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Titoism, Dissidents and Culture of Dissent

IZVLEČEK

TITOIZEM, DISIDENTI IN KULTURA DISIDENTSTVA

Prispevek obravnava vprašanje jugoslovanskih disidentov v zvezi s sistemom komunističnega upravljanja in delovanja države pod vodstvom Josipa Broza Tita. V širšem kontekstu je analizirana vloga kritične inteligence, tj. kulture disidentstva, v značilnih jugoslovanskih okvirjih. Prispevek vsebuje krajši pregled posebnosti jugoslovanskih disidentov, predvsem razlik v njihovem dojemanju, vrst kritik in medsebojnih odnosov, ki so jih imeli kot nasprotniki režima, pa tudi različnih usod posameznikov. Poseben poudarek je bil na stališču Zahoda do jugoslovanskih disidentov, ki se je precej razlikoval v primerjavi s stališčem do disidentov iz Sovjetske zveze in drugih držav realsocializma.

Ključne besede: *Disidenti, Josip Broz Tito, titoizem, Jugoslavija, komunizem*

ABSTRACT

The paper deals with the issue of the Yugoslav dissidents with regard to the system of communist governance and the functioning of the state led by Josip Broz Tito. In the wider context the role of critical intelligentsia – a culture of dissent – is analyzed within distinctive Yugoslav frameworks. The paper includes a shorter overview of the particularity of the Yugoslav dissidents, above all the differences in their perceptions, type of criticism, their mutual relations – as the opponents to the regime, and different destinies of individuals. Special emphasis was put on the West's position of Yugoslav dissidents which differed considerably in comparison with dissidents from the Soviet Union and other states of real socialism.

Keywords: *Dissidents, Josip Broz Tito, Titoism, Yugoslavia, Communism*

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Titoism and Culture of Dissent

The nature of the post–war Yugoslav version of a dissident is closely related to the system of governance and values of the Yugoslav socialist society (Titoism), embodied by Josip Broz Tito. According to many indicators, the Yugoslav sovereign was an autocrat. But what was the nature of his dictatorship? How did he govern and what was the state he ruled? Josip Broz Tito, the first name of Yugoslav communism, the guerrilla leader who has gained fame and respect even with his ideological opponents during and after the Second World War, ruled the post–war Yugoslav communist state "with an iron hand in a velvet glove." Historian Ivo Banac reveals in Broz's individuality the persistent historical paradigm for the South Slav zone: "ill fate of the Balkans" which exhibits "the need for order in a mobile encampment, faith in an imperial idea as the sole guarantor against chaos."[1] In this sense, British historian A. J. P. Taylor notes that "Marshal Tito was the last Habsburg."[2] According to the writer Stanko Lasić, Tito was a hypocritical pragmatist, an extremely determined and skilled politician and a statesman who knew how to use his strength and turn defeats into a victory.[3] For political emigrants, he was a Machiavellian, cruel communist dictator.[4]

As observed by Aleksa Đilas Yugoslavia was "a country that was difficult to explain and understand, perhaps even harder for those who lived in it and were not indifferent to it, but to those who do not carry that experience. It was a land full of paradoxes."[5] Anecdotally, Tito's Yugoslavia was described as a country with "six republics, five people, four languages, three religions, two letters, and one Tito."[6] In the short resume on Tito's Yugoslavia, Tvrtko Jakovina concludes: "Yugoslavia was a one–party dictatorship in which elections were not democratic, in which one could be prosecuted for singing an inappropriate song, the society in which the advancement of the service sought membership in the Communist Party, the state in which it was not free to believe and pray. Yugoslavia was not a free country, but it was the most liberal communist state in Europe."[7] What were repressive and liberal aspects in Tito's Yugoslavia? How did they manifest themselves and how they were connected? What was the nature of dissent in Yugoslavia? What was the position of those who – in any way – questioned the political authorities? Who were the Yugoslav dissidents?

