Disintegration, Unification, Disintegration

Sarajevo, Bosnia-Herzegovina
With the crushing of the Prague Spring, Soviet authority in eastern Europe seemed complete. Yet little more than 20 years later, the USSR had fallen apart and the former Warsaw-Pact states were lining up to become members of the European Union. How did this happen?

- WHAT happened?
- WHY did it happen?
- What were the CONSEQUENCES?
- Conclusion: the case of Yugoslavia

Lithuanian and Slovenian euro coins, 2007

Cold War Europe, 1948-1990
Velvet Revolution or Autumn of the People?

June 1989 Solidarity wins almost every seat in Polish elections

Sept. 1989 Hungary opens Austrian border (100,000 people/day)

Oct. 2, 1989 20,000 people gather for peaceful protest in Leipzig

Oct. 30, 1989 300,000 at Leipzig protest

Nov. 9, 1989 East German guards let people through Berlin wall

Nov.-Dec. 1989 peaceful protests; Communist Party of Czechoslovakia relinquishes control

Dec. 1989 televised execution of Romanian President Ceausescu and his wife

Mar. 1990, East German elections favor unification

Oct. 3, 1990 Official re-unification of Germany

June 1991, Yeltsin elected president of Russian Soviet Republic

Aug. 1991, attempted coup by opponents of perestroika—army defects and backs Yeltsin

Nov. 1991, Yeltsin bans Communist Party in Russia
Neoliberalism and the End of History?

What we may be witnessing is not just the end of the Cold War, or the passing of a particular period of post-war history, but the end of history as such ... That is, the end point of mankind's ideological evolution and the universalization of Western liberal democracy as the final form of human government.

Francis Fukuyama, *The End of History and the Last Man* (1992)

Why? one claim—The West won the Cold War
From Cold War to Détente and Ostpolitik

March 1970 Willy Brandt is first West German Chancellor to visit East Germany

Feb. 1972 US President Nixon visits (Communist) China

May 1972 Nixon visits Soviet Union; Nixon and Brezhnev sign SALT I (first Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty), under negotiation since 1969

March 1973 West and East Germany establish diplomatic relations

June 1979 Brezhnev and US President Carter sign SALT II, which calls for reduction in number of nuclear arms on both sides

Dec. 1979 USSR invades Afghanistan

Why? one claim—The West won the Cold War
Poland

Oct. 1978 Karol Wojtyła (Bishop of Cracow) elected pope (John Paul II); first non-Italian pope since 1523

Aug. 1980 strike starts in Gdansk shipyards, headed by Lech Wałęsa; spreads to rest of northern Poland

Sept. 1980 government recognizes right to strike and trade union independent of Communist Party

Sept. 1980-Dec. 1981 more than ten million people (25% population) join Solidarity

Dec. 1981 Martial Law declared; tanks in Warsaw; Solidarity leaders jailed

Oct. 1983 Lech Wałęsa awarded Nobel Peace Prize
Czechoslovakia

On 13 Oct. 1976… published in the Codex of Laws of the CSSR… was an “International Pact on Civil and Political Rights” signed on behalf of Czechoslovakia in 1968 [and another pact on economic and cultural rights]

Their publication reminds us how many fundamental rights are for the time being valid in our country only on paper. Completely illusory, for example, is the right to freedom of expression, guaranteed by art. 19… Freedom of public expression is suppressed by the central direction of all information media and publishing and cultural activities. …

Charter 77 wants to engage in a constructive dialogue with state power, especially by calling attention to various concrete interests of the violation of human and civil rights, to prepare documentation on them…

Declaration of Charter 77 (1977)
Afghanistan: the Soviet Union’s Algeria?

Soviet presence in Afghanistan, 1979-1989

- over 100,000 soldiers in Afghanistan at any time
- over 15,000 military deaths
- rarely controlled more than 20% of country
- attacked by mujahideen (lit. “those who struggle”)

monument to Afghan War
Moscow, Russia

section of rug woven by Afghan refugees in Pakistan, 1980s
Gorbachev’s reforms, 1985-1988

*perestroika* = restructuring    *glasnost* = openness

Perestroika means a resolute shift to scientific methods … It means combining the achievements of the scientific and technological revolution with a planned economy… Perestroika means eliminating from society the distortions of socialist ethics, and it means the consistent implementation of principles of social justice. …To restructure our life means to understand the objective necessity for renovation and acceleration. And that necessity emerged in the heart of our society. The essence of perestroika is that *it unites socialism with democracy* and revives the Leninist concept of socialism…


“Perestroika—continuing to build October. Hastening democratic *glasnost*” (postage stamp 1988)

Why? Restructuring and openness in the Soviet Union

“Let’s Build a Zeppelin Fleet for Lenin!”
(1931) sovietposter.blogspot.com

Why? Restructuring and openness in the Soviet Union
Russia in 1994
36 billionaires worth $110 billion (25% of country’s GDP)

Lebedev owns: 1/3 of Aeroflot (Russian airline)
London Evening Standard newspaper
major investments in mortgage industry, Gazprom etc.

Consequences: Increase in economic inequality and nationalism
1878 Congress of Berlin resolves Russo-Turkish War; Serbia, Bulgaria, Romania become distinct states; Bosnia occupied by Austria-Hungary

1914 “Young Bosnia” activist assassinates Archduke in Sarajevo; A-H declares war on Serbia; Russia supports Serbia; WWI

1918 Kingdom of Yugoslavia created

1941 Axis invasion; Nazi puppet state headed by local fascists (Ustase) in Croatia

1941-1945 resistance fights Nazis; also a civil war between royalists + communists

1946 Federal People’s Republic of Yugoslavia, headed by Jozep Tito (Croatian leader of Communist resistance)

1961 Tito creates “non-aligned” movement

1980 death of Tito
1989 Slobodan Milošević elected president of Serbia

1990 Franjo Tudjman elected president of Croatia

1991 Slovenia declares independence; few weeks of fighting ensues

1991 Croatia declares independence on Croatia nationalist grounds; Serbs within Croatia declare own state (Krajina), civil war erupts

1992 Serb political leaders within Bosnia insist that Bosnia will remain part of Yugoslavia/”Greater Serbia”

1993 Bosnian Serbs besiege Bosnian Muslims in Sarajevo; Bosnian Muslims also fighting Bosnian Croats [ethnic cleansing by means of massacre and rape creates refugee crisis; UN “peacekeepers” prove ineffective]

1995 Dayton Accords create two Bosnian states

1999 Kosovo Liberation Army demands independence from Serbia; NATO intervention and bombing of Yugoslavia

Break Up of Yugoslavia

CIA map of “ethnic groups” in 1993