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NATIONAL COMMUNISM AND TRANSFORMATION OF OWNERSHIP IN EASTERN EUROPE 1945–1952

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ABSTRACT: After Second World War in the countries of Eastern Europe i.e. the countries of „people’s democracy“, Party State was not created by direct revolutionary action (by the destruction of existing and the building a new political and state institutions of power) but by structural transformation of political institutions. The gaining of economic power by a Party state was very complex, because of „gradual and cautious policy“ of economic and political changes in those countries, as well as relationship of political and social forces on the interior and international level. On the other hand, for „People’s state“, gaining economic power was of crucial importance for the stabilization, maintaining and functioning of political power, because establishing of control over the process of social reproduction made it possible for Party state to control also the social relations and processes in it’s entirety, and so that consolidate it’s power without a wider application of an open and massive terror over population.

The introduction of state ownership over means of production and a planned management in the countries of so-called „people’s democracy“ was linked to the process of structural assimilation of political structure of these countries and international relations between 1946–1947. In that period, coalition governments in these countries were relatively politically significant, although they were socially and politically limited.

Key words: Nationalism, communism and Eastern Europe

The events in Eastern Europe since 1989 and especially dissolution and atrocity of Yugoslavia have reinforced the central importance of nationalism in Eastern European history of political evolution and upheaval.

Some authors, as Immanuel Wallerstein, argued that the ethnic conflicts would be the main characteristic of the history of the 21st century, due to the global crisis of the world capitalistic system.¹ Others allege that the anguish and disorientation which finds expression in the hunger to belong, and hence in the „politics of identity“, is no more a force of history than the hunger for „law and order“ which is an equally understandable response to another aspect of social disorganization. Moreover, E. J. Hobsbawm alleges that in the case of the western ex-communist societies this social disorientation is intensified by the collapse of life, as most of the inhabitants have known it and learned to live it. Furthermore, he asserts that in post-communist societies ethnic or national identity is above all a device for defining the community of the innocent and identifying the guilty who are responsible for „our“ predicament; especially once communist regimes are not longer there to function as scapegoats. In the case of Poland, anti-Semitism continues to explain Polish ills in the total absence of Jews. Hobsbawm claims that: „...it was great achievement of the communist regimes in multinational countries to limit the disastrous effects of nationalism within them. The Yugoslav revolution succeeded in preventing the nationalities within its state frontiers from massacring each other almost certainly for longer than ever before in their history, though this achievement has now unfortunately crumbled“.²

National Communism and the Cold War

The notion of national communism was widely used in the Western historiography during the 50s and 60s. This term indicated that some Communist governments of the Eastern Europe tended to conduct a relatively independent foreign policy in relation to the USSR during the period 1948–1968.³ In other

¹ Immanuel Wallerstein, *Utopistics or Historical Choices of the Twenty-First Century*, The New Press, 1998.

² E. J. Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism since 1780. Program, Myth and Reality*, Czmbridge University Press, 1992, p.180.

³ For the first time this tendency has emerged as the well-known Soviet-Yugoslav split. In 1947, Stalin decided to create a physical and ideological impenetrable barrier around the Soviet Union. The Eastern European „buffer states“ would have been turned into the Soviet strategy defense line. The reason for this Soviet policy was the implementation of the European Recovery Program, the so-called Marshall Aid. The first step was the establishment of the Communist Information Bureau (Cominform). At the conference held from the 2d to the 27th of September 1947 in Szklarska Poreba, Stalin and Andrei Zhdanov proposed the creation of the Cominform. It was a forum for the official interference of the Soviet Party into the domestic affairs of the Eastern European countries. The purpose of this forum was to prevent the spread of Western influence into the Eastern European countries, since Poland and Czechoslovakia had already planned to accept

words, national communism implied a resistance to the over lordship of Kremlin. In this context, some historians had used the term „Balkan Communism“ to denote the post-war development of the Communist regimes in Yugoslavia, Rumania, and Albania, determined by their specific position in international relations. Such usage of the term national communism reflected the impact of the international bloc division on the post-war historiography.

The United States' guiding principles during the Cold War were embodied in its policy of Containment. Developed by George Kennan,⁴ the US diplomat and historian, the doctrine of Containment rested on the thesis that the Soviet foreign policy was rooted in a system that combined traditional Russian expansionism with the Communist ideology, which viewed capitalist powers as irrevocably hostile. The Soviet aim of the „total destruction of rival power“, occasioned by the same goal in American foreign policy, became the transformation of the Soviet society. Consequently, the United States tended to become involved with a long struggle counteracting and containing the aspirations of the rival power until the Soviet system collapsed. Translated into an operational foreign policy, Containment provided the conceptual framework, direction and scope of the US foreign policy until the end of the Cold War.

One of the aims of the Containment policy was the prevention of the further expansionism of the USSR's influence in Europe. For that purpose, the United States embarked on a massive economic reconstruction of Western Europe under the Marshall Plan, a military build-up through the NATO, and the Truman Doctrine, the grant of aid to Greece and Turkey.

the Marshall Aid. When Stalin decided to build the defense network, he realized that its significance for the Soviet Union was directly proportionate to Moscow's ability to control the foreign and domestic actions of the National Communist regimes in Eastern Europe. Stalin understood the simple political truth that the trustworthiest ally is one totally dependent upon the Soviet Union for its own political power - a local agent of the Soviet authority. The only leader of these National Communist parties in Eastern Europe who did not solely owe his political authority to Stalin was Tito, the leader of the Yugoslav Communists. The Yugoslav Communists' path to victory differed from that of other Eastern European parties. Soviet aid played a less significant role in the process of liberation of Yugoslavia than in other Eastern European countries. Tito ruled the nation without Soviet troops. However, there were mild disagreements in the post-war years that assumed awesome proportions in 1948, and on the 28th of June of that year the Yugoslavian Communist Party was expelled from the Cominform. Thus, due to the Soviet Union political doctrine, which still equated the success of Communism with that of the USSR, Tito had to go. He had to be dismissed, not because he was a bad Stalinist, but because he was a good one. Yugoslavia was the first to refer to itself as a „People's Democracy“. It was completely contrary to Stalin's plans in 1947-1948. Tito's distinction between the ideological and the states' interests is crucial. Tito had claimed no right other than the one established by Stalin, that of a nation to create Socialism within the confines of its own borders under its own national leadership. It was not the content of Yugoslav policy that was to divide Moscow and Belgrade. The issue was in which city the policy would be made.

⁴ G. Kennan, *Memoirs 1925-1950*. Little, Brown and Company, Boston, 1967, pp. 271-297; G. Kennan, „The Sources of Soviet Conduct“. *Foreign Affairs*, vol. 25, No. 4 (July 1947), pp. 571-589.

Due to the rivalry between the USA And the USSR, the control of the European political events and the tendencies in Eastern European countries were observed and assessed by the superpowers with regard to their own interests.

During the whole period of the Cold War, the USA strove, parallel with the policy of Containment, to pull some of the Eastern European countries away from the Soviet Union's sphere of interest. In the course of this strategy, the USA supported even the Eastern European communist leadership, which attempted to conduct a relatively independent foreign policy and to not be under the absolute control of Moscow.

Thus, the tendency of some communist leadership to free them from Soviet guardianship to establish a political and economic cooperation with the Western countries was named national communism in Anglo-American literature. The USA sought to encourage spreading of this tendency among the Eastern European communist governments, especially during the late 1940s and the 1950s, in order to weaken the soviet bloc in Europe. Apparently, the American support to some communist regimes in Eastern Europe was tactically motivated in order to pull the Eastern European countries a way from the soviet bloc and to change their communist system into the capitalist system.

The American and Western European strategist considered that the best way to achieve these goals has to encourage the nationalist political tendencies in Eastern Europe. The USSR in the inter- war supported the same political tendencies in Eastern European countries period and in the last year of the Second World War. In that period, USSR intended to sovietize the Eastern European societies in order to establish its political domination in this region.

During the whole 20th century the main political ideology in Eastern Europe was nationalism. Because of that, nationalist Eastern European political elites and movements had been supported by the Great Powers, such as the Great Britain, France, Germany, the Soviet Union and the USA, which were interested in establishment and maintaining their influences in this geopolitical region. Predominance of nationalism over liberalism and socialism in Eastern Europe was caused by its backwardness. Both liberal and communist modernization failed there. Moreover, these societies not only faced the problem of national emancipation, but also the problem of development and modernization.

Unsuccessful modernization of Eastern Europe and grievances of its peoples determined the social basis of communist movements and the phenomena of national communism.

In this study, I would like to propose a new approach to the concept of national communism. It will be argued that the political and economic system of national communism occurred, in the historical sense, as a type of communist modernization of the Eastern European societies after the Second Ward War.

The political formula of national communism combined the one-party political system and the state owned property system with the policy of national and social emancipation of the peasants through the redistribution of land.

In order to describe social and political bases of national communism in Eastern Europe after the Second World War, the following issues are highlighted in this study. The first part examines the notion of national communism. In the second part the geopolitical position of Eastern Europe as the European periphery is taken into consideration. The central part of study is devoted to the analysis of the historical and social sources of Eastern European national communism and to the issue of the communist policy towards the question of the borders and towards the question of the right to land.