The questioning of freedom in the societies ruled by the undisputed authorities implies the emergence of critical thinking, resistance, and dissent. The relationship between authoritarian power and opponents to the regime had specific historical significance in communist societies. In the words of Vaclav Havel: "You do not become a

1 Ivo Banac, *Acta Turcarum* (Zagreb: Durieux, 2006), 32.
2 A.J.P. Taylor, *Habsburška monarhija 1809–1918* (Zagreb: Znanje, 1990), 323, 324.
3 Stanko Lasić, *Mladi Krleža i njegovi kritičari 1914. – 1924* (Zagreb: Globus, 1987), 590, 591.
4 Jure Petričević, "Hrvatski nacionalni problem," in: *Hrvatska revija*, Vol. 2–3 (1964): 200.
5 Dejan Jović, *Jugoslavija – država koja je odumrla: Uspon, kriza i pad Kardeljeve Jugoslavije (1974–1990)* (Zagreb: Prometej, 2003), 495.
6 Martti Ahtisaari, *Beogradska zadaća – Kako je slaman Milošević* (Zagreb: Naklada Szabo A3 data, 2002), 23.
7 Tvrtko Jakovina, "J.B.T. Historiografija vs. Mitologija. Komunist kojega je Zapad podržavao," *Večernji list*, April 30, 2005.

'dissident' just because you decide one day to take up this most unusual career. You are thrown into it by your personal sense of responsibility, combined with a complex set of external circumstances. You are cast out of the existing structures and placed in a position of conflict with them."[8] As well as other communist states Yugoslavia cherished a cult leader, carried out censorship and ideological manipulations and repressed those who opposed to the authority of Tito and Communist Party. The periodical clash with those disobedient in their own ranks was combined with the constant struggle with political emigration (which was considered as people enemies).

However, the system of political and social control characteristic to totalitarian regimes in the states of real communism significantly differed in the Yugoslav case. Unlike the other communist states Yugoslavia was under the strong influence of the West – especially in culture (from the early 1950s) and it was relatively open country. The Yugoslav cultural politics was one of the most significant indicators to Yugoslav distinctiveness; it was also relevant to the emergence of the specific Yugoslav culture of dissent as a result of a constant struggle of liberal–minded intellectuals and authoritarian rule. The Yugoslav ambiguities, and afterward the fact that the very state ceased to exist, are probably the reasons why it is not easy to deal with the complex Yugoslav past. A rational and critical approach to the phenomenon of Titoism and Tito's Yugoslav state still present a challenge to historical analysis.

One of the problems of historical analysis can be identified in the deficit of historiographic synthesis of wider social scopes in the postwar period. Tito's Yugoslavia broke up, and even while it lasted there were weak attempts of more significant historical synthesis to its past. Serbian historian Andrej Mitrović notes: "Concerning the past of Yugoslavia it is very important to stress that it has been not historically sufficiently explored. It doesn't mean that there had not been valuable research, but in that context, two external indicators can be considered as well. How many histories of the Yugoslav state did we produce? Two, three, mostly in the eighties at the end of the decay of the state. In world history, every country has dozens of its history, 'small' and 'big', booklets and multi–editions…"[9] Many would argue that the "lack of history" was the problem of Yugoslav successor states and its people, but it certainly does not contribute to a better understanding of the complexity of the Yugoslav past. Considering many "unsolved" historical issues one can observe that past places a burden on contemporaries as an eternal presence.

The phenomenon of culture of dissent in the Yugoslav society, including the that of dissidents, had its cyclic changes – variations that largely depended on the vague ambivalences of Titoism: "the 'cold' and 'hot' periods interchanged; after the period of release and relative liberalization the period of 'clash' would follow, and it was skillfully maintained as a balance between different ideological currents in party leadership and confrontation between republics."[10] Like the other communist states Yugoslavia had

8 *Václav Havel: From a political dissident to a dissident politician*, accessed August 13, 2018, http://www.pehe.cz/Members/redaktor/vaclav-havel-from-a-political-dissident-to-a.

9 Andrej Mitrović, "Javna, tajna i porodična istorija," interviewed by Aleksandar Ćirić, *Vreme*, No. 429, Januar 9, 1999.

10 Ivica Župan, *Pragmatičari, dogmati, sanjari – hrvatska umjetnost i društvo 1950.–ih godina* (Zagreb: Ina industrija

a capillary system of social control based on censorship and ideological commissions and a privileged position of "socio–political workers" was maintained as the power lever. Following the cyclic changes of Yugoslav society the social power and control of one–party system slightly faded away, but almost until the very end of the Yugoslav state the Communist Party apparatus was a decisive factor in almost all aspects of public life. However, under Tito's "scepter" some of the liberties in Yugoslavia have been developed that were unimaginable in other states powered by the communists. Strangely enough, in Yugoslav socialist society the ideological indoctrination conducted by the party apparatus "coexisted" with various forms of intelligentsia criticism; the compelling repertoire of the Communist "Reveille" and hymn – dedicated to the cult of Tito's personality – was pervaded by jazz and rock'n'roll and the admiration of American film actors. According to Czech film director Jiří Menzel socialist Yugoslavia, as a country open to Western influences, has been perceived in communist bloc countries as "America of the East."[11] Such a cultural climate would not be possible without a certain social cohesion and the main integrating factor was the Yugoslav sovereign.

