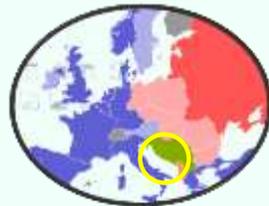


Greece & the Balkans –
Birth of West and
Battleground of East



Class #2, Nov 5, 2020 – **Former Yugoslavia –
Creation and collapse of a geopolitical
heresy (1918-92)**

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Topics

1. Significance of Yugoslavia
2. Creation of Yugoslavia
3. Titoism & Cold War heresies
4. Tito's death & bloody break-up of Yugoslavia

**Class #2, Nov 5, 2020 – Yugoslavia – Creation and collapse of a geopolitical
heresy (1918-92)**

- Thanks for logging in to our lecture on the Former Yugoslavia – its creation and collapse
- I promise not to talk about elections – in the countries and periods covered by this lecture, they didn't bother with democratic elections!
- Why a lecture on a former communist war-torn country and Black sheep of Soviet flock ?
- Inspiring case of how diverse peoples can eventually overcome conflict and communism and now coexist in relative harmony and peace as fledgling democracies
- Perhaps the example of Yugoslavia offers hope for other long squabbling regions such as Middle East

Former Yugoslavia today

- 7 Independent & democratic
- Smaller East European nations
- Population of FL but bigger
- 2 prosperous (Slovenia & Croatia)
- 5 poor



7 Countries of Former Yugoslavia: Capitals, Independence and Economy

	Slovenia	Croatia	North Macedonia	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Montenegro	Serbia	Kosovo	Total
Capital	Ljubljana	Zagreb	Skopje	Sarajevo	Podgorica	Belgrade	Pristina	NA
Independence	6/25/1991	6/25/1991	9/8/1991	3/1/1992	6/3/2006	6/5/2006	2/17/2008	NA
Population (2018)	2,086,525	4,109,669	2,068,979	3,301,779	622,359	6,988,221	1,886,259	21,063,791
Area (Sq. Mi 1000s)	7.8	22.2	10.1	19.9	5.5	34.3	4.3	104.1
2018 GDP (\$ bil.)	54.2	60.8	12.8	19.8	5.5	50.5	7.9	211.5
2018 GDP/capita \$	25,976	14,794	6,186	5,996	8,837	7,226	4,188	10,040

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Former Yugoslavia today

- 7 Independent countries beginning in 1991
- Population of 21 Mil. – about same as Florida but 50% larger
- Quite diverse demographically, economically and culturally
- All communist, but not behind Iron Curtain
- Transitioning to democracy and capitalism
- Westernizing - Now in NATO and EU or an applicant



Despite their tragic pasts, now tourist attractions

- The point of these picturesque pictures is to dramatize the contrasts of nations of former Yugoslavia with their horror stories during WW I, WW II and Cold War
- Some 50 to 75 years ago, they would not have been called picturesque places
- They were embattled and encircled
- They lost millions to World Wars, the Holocaust, internal conflict and genocide
- They were involved in bloody conflicts that required UN and NATO military forces and bombing
- They had some of the most brutal and vicious dictators who were indicted by the Hague Court

Global Context:
1914 (Pre-WW I)
W. Europe
Empires controlled
84% of World



- Period of relative peace and prosperity – a “Gilded Age”
- Balkans – like much of world in collections of diverse peoples beholden to remote empires – not nations
- Autocratic not democratic governments
- Assumption that war impossible too interdependent
- Yet, building up of militaries and strained alliances

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Global Context: 1914 (Pre-WW I) W. Europe Empires controlled 84% of World

- Period of relative peace and prosperity – Gilded Age
- Peak of British and European Empires
- Much of Europe in Empires – Russian, Astro-Hungarian and Ottoman Empires
- Rising US beginning to encroach on British dominance
- Mostly diverse collections of peoples – not nations
- Autocratic not democratic governments
- Claims war impossible because nations too interdependent
- Yet, building up of militaries and strained alliances