National Communism and Modernization

National communism can be defined as a type of national states in the period after the Second World War. This type of national states had the form of a Party State and was characterized by state property and a state-controlled economy, as well as by the one party monopoly to formulate and represent the social and national interests. The important element of national communism was the Communist welfare state, which provided social security for a large part of the society (full employment, health insurance, free education, etc.).

National communism can be analyzed as a specific ideology and a concrete historical phenomenon. It was a project and an attempt of modernization in Eastern European countries. It failed. V. I. Lenin had formulated this concept as the way for social changes and for overcoming the backwardness of the society. After the Second World War this concept of social development was implemented in Eastern Europe. According to this conception, the overcoming of the backwardness is possible only through centralized state mobilization of productive resources and through organizing and regulating enterprises on the basis of state property and planning. The goal of the Eastern European revolution was not only to bring about changes in the property status, but also to establish a government by the proletariat, i.e. „the synchronization of the production relations with the production forces“, as suggested by Marx and the Western Socialists. In fact, the aim of this revolution was the modernization of the society as well as the overcoming of the economic and technological backwardness and the achievement of the Western countries level of production. The Eastern European revolution was an instrument of national emancipation. Naimark suggests that „these revolutions in their own time need to be seen as ‘incorporating’ nationalist aims, in some senses of being nationalist revolution themselves, fulfilling the goals and purposes of national movements in the countries and reflecting racialist components of inter-war and especially wartime Eastern European political

ideologies“.⁵ After the Second World War, the Communist parties in all Eastern European countries succeeded in representing both the proletarian and nationalist interests. The important feature of national communism was autarkic development policies and economic independence from any nation, which is believed to be unfriendly.

Eastern Europe as the European Periphery

The term Eastern Europe has been used to describe a complex of geographical, historical, cultural and political factors that mark this area off from other parts of the continent. It is currently employed to refer to the tier of small states that lie between Germany and Russia. In political terms, Eastern Europe may be defined as an area positioned between Germany and Russia, subjected to the direct influence of these two countries (many of the nations lived under their occupation), or, subjected to their indirect influence (the powers rivaled each other, particularly in the Balkans).

Agnes Heller and Ferenc Fehér suggested that Yalta created a geographical entity, Eastern Europe, which as a polity or a community of destiny had never existed before. According to them, certain nations or ethnic groups of this geographically defined region had a long prehistory of political sovereignty, while others had always been integrated into larger conglomerates of countries or regional monarchies.⁶

Contrary to this opinion, Jerzy Tomaszewski and Gordon Skilling denote Eastern Europe as the region, which has several historically created features in common. In the past, the major factor affecting this region was that, eastward of the conventional borderline running along the River Elba and further up to Trieste, serfdom predominated in the final stage of feudalism, and this resulted in feudal conditions that remain here longer than in most West European countries. Almost all Eastern Europeans shared in common backwardness of economic development that condemned most of them, whatever their nationality or location, to a life of hard work and poverty. In the inter-war years, the continent was divided distinctly into what had been called „the two Europe, the farming and the industrial“. A line drawn from Riga to Trieste bisected Europe, the population to the east overwhelmingly occupied in agriculture and that to the west, by majority, in industry, transport, trade and services. Czechoslovakia, with only 33 per cent

⁵ N. Naimark, „Nationalism in the East European Revolution, 1944–1947“. Paper presented at the Conference „Remembering, Adapting, Overcoming the Legacy of World War Two in Europe“, New York, New York University, April 24–27, 1997, p. 3.

⁶ A. Heller, F. Fehér, *From Yalta to Glasnost. The Dismantling of Stalin's Empire*, Basil Blackwell, Oxford, 1990, p. 16.

of her population in agriculture, was unique in an area where this proportion was normally over 60 per cent, in the Balkans even above 75 per cent.⁷

In the League of Nations publication from 1945, entitled „Economic Demography of Eastern and Southern Europe“, Wilbert Moor described in the following terms that the division of Europe into the developed Western Europe was the core and that the underdeveloped Eastern Europe was the periphery:

„If one were to draw a circle on a map of Europe, with a centre in the North Sea off the English Coast having a radius of some 800 miles, this division of the European continent would approximate the boundary between the relatively prosperous industrial economies of the North and West and the relatively undeveloped and predominantly agrarian economies of the South and East. Within the area of the circle would lie most of the major commercial and industrial centres of Europe, and the regions with virtually stationary populations; beyond its borders would lie countries of meagre wealth and growing populations.

Despite Europe's historical role as the center of modern industrialism, the continent retains its remarkably divergent economic systems. The industrial expansion and complex market organization, characteristic of North-western Europe, have made slight inroads into the belt of the agrarian states in Eastern and Southern Europe.“⁸

On the eve of the Second World War, Eastern Europe suffered from numerous unsolved political and social problems, such as the agrarian and national questions, the lack of democratic forms of power, and the worker's question. All of these problems determined both the Eastern European Fascist ideology and movements and the Eastern European National Communism development, some adopted the attitudes of Fascist Germany, while others the values of Soviet Russia.

Origins of the Eastern European National Communism

National communism resulted from the Second World War. However, it was neither the consequence of the Soviet military supremacy in Eastern Europe during the final operations against the Nazi Germany, nor the challenge to the sovietization of Eastern Europe. My thesis is therefore that the post-war reconstruction of the Eastern European countries founded on national communism was a result of various historical tendencies. I argue that the backwardness of the Eastern European area determined both its wartime and its post-war political strategies. The backwardness of this region, as a long-term historical tendency,

⁷ J. Tomaszewski, *The Socialist Regimes of East Central Europe. Their Establishment and Consolidation 1944–1967*. Rutledge; London, 1989, G. Skilling, *The Governments of Communist East Europe*. Thomas Y. Crowell Company, New York, 1966.

⁸ W. Moor, *Economic Demography of Eastern and Southern Europe*. Arno Press, New York, 1972, pp. 17 and 27.

as well as the pre-war and war experience of the people and the Allies war victory were the main determinants of the rise of the Eastern European National Communism.

There is no uniform interpretation of the origins of Communism in Eastern Europe. According to one opinion the rise of the Eastern European Communism can be seen as a consequence of the Soviet military predominance during the German retreat from the Eastern European area after the Stalin grad battle. In this view, the economic and relating social problems in this region are not regarded as an important factor, which had contributed to the acceptance of Communism in Eastern Europe, although the significance of this factor is not completely disregarded. David Turnock is a typical representative of this scholarship. He writes:

„With the benefit of hindsight communism may be seen as a latent political force in Eastern Europe in 1945, generated by dissatisfaction with western-inspired strategies of economic development and interest in at least certain elements of the Soviet system. However it would be wrong to suppose that the economic problems created an inevitable communist takeover. The war situation was crucial.

As R.L. Wolf argues for the Balkans, one of the chief reasons for the communist successes was obviously military: it was the Soviet Union whose armies defeated and invaded Romania and Bulgaria and completed the expulsion of Germans from Yugoslavia. There were no British or American troops in Southeast Europe.

The same applied in Hungary, Poland, and in most of Czechoslovakia. Developments might have followed a very different course had there been a landing by the western allies in the Balkans and much regret had been expressed that no operation comparable with the advance from Thessalonica in the First World War was mounted. The issue has been widely debated on account of the supposition that Churchill was in favor of such a strategy (being keenly aware of Soviet intentions) but was pressed by the Americans to agree to landings in France and Italy instead.⁹

In terms of this line of reasoning, the development in the individual countries of Eastern Europe was directly connected with the policies and interests of the big powers. Hence, the decisions as to which armies, those of Western Allies or of the Soviet Union, would liberate the individual countries were of great political importance. Jerzy Tomaszewski suggests that the Allies decision to establish the zones of military actions bore important political consequences. Thus, the Allied Control Commission set up in Italy, Bulgaria, Romania, and Hungary were a powerful instrument for controlling the internal situation of these countries. In Italy, the Western Allies took the opportunity to weaken the political position of the Communists. On the other hand, the Soviet occupational troops ruled out any possibility of left-wing opponents engineering a coup d'état.¹⁰

⁹ D. Turnock, *Eastern Europe: An Economic and Political Geography*. Sage, London, 1989, p. 15.

¹⁰ J. Tomaszewski, *The Socialist Regimes of East Central Europe. Their Establishment and Consolidation 1944–1967*. Rutledge; London, 1989, pp. 13 and 14.

These scholars assumed that the Yalta and Teheran Agreements were reached with the USSR on combined operations against Germany, defining the respective zones of action and assigning to the Soviet forces exclusive responsibility in almost all parts of Eastern Europe. Marginal efforts by the West to take limited actions beyond the lines of demarcation, such as the offer of air assistance to the revolt in Warsaw or to the Slovak uprising, or of military aid to Prague in the closing hours of the war, were frustrated by the unwillingness of the Soviet Union to permit such measures in what it regarded as its exclusive military domain.

The second type of scholarship takes into account the impact both of internal social and political situations in Eastern Europe at the end of the war and the influence of the Great Powers.