An important instrumentality of authority was the cultural policy. Like in other aspects of the public sphere Tito had the most important role as supreme arbitrator. All other institutional mechanisms simply followed. Promoting the workers self–management at the beginning of 1950s the National Assembly "predicted that its success will depend on how rapidly the cultural development will advance.[12] With the "ups and downs" and parallel to the party propaganda a distinct "space of freedom" will be developed due to a relatively liberal cultural policy. And it wasn't deprived of controversy. One of the central figures of the Croatian and Yugoslav culture and close associate to Tito – Miroslav Krleža, was often portrayed as the rebellious free spirit. As a writer, he frequently emphasized the destiny of an artist as someone who is doomed to dissent: "In order to practice his craftsmanship properly a writer must have the ability to be a dissident or even a defector in some ways, from the institutions, the nation, and the authorities. He is a prodigal son who returns to his father's hearth just to be able to leave him again. Negation is his familiar form of acceptance of the world. The only one who radically understands and accepts this truth can really help the writer or the artist."[13] In 1952, at the Third Congress of the Yugoslav Writers' Union in Ljubljana Krleža opposed socialist realism and announced the liberation of literature from ideological bonds. Broad cultural activity developed and, within it, various cultures of dissent.

Culture went through non–linear metamorphosis just as did the Yugoslav socialist society as a whole; from the Stalinist phase of showdown with "national enemies" – when there was strict censorship and rigid party control over all aspects of life including culture, until the end of the eighties when communist officials publicly stated that they were no longer able to control the social processes that ultimately led to the

nafte d.d. and Meridijani, 2007), 19.

11 Jiří Menzel, *Moja Hrvatska*, HTV, Documentary, August 18, 2011.

12 Predrag Matvejević, *Jugoslavensvo danas–Pitanja kulture* (Zagreb: Globus, 1982), 128.

13 Predrag Matvejević, "Mjera naše zrelosti," *Školske novine*, January 7, 1982.

emergence of political pluralism. The film director Đorđe Kadijević (*Praznik, Pohod*) who was a representative of socially engaged Yugoslav film – so–called *Blake Wave* – described the paradox of Titoism: "My films, albeit forbidden, went to world festivals and had great success." On Tito's role in cultural policy Kadijević states the following: "As we know, Tito was the predominant personality in every aspect of our country. He was not an intellectual, he had no great education, no particular culture, but he had a genuine interest in art and he supported the artists. In Tito's time culture was a constituent part of state politics and systems" (…) Although an adversary of modern art – in 1962 Tito spoke explicitly against abstract art – at the same time his 'soft Stalinism' enabled the Museum of Contemporary Art to be built quite unhindered. A similar paradox is the fact that the writer Borislav Pekić was imprisoned but afterward received prestigious literary awards such as *Nin*'s and *October's*."[14]

An important component of the development of dissent related to the culture of young people who have been under the strong influence of the West since the 1950s and especially in the 1960s. This influence, despite the "changes", will continue until the fall of the Yugoslav state. The influence of literature, film, and music – ranging from pop culture to avant–garde streams, were among the younger generations manifested by action that was not devoid of political connotations. Thus the conceptual artist Vladimir Dodig Trokut states that members of his 68th generation were considered a group of "humanists, nihilists, anarchists, anarcho–liberal, anarcho–humanist, dialectics, disbelievers, rebels and party defectors." Members of the "rebel" youth had already formed attitudes in relation to the social situation and the cultural reality (dialectics of liberation and theology of freedom). As Trokut states, everything was happening under the watchful eye of the authorities, who made sure that the behavior of the "rebels" did not escape control; there were even occasional sanctions. On the other hand, some Communist leaders and intellectuals, such as Vicko Krstulović, Koča Popović, and Jure Kaštelan, guarded and supported the alternative path of the younger generation.[15] Vicko Krstulović was known by the idea of establishing Dalmatia as a federal unit. Koča Popović performed high functions in the Communist nomenclature, but also acted as a surrealist (in his young days) and an independent intellectual who even opposed Tito himself. The academic and poet Jure Kaštelan – who in 1948 acted as a "cultural worker" in Agitprop of CC CPC – in 1968 published a new edition of the *Bible* that was sold in more than 200,000 copies.

