ćosić used the *Zadruga* pulpit to develop themes prominent in his earlier fiction writings. One was Serbian cultural backwardness, which he saw as the result of industrial development's having outstripped cultural progress: "In our country's new houses there are no libraries."¹⁵⁵ The other, far more controversial politically, was the tragedy of Serbian division. This was expressed most explicitly in the speech Ćosić delivered at the *Zadruga's* 64th Convention in May of 1971. The convention took place at the height of the Croatian national movement and concern over events in Croatia, especially the linguistic controversy, provided a leitmotif that ran through many speeches.¹⁵⁶ In this charged atmosphere, Ćosić delivered the most influential of his *Zadruga* speeches. It painted a bleak picture of the current situation as one in which Serbian and Yugoslav unity were *both* under attack. Since 1945, he said, Serbs had "consciously renounced the expression of their national specificity" in the name of socialist Yugoslavism. Now, they were faced with "the repudiation and suppression of Yugoslavism as a striving for commonality [*zajedništvo*]." At the same time Serbian cultural unity had been suppressed. The result was that: "we go backwards historically, again we cross artificial borders and concern ourselves with problems...solved a century ago."¹⁵⁷

Serbian opposition to Yugoslav decentralization gained its fullest explicitly political expression during the period of officially-mandated "public discussion" that preceded the passage of the constitutional amendments of 1971.¹⁵⁸ In March of 1971, the Law Faculty of the University of Belgrade hosted a particularly dramatic session. A leitmotif of crisis ran through the discussions, with speaker after speaker rising to assert that Yugoslavia was in a state of "economic, social, constitutional and moral crisis," "serious social crisis," "economic, political and moral crisis," or "deep social crisis."¹⁵⁹ Some part of the charged atmosphere of 1971

derived from what turned out to be very premature anticipation of a post-Tito succession crisis. (The original impetus for the amendments of 1971 was the 79-year-old leader's decision to create a collective state presidency to succeed him.) Others claimed that Yugoslavia was "at its final cross-roads," or that "after the adoption of these amendments Yugoslavia will no longer exist as a state."¹⁶⁰

In this charged atmosphere, some speakers called on Serbs to look to their own interests in what was imagined as a post-Yugoslav situation.¹⁶¹ Philosopher Mihailo Đurić made the strongest statement of this position. Alone among the speakers, Đurić complained that the Serbian position in Yugoslavia was *already* untenable - at least for Serbs outside Serbia - let alone what it would be if the amendments passed:

In the S[ocialist] R[epublic of] Croatia and in the SR Macedonia the Serbian people has no special constitutionally-guaranteed rights for its national life....In the SR Bosnia-Herzegovina, although it makes up the majority of the population, the Serbian people in practice cannot even use its Cyrillic alphabet, which is just one of the outward signs of its division from the whole of the national culture to which it belongs. And in the SR Montenegro, the Serbian people does not even have the right to its own national name, or at least that right is contested for those many Montenegrins who consider themselves Serbs.¹⁶²

Asserting that "in the name of national equality several independent and even opposing national states" had already been established on Yugoslavia's territory, Đurić argued:

It is obvious that the borders of the current SR Serbia are neither the national nor the historic borders of the Serbian people. In general, the borders of all the current republics in Yugoslavia have a conditional meaning; they have an administrative more than a political character....The existing borders are not adequate for any republic in Yugoslavia - except perhaps Slovenia - and especially not for Serbia....In a moment when it is led by the force of circumstances to [a situation where] it must again establish its own national state - can the Serbian people be indifferent to its many parts outside the current borders of the Socialist Republic of Serbia?¹⁶³

By challenging republican borders, Đurić violated one of the strongest taboos in postwar Yugoslavia - a piece of temerity for which he was arrested sixteen months later, in the ideologically stricter atmosphere of 1972.¹⁶⁴