In the second half of the 1960s, Gordon Skilling suggested that the predominant position of the USSR in Eastern Europe had been the result of a combination of military and political factors. Thus, the Soviet pre-eminence reflected, not only the fortunes and the diplomacy of the war, but also the pre-war diplomatic constellation in Europe. He puts forward:

„The rise of communism in Eastern Europe was greatly influenced by the political and economic conditions as well as the historical and cultural experiences of each of the states concerned. To what extent, the question must be posed, was communism forced on entirely unwilling people, and to what extent did it represent a spontaneous outgrowth of economic and social discontent and of political and historical inclinations? How far were Soviet military presence and diplomatic paramount aided by positive attitudes toward communism and the Soviet Union, or by the absence of viable and attractive political and social alternatives? Was the pre-war experience of these people such as to encourage a hopeful response to the communist offers and to discourage a return to a political and social order reminiscent of that era? ... Answers to these questions are complex and presuppose a knowledge of the inter-war experience of these nations, their economic and social setting, their ethnic and religious composition, their cultural and historical patterns and traditions, and their political experiences.“¹¹

Discussing the demise of the „Yalta system“ in Eastern Europe, Agnes Heller and Ferenc Fehér argue that the least and not the most fecund period in which it was possible to produce alternative solutions to the „Yalta system“ had been precisely the immediate post-war era. According to them, the opposition forces faced deep internal divisions within their respective nations and they lacked contact with one another in the artificially created supranational space of Eastern Europe. The non-communistic political actors in the Eastern European countries had no serious moral and political prestige accumulated in the war. They were heavily sedated by illusions of Western Powers' willingness and capability to act on behalf of Eastern Europe, and they were also entangled in a social struggle

¹¹ G. Skilling, *The Governments of Communist East Europe*. Thomas Y. Crowell Company, New York, 1966, p. 6.

with the Communists. Heller and Fehér emphasize that the Soviet system seemed to offer a viable alternative to the tremendous pre-war backwardness of the region, an alternative that temporarily attracted a considerable part of the populace. „...the communists had no chance whatsoever of gaining even a temporary electoral majority, they did however have a considerable electorate in each country, since they were advocating issues of modernization long overdue in these backward areas.“¹² National unity against Yalta on this basis was not possible. The dormant national communists were secretly dreaming about their own „separate ways“ of the dictatorship of the proletariat or were hatching stillborn plans of supranational confederations, non-communist and anti-Communist parties – without support from the West – they all were fighting a lost battle.

In the Soviet post-war propaganda literature, it was suggested that the Soviet Union had been the direct liberator of the countries of Eastern Europe from Fascist enslavement. It was emphasized that the Soviet Army had liberated those countries not only from foreign yoke and had ensured them their national freedom, „but by its presence it exerted a mighty revolutionary influence on the march of events, strengthened the revolutionary energy of the popular masses and accelerated historical processes.

Secondly, the Soviet Union frustrated Anglo-American intervention in the countries of central and south-eastern Europe. The Anglo-American imperialists are known to have sought to land their troops in Albania, Bulgaria, to break through to Czechoslovakia, Poland and Hungary, and to reach there before the Soviet Army. It is quite clear that had the British and American troops entered these countries, the ruling circles in the U.S. and Britain would have done their utmost to prevent the victory of People's Democracy. The Soviet Union saved the countries of central and South Europe from new intervention and from new imperialist oppression, thereby rendering the working people of Central and south-eastern Europe great assistance in establishing a new, revolutionary power – People's Democracy.

Hence, far from interfering in the domestic affairs of the central and south-eastern European countries, the USSR sheltered them from Anglo-American interference, from Anglo-American military intervention.

Thirdly, in the course of the war against the Hitlerite Germany the Soviet Army smashed her allies, the armed forces of the fascist reaction, in Rumania, Hungary and Bulgaria. The working class of those countries would have required immense strength and energy to annihilate the armed forces of native fascists, but that was done during the war by the Soviet Union.

The Soviet Army drove out the Hitlerite troops and smashed the Hitlerite violence machine in Poland and Czechoslovakia. Furthermore, the presence of the

¹² A. Heller, F. Fehér, *From Yalta to Glasnost. The Dismantling of Stalin's Empire*, Basil Blackwell, Oxford, 1990, p. 16.

Soviet troops prevented the reactionary circles in those countries from creating and developing armed forces of counterrevolution of any notable size, though such attempts, some extremely energetic, took place, for instance, in Poland.

Immediately following their establishment, international imperialism fiercely attacked the young people's democratic regimes. The ruling circles of the U.S.A. and Britain pursued a policy of blackmail, intimidation, and slander against the People's Democracies, and exerted political and economic pressure upon them. They tried by various means to interfere in the domestic affairs of those countries, and desperately strove to restore anti-popular, reactionary regimes.

The USSR, always a champion of the peoples' independence, made use of its high international prestige and helped the People's Democracies to repel the attacks of the imperialist forces, paralyzed the attempts of the ruling circles in the U.S.A. and Britain to interfere in the domestic affairs of those countries, helped them to uphold their freedom and independence and to strengthen their international position.¹³

Hence, according to the unsophisticated post-war Soviet propaganda, „People's Democracy“ has become victorious in the course of the powerful anti-Fascist movement of the laboring masses under the leadership of the working class and its revolutionary vanguard, the Communist parties. „The Soviet Union created favorable conditions for the victory of People's Democracy and helped to establish it. But the emergence of popular governments should be regarded as the result of the activity of internal forces, as the result of the revolutionary struggle of the popular masses under the leadership of the working class.“¹⁴

The East European „People's Democracy“

During the immediate post-war years, (1945–47), the Communist parties in the Eastern European countries did not deny the legitimacy of the parliamentary democracy institutions. They also did not publicly declare their political systems to be of the Soviet type, as the Bolshevik party did during the October Revolution in Russia. Namely, the Eastern European Communist parties were conducting their activities through both parliamentary and informal extra parliamentary channels, in order to seize power and take to control over the army, police, courts, the local governments, trade unions and the mass media. The result of this process was the creation of the Party State.

Thus, the political system of the Eastern European states that during the period of 1945–47 it was based on two different political structures: (1) the old, traditional, democratic structure, and (2) the new, revolutionary structure. This

¹³ A. Sobolev, *People's Democracy. A New Form of Political Organisation of Society*, Foreign Languages Publishing House, 1954, Moscow, pp. 18–21.

¹⁴ *Ibid.* p.23.

type of political systems is denoted as „People’s Democracy“. The process of structural assimilation of the traditional democratic structure by the revolutionary one was the main political process in the system of „People’s Democracy“¹⁵. Gradually, the entire political life was subjected to control of the Party State. Furthermore, the term „People’s Democracy“ denotes the doctrine which enables the Communist parties to form tactical coalitions with all national, social (the „working people“) and anti-Fascist political groups, acting within the social movements which pledged for social modernization, political democracy and national independence in various countries where the USSR sought to establish its political influence.¹⁶

The initial phase of „People’s Democracy“ was characterized by radical change in all spheres of life in Eastern Europe. Industry was nationalized, land tenure revised, the social class structure overturned, national minorities expelled or transformed, and the political patterns revolutionized.

The programmers of political coalitions that had come to power in most Eastern European countries at the end of the war embraced the proposals for social economic reforms prepared during the early war years. The social and economic transformations in the Eastern European countries took place in the aftermath of the war. Various radical measures were taken before the Communists could be able to seize total power. The establishment of the state property through measures of confiscation, agrarian reform and nationalization was of crucial importance for the development of the Party State. These measure, in particular the agrarian reform, pursued by the Communist parties, and was supported by masses and most non-communist parties in all Eastern European countries. For example, in Yugoslavia, the measures of confiscation, agrarian reform and colonization and nationalization¹⁷ were strongly and widely supported by masses as well as by some civic politicians, for instance Dragoljub Jovanovic.¹⁸

As early as the summer of 1945, the workers in Czechoslovakia began to call for nationalization, sometimes even going on strike to support the demands. On 24 October 1945, President Benes signed the Nationalization Decree. The Czechoslovak Communist Party attracted considerably high popular support.

¹⁵ See: Wohforth, Tim. (1968). *The Theory of Structural Assimilation: A Marxist Analysis of the Social Overturns in Eastern Europe, Yugoslavia and China*. New York: A Bulletin Publication.

¹⁶ The Communists built these coalitions within a socially, widely conceptualized organization named the „National Front“. The Communist propaganda emphasized that in the period of the anti-Fascist struggle the working class had formed a firm fighting alliance with the peasantry, the intelligentsia, the urban petty bourgeoisie, and anti-Fascist circles among the middle bourgeoisie. The working class played the leading role in this alliance. See: Obradovic, Marija. (1995). *„Narodna demokratija“ u Jugoslaviji 1945–1952. („People’s Democracy“ in Yugoslavia 1945–1952)*, Beograd: Institut za noviju istoriju Srbije.

¹⁷ The Confiscation Decree and Agrarian Reform and Colonization Decree were enacted in 1945 and the Nationalization Decree was put into effect in 1946.

¹⁸ See: Obradovic, Marija. (1995) *„Narodna demokratija“ u Jugoslaviji 1945-1952. („People’s Democracy“ in Yugoslavia 1945–1952)*, Beograd: Institut za noviju istoriju Srbije.