Despite the rigid single–party communist system and the persecution of the disobedient, due to an ambiguity of Titoism various forms of a critical thought emerged. Some of the actors who criticized Yugoslav ideology and politics become dissidents.

14 *Đorđe Kadijević o Titu: Nije imao obrazovanje ali je znao da uzdigne kulturu* | *Zabava* | *Kurir*, accessed June 18, 2018, http://www.kurir.rs/zabava/pop–kultura/dorde–kadijevic–o–titu–nije–imao–obrazovanje–ali–je–znao–da–uzdigne–kulturu–clanak–1889209.

15 Dodig Trokut, Vladimir, interview by Albert Bing for COURAGE–project, December 22, 2016.

Who Were the Yugoslav Dissidents?

The phenomenon of a dissident in Tito's Yugoslavia can be considered from very different perspectives. However, so far no particular typology of the Yugoslav dissident has been formed in humanities and social sciences. There is no considerable attempt to synthesize the historical circumstances and motifs of dissidents; their dissociative "critical potential", the effector or forms of repression that the government has carried out against the "disinformation", as there is no complete phenomenological analysis of Titoism. The notion of dissident occurs in very different contexts; it is manifested and evaluated differently in certain phases of Yugoslav history as well as in different parts of Tito's Yugoslavia.

In general Yugoslav dissidents have been apostrophized as defectors of the Communist Party. They are also referred as the opponents of the regime; individuals who at some point emerged in public from "unacceptable positions" and were "excluded" from public life (although sometimes they were formally not members of the party or of party structures). In the wider context, they also appear as critics – free thinkers; their public criticism or "improper" thinking that questioned the socialist reality – very different manifestations of the culture of dissent – often led to conflicts with the authorities, including persecution and internment or isolation. Even in the last decade of the Yugoslav socialist state, when the demands for democratic reforms increasingly emerged and when it became clear that the party system is unsustainable – the practice of social control will continue despite the formal absence of censorship; according to Stipe Šuvar's report at the Central Comity CPY's 7th Session in April 1987, between 1981 and 1985, there were 36 prohibitions of publications: ten newspapers, sixteen books, three journals, two calendars, two tourist brochures, one geographical map, one bulletin, and poster. Between 1982 and 1987, claims for "political delinquency" were raised against 2,443 persons (1,748 for verbal delict); the highest in Kosovo (1,020), followed by Croatia (473), Serbia without the province (306) and Bosnia and Herzegovina (291). In Slovenia, there were 90, in Montenegro 71, in Macedonia 51 and in Vojvodina 37 persons who were indicted (in court) for political crimes.[16] However, the forms of "resistance" and "punishment" were very different, especially in comparison with the relationship between authorities and dissidents in other states where communists were in power. In short, attempts to further define the phenomenon of Yugoslav dissident face many problems. The arguments for this thesis are numerous.

Already at the level of perception of dissident one can observe very different opinions. Literate and publicist Miljenko Jergović thinks that Ivan Supek – one of the most prominent Croatian intellectuals of the post–war period, physicist and philosopher as well as the rector of the Zagreb University during the turbulent 1971 Croatian Spring – was not a dissident. Supek was first of all "a convinced leftist and a Democrat" (despite the fact that he was a member of the Communist Party before the Second World War; he left the Party in 1940, among other things, because of disagreement with the

16 Jović, *Jugoslavija*, 331.

party's interpretation of Albert Einstein's thesis that was dismissed as inadmissible in Moscow).[17] On the other side one of the most prominent intellectuals in Croatian emigration, Bogdan Radica considered Ivan Supek to be a dissident, as did a student leader from the period of the Croatian Spring, Dražen Budiša. Introducing Supek's book *Heretic on the left* Budiša noted: "To preserve internal freedom, autonomous political thinking, and scientific activity, to be on the side of his people and belong to the left, it was possible only if one was a dissident. This has been shown in Supek's book."[18] The controversy in the understanding of dissidence is related to some of the key moments of Tito's Yugoslavia, such as the break with Stalin in 1948. In the ranks of Yugoslav dissidents can be included the communist "deportees" who, following the resolution of Informbiro, agreed with Stalin (as well as a number of innocent persons who were guilty of being accused as "Stalinists"). At the same time while the purge against the Yugoslav Stalinists – dissidents from Tito's CPY – went on (by using the Stalinist matrix) Josip Broz was recognized in the West as the most important communist dissident after Lev Trotsky.[19] Moreover, Yugoslavia itself got the label of dissident; in the words of François Furet: "… disconnected from the Stalin order, Tito introduces a new genre in the history of communism: the rejection of national communism."[20]

