

# 2019/6/4 (EN): Grosch

## The multinational state Yugoslavia

### *Conflict and war at our front door*

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Hardly 30 years have passed since the multinational state Yugoslavia had to experience its almost inevitable perdition, and the nations mostly dominated by Serbs gained their independence. Yugoslavia had been a state consisting of six republics, where – depending on version – six up to eight peoples lived, speaking six languages, belonging to three religions, using two alphabets, and being under control of one single political party. With this single sentence one can describe the entire problematic nature and conflict gestation in a nutshell; in spite of all, the state existed for about 70 years., from 1918 to 1941 and then again from 1945 onwards. Until 1991 the so-called Federal Peoples' Republic Yugoslavia (Federetniva Narodna Republika Jugoslavija) had consisted of the six sub-republics Serbia (Srbija), Croatia (Hrvatska), Slovenia (Slovenija), Bosnia and Herzegovina (Bosna i Hercegovina), Montenegro (Crna Gora) and Makedonia (Makedonija), as well as the two autonomous regions Wojwodina and Kosovo which belonged to Serbia. In this state the peoples of Serbs, Croatsians, Slovenians, Montenegrinans (closely related to the Serbs), Macedonians, Albans and Hungarians as well as small minorities of Romanians and Bulgarians lived together. Additionally, there were the Bosnians who began to feel as an ethnic group of their own because of their Islamic denomination, who, however, have Serbian as well as Croatian roots. Since 1991, we were confronted with dramatic reports and photographs of this conflict every day. News about so-called „ethnic cleansings“, rapes, scorched earth, constructions of camps resembling concentration camps seriously reminded of the malice of past times. In addition, all this happened after the end of the East-West-Conflict, despite the euphoric mood arising in Europe as well as all over the world. The Yugoslavia Conflict can thus be seen as an example for the failing of a multinational state. For this reason, one ought to analyse and assess the relevance of nationalism, historical conflict roots, economic general conditions, different interests and/or the lack of interest in this conflict of different states and organisations such as UN, NATO and EU. After the dictator Tito had died, in the course of the fall of Communist power 1989/90, Yugoslavia was bound for rapid decline. In 1991 and 1992 Slovenia, Croatia, Makedonia and Bosnia-Herzegovina left the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. After the war of independence of Croatia, which lasted – with interruptions – until 1995, a bloody war developed in Bosnia-Herzegovina, also called “Smaller Yugoslavia” at the same time, where Moslem Bosnians and Serbs, and sometimes Bosnians and Croatsians, fought against each other. After massacres among the Bosnian civil population such as in Srebrenica (despite the fact that UN sanctuaries had been established), and consequently the NATO air raids, the Dayton Peace Treaty of 1995 led to the deployment of a UN protection force led by NATO. After the Kosovo War of 1999 and the independence of Kosovo in 2008, there are seven sovereign states with partially fragile structure on the area of former Yugoslavia today.