Around 40 per cent of the electorate during the 1946 elections cast their votes on behalf of this party. In 1946, about 60 per cent of the industrial potential in Czechoslovakia was nationalized. Under the Communists' pressure in Czechoslovakia in 1947, the political parties came to an agreement to place all the remaining enterprises under state control.¹⁹

In 1947, the reconstruction of the social and economic system of Eastern Europe based on the described measures was completed. The preconditions for Communist modernization were created. Next stage was the development of the national economy founded on state directed forcible industrialization and urbanization and planned economy.²⁰

Economy of Party State

By confiscation and nationalization, a state ownership and monopoly over industry was created in these countries and, at the same time, large real properties were fragmented through the land reform, but private ownership over small properties remained. Although there network of the states farm cooperatives was established by the system of obligatory contracts with depressed prices (those measures were called „preparation phase“ a transition from individual to collective production and as measures for „restriction and pressing back“ kulaks) the „People's state“ failed to master the accumulation and agricultural income as whole, because one of it's parts was realized through the free market. As we can see the state ownership itself was not a sufficient condition to achieve the full economic power of Party state, because the state ownership did not make possible the collection of national income as a whole, as well as direct dislocation and distribution of capital. Therefore, the economic plan was necessary. On the other hand, the economic plan was necessary for the Party state in order to realize „socialist industrialization“ which was considered as basis for the development socialist social relations. It was believed that the development of „socialist“ industrialization would become a basis for socialist economy. The economic plan obtained these functions, which were necessary for economic power of Party state, because the state ownership itself was not able to fulfill. The main goal was, as a matter in fact, to make it possible that all parts of the national income could be collected through the financial system and by planning organs during the process of circulation itself, in their first appearance in order to make possible their later division. This process, in the jargon of the state planners in the countries of so-called „People's democracy“ was called „the phase of the first renewed division of the national income“.

¹⁹ Tomszewski, Jerzy. (1989). *The Socialist Regimes of East Central Europe. Their Establishment and Consolidation 1944–1967*. London: Rutledge, p. 81.

²⁰ See: Obradovic, Marija. (1996). „Communist Modernisation in Yugoslavia (1947–1953)“, *The European Legacy: Toward New Paradigms*, vol. 1, No. 3, pp. 859–865.

Centralization of the national income was very important for the Party state, because it was the only source for „socialist industrialization“. Immediately after The Second World War, the countries of „people’s democracy“ accepted neither „Marshal’s plan“ nor Western foreign investments since the integral part of the communist propaganda was the assessment that the big share of foreign investment in industries of these countries before the war was detrimental for their economic development. Apart from Centralization, „People’s state“ considered that it was very important to increase intensively the people’s income. Therefore, through press propaganda, the state was campaigning for the full use of industrial capacities, the proper work organization, complete rationalization of technology as well as working hours, and the increase of the production and the reduction of costs. The need for the rationalization of the production and the increase of the productivity of work for the purpose of increasing the national income and the expansion of source of accumulation, was yet another function of economic plan.

The plan made possible a controlled increase of employment which was the basis for increasing the national income; then to define and coordinate production programs of enterprises through production plans (the principle of full use of working year; the introduction of additional labor into industrial production, especially into civil engineering, timber industry, mining industry - youth work brigades, socialist alliance brigade, local production commissions and farmers engaged in their free time; obligatory work and other forms of work reserves).

The third function of the plan was related to the division of national income in two parts. Fund of consumption and Fund of accumulation, through the policy of prices, policy of salaries and wages. By doing that, the State tried to limit completely the function of the market as well as in the trade of consumer goods (not only the market of business, raw materials and means of production) and in the exchange of goods between villages and towns.

By planned policy of prices and wages, the State regulated the balance between good and money’s funds of population. In the field of exchange between villages and cities the nutrition of population and the supply of industry with raw material was also regulated in towns as well as the level of sufficient personal supply (cretonne, footwear, etc) and manufactured consumption (agricultural machines, tractors, seed, fertilizer) of farmers.

Through propaganda and ideological desultory the policy of depressed prices of agricultural produce was legalized by the formula „Alliance of working people both of poor and medium farmers“ and by the need to limit the „kulaks“.

The mobilization of necessary funds for „socialist industrialization“ was practically realist by a planned income policy and a credit system.

The basic economic levers by which the State realized the third function of the plan (through policy of prices and wages, on the one hand, and tax policy and

credit system, on the other hand) were: A) proportion of wages, B) the purchase price of necessary agricultural products, C) the price of industrial products for consumer goods, D) the purchase price of agricultural products, E) the price of agricultural products on the free market, and F) the prices of industrial products which were on free market in the state owned shops and storehouses.

The function of the „Plans of people’s economy“ was also politically controlled. Economic plan was established as a political instrument, which facilitated administrative regulation of all courses of expanded reproduction (particularly the collection and distribution of national income) i. e. a political allocation and distribution of capital. On the other hand, through economic plan, it made possible the „adjusting“ of economic and export-import structure of every country of „people’s democracy“ in order to create a close economic interdependence between them and the Soviet Union, and their complete economic independence from economic systems of western countries.

The structural transformation of economic systems of countries with „people’s democracy“ was initiated in 1947. by gradual transition to planned economy. Thus radical changes were carried out of economic structure of these countries both in correlation between industrial and agricultural production and within themselves, in respect of priorities in organization branches as well as in the division of national income on two funds: the Fund of consummation and the Fund of accumulation. Heavy industry was the basis (production of electricity, coal and steel) for the development of which large investments were made. The development of all other economic branches as well as living standards of the people, had to be subjected to this purpose. Therefore, big investments in light industry and agriculture were not planned and the increase of their production was not expected. The same meaning had the division of national income in favor of Fund of accumulation, as the expense of the living standard.

The main changes in foreign trade of countries of „people’s democracy“ after the war were reflected in considerable decrease in trade with Germany (which was their main market in prewar years) and in economic exchange with the U.S.S.R. (which was insignificant before the war). Before war, Germany was mainly the buyer of food and raw materials from these countries, and their supplier of industrial products. Germany also imposed to these countries clearing balance of accounts. After the war, the U.S.S.R. became the main supplier of raw materials and food for the countries of Central and South-Eastern Europe, and at the same time, the Soviet Union imported from these countries industrial goods. However, the Soviet Union, from time to time, exported to these countries also large quantities of equipment through trading agreements. Among them, the most important were agreements between Yugoslavia and the Soviet Union, and the Soviet Union and Poland, signed in the middle if the 1947.

Nationalization and Confiscation

Nationalization and confiscation were carried out first in Yugoslavia (The Confiscation law of 1945. and Nationalization law of 1946.) and in Poland where at the beginning of 1946. by a decree all light and heavy industry was nationalized, banks, transportation, warehouses, storehouses etc. The enterprises, which were owned by German citizens and Poles who collaborated with enemies, were confiscated. In the key branches of economy as metallurgy, engineering industry, mining, oil industry, chemical, energetic and in major part of textile industry, more than 3.500 enterprises were transformed from private to state ownership through so-called Decree on nationalization. The transformation included more than 75% enterprises with more than 20 workers employed. Several hundreds of small enterprises were ruled by co-operative organizations, so after that, 90% of workers were employed in state and co-operative industry.

By a Decree on nationalization in Czechoslovakia in the October 1945. more than 2000 enterprises were transformed into state ownership enterprises. Thus, approximately all mining-industry was included as well as over 70% of chemical and 60% of engineering industry.

On the basis of Nationalization law, in course of 1946. about 70% of production capacity, and 60% of workers were included in the State owned sector of economy. Also, all joint stock companies and insurance companies were nationalized and property of foreigners and enemy collaborators was confiscated.

The existence of coalition governments in these countries, which were composed not only by communists but also by representatives of other political parties, represented a political limitation for the forming of a complete state owned monopoly.

Nationalization in Albania was done on the same foundations as in Yugoslavia, by way of confiscation enterprises and property of Italian occupiers and their local collaborators.

The process of nationalization in Bulgaria, Hungary and Rumania, during 1945–1946. was somewhat slower as compared to the countries of so-called „people’s democracy“. The reason for that was, on the one hand, the fact that these countries, had undefined status since they were supporting Axis forces, during the war, and on the other hand, in coalition governments of these countries, which were established before the end of the Second world war, after the Red Army came, communist were not a majority.

In this period, in Bulgaria, hardly 30% of production capacity was transformed through nationalization and confiscation into states ownership. In Hungary, the mine and coal industry with 50.000 workers were nationalized and at the same time the State insured for itself 50% of shares in tree major joint-stock

companies of heavy industry with more than 70.000 workers. Automobile and motorcycle stock company was also nationalized. In 1946. Rumania nationalized by Decree of nationalization all big trade-banks, which were put under the state control, as well as concern bank. In may 1947. worker's control in the production was introduced trough so-called productions commissions, which were under the state control. Those commissions were to provide state control over economic enterprises.

In these tree countries nationalization of economy was completed during 1947–1948 period. In Bulgaria, Nationalization law of industrial enterprises was passed in December 1947. Beside banks and mines, „people's property“ included 80% of industry. At the beginning of 1948. the whole big agricultural inventory was bought out.

In Hungary the major banks were nationalized in the 1947. and at the beginning of 1948. industrial enterprises, which employed more than 100 workers in one shift, were also nationalized. So, in this way the government sector covered more than 80% of industry, and almost the whole mine production.