Unique Yugoslavia

- WW I creation from 2 collapsing empires
- Top-down amalgam for mutual protection
- One-man show: Tito (1953-80) indispensable
- Unaligned in Cold War - straddled East and West
- Religious & ethnic fractured
- Violent break-up
- Converted from communism to democracy



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Uniqueness of Yugoslavia

- WW I creation from 2 collapsing empires, acquiesced in by major powers
- Created top down despite diversity
- One-man show – Tito
- Cold War straddled East and West
- Religious & ethnic fractured
- Violent break-up
- Mostly switched from East to West

Yugoslavia – Geopolitical heresy (1918-92)



- From Kingdom to Federation to 7 nations
- Never existed before in any historical sense
- Presumably, all Slavs (Yugoslavia= "land of South Slavs")
- But fragile & fractious: languages, cultures, religions ...
- "Black sheep" communist not behind Iron Curtain
- Fractured when lost Tito & purpose after Cold War

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Yugoslavia – Unique geopolitical creation of 20th century

- Never existed before in any historical sense
- Ties that bound together were tenuous
- Presumably all "Slavs" – (Yugoslavia means land of South Slavs)
- Actually - amalgamation of languages, alphabets, cultures, religions and traditions
- Littered with splits , conflicts , and shocking violence - surprising that it lasted as long as it did
- Confirmed at the 1919 Versailles Conference, the "first" Yugoslavia was a particularly fragile enterprise, and there was almost constant tension between the majority Serbs and the other Yugoslav nationalities, especially the Croats

Much of this presentation is based upon *Yugoslavia: The History of the Eastern European Nation from Its Founding to Its Breakup*, by Charles River Editors

Diversity of Yugoslav Language & Religion

Country	Most spoken language	Major Religion
Bosnia and Herzegovina	53% Bosnian	51% Islam
Croatia	96% Croatian	86% Catholic
Kosovo	94% Albanian	95% Islam
Montenegro	43% Serbian	72% Orthodox
North Macedonia	67% Macedonian	64% Orthodox
Serbia	88% Serbian	84% Orthodox
Slovenia	91% Slovene	57% Catholic

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Diversity of former Yugoslavia's languages and religions

- Almost each had a separate major language
- Split among 3 major religions
- The Christian Orthodox, especially in Serbia, had fraternal support from co-religionists, most notably Russia.
- Croatia, second largest of the Yugoslav nations - was Catholic
- Bosnia and Kosovo were Islamic
- Montenegro gained independence from Ottomans in 1878
- Traditionally, Montenegro had been close to Serbia and fought on the same side during WW I, but occupied by Austrian forces between 1916 - 1918.

Yugoslavia: Black sheep of the communist flock



"Tito would pursue a "heretical form of socialism" that was diametrically opposed to the central tenants of Soviet rule. In Yugoslavia communism power was decentralized, not run by highly bureaucratized party-state. Industrial production was steered through the "self-management" of over 6,000 elected workers councils, not by draconian managerial rule imposing the diktats of central planning. And Yugoslavia pursued "non-alignment"- effectively neutrality in the Cold War through avoidance of formal commitments to either of the superpowers - rather than bow to Soviet imperatives in foreign policy."

Source: Ian Kershaw, *The Global Age: Europe 1950-2017*, Penguin Books, 2015, page 102)

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Yugoslavia: Black sheep of the communist flock

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The system functioned. Industrial production rose annually by over 13% between 1953 and 1960... The impressive economic growth... was helped ... by financial aid from abroad ... as the United States ...viewed Yugoslavia as a wedge to split communism still further.

Popular support for Yugoslavia communism in the 1950s probably exceeded that for any of the Soviet satellites.... Yugoslavian communism was fortunate that Tito... lived so long... Without him, the divisions that would tear the country apart not long after his death might well have manifested themselves much earlier.