Various interpretations of the character of "Yugoslav dissident" are related to real and apparent controversies. In this context, it is interesting to note how political emigrant Bogdan Radica – who was never a member of the Communist Party (he was a sympathizer of the Croatian Peasant Party) – is regarded as a dissident in today's post–communist perspective. On the Croatian historical portal Radica is apostrophized as "formally (…) the first Yugoslav dissident, even eight years before "Milovan Đilas"[21]. The reason for this was Radica's leaving Yugoslavia in 1945 for failing to accept the single–party system, although he actively supported the struggle of Tito's partisans in America during the WWII but disagreed with the one–party system and repression committed by communist authorities: "In accepting an ordinary dictatorship or semi–dictatorial regime man can compromise with himself as well as the society in which he lives. Who did not do it? But in the matter of accepting fascism or communism, that is, a system that demands the full submission of a lie–dogma, it is necessary for one to clarify it to himself and to his conscience and the society in which he lives, for which he has done all this and for what he has aspired."[22]

The fact of Radica's active support to Tito's Partisans during World War II did not bother the Yugoslav regime's publicists to disqualify him not only as a "dissident" but as an "Ustasha" as well (since he belonged to Croatian political emigration). When

17 Miljenko Jergović, "Sumnjivo lice – Kako su izumrli građani u Hrvatskoj," *Jutarnji list*, April 7, 2015.

18 Dražen Budiša, na koricama knjige Ivan Supek, *Krivovjerac na ljevici* (Zagreb: Globus, 1992).

19 Albert Bing, "Disidenti/'divergenti', ljudska prava i osamostaljivanje Hrvatske," in: *Disidentstvo u suvremenoj povijesti*, eds. Kisić Kolanović et al. (Zagreb: Hrvatski institut za povijest, 2010), 408.

20 François Furet, *Prošlost jedne iluzije – Ogled o komunističkoj ideji u XX. Stoljeću* (Zagreb: Politička kultura, 1997), 395, 396.

21 "Bogdan Radica – hrvatska veza sa svijetom," *Hrvatski povijesni portal*, accessed June 18, 2018, http://povijest.net/bogdan-radica-hrvatska-veza-sa-svijetom/.

22 Bogdan Radica, *Hrvatska 1945* (Zagreb: Grafički zavod Hrvatske, 1992), 240.

Radica met with Milovan Đilas in the late sixties in Princeton and New York (he wrote about meeting Đilas in the *Croatian Review* magazine), Zagreb daily *Večernji list* published the following information: "In America, Đilas met with some Ustasha leaders including the cutthroat ideologist Bogdan Radica."[23] Much more interesting were the impressions of Radica after an encounter with Đilas "in an unforgettable conversation." For Radica, Đilas was "one of the disappointed idealists who has lost faith in 'his' God" and "the rebellious angel of the official communist galaxy." However, he was also a consistent follower of the "divine" emanation a dared to "face God" (Tito) for his "faith", pointing to his "sin": "To dream about at the perfect state, then to realize it and then to feel that it is a fake and weaker than any common and even bourgeois dictatorship, and to stand against it to such an extent that the faults are exposed by their own being, it is not a small and insignificant feat. This is certainly a strong and decisive step, which requires a lot of inner courage, which can only impose the search for truth in man (…) the clashes in the position of the heretics from the Communist theocratic society are not easy or simple, especially when society has all the means of modern government which was never achieved by any other authority, even by the Pharaoh or the Inquisition."[24]