The Grand Romanian Assembly passed in Law on nationalization only on June in the 1948. On the basis of that law, the state nationalized the whole engineering industry, employing more than 100 worker in one shift, then textile and food industry, civil engineering enterprises, private railway, firms, shipping companies, insurance companies, all trade banks and PTT. Before this nationalization, State owned 25% of enterprises of ferrous metallurgy, tobacco, matches, mentholated alcohol, salt, about 25% of forest surfaces, the big part of saw-mills, 30%–40% metal-engineering and a big number of fishing companies. Over 650 industrial enterprises were nationalized as well as tree big shareholding companies, 10 private railway lines, 4 shipping societies, 350 river and sea ships and 15 insurance companies. By this nationalization, state owner ship dominated in the industry, while at agriculture the private sector remained dominant. The small and medium enterprises, as well as retail shops remained private ownership, even after the state economic plans for 1949. were passed.

National Communism and Peasantry

During the Second World War, the Communists in Eastern European countries intended to attain the political mobilization of masses. The political platform for this mobilization concerned the anti-Fascist struggle and the liberation of the country from the aggressors. The mobilization was carried out through the activity of the National Front. Immediately after the Second World War, the Communists in Eastern Europe attracted the popular political support, thanks to their struggle for the restoration of the countries' inter-war borders. The Communist pledge for the resolution of the question of the right to land, which

was the most important social inter-war question in this region, also contributed to the Communist political mobilization of the masses. The mobilization was accomplished through political propaganda activities, and the Communist parties undertook various political actions. On the basis of the contents of the political program and the form of the political mobilization, as well as of the nature of the strategy for accumulation of political support deplored by them, the post-war regimes in Eastern Europe can be categorized as the national communist regimes. The Eastern European Communists attributed great significance to this question of border delimitation. This reflected their intent to secure the optimal frontiers in strategic and economic terms. Norman Naimark rightly emphasized that the „communist and non-communist political forces in Eastern Europe which laid claim to influence during the war represented national interests by advancing maximal programs for setting their countries borders in the post-war world“.²¹

The second question, which the Communist programs for mobilization of masses were based on, was the problem of the land reform. At the end of the Second World War, Eastern Europe was „a great sea of peasantry“, with islands of urban life and cities. The existing large private land estates were a relict of the feudal epoch and created discontent among the peasants.

In Poland, for instance, 87.1 % of households owned 31.8 % of the land, while 0.9 % of the large estates amounted to 47.3 % of the total. In Rumania, 97.5 % of households owned 60 % of the land, while 0.8 % of the estates made 32.2 % of the total. In Hungary, 93.8 % of households owned 34.2 % of the land, while 0.9 % of the estates amounted to 46.4 % of the total. In Czechoslovakia, one per cent of the big landlords owned 43.4 % of the land, while 70.9 % of the peasants had only 15.5 % of the total. In Albania, the peasants owned only 56 % of the land; the rest was in the hands of the beys (feudal lords), the landlords, and the church. The landless peasants were forced to rent the land from the beys at a price of up to tree-fourths of the harvest.²²

The peasants demanded land; to get it was their age-old dream. The Communist parties advanced their slogan: „The land belongs to those who till it“. The post-war land reforms, which were carried out in the Eastern European countries, had immense social and political consequences. The land was confiscated and land ownership limited to a maximum acreage i.e. the limit of land each private farm could own was established in all Eastern European countries. The land confiscated from the landlords and redeemed from rich peasants was given to needy peasants at a small price, to be paid in installments over 15-20 years.

²¹ N. Naimark, „Nationalism in the East European Revolution, 1944–1947“. Paper presented at the Conference „Remembering, Adapting, Overcoming the Legacy of World War Two in Europe“, New York, New York University, April 24–27, 1997, p. 9.

²² A. Sobolev, *People's Democracy. A New Form of Political Organisation of Society*, Foreign Languages Publishing House, 1954, Moscow, pp. 33 and 56.

The families of the partisans and of those who fell in the war against the Nazis received the land gratis. The peasants of the Eastern European countries received over 37 million acres of land.²³ The peasant land ownership was consolidated.

Consequently, peasants became the social bases of the Eastern European national communist regimes. The peasantry enormously benefited from the modernization measures pursued by the national communists since they liquidated the landlord ownership of land in the Eastern European countries. Therefore, the Eastern European national communism was an agriculturally based system.

Paralleled with nationalization in the countries of „People’s Democracy“, the agrarian reform was made a part of the socialistic transformation of the village in order to create a class union of workers and peasants, emphasized as a main characteristic of new „people’s regimes“.

In Poland, in September 1944, with some more additions in January 1945, the State’s land fund was established which incorporated: A) all land owned by the state, B) the which was confiscated from Polish collaborators and Germans, C) and all land estates that was larger than 50 ha. In pre-war Poland, 70% of rural population was poor people, 15%-20% were medium rich peasants and about 15% were wealthy families. Some 19.000 owners of large land estate had at their disposal 50% of the whole land, while two millions of rural estates possessed maximum 5ha, which presented only less than 15% of the total agricultural surface. The result of agrarian reform was that peasants obtained more than six millions ha of land. The land was given to landless peasants free of charges, to poor peasants, to small-lease holders, to medium rich peasants and to those who re-emigrated. All of them obtained 5 ha of land of average quality.

On the territory which belonged to Poland before the war, land was given to 467.000 families, and in western regions which were German territory before the war, according to the agreement between the Allies, 3.000 peasants were colonized and about half millions farms were established. Thus, the total number of farms reached 3.300.000. Among them, 777.000 were 2ha, 950.000 up to 5 ha, 780.000 up to 10ha, 350.000 were up to 20 ha and 10.700 were over 50 ha, and 89.000 up to 50 ha. The private holding was very fragmented, with a large number of the small farms and the state’s land fund forming the basis for establishing large, state owned, agricultural estates. From the total land fund, 20% remained in the hands of big owners of large estates.

After the Red Army entered into Czechoslovakia, no agrarian reform was made, but land was confiscated and divided that had been the property of Germans, Hungarians and local collaborators, total in a 2.700. 000 ha, of which 1.100.000 ha was forested, 110.000 farmed, and 1.100.000 ha of able land was distributed. So, that the average farm covered under the slogan „Land belongs to the one

²³ *Ibid.* p. 58.

who tills it“. Agrarian reform limited private ownership to 50 ha of land and all of the land above that limits were bought by the State, as well as land of those who did not till it or were buying the land in order to speculate with it.

In Hungary, in March 1945, the Decree of confiscation of real estate, with the inventory of fascists, those who violated military law and traitors, was passed. Apart from that, on the basis of purchase all land larger than 100 holds (1 hold = 0,5 ha) was taken away from owners of large estates. Thus, about 5.700.000 holds were collected for distribution in which day laborers, small peasants and others got, in the course of 1946, about 2.700.000 holds. From the remaining 3.000.000 holds communal agricultural estate were formed.

In Rumania, land was confiscated which used to belong to the Germans and people's traitors in March 1945. Big landowners were deprived of all land that approximated 50 ha, without repayment. The exceptions were church, monastery, royal, municipal and school estates. By this confiscation, the agrarian Fund collected about 1.325.000 ha of land. Out of that, 1.135.000 ha of land was divided among 870.000 landless peasants and medium rich peasants. At the beginning of the March 1949, the decision was made that all farms of big landowners, including real estate, were to be transferred into state ownership. To the owners was left 50 ha of the land and a maximum 300 ha, as an example farms. This expropriation of the land had the character of nationalization, because land was not given to small peasants but became a state property or „people's goods“.

In Bulgaria, transfer of ownership in villages was done in March 1946 on the basis of the law of agrarian land: A) to take land over 20ha from private owners, which would bring 120.000 ha, B) to take land surpluses above 3 ha from those who do not till it, which should bring 50.000 ha, C) to take community's estates, school's and other land's funds, which properties had totaled around 150.000 ha, D) to take land from monasteries and churches totaling 10.000ha, and E) taking 150.000 ha of forests. The land fund was supposed to get additionally 50.000 ha of land, which had to be improved. By the end of 1946, the Fund amounted to 100.000 ha, of which 20.000 ha were divided to 20.000 landless peasants. In the same year, the agrarian reform was done in Dobridza, where about 83.500 ha of land were taken from the rich peasants.

The agrarian law in Albania was passed in August 1945 at the same time as in Yugoslavia. According to this law, big estates, which belonged to beys, together with the equipment and inventory, were confiscated. Afterwards, that land was divided free of charge to peasants and all other persons who wished to till it. The land maximum for those who used agricultural machines was 40 ha. For those who worked without machines, the maximum was 20 ha. While, to those who did not work on land they were left 7 ha. Landless peasants were given

5ha of land each. By October 1946 the agrarian reform plan was fulfilled, with 67% and 158.700 of the land were divided among peasants.²⁴

The Case of Yugoslavia

Some scholars considered National Communism as a part of the Soviet global world strategy and emphasized the significance of „Titoism“ as an attempt to organize more efficiently the relations among the Communist states and among the Communist rulers and their subjects. D. A. Tomasic (professor of Sociology and of Eastern European Studies at Indiana University) pointed out that in late 50's, the experience from the Stalin-Tito break urged the Kremlin to recognize the global strategy demands in the division of the „spheres of interest“ among the Communist powers, as well as the division of roles, if unity is to be maintained and a striving force efficiency increased.

But he was not concerned with „Titoism“, only in the terms of Soviet strategy. He also put emphasis on the national and social basis of Communism in Yugoslavia. He stressed the importance of cultural features of the Yugoslav peoples, particularly of the old „patriarchal civilization“ (the Dinaric culture) for the National Communism in Yugoslavia.²⁵

National Communism in Yugoslavia after the World War II („Titoism“) satisfied the national and social aspirations of the Yugoslav people and also had the point of support in the domestic cultural features. It gave the vast majority of the Yugoslav people's national freedom and independence, social egalitarianism and the development by Communist modernization.