Source: Ian Kershaw, *The Global Age: Europe 1950-2017*, Penguin Books, 2015, pages 102-4)

Serbia may not have caused WW I, but started it



Assassination of Austro-Hungarian Archduke, Franz Ferdinand

- June 28, 1914, assassination in Sarajevo was the spark
- Serbia provided the assassin Princip with firearms
- Russia, aware of Princip's activities, had a vested interest, wanted access to Mediterranean
- But in hindsight – war was inevitable
 - Tangled web of conflicting alliances, growing diplomatic tensions, arms race, belligerence of Germany
- Archduke - right man in wrong place at wrong time

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Serbia may not have caused WW I, but started it

- June 28, 1914 Assassination of Austro-Hungarian heir, Archduke Franz Ferdinand in Serbia was the spark
- Serbia provided the assassin Princip with their firearms, explosives
- But in hindsight – war was inevitable
- Tangled web of conflicting alliances, growing diplomatic tensions, arms race, belligerence of Germany, etc. pointed towards one tragic outcome .
- Russia was aware of Princip's activities and had a vested interest in weakening Austro-Hungarian Empire - giving it access to Mediterranean
- Franz Ferdinand was simply the right man in the wrong place at the wrong time

WW I drastically affected the Balkan peoples

- WW I decimated Ottoman Empire
- Fighting dragged on into 1920s, while populations “exchanged”
- Ottomans aligned with losing Germany and Austria, which included Croatia, Slovenia, and Bosnia and Herzegovina
- Serbia fought against losing Central Powers along with Montenegro
- Thus, all of what became Yugoslavia on losing side WWI



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WW I drastically affected the Balkans

- WW I decimated Austro - Hungarian and Ottoman Empires
- Fighting dragged on into 1920s, while populations were “exchanged” based on nationality
- Ottomans aligned with Germany and Austria, which included Croatia, Slovenia, and Bosnia and Herzegovina
- Serbia fought against the Central Powers along with Montenegro
- Yugoslavia was essentially a top - down project - France and Britain became early supporters

Yugoslavia: 1918 forging of a combustible region



- Forged in wake of Austro-Hungary and Ottoman Empires collapse
- Crucially, during WW I, Allied Powers didn't oppose it
- Combustible region of diversity of identities, ethnicities, and traditions
- Greeks, Bulgarians, Romanians, Albanians, and Turks all played a role in forging Yugoslavia

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How Yugoslavia came about

- Supported by committed group of proponents in wake of collapse of Austro-Hungary and Ottomans empires
- Crucially, during WW I, Allied Great Powers didn't oppose foundation of Yugoslavia then called the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes.
- Combustible region of several national groups at a crossroads of Europe, Asia and Middle East
- Cause of instability in Balkans was decline of Ottoman and Austrian Habsburgs
- Plus diversity of identities, ethnicities, and traditions
- Greeks, Bulgarians, Romanians, Albanians, and Turks all played a role in the development of Yugoslavia

Early Yugoslavia – Backward, poor and fractured



- Not initially truly federated: 6 customs areas, 5 currencies, 4 rail networks, 3 banking systems, 2 seats of government in Belgrade and Zagreb
- Backward - 75 % still worked on farms
- GDP/capita 13% of UK
- Democratic institutions never took root
- In 1930s after Great Depression – precarious since was a fragile multi-ethnic state of national rivalries

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Backward and fractured early Yugoslavia

- Initially was not a truly federated state - had 6 customs areas, 5 currencies, 4 rail networks, 3 banking systems, and 2 seats of government in Belgrade and Zagreb.
- Was backward - 75 % still worked on farms
- Although nominally democratic, democratic institutions never took root in the first decades of the state's existence
- 1929 Wall Street Crash impacted Europe
- Many countries abandoned democracy and moved towards the extremes of fascism and communism
- 1930s were dangerous in Yugoslavia since the country was a fragile multiethnic state of national rivalries