While no other speaker challenged Yugoslavia's internal borders so openly, several raised the territorial issue by noting the paradox at the heart of Yugoslav decentralization. While decentralization was justified on national grounds - as the logical expression of national self-

determination - it was carried out on an exclusively territorial basis.¹⁶⁵ It was not Yugoslavia's peoples, but its republics and provinces, that won new rights and increased self-government. (Perhaps the most striking illustration of this principle is the exactly parallel treatment of Kosovo, with its Albanian majority, and Vojvodina, with its Serb majority.) One speaker asserted that in the proposed amendments, "the existence of two dimensions of federalism [territorial and national] was completely overlooked." The draft version, he said, "explicitly or implicitly recognizes the existence of eight national states, and so is grounded in the necessity of state-legal protection of the nation," but it accorded no such protection to groups in the minority in each federal unit - except in Serbia.¹⁶⁶ And several speakers saw evidence of inconsistency in the fact that autonomous provinces existed only in Serbia. National rights, they argued, should gain territorial expression everywhere that numerically significant minorities existed, or else nowhere: if Albanians in Serbia had a province, so should Albanians in Macedonia and Serbs in Croatia.¹⁶⁷

The assertion that the amendments "overlooked" the complicated relationship between national and territorial rights seemed to gain some support in the speech with which Edvard Kardelj presented the draft amendments to the LCY Presidency in March of 1971. Kardelj said: "We must take account of the fact that in the relations between the peoples, that is to say [*odnosno*] the republics, of Yugoslavia there exist not only different but also certain *objectively* contradictory interests."¹⁶⁸ This formulation is known for its recognition of "contradictory interests," but at least as important is the apparent carelessness with which Kardelj merged nations and republics.¹⁶⁹ Obviously, neither Kardelj nor any of Yugoslavia's other leaders actually overlooked the fact that Yugoslavia's republics (with the perennial Slovene exception) were not coterminous with its nations. But their commitment to the proposition that democratic socialism was the solution to all national problems required them to deny any importance to this fact and to its inextricable consequence: the existence of national majorities and minorities in each of Yugoslavia's federal units. The very word minority, a leading authority on national relations asserted, was "unsuited to a self-managing community, in which a person should not feel that he belongs to some sort of national majority or national minority."¹⁷⁰

What conclusions can be drawn from this survey of Serbian reactions to Yugoslav decentralization? The provisions of the Proposal for Consideration, Ćosić's speeches at the Fourteenth Plenum and at the *Zadruga*, and Mihailo Đurić's rejection of Serbia's existing borders all demonstrate that the weakening of Yugoslav unity immediately and dramatically focused the attention of nationally-minded Serbs *within* Serbia on the position of Serbs outside Serbia. They also revealed a tendency to conceive of unity in strictly national terms (assuming that national ties were always and automatically stronger than shared historical experience in a common territory), and to lament Serbian divisions while ignoring or downplaying the fact that other peoples - notably Croats, Muslims, and Albanians - were also divided by Yugoslavia's internal borders.

Serb thinkers could ignore these complexities in part because the regime met their attempts to address the issues involved in Yugoslavia's national-territorial settlement with repression. Regardless of its limitations and blind spots, the Serbian critique of Yugoslavia's decentralization raised issues concerning the tension between national and territorial rights that were important if Yugoslavia was to preserve itself as a multinational state, and vital if it was not. Repression conferred the aura of martyrdom on Serbs' self-appointed national champions, where reasoned dialogue might have found ways to address some grievances, and to discredit exaggerated claims. When "nationalist" attacks on the dominant model were suppressed, they were not replaced by any more reasoned discussion - in short, by any form of dialogue that might have helped to avert the tragedy of the 1990s.

IV. F. The 1970s: Repression and Prosperity

"The 1970s" is a convenient shorthand for a distinct period in Yugoslav political development: one marked by a narrowing of ideological limits after the relative freedom of the late 1960s, a virtual end to public conflict among the republican and provincial leaderships as elite cooperation was restored, and an ossification of the Tito personality cult as Yugoslavia confronted the unspoken likelihood of Tito's death.¹⁷¹ It should be noted, though, that "the 1970s" in this sense did not coincide precisely with the calendar. For much of Yugoslavia, the 1970s began in the autumn of 1972, with the ouster of "liberal" leaders in Macedonia, Serbia, and Slovenia. (For Croatia, a more appropriate starting point would be the December 1971 ouster of the Croatian leadership.) The moment that, in retrospect, would mark the beginning of

the 1970s came at the beginning of October 1972, when the "Letter of President Tito and the Executive Bureau [of the LCY]" was distributed to all Party organizations in Yugoslavia.¹⁷² This document, known simply as "the Letter," became a universal point of reference, marking the dividing line between the bad old days of liberalism, technocratism, and nationalism - that is, the 1960s - and the new age of ideological unity and commitment. Indeed, when a newly-purified *NIN* published a long account of the Serbian liberals' decline (into ideological deviation) and fall, the article was called simply "Serbia Before and After the Letter."¹⁷³