„Brotherhood and Unity“ as a Political Myth for the Communist Reintegration of Yugoslavia after World War II

„Brotherhood and unity“ as a political formula was coined by the Yugoslav Communist Party during World War II. As one of the political values created during the people's liberation struggle, it became part of the revolutionary tradition and thus affected the shaping of the Yugoslav post-war historic and social consciousness. Organizing, in July 1941, the resistance movement after the German occupation of Yugoslavia, the Communist Party of Yugoslavia tried to rely on the military, the collectivist and the Slavophilic tradition present in the historic consciousness of the Serbian and other Yugoslav peoples. However, besides the traditionalist values, devoting the greatest attention to the „resistance

²⁴ Archive of Central Committee of Communist League of Yugoslavia (Arhiv Centralnog komiteta Saveza komunista Jugoslavije), The Boris Kidric's Fund, boxes 3, 4.

²⁵ Tomasic, A. D. (1957). *National Communism and Soviet Strategy*. Washington D. C.: Public Affairs Press.

to the foreign aggressor“ and egalitarianism, the Communist Party of Yugoslavia included in its political register some modern ideas, the idea of the single „Southern Slavic civilization“ playing the major role. The Yugoslav Communists adjusted this originally liberal and civil idea to the Messianic character of their ideology. The National Liberation Movement of Yugoslavia countered the overall hostility between the peoples and the „fratricidal war“ in Yugoslavia during World War II with the idea of Yugoslavianism, as an antithesis, which implied the alliance of all anti-Fascist forces, irrespective of their national background. Through the idea of Yugoslavianism, the Communist Party of Yugoslavia operationalized the Communist Messianism during war, launching the political formula of „brotherhood and unity“.

The communist movement stressed that „there is only one way for all Yugoslav peoples, for all Serbs, Croats, Slovenes, Montenegrins, Macedonians, Muslims, etc. - the way of joint brotherly struggle against the occupiers and local traitors, the road taken by our heroic partisan and volunteer army, the fight for liberation!“²⁶

The Party tried to convince Yugoslav peoples that the partisan movement, in conformity with its anti-Fascist and Yugoslav character, is the only option to the conditions imposed by German and Italian occupation of Yugoslavia, with crimes committed against the members of other peoples by the Ustasha, Chetnik, Balist, White Guard and other quisling formations. In a speech delivered before the newly-founded Fourth Proletarian Brigade on 17 June 1942 in Ljubinje (eastern Bosnia), Josip Broz Tito pointed out: „We will carry the banner of the national liberation struggle, the banner of armed brotherhood and the unity of our peoples through new Yugoslav regions. We will stop those who intend to turn the people into their object of pillage. We will continue to fight against all those who side with the occupiers. (...) We will disseminate brotherhood among the peoples.“²⁷

The political aim of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia was to create assumptions through the national-liberation struggle to assume power in Yugoslavia after the war. It countered the civil principle of social and state cohesion, which underlie Yugoslavia between the wars, with the class and national principle. Reintegration of the Yugoslav state based on federal order was the leitmotif of the Communist program and propaganda. Organizing partisan units throughout Yugoslavia, the Yugoslav Communists fought against disintegration of the state, which was divided after capitulation in April 1941 into several occupation zones and puppet Fascist quasi-state creations.

²⁶ Quote from the statement of the Supreme Commander Josip Broz Tito on 8 May 1942, *Zbornik dokumenata Narodnooslobodilackog rata (Collection of Documents of the Peoples' Liberation War)*, vol. II, book 4, p. 51.

²⁷ Josip Broz Tito, (1977). *O bratstvu i jedinstvu (On Brotherhood and Unity)*. Beograd: Mladost, p. 23.

The ideological platform of the national liberation movement in Yugoslavia, led by Communists, was first explicitly formulated in Josip Broz Tito's article entitled „National Issue in Yugoslavia in the Light of National Liberation Struggle“, published in *Proleter* No. 16 in December 1942. This document represents, in the political sense, the attempt of the Party leadership to mobilize the masses and to open social perspective to the conditions of social disintegration, collapse of the state and political system, value disorientation and fear among the population, which occurred as the consequence of war, occupation and war crimes. The author stressed, „I wish that all those who fear for their fate and future see that there is only one possible, although thorny path to their better future, toward freedom and equality, and that is the national liberation struggle, participation in that struggle in the ranks of the People's Liberation Army and partisan units of Yugoslavia... Brotherhood and combat unity, which are being forged in this hard liberation struggle from the blood of the best sons of our peoples, offers a clear perspective – freedom and independence of our peoples will indeed be won. Yugoslavia must no longer suffer national oppression nor social exploitation.“

The Party saw the essence of Yugoslavia's integration as the „final solution“ and became a „national issue“, subjected to fierce political struggle and conflict between the wars. In the mentioned document, Josip Broz Tito put this in the following way: „The present-day national liberation war and national issue in Yugoslavia are inseparably related. Our national liberation struggle would not be so persistent and so successful unless the peoples of Yugoslavia saw in it, except the victory over Fascism, also the victory over what happened under previous regimes, the victory over those who oppress and who tend to continue to oppress the Yugoslav peoples. National liberation war would be only a meaningless phrase, even a deceit, unless it also had, besides the all-Yugoslav sense, the national meaning for each people separately, i.e. unless it also meant, besides the liberation of Yugoslavia, the liberation of Croats, Slovenes, Serbs, Macedonians, Albanians, Muslims, etc., unless the national liberation struggle really meant that it brings freedom, equality, brotherhood to all Yugoslav peoples. This is what the national liberation war is all about.

...

...The Communist Party has never renounced nor will ever renounce the principle, formulated by our great teachers Marx, Engels and Lenin, the principle that every people have the right to self-determination, including secession. But, at the same time, the Communist Party of Yugoslavia will never allow and will fight against the abuse of this right by the enemies of the people to create medieval darkness and colonial slavery instead of freedom and independence, as it happens with Pavelic's 'independent' Croatia.

The Communist Party of Yugoslavia will continue to fight for brotherly, free and independent community of all Yugoslav peoples. It will equally fight against Great Serbian hegemonic, who again tend to oppress other Yugoslav peoples, in the same way in which it will fight against those who would try to sow discord for the benefit of any imperialist power and to obstruct brotherly harmony of the Yugoslav peoples.“

„The brotherhood and unity“ slogan played a double role in Communist propaganda during the war. On one hand, it expressed the Communist vision of the solution to the national issue in Yugoslavia, and, on the other, the political principle represented confrontation with the resentment for Nationalism, which resulted in mass-scale mutual massacre between the Yugoslav peoples during the war. In an article „Struggle of the Peoples in Occupied Yugoslavia“, published in *Nova Jugoslavija* No. 6 in May 1944, Josip Broz Tito wrote: „With the attack of German, Italian, Bulgarian and other conquerors on our country started not only the extermination of our population by foreign conquerors, but also the full-force dissemination of hatred between certain peoples, with an intention to urge them to mutual extermination. Ustashas, under German guidance, killed hundreds of thousands of Serbs, Draza Mihailovic's Chetniks, under Italian and German leadership, killed tens of thousands of Muslims and Croats. Our peoples faced an ominous threat of being totally exterminated. When our Serbian units came to Eastern Bosnia, they saw thousands of bodies of innocent Muslim victims - women, children and old people at the bottom of the Clear River Drina. In Bosnia and Herzegovina, and particularly in Krajina, we found huge natural ravines full of bodies of slaughtered Serb women, children and old people. Our slogan was brotherhood and unity of the Yugoslav peoples. We did all we could to convince enraged Serbian population and misled Chetniks that not all Croats are criminals that not all Muslims are evildoers, but only a small fraction of them in the Ustasha ranks, who commit crimes under the German leadership. We proved in every possible way to anguished Muslim and Croat population that Serbs are not evildoers, but that atrocities are committed only by a handful of Chetniks around Mihailovic, Pecanac and Nedic. This was a strenuous work of our heroic brigades and partisan outfits, uncompromising warriors not only against the occupiers but also against the Ustasha and Chetnik criminals who were only instruments in the occupiers' hands.“

The Yugoslav idea, operational zed through the political formula of „brotherhood and unity“ in the political corpus of the Yugoslav Communist Party, rested on charismatic communication. „Brotherhood and unity“ and „people's rule“ were considered the biggest exploits of the national liberation struggle, as Josip Broz Tito pointed out in his speech at the session of the Great Anti-Fascist Assembly of National Liberation of Serbia, held in Belgrade 9 November 1944. Although it relied on the military tradition of the authoritarian patrimo-

nial Yugoslav society and the „self-sacrifice“ myth to mobilize the masses for the war, the Communist Party of Yugoslavia reintegrated the state on the basis on this charismatic authority. The charismatic authority corresponded to the principle of „Communist solidarity“, which substituted the principle of „mechanical solidarity“, characteristic of the inter-war backward traditional Yugoslav social community. Besides breaking with the tradition, thus, as Max Weber put it, giving the charismatic power the character of a „creative revolutionary power of history“, it implies focusing on the historic mission, on the „imagined and designed system“, which from apparent assumptions creates a reality, which is not a reality. Charismatic power „enjoys esteem and authority on the basis of mission which is thought to be embodied in a charismatic personality“. The Communist Party of Yugoslavia saw its mission in the establishment of „people’s democracy“ and „brotherhood and unity“ in Yugoslavia after World War II, while Josip Broz Tito – the author of the „brotherhood and unity“ political formula – played the role of the charismatic leader. Yugoslavia’s reintegration, along with Communist principles of public ownership and the single-party political system, led to changes in the social contents of the liberal Yugoslavian idea. It was given the charismatic, revolutionary political structure in the function of the „new Communist society“, whose mission decoratively was the removal of national and social injustices. Thus, it grew into a myth, an „exploit of the revolution“, and hence could not be the principle of modern economic, political and cultural integration of the Yugoslav territory, as it was in its original liberal ideological meaning.