In WW II, Hitler boke-up Yugoslavia



- Axis "Tripartite Pact" of Germany, Japan, & Italy of Sep 1940
- Yugoslavia coerced into Pact; then Hitler dismembered
 - Slovenia: divided and occupied by Germany and Italy
 - Serbia: solely occupied by Nazis
 - Macedonia: given to Bulgaria
 - Montenegro: puppet regime installed in Montenegro
 - Kosovo: claimed by Italy after annexing Albania

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In WW II, Hitler boke-up Yugoslavia

- Fascist powers turned their attention to the Balkans in early 1941
- "Tripartite Pact" unity agreement of Axis Powers of Germany, Japan, and Italy in Sep 1940
- Hungary and Romania, and Bulgaria joined
- Yugoslavia was coerced into signing the Tripartite Pact and shortly was under Hitler and dismembered
- Slovenia was divided and occupied by Germany and Italy
- Serbia was solely occupied by the Nazis
- Bulgaria was given Macedonia, and a puppet regime was installed in Montenegro.
- Italy claimed Kosovo and had already annexed Albania

Tito expanded Communist Party & smashed opposition



- Once Nazis had pacified Balkans, they felt confident enough to invade Soviet Union in summer of 1941
- Jews in Balkans dropped from 856,000 to 50,000 because of the Holocaust genocide
- Tito in 1940 swiftly expanded Communist Party
- During 1942 and 1943, a seesaw battle of Germans vs. Tito's Partisans
- Germans made a desperate attempts to kill Tito, but he was evacuated by Allies

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Yugoslavia in WW II (April 1941 – May 1945)



- Yugoslav Partisans defeated Germans in last battle of May 25, 1945, 17 days after Germany's surrender
- Million Yugoslavs killed in WW II
- Communist Partisans led by its hero Tito and backed by Allies, in dominant position at end of WW II
- Tito managed to quash intense nationalisms of diverse peoples making up Yugoslavia

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- Tito managed to quash intense national feelings of diverse groups making up Yugoslavia
- At end of WW II, Yugoslav Army executed tens of thousands of their adversaries

Post WW II - Tito created Communist state and broke with Stalin



- Tito promised Allies to allow multi-party democracy
- But smashed opposition after Germany's surrender
- Executed tens of thousands adversaries
- Tito, riding a wave of glory, took over and launched aggressive Five-Year Plan
- Stalin tied to kill Tito due to his maverick leadership

Stalin hated Tito - called him "stinking head of a fascist clique" and "a prostitute for Anglo-American imperialism" and at least twice seriously considered invading Yugoslavia

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Tito creates Communist state and breaks with Stalin

- Tito promised to allow a multi-party democracy in Yugoslavia
- But he smashed opposition a week after Germany's surrender
- At end of WW II, Yugoslav Army executed tens of thousands of their adversaries
- Tito, riding a wave of triumph and military glory, took over Yugoslavia and launched an aggressive Five - Year Plan
- He soon split with Stalin and due to disregarding Stalin's doctrine
- After Stalin's death in 1953, Tito tried to reconcile with the Soviet Union in 1955
- The resulting Belgrade declaration granted the right to interpret Marxism in a different way and ensured equal relationships amongst satellite states and Soviet Union
- But Declaration's cynicism exposed when Soviets intervened in Hungary in October 1956
- Khrushchev visit Yugoslavia again in 1963 to ease tensions

Tito held together a unique state unaligned separate from East or West

- Tito maintained a communist state while relying on tacit Western support to keep Soviets at bay
- By 1955, US aid to Tito of \$1.2 bil.
- After Stalin's death in 1953, Tito attempted rapprochement, but rebuffed by Khrushchev until 1955
- Tito continued playing East and West off against each other



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Tito created unique unaligned state separate from East or West

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- After Stalin's death in 1953, Tito attempted rapprochement, only to be rebuffed by Khrushchev until 1955
- Tito continued playing East and West off against each other
- Tito had created a relatively prosperous and unique state that remained separate from East or West