The fate of many dissidents was intertwined in a variety of ways (among the other relationship between Tito as a dissident and his victims who have become dissidents). In the immediate post–war period, innumerable intellectuals in a short time were struck by a new power that left the policy of the National Front and imposed a communist political monopoly. Among them were writers of various political affinities such as Edvard Kocbek and Borislav Pekić. Despite the labeling by the authorities – Pekić was imprisoned, and Kocbek under supervision – both writers managed to publish remarkable and award–winning works. Politician and professor Dragoljub Jovanović who sympathized with the social ideas of the CP in the prewar Kingdom of Yugoslavia and came into conflict with the then authorities will become the victim of the communist regime.[25] "Always in opposition and a dissident" Jovanovic consistently fought for "multi–party system and freedom of speech."[26] As a people's deputy at the National Assembly of the FNRJ in 1947 Jovanović was prosecuted by the chief of Agitprop of CC CPY Milovan Đilas. When arguing the one–party system and promoting a form of pluralism in 1953/1954 Đilas himself – after confronting Tito – became a political victim and the most famous Yugoslav dissident. For a couple of times, he was sentenced to prison and then released (at the end of 1966 Đilas was finally granted amnesty after nine years spent in jail). He even traveled abroad and gave a series of interviews for the foreign press. However, he was constantly under the watchful eye of authorities and exposed to defamation; e.g. in 1984 *Večernji list* published a feuilleton (as mentioned previously) on his "traitorous behavior".

The change in public climate was noticeably different in the second half of the eighties when a liberal press started to publish "floods of forbidden literature"; opening

23 Branko Vlahović, "Đilasov san o vlasti," *Večernji list*, June 11, 1984.

24 Bogdan Radica, "Metapolitika Milovana Đilasa," in: *Hrvatska revija*, Vol. 3 (1969): 255, 256.

25 Srđan Cvetković, *Portreti disidenata* (Beograd: Institut za savremenu istoriju, 2007), 228.

26 Ibid.

also meant an intensified interest for the dissidents.[27] In an interview to liberal weekly *Start* Đilas was presented as a "revolutionary, an apostate, dangerous taboo–theme, multi–year political prisoner"; "About Đillas everybody knew everything and in fact very little is known and most of all as clichés: He is a traitor…"; "how many people know that he has spent his entire life dealing with literature? As every man who renounced his glorious past and shifted from 'good' to 'evil' boys, the portrait of Đilas is composed on semi–information, stereotypes, and mythologies about 'the enemy of the state 'no. 1' (…) he was "a man who was dismissed in 1954. from all of his duties and classified as an anarchist and revisionist"; at the same time he was called by the press as 'the last and largest Eastern European dissident after the Saharov rehabilitation', and also the last living member of the pre–war ruling CPY Politburo. That triple position is sufficiently bizarre and intriguing to be completely ignored. At the very least, he is one of the most controversial witnesses of our recent history."[28]

Similar public engagements and even the connection to the same events reflected differently to the destiny of individual dissidents. Daniel Ivin, who was not a member of the Communist Party, deserved the qualification of the "suspect" by participating in the "dissident gathering in Zadar" in 1966 where he was "elected president of the publishing council of the first independent newspapers in Yugoslavia *Slobodna Riječ*". The magazine was supposed to promote "multiparty" system (allegedly under the influence by Miroslav Krleža). Ivin was arrested and interned for two months in Belgrade's central detention center. "The conspiracy group" consisting of intellectuals – Mihajlo Mihajlov, Predrag Ristić, Marijan Batinić, Franjo Zenko, Miro Glavurtić, Mladen Srbinović, Leonid Šejk, Slobodan Mašić, and others – was charged with the constructed indictment which included allegations about preparations for the assassination of comrade Tito." After the indictment was dismissed and Ivin was released he got an invitation of St Antony's College and so he went to England ("British diplomacy followed him as" the most rational member "of the Yugoslav group of dissidents because he was looking for a way how to democratize society"). He then worked at the Schweizerisches Ost–Institut in Bern where he published the book *Revolution and Evolution in Yugoslavia*. At the end of 1969, he returned to Yugoslavia and collaborated on the project of the founding of the Croatian Economic Bank with a prominent Croatian communist and politician Većeslav Holjevac. In 1970 he signed a contract with Television Zagreb for the series "Croatian Statehood Story" (both projects were ultimately not realized due to Holjevac's death and repression after the collapse of Croatian Spring). In the continuation of his career, Ivin will write about the most famous Yugoslav dissident Milovan Đilas and about Andrija Hebrang, the most influential Croat communist who was killed in unknown circumstances. In the late 1980s, he was engaged in Croatia in promoting multiparty reform and human rights.[29] In

27 Milovan Đilas, "Vlast kao strast," interviewd by Dina Julius i Dušanka Zeković, *Start*, No. 521, January 7, 1989.

28 Ibid.

29 Drago Pilsel, "Uz 80. rođendan Daniela Ivina," *Regional Express*, accessed August 13, 2018, http://www.regionalexpress.hr/site/more/uz–80.–roendan–daniela–ivina.

short, despite the dissident label Ivin successfully continued to work in Yugoslavia as well as abroad.