Its author, Josip Broz Tito, in a speech delivered in Rijeka on 23 October 1946, picturesquely expressed the Communist vision of the Yugoslavian idea, politically operationalized through the „brotherhood and unity“ formula. He said on that occasion: „The new social order, new social relations are the basis of that brotherhood and unity and constitute the foundation of common, unified interests of all those living in new Yugoslavia, irrespective of the nation to which they belong. (...) What is another firm foundation of brotherhood and unity? It is comrades, our people’s democracy. We could not have achieved brotherhood and unity without the prior political foundation. We could not have created brotherhood and unity unless we had our people’s democracy, democracy for broad masses of people.“

The charismatic basis of the Communist authority in Yugoslavia after the World War II caused the monopolization of the collective national awareness, which drew its power solely from the belief in the autocratic power of the Communist leader, the creator of the myth of „brotherhood and unity“. As the result, in the post-war historic consciousness of Yugoslav peoples, the reception of cohesive state factors was reduced to irrational social elements (the charisma of the leader Josip Broz Tito, „brotherhood and unity“ myth) and states structure (the Party

State and Yugoslav People's Army). Such reduced historic awareness, which was lacking any idea about social-cohesive principles of „organic solidarity“ (real economic, political and cultural interests), managed to absolutize the political and government authority as the privacy to which everything else is subordinated (economy, technology, education, science and culture), including the principles for reintegration of the Yugoslav state.

Two ownership systems

Yugoslav Communist Party established the state property during the Second World War, i. e. people's liberation struggle, by confiscation of estates of so-called „people's enemies“ and those who collaborated with the occupiers.

Fund of „people's property“ which was established by expropriation between 1941. - 1945, was insignificant compared with dominant private property in Yugoslavia.²⁸ The first significant socialization of one part of capital was done by confiscation of German Reich property, of German national minority and the property of „people's enemies“ by AVNOJ Decree of November 1944.²⁹ All industrial enterprises which were transferred to state property, were put under state control of „people's goods“ established in February 1945. in the Board for trade and industry NKOJ.³⁰ Large number of foreign enterprises was put under the sequestration, and the whole mining was transformed into the state ownership.

The special form of expropriation was taking away war-profit gained during the occupation, which was done according to the law of May 1945. by AVNOJ Presidency.³¹ The profit gained by that way was collected into the Fund for renewal and aid to ruined areas,³² and by the April 1946. in that Fund was paid in, on the basis of war-profit, 50.000.000 dinars.³³

²⁸ Branko Petranović, *Političke i pravne prilike za vreme Privremene vlade DFJ*, Institut društvenih nauka, Beograd, 1964, p. 43

²⁹ Odluke Predsedništva AVNOJ-a o prelasku u državnu svojinu neprijateljske imovine, o državnoj upravi nad imovinom neprisutnih lica i o sekvestru nad imovinom koju su okupatorske vlasti prisilno otudile (*Službeni list DFJ* 2/45 from 06. February 1945.)

³⁰ Pravilnik o organizaciji Državne uprave narodnih dobara (*Službeni list DFJ* 3/45)

³¹ Beside that one, other property's laws were passed: *Zakon o postupku s imovinom koju su sopstvenici morali napustiti u toku okupacije i imovini koja im je oduzeta od strane okupatora i njegovih pomagača i Zakon o zaštiti narodnih dobara i njihovom upravljanju* (*Službeni list DFJ* 36/47)

³² Fond za obnovu zemlje i pomoć postradalim krajevima was established in the Ministry of Finance and it's recourses were compound from the money gained by selling out of goods which was gained from UNRRA as well as from war-profit. Recourses from that Fund served for reconstruction of the country and they were distributed exclusively by Economic Council which was established in the December 1944.

³³ Branko Petranović, *Političke i pravne prilike za vreme Privremene vlade DFJ*, Institut društvenih nauka, Beograd, p. 55.

According to the communist people's democratic phraseology of that time, State ownership was called „people's goods or property“. By the Law on protection and administration of people's goods which was passed by the AVNOJ Presidency of May 24th 1945. on the proposal of Ministerial Council DFJ „all property and real estate which became and will become state ownership, by AVNOJ Decree of November 21st 1944. shall become the people's property which ownership was without possibilities of going out of date“³⁴

Nationalization of means of production in Yugoslavia until the end of 1946 passed the law was done chiefly through punishment of collaborators with enemies and „people's enemies“, that is, according to the Criminal law. Confiscation of property was a punishment for national or political betrayal of country or people. Thus, country courts under which competence the property was located carried out the confiscation according to the Confiscation law of property and execution of confiscation, passed by AVNOJ Presidency on 9th of June 1945. The confiscation was done by urgent procedure, according to the court's sentences and decisions of civil and military authorities.³⁵

The end of 1945 transferred even 55% of the total industrial capacities in Yugoslavia transferred into the state ownership, on the ground of confiscation.

By agrarian reform and colonization which began in the autumn 1945. and was completed in 1948. large land estates were liquidated and state ownership was restored.³⁶

According to the law, the land should belong to those who till the land. The land maximum was 20 ha. of arable or 30 ha. entirely. The land above this maximum was confiscated and entered into the Fund of agrarian reform, which was made by the land confiscated from German national minority, big farms, estates of church and monasteries, agricultural estates have maximum of non-agricultural estates, lands of share-companies, missing owners etc. The Fund established by agrarian reform was, then, distributed to the poor peasants, landless settlers, and one part of it was given to 180.000 poor peasants, 7.000 landless farmers and 66.000 settlers. On the rest of the land, 117 state's farms were created in 1946. which did federal and republican authorities administrate. In 1947. the number of such farms was 194 with 800 ha. of the land.³⁷

³⁴ See article 1. of the Law (*Službeni list DFJ* 36/45 from May 29th 1945.)

³⁵ *Službeni list DFJ* 40/45 from 12, July 1945. People's Assembly approved this law in June 1946. (*Službeni list FNRJ* 61/46 from 30. July 1946) and was abolished 1951, by bringing the Law about execution of sentences, security measures and educative-correctional measures (*Zakon o izvršenju kazni, mera bezbednosti i vaspitno-popravnih mera*) (*Službeni list FNRJ* 47/51)

³⁶ Temporary People's Assembly unanimously 23 passed agrarian reform and colonization law. August 1945. (*Službeni list DFJ* 64/45).

³⁷ Jugoslavija trideset godina posle oslobođenja i pobjede nad fašizmom 1945–1975, p. 72.

By federal colonization of people from so-called „passive areas“ and members of national-liberation movement in Vojvodina were settled and land was given to all those who were interested in tilling it.³⁸ Each republic had fixed quota for settling. Colonization was part of the solution of so-called „peasant question“ and had not exclusively economic but also social-political significance.

Through agrarian reform and colonization, PJ tried to resolve the question of caring for all who participated in national-liberation war and to strengthen their political loyalty to the „people’s authority“ as well as to expand political support to the Party in settled areas. The settling of colonists in fertile areas in Vojvodina should make easier the problem of acute surplus of agricultural population in regions that colonists were coming from. However, by agrarian reform and by colonization, the acute Yugoslav problem of agrarian over-population was not solved, accepts partly in Slovenia, thanks more to the development of town’s economy than to the distribution of the land from agrarian Fund. Reasons why the problem was not solved are: the Land Fund for distribution was limited, than the land was divided into small pieces which were cultivated by large families who lived on it, and because of the introduction of state ownership over the large farms.

Although one part of agrarian Fund was nationalized through agrarian reform, in villages remained and dominated small but private property. It will have a strong influence on the Yugoslav economic system as well as on economic policy of KPJ.