Yugoslavia's crisis after Tito's 1980 death led to violent break-up

Troubled Yugoslav Economy after Tito's 1980 death

Year	Debt (bil \$)	GDP (bil \$)	Real GDP growth/yr	Unemployment	Annual Inflation
1965	\$1	-	9%	7%	35%
1971	\$3	16	13%	7%	NA
1973	\$5	22	18%	9%	20%
1980	\$19	70	12%	14%	27%
1982	\$20	63	-7%	14%	40%
1987	\$22	85	-1%	16%	167%

Source: Economy of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, Wikipedia

- Yugoslavia was federated - republics had own parliament and leadership and delegate to central
- Tito had obtained loans and aid from West while retaining relations and trade with communist bloc
- But in late 1980s, Yugoslavia went into recession
- Debt rose 4-fold, GDP fell, unemployment doubled
- Inflation soared and economic reforms advanced

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Yugoslavia economic crisis of late 1980s

- When Tito died in 1980, nationalists were urging end of Yugoslavia
- By 1983, Yugoslavia was in serious economic trouble
- Political impotence and economic problems – high inflation, low productivity, high debt and need for hard currency – would culminate in the horrors of the 1990s' conflicts when exploited by nationalists.
- Yugoslav politics were complex and multi - layered, but essentially each republic had its own parliament and leadership which then appointed a delegate to the rotating central
- Oil crisis of the 1970s hurt economy foreign debt grew in 1980s with shortages of goods & fuel
- In economic crisis, led to economic reforms and privatization
- In 1990, Yugoslav wars, dissolution, mismanagement, etc. brought further economic trouble
- Source: Economy of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, From Wikipedia

Nationalistic Milošević took over



- Slobodan Milošević, nationalistic, authoritarian, kleptocratic President of Serbia, overturned republics and took power and dominated 1989-2000
- Serbia was largest and most populous part and Belgrade the capital
- While break-up was aided by end of Cold War, nationalist agitation grew after Tito died
- Geopolitical importance of Yugoslavia declined with US and Soviets under Gorbachev in détente after 1985

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Nationalistic Milošević took over

- Milošević, Serb nationalist, overturned the republics and took power
- While the fall of Yugoslavia was aided by end of Cold War from 1989 - 1991, nationalist agitation sentiment grew in Yugoslavia in the decade after Tito died
- Geopolitical importance of Yugoslavia declined as the West and the Soviets under Gorbachev moved toward détente after 1985
- Slovenia was the most economically developed part of Yugoslavia and was confident it could prosper alone

Yugoslavia:
"lacked reason
to exist" after
Cold War &
break-up



- Cold War rivalries gave Yugoslavia geopolitical significance that ended with fall of Berlin Wall
- Without its charismatic Tito, who transcended national rivalries and end of superpowers supporting it, Yugoslavia collapsed in 1990s
- Socialist ideology gave way to ethnically-based states
- Richest, Slovenia 1st vote leave in 1991, then Croatia 20

Yugoslavia – “lacked a reason to exist” after end Cold War

- Cold War rivalries also provided Yugoslavia with a geopolitical significance that evaporated after the fall of the Berlin Wall.
- Without its charismatic dictator who transcended internal national rivalries and end Cold War, Yugoslavia collapsed in early 1990s
- In serious peril, decoupled from socialist ideology that had bound it together for 45 years
- Socialist ideology was giving way to nationalism
- Eventually old identities reasserted themselves, bringing about intense conflicts
- Ethnically-based successor states cracked up Yugoslavia
- The richest, Slovenia and Croatia were first to secede
- But the disintegration came ultimately at an enormous cost.