The Letter was a call to renewed ideological struggle, an attempt to revive some of the revolutionary fervor of the past. It set out, in uncompromising terms, the principles Party members were to follow as they went on "the ideological and political offensive." By far the most important of these principles was Party unity. To strengthen unity, the Letter called for better ideological education of all Party members, and the expulsion of any members found to be unsuitable for ideological or other reasons. The main remedy, however, lay in strengthening democratic centralism - which, the Letter pointedly reminded Party members, should be applied at all levels "from the basic organization to the Party presidency" and not only "within republican and provincial organizations." With its insistence that democratic centralism ran all the way to the top, and that the LCY's central leadership had the right and duty to "discuss...the work of republican and provincial Leagues of Communists," the Letter marked a partial reversal of the trend toward Party decentralization that went back to 1964.¹⁷⁴

While the Letter focused mainly on internal Party organization and discipline, it also included broader prescriptions for the Party's role in Yugoslav society. In sum, the Party was to take a more activist and directive role, and to maintain a closer scrutiny over people chosen for "leading" positions in the economy, education, or the media. Especially in the media, more Party involvement was needed "to prevent destructive writing, remove from leading positions all those who do not accept the political course of the LCY [and] prevent writing that is contrary to the policy of the LCY."¹⁷⁵ As these principles were implemented, the boundaries of public intellectual life narrowed. Criticism - both national and social - which had formerly been tolerated was now suppressed. Nevertheless, the severity of repression against intellectuals should not be overstated. Yugoslavia, even after the Letter, was not post-1968 Czechoslovakia. The imprisonment of intellectuals - sometimes followed by a period of parole in which any

public speaking was forbidden - remained relatively uncommon.¹⁷⁶ Those who overstepped the new ideological boundaries might be removed from their positions - especially if those positions gave them access to the public ear - but in many cases they were able to continue some form of intellectual employment.¹⁷⁷

It should be emphasized that the muting of national and social criticism in the 1970s cannot be attributed entirely to repression. Just as important was apparent economic success. Overall economic growth rates, which had declined in the late 1960s, recovered in the early 1970s. Through much of the decade, Yugoslavia experienced a rapid rise in both industrial investment - which provided more jobs - and consumption. This apparent prosperity was in large part illusory, built on a quicksand of foreign debt: Yugoslavia's debt grew from \$2 billion in 1969 to almost \$20 billion by the beginning of the world debt crisis in 1982.¹⁷⁸ During the 1980s, Yugoslavia's foreign debt would pose a constant and high-profile problem for the country, not to mention its creditors. Throughout the 1970s, however, Yugoslavs were given almost no information about their country's indebtedness.¹⁷⁹ In the circumstances, they might be excused for taking their prosperity at face value. And so, just as disappointment with the results of economic reform had helped to fuel national and regional antagonisms in the late 1960s, consumer prosperity and an apparently ever-expanding economic pie helped to defuse them in the 1970s.

If "the Letter" charted the Yugoslav Party's course for the 1970s, the Constitution of 1974 charted the state's. Taken together, the Letter and the new Constitution showed how Yugoslavia's leaders intended to prevent any recurrence of the 1960s' centrifugal trends: not by recentralizing the state, but by setting a purified and strengthened League of Communists to guard both state and socialism. The resulting model of government - combining state decentralization with Party control - has aptly been described as "consociational authoritarianism."¹⁸⁰