In 1946. State owned 0,8% out of the total area of fertile land and at the beginning of 1948. 3%. At the same time, farm sector, which included peasant’s working farms in 1946. had 0,4% of fertile land in Yugoslavia and at the beginning of 1948. 1,5%. Private sector in 1946. had 98,8% of cultivated land and by the beginning of 1948. 95,5.³⁹

On the contrary, in the industry the state owned 75% enterprises in the middle of 1945. Out of that, 49,5% was transferred into the state ownership by confiscation and 26% was under the state sequester. At the end of 1945. 82% of the whole industry was nationalized. Out of that percentage, 55% was confiscated and 27% was put under the sequester. All modern enterprises were under the state administration, and ruled by Federal Ministry of Industry from the beginning of the may 1945.⁴⁰

³⁸ Yet on commission for settling warriors in Vojvodina and yet of carrying out settling warriors in Vojvodina were passed in the middle of September 1945. (*Službeni list DFJ* 71/45 and 72/45)

³⁹ Moša Pijade, „Pet godina narodne države“, *Arhiv za pravne i društvene nauke* 4/48

⁴⁰ Strašimir Popović, *Organizacija privrede Jugoslavije i uloga države*, Rad, Beograd, 1956: Rešenje o prelasku pod poslovno rukovodstvo i nadzor Saveznog ministra industrije, industrijskih preduzeća koja su prešla u državnu svojinu (*Službeni list DFJ*, n. 33, 18. May 1945)

On the ground of the law of establishing and working credit system of October 26th 1945. all private banks were liquidated.⁴¹ The whole banking system was transferred into the state ownership and state guaranteed all obligations of state credit enterprises, while former private bank's obligations, promissory notes and cashier's bookings were equalized with state securities.

In February 1945. Communist Party restored control over the credit institutions.⁴² In this way, Party State by the beginning of 1947. completely monopolized and centralized the total mass of monetary loans recourses and by doing that, strengthened its social power, created through confiscation and agrarian reform. State administration was insured through planned monetary circulation. According to its interests, needs and goals, Party State directed monetary circulation from one to another economic sector or region. The final absoluteness of Party State social power, before the beginning of Five Year plan, was realized by nationalization at the end of 1946.

Up to that time, KPJ postponed the establishment of state ownership through radical measures, because of international reasons, as it was stressed letter by Edvard Kardelj. However, gradual expropriation of private ownership in Yugoslavia „according to assessments of proper circumstances“ was influenced by people-s democratic communist strategy of that time, applied in all countries of South Eastern Europe and was motivated by exterior and interior political facts. Communists did not establish „revolutionary social changes“, according to the strategy, through radical ways, but through structural transformation of existing social and relations of ownership.

The first Fund of state ownership was made of former Yugoslav Kingdom's property, which new communist authorities took during the war. This property consisted of railways, large part of river shipping, PTT, enterprises for manufacture of tobacco, a part of heavy industry, a certain number of mines which were exploited by the State, one part of municipality power plants and gas works. After that, the Fund was enlarged by confiscation of property of German Reich, German national minority, collaborators and „people's enemies“. The next step to enlarge the state property as well as communist social power, was abolishing of foreign concessions over mineral recourses, by the Decision of Temporary People's Assembly DFJ and putting of under the sequester of all properties of absent foreigners or missing owners.⁴³ Politburo CK KPJ Decree

⁴¹ *Službeni list DFJ* 87/45 OF on November 9th 1945; People's Assembly confirmed that law in the summer of 1946, by the Law ratification, changes and supplements of the Law (*Službeni list FNRJ* n. 68/45 of August 23rd 1946). Out of 819 private banks, 720 were liquidated and those, which remained, were confiscated and nationalized).

⁴² Odluka o privremenom upravljanju Narodnom bankom, Državnom hipotekarnom bankom, Poštanskom štedionicom, Privilegovanom agrarnom bankom, Zanatskom bankom i Upravom državnih monopola (*Službeni list FNRJ* n. 7/45 from February 23th 1945).

⁴³ Compare: Branko Petranović, *Politička i ekonomska osnova narodne vlasti u Jugoslaviji za vreme obnove*, Institut za savremenu istoriju, Beograd 1969, part: Eksproprijacija buržoazije i organizacija upravljanja privredom, str. 233–239.

about nationalization, which was passed at the meeting of 22. September 1946. preceded Nationalization Law, which was passed by People's Assembly of 5. December 1946.⁴⁴

Nationalization included economic enterprises of so-called federal and republic importance and small local enterprises and trade shops remained the private ownership. Final nationalization of industry was done at the beginning of conflict between Yugoslavia and the Soviet Union.⁴⁵

Both nationalization laws were preceded by the decision of Politburo CK KPJ.⁴⁶ Second nationalization included mostly local enterprises and retail shops (mines, power plants, brick yards, saw-mills, printing houses, store-houses, baths, summer resorts, mills, cinemas, etc.).

By the end of 1945. about 80% of industry, the greater part of banking and almost the entire wholesale business was state ownership in Yugoslavia, created by confiscation, sequestration and taking of war profit. After nationalization, at the end of 1946. the state sector included the entire federal and republic industry and 70% of local industry, all banking, the wholesale business, traffic, communication and 90% of retail trade business. Through nationalization was formally liquidated the foreign capital in Yugoslav economy, which included, before the war, 49,5% of total capital. The remaining industry, wholesale trade, banking and retail trade were nationalized 1948. In 1945. 80% of the circulation of good went through private shops, 12% through cooperative societies and only 3% through state owned shops. In 1946. state shops participated with 19,2% cooperative societies with 32% and circulation of goods through private shops fell to only 48,8%. By the 31st of March 1948. private shops participated in circulation of goods with only 1,78%, the state's shops participated already with 29,91% and cooperative societies with 58,31%. Private trade was systematically pushed back from circulation, although in 1948. 45,55% of shops were in the private ownership.

By the beginning of the Five Year Plan, the Party State possessed more than one third of national income and almost all industrial banking and trade capital and through agrarian reform gained 49% of the land. At the same time, small farms and private property dominated in villages. Through policy of taxes, price policy and by buying off, Party State tried to obtain national income in villages, which is evidenced by increasingly bigger peasant's participation in gross than in net national income.

⁴⁴ Zakon o nacionalizaciji privatnih preduzeća (*Službeni list FNRJ* 99/46) Archive of Central Committee of Communist League of Yugoslavia, III/21

⁴⁵ Zakon o dopuni Zakona o nacionalizaciji was accepted by People's Assembly FNRJ at it's first regular session on 28th of April 1948. and it was published in *Službeni list FNRJ* 35/48

⁴⁶ Archive of Central Committee of Communist League of Yugoslavia, III/32, session from the 12. April 1948.

The attempt of full nationalization of land properties through collectivization in 1949 was failed.⁴⁷

Conclusion

The Eastern European national communism represented the national and social reaction of the backward societies to the challenges of modernization.

Nationalism and Communism are historically distinct movements, but there are numerous important similarities between them.

Peter Zwick argued that both Nationalism and Communism are millenarian worldviews. They do have quasi-religious, messianic characteristics in that they promise secular deliverance and salvation in the form of a perfect world order. Furthermore, both ideologies are expressions of collective social grievances, the differences being that in the case of Nationalism, other ethnic groups are depicted as the enemy, whereas in the case of Communism, the villain is an economic class.

Another feature that Nationalism and Communism share in common is that they are anti-individualistic ideologies. The success of these mass-oriented social movements depends upon collective action. Although Nationalism stresses the common interest of a geographically defined group and Communism emphasizes the common interest of an economic class, both are „socialist“ cosmologies in that they put the good of the community above that of the individual.

One important outgrowth of the fact that Nationalism and Communism are mass movements expressing communal grievances is that both have been very susceptible to charismatic leadership.

Peter Zwick denoted Nationalism and Communism as messianic solutions to the difficulties of modernization during the 20th century.⁴⁸

⁴⁷ Instruction for faster collectivization in villages was issued at the Second Session of CK KPJ, held from 28-30 of January 1949. (Rezolucija o osnovnim zadacima u oblasti socijalističkog preobražaja sela i unapređenje poljoprivredne proizvodnje), *Sednice Centralnog komiteta KPJ 1948–1952*, edited by Branko Petranović, Ranko Končar, Radovan Radonjić, izdavački centar Komunist, Beograd 1985. Basic law on cooperative communities was passed on June 6th 1949: *Službeni list FNRJ* 49/49, from 9. June 1949. although the basic law about cooperative-communities was passed as early as on 18th of July 1946: *Službeni list FNRJ* 59/46 from 13. July 1946.)

⁴⁸ P. Zwick, *National Communism*. Westview Press, Boulder, Colorado, 1983, pp. 11–13.

Резиме

Национални комунизам и својинска трансформација у Источној Европи 1945–1952.

Кључне речи: Национализам, комунизам, Источна Европа

Источноевропски национални комунизам представља националну друштвену реакцију заосталих друштава на изазове модернизације.

Национализам и комунизам настали су као различити историјски процеси и идеологије, али и поред тога постоји велики број сличности између њих. Питер Звик истицао је, са правом, да су комунизам и национализам миленијумске идеологије. Према њему, ове идеологије имају квази религијске месијанске карактеристике у смислу да обећавају секуларно ослобађање и спасење у форми идеалног светског поретка. Даље, обе идеологије, изражавају колективне друштвене фрустрације, разлика је у томе да се у случају национализма друге етничке групе виде као непријатељ а у случају комунизма кривац је економска класа.

Следећа заједничка карактеристика национализма и комунизма је да су обе антииндивидуалистичке идеологије. Успех масовно оријентисаног друштвеног покрета зависи од колективне акције. Иако национализам наглашава заједнички интерес географски дефинисане групе, а комунизам истиче заједнички интерес класе ипак су оба социјалистичка космологија у смислу да се добро заједнице поставља изнад индивидуе.

То што су и национализам и комунизам масовни покрети који изражавају фрустрације заједнице чини их оба пријемчивим за харизматско вођство. Тако је Питер Звик одредио национализам и комунизам као месијанска решења тешкоће модернизације заосталих светских региона током 20. века.