Horrific 1992-5 Bosnian War

- After Slovenian & Croatian secessions
- Bosnia & Herzegovina voted secession which Bosnian Serbs boycotted
- Bosnian Serbs, supported by Serbian Milošević, sieged Sarajevo and did the Srebrenica massacre
- NATO intervened with troops & bombing, ending the war
- 100,000 people killed & 2.2 million displaced - worst conflict in Europe since end of WW II



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Horrific 1992 Bosnian war

- Bosnian War (Serbo-Croatian) was in Bosnia and Herzegovina (1992 and 1995)
- main belligerents were Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croatia and Serbia, respectively.[10][11]
- Arose following Slovenian and Croatian secessions
- Bosnia and Herzegovina – voted for independence which Bosnian Serbs boycotted
- Bosnian Serbs supported by the Serbian Slobodan Milošević sieged Sarajevo and the Srebrenica massacre
- after Srebrenica massacre, NATO intervened and proved key in ending the war.
- International Criminal Tribunal convicted 61 of war crimes in connection with the war in Bosnia
- around 100,000 people were killed and 2.2 million were displaced - the worst conflict in Europe since the end of World War II

Kosovo war and NATO bombing

- War (Feb 1998- Jun 1999) by Serbia & Montenegro vs Kosovo Albanian rebel group (KLA) with NATO air support
- Kosovo, integral part of Serbia, but predominately Albanian
- Milošević had exploited strong Serbian nationalism
- Ethnic Albanians sought independence after 4 others
- Kosovo outcome like Bosnia & Herzegovina - UN Protectorate until Kosovo independence in 2008



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Kosovo war and UN bombing

- War (Feb 1998- Jun 1999) by Serbia & Montenegro vs Kosovo Albanian rebel group (KLA) with NATO air support
- Kosovo, was different - an integral part of Serbia but 90 % ethnic Albanian
- Slobodan Milošević had exploited this strong nationalist attachment
- Albania considered it as part of Greater Albania, which would include Albania, Kosovo, and parts of Macedonia
- Albania perceived that their moment might be approaching after the four republics had left
- NATO launched an air campaign in March 1999
- Kosovo outcome was like Bosnia and Herzegovina - UN Protectorate until Kosovo independence in 2008

Kosovo was the final straw for Yugoslavia



- Milošević died before sentencing
- Int'l. Criminal Tribunal convicted 90 of war crimes
- Demise of Yugoslavia led to soul-searching
- Many wondered how a country that seemed successful for so long could come apart so spectacularly
- Others wondered how it survived so long
- Coffey wonders what are Yugoslavia's lessons for other fractured nations
- Why do we have almost 200 nations today compared to 50 signers of 1945 UN Charter

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Kosovo was the final straw for Yugoslavia

- A partially-recognised state and disputed territory of Serbia of 2 million
- 161 persons indicted and 90 convicted in International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia
- Milošević died in prison before sentencing in 2006
- Demise of Yugoslavia disconcerted West and led to much soul - searching
- Many wondered how a country that seemed financially successful for long stretches could come apart so quickly and spectacularly
- Others wondered how it survived so long
- Coffey wonders its lessons for other fractured nations

Summary & Conclusions:

Yugoslavia – Creation and collapse of a geopolitical heresy (1918-92)



- Most unusual geopolitical amalgam of 20th century
- Nominally Slavic but, multi-ethnic
- Unaligned black sheep Tito dealt with both US & Soviets
- Began breaking apart after Tito's death and Cold War superpower support, and wave of nationalism
- Splits ignited simmering ethnic conflicts that erupted into genocide prompting UN and NATO interventions
- Now dissolved into 7 countries, most in EU and NATO

Next: **Nov 12:** Contrasting Balkan Communists: Albania, Bulgaria, Moldova & Romania

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Summary & Conclusions: Yugoslavia – Creation and collapse of a geopolitical wedge

- Most unusual geopolitical creation of 20th century
- Nominally Slavic but, in reality, highly diverse
- Under its communist leader Tito, unique in Cold War in dealing with both US and Soviets
- Lacked reason to exist after Cold War and began falling apart
- The splits ignited simmering conflicts that erupted into ethnic violence requiring UN and NATO military interventions
- Now dissolved into 7 countries, most in EU and NATO
- Next: Nov 12: Balkans: Life in Cold War under Soviet Communism. Will deal with other Balkans – Albania, Romania and Bulgaria and their differences up until the end of the Cold War