The 1974 Constitution (constitutions, really, as each republic and province adopted its own new constitution after the federal one was passed in February of 1974) must hold a central place in any discussion of the evolution of Serbian critiques of Titoist Yugoslavia. By the late 1980s, the Constitution was as important a rallying point as the Kosovo issue (with which it was

intimately connected, since Kosovo's autonomy depended upon the constitutional settlement). The vast majority of Serb intellectuals and politicians, regardless of their disagreements on other issues, were united in believing that the Constitution - whether viewed as a Yugoslav-wide plot against the Serbian nation, or as an impossibly inefficient way to run a modern government - required fundamental revisions. During the 1970s, this Serbian critique took a relatively muted form. Although the passage of the federal Constitution included a period of officially-mandated "public discussion," there were no debates comparable to those surrounding the 1971 amendments: the atmosphere that reigned after the Letter was hardly conducive to criticism. Objections to the 1974 Constitution would come later: first behind closed doors in the "Blue Book" prepared in 1977 at the request of the Serbian presidency (discussed further below); and then, after Tito's death, in a gradually increasing groundswell of public attacks.¹⁸¹

Although it was the "1974 constitution" that became the focus of Serbian hostility, most of the provisions to which Serbs objected really dated back to the amendments of 1971.¹⁸² The Constitution consolidated rather than changed the federal structure established by those amendments. The principles of parity between and consensus among the federal units remained central to Yugoslavia's government. Most important, through the practice of "reaching agreement" the republics and provinces retained their veto power in crucial areas of federal decision-making.¹⁸³ The functional (though not theoretical) equivalence of republics and provinces, established through the amendments of 1968 and 1971, was reinforced in 1974. Indeed, a 1976 textbook on the Constitution noted that the provinces had "basically the same position" and "practically the same [internal] independence" as the republics.¹⁸⁴ In the restructured bicameral federal legislature, the provincial delegations remained smaller than the republican ones, but the consensus requirement made this size difference insignificant. Moreover, two provisions of the 1974 constitutions formally reinforced equality between republics and provinces. For the first time, the provinces received their own constitutions, replacing earlier "statutes" and "constitutional laws." And the state presidency was reduced from twenty-three members (three from each republic and two from each province, plus Tito) to nine (one from each republic and province, plus the LCY President - Tito again - ex officio).

The Constitution broke new ground not in Yugoslavia's federal structure, but in the intertwined areas of ideology and economics. It represented the attempt of Yugoslavia's old revolutionaries - increasingly conscious that their time was limited - to put Yugoslavia back on

the right path after what they saw as the deformations of the 1960s. If Yugoslavia was to resume its journey toward the classless society, they believed, self-management had to be defined more strictly, to prevent "technocrats" from accumulating power independent of the workers (and the Party!).¹⁸⁵ Hence the concept of "associated labor," which emerged during the first years of the 1970s. Prominent in the new Constitution and at the 10th Party Congress (held in May of 1974), associated labor was finally enshrined in the Law on Associated Labor (*Zakon o udruženom radu*, or *ZUR*) of 1976. The "revolutionary" aspect of associated labor, its attempted return to a purer Communism, lay in the autonomy it gave to each work unit - a Basic Organization of Associated Labor (*Osnovna organizacija udruženog rada*, or *OOUR*) - within a socially-owned company. The concept of the *OOUR* had first appeared in the "workers' amendments" - Amendments 21-23 - of 1971, but it had been neglected in the intervening years. Under the new system, with its slogan "All income to the workers!," members of each *OOUR* were given authority - unlimited in theory and extensive even in practice - to control the disposition of their unit's income among wages, investment, and other claims.¹⁸⁶

The Party's determination to control elites and prevent the formation of competing centers of power revealed itself through other aspects of the new constitution as well. Banks - viewed as the ultimate locus of alienated financial power - were made subject to the *OOURs*. Managers were barred from election to workers' councils. Such measures, while justified as extending workers' control, were obviously also a way of weakening potential competitors to the Party.¹⁸⁷ A similar measure in the political sphere was the introduction of the "delegate system." In this extremely complicated method of indirect voting, citizens were divided into units defined mainly by occupation, territory, and mass organization membership to elect candidates (themselves selected by the Socialist Alliance) to communal and republican or provincial assemblies. These delegates became part-time politicians: they were required to keep their regular jobs throughout their mandate. The communal and republican or provincial assemblies then elected delegates, who were explicitly bound to represent the assemblies' wishes, to the two chambers of the Federal Assembly. (The communal assemblies elected the members of the Federal Chamber, which had thirty members from each republic and twenty from each province. The republican and provincial assemblies elected delegates - chosen from their own members - to the Chamber

of Republics and Provinces, which had twelve members from each republic and eight from each province.)¹⁸⁸