Mihajlo Mihajlov, an assistant at the Faculty of Philosophy in Zadar, had a different destiny. Like Ivin and other intellectuals who tried to organize a democratic forum in Zadar in 1966 Mihajlov was convinced that "social and political conditions have matured for the establishment of competitive organizations to the Communist Party"; he was actually exposed to the persecution since 1965 because of the essay *The Summer of Moscow 1964*, which was categorized as a "defamation" insulting the Soviet Union" (in time when Tito was establishing closer relations to USSR). Despite the authorities pressure, Mihajlov insisted on holding a Zadar summit and launching a magazine with the aim of establishing a review of democratic profiles which will become "the core of a democratic socio–political movement."[30] He addressed his acquaintances in the West (among others PEN Secretary Arthur Miller) and the Yugoslav public with an open letter written to Josip Broz Tito.[31] Mihajlov was arrested and prosecuted for, among other things, criminal offense "against the public order (…) by spreading false news." Unlike Ivin, who returned to his homeland and cooperated with prominent political figures like Većeslav Holjevac, Mihajlov was sentenced to a long–term prison after which he went abroad. Along with Milovan Đilas, Mihajlov became one of the most famous Yugoslav dissidents whose fate was followed by the international public, but as a dissident he did not have any significant political influence.

Some individuals, such as Adem Demaçi and Marko Veselica, condemned for "hostile activity" and nationalism, were apostrophized as an Albanian and Croatian "Mandela" for serving long–term prison sentences. Prior to the conflict with the Communist authorities, Demaçi was – at least as a nominal – part of the "system" (from "Tito's pioneer" to the opposition Albanian revolutionary), and Marko Veselica was one of the party personnel who actively participated in the suppression of student protests in Zagreb in 1968. A particular chapter on dissidence would be a story on intellectuals who confronted Communist authorities in different periods of Yugoslav socialism and with various motives. Many intellectuals, especially philosophers and sociologists gathered around the *Praxis* magazine, actively participated in student protests in 1968. Some of them, especially in Belgrade, experienced the exclusion of the Party, various forms of pressures and even dismissals.

Particularly interesting was the case of Predrag Matvejević. After completing his studies, Matvejević spent two years in Paris, where he acquired a Ph.D. in Sorbonne. He returned to Yugoslavia at the full swing of the student protest in 1968. The ban of his text "What is the common protest of the students of Europe" will be later evaluated "as his promotion in the line of disagreements." A few years later he voluntarily "auto–suspended himself" from the League of Communists when "the critiques on his account became more and more laud"; he explained that he had joined the Party

30 K. Spehnjak, "'Slučaj Mihajlov' u bilješkama diplomatskih predstavnika Velike Britanije 1966," in: *Disidentstvo u suvremenoj povijesti*, eds. Kisić Kolanović et al. (Zagreb: Hrvatski institut za povijest, 2010), 362.

31 Ibid.

as a student "because he did not appear to be in the rift with the party in which were then Miroslav Krleža, Marko Ristic, Ivo Andrić, Ranko Marinković, Petar Šegedin, and many others." Matvejević's even dare to write an open letter to President Tito, in which – despite all his merits – he asked him to depart from his duties due to his age. He didn't suffer any significant consequences.[32]

In the later period of Yugoslavia, when the party was weakened many Yugoslav dissidents collaborated "irrespective of whether they were left or right"; Marko Veselica stated that "he regularly contacted Đilas and Belgrade lawyer Jovan Barović."[33] Mihajlo Mihajlov – who had "more favorable status" than other Yugoslav dissidents due to his critical observations on the USSR – initiated the establishment of the Committee for Aid to Yugoslav dissidents in New York in 1979. The heads of the Committee were Milovan Đilas and future Croatian president Franjo Tuđman, later replaced by Vladimir Šeks.[34] After the death of Josip Broz Tito and the expectations of change, the dissidents were increasingly engaged. In October 1980, a group of 36 dissidents in the country sent a letter to the Presidency of the SFRY, requesting amnesty for those who were still in jail for verbal delinquency. In December 1980 a petition proposing the abolition of Article 133 of the SFRY Criminal Code – which sanctioned the false and malicious presentation of social and political opportunities in the country – was signed by 102 signatories.[35]

Due to the general appearance of the collapse of communism "dissidents throughout Eastern Europe become louder (especially in Czechoslovakia – with Charter 77; and in Poland – with Solidarity)"; this has only slightly affected the activities of Yugoslav dissidents.[36] The first organized initiative for democratic changes in Yugoslavia was inspired by the critically oriented intelligentsia of "left" provenance. Some of them were considered as dissidents or advocated the abolishment of any form of political pressure. In 1989 a number of Zagreb intellectuals promoted an "Association for Yugoslav Democratic Initiative" (the name of the organization was suggested by Branko Horvat and Predrag Vranicki). The president was Branko Horvat, followed by Nebojša Popov, while the organizing director was Žarko Puhovski. Other members of the board were Bogdan Bogdanović, Milan Kangrga, Lev Kreft, Shkelzen Maliqi, Vesna Pešić, Koča Popović, Milorad Pupovac, Ljubisa Ristić, Božidar Gajo Sekulić, Rudi Supek, Ljubomir Tadić, Dubravka Ugrešić, Predrag Vranicki, Jug Grizelj, and Nenad Zakošek. However, in the atmosphere of ever more pronounced national confrontations after democratic elections, the political supremacy was taken by the parties with national programs.

With the collapse of communism, and then the Yugoslav state, dissidents become a sort of relic of the past despite the fact that in some cases (like Croatia) some of the leading positions were occupied by communist dissidents (Franjo Tuđman, Stipe

32 Ingrid Badurina, "Otvorena pisma Predraga Matvejevića," *Start*, January 7, 1989, 37, 39.
33 Željko Krušelj, "Zapadu smetali jugoslavenski disidenti," *Vjesnik*, October 1, October 2, 2005.
34 Ibid.
35 Jović, *Jugoslavija*, 333.
36 Ibid.

Mesić). New circumstances have also produced new controversies with regard to the phenomenon of a dissident. After the dramatic changes, "a few mentioned the dissidents and especially praised them."[37] One of the probable reasons for the restrained attitude toward the dissidents in the post–communist period may be found in the difficulties of perception of dissident phenomenon; according to Mira Bogdanović, "the thinking of dissidents in former Yugoslavia ranged from total denial of their existence (Minić, 1999), to alleged dissident status of hundreds of thousands of winter walkers (Mihajlov, 1998)."[38] The post–communist and post–Yugoslav perspectives imposed new evaluation of dissent in Yugoslavia (primary anti–Yugoslav, national state, anti–communism). The "inflation" of victims of a regime and "dissidents" after the collapse of communism and Yugoslavia – especially in the ranks of "new" political and intellectual elites (most commonly converted communists) – certainly dimmed a clearer view of the historical retrospective of the Yugoslav dissident.

It is interesting to note the perception of the "new Croatian dissident" in the early 1990s; more precisely, the fate of individuals who "became dissidents and exiles from the new state of Croatia" despite the proclamation of democracy. Thus in an article "Why did the Croatian dissidents disappear" (dissidents from the period of socialist Croatia and Yugoslavia), the author registers the emergence of "new dissidents."[39] As a paradigmatic example was the fate of Predrag Matvejević, author of "the most famous and most translated contemporary Croatian book *The Mediterranean Breviary*"; due to his political attitude and criticism which directly referred to Croatian president Franjo Tuđman, Matvejević become "persona non grata in his homeland or, more simply – a dissident." As noticed by the author it was a paradox since Matvejević actively defended dissident Tuđman while he was prosecuted by the communist authorities in the early 1980s. Matvejević was then the president of the Croatian PEN and advocated suspension of persecution of individuals who opposed the communist regime. Only a few years later Matvejević and Tuđman found themselves in reverse positions with one significant difference: "In Tuđman case the authorities become displeased with him and he was persecuted, and in the case of Matvejević he was displeased with authorities so he becomes dissident of his own will." In the category of "new dissidents" – the author also calls them "exiles" – were two writers Slavenka Drakulić and Dubravka Ugrešić