The first serious critique of the 1974 constitutional settlement came in an internal document prepared by a group of Serbian constitutional experts at the request of the Serbian state presidency, and presented to the presidency in March of 1977.¹⁸⁹ Officially titled "The Socialist Republic of Serbia and the Autonomous Provinces in its Structure - Constitutional Position and Practice," the report was known as the "Blue Book" (*Plava knjiga*) from the color of its cover. The Blue Book addressed Serbia's internal organization as set out in its 1974 republican constitution.¹⁹⁰ Most of the Blue Book's explicit criticisms were directed against the implementation rather than the content of the republican constitution, and it dealt only indirectly with the 1974 Federal Constitution and Serbia's position in the Yugoslav federation. Nevertheless, the report was controversial from the start: it was never formally discussed by the presidency, nor was it made public. The Blue Book was important less for its impact at the time than as a portent of things to come: it set out much of the common ground on which Serbia's politicians and "opposition" intellectuals would mobilize in the 1980s.

The main contention of the Blue Book's authors was that Serbia - contrary to the intent of its constitution - was effectively being divided into three separate political, legal, and economic entities. The 1974 Serbian constitution had finished the process of establishing parallel government structures for the republic and the provinces. Each province, as well as the republic, now had a parliament, a presidency, an executive committee, and a supreme court. Focusing on the implementation of the constitution rather than these basic provisions, the Blue Book emphasized the procedural difficulty of passing and implementing laws that applied to the whole republic.¹⁹¹ In particular, the authors complained, "there is not one law or other act in the area of finance, tax and monetary-credit policy, price policy and such matters which is applied identically on the whole area of the republic." This lack of a unified economic framework, they contended, damaged both the republic's internal economic life and its position on the Yugoslav market.¹⁹²

Other criticisms of the provinces' status focused on asymmetries between the structure and the function of republican organs. Republican organs - parliament, presidency, etc. - included members from the provinces and theoretically had some power to enact measures for the whole

republic. Yet in practice, the authors maintained, these bodies' competence was limited to Serbia proper. This meant that provincial representatives took part in the governance of Serbia proper, while republican representatives did not take part in the governance of the provinces.¹⁹³ (For instance, the republican presidency, including its provincial members, made decisions about executive clemency in cases from Serbia proper, while no republican representative or organ could influence provincial clemency decisions.¹⁹⁴) Foreign policy was an especially sore point: the Blue Book complained that while provincial delegates served on all republican bodies relevant to foreign policy, the republic had no means of influencing, or even learning about, official contacts between Vojvodina and Hungary, or Kosovo and Albania.¹⁹⁵ Another target of the Blue Book's criticism was the provinces' position in the Yugoslav federation. Arguing that provincial delegations in the federal parliament and other federal bodies acted with complete independence of (Serbian) republican ones, the book called for consultation and cooperation between the three delegations in each federal organ. Finally, the Blue Book objected that even though the federal Constitution called for "equal" representation of the republics and only "corresponding" representation of the provinces, in practice the provinces were given equal representation with the republics in federal organs except where the Constitution specified lower numbers (as in the two houses of the federal parliament).¹⁹⁶

For the most part, the Blue Book carefully avoided "Serbian" or "national" language. (National issues were undoubtedly more prominent in the minds of its authors than the politically cautious text reveals. It is indicative that in discussing the Blue Book in his private journal Dragoslav Marković, its prime political backer, complained: "there cannot be two Albanian states," and asked why Yugoslavia should contain two Serbian states, Serbia and Vojvodina.¹⁹⁷) The Blue Book's discussion of education and culture, however, included a rare foray into the language of national claims. Noting the complete independence of republican and provincial policies in these fields, and the lack of cooperation between the relevant government organs, the authors complained that this state of affairs adversely affected the "unity of national culture and national identity of the Serbian people."¹⁹⁸ And in the Blue Book's most radically national statement (which occurs in the document's conclusion), the authors suggested that Serbia's effective division into three parts was raising the question whether "the Serbian people is realizing its historical right to a national state in the framework of the Yugoslav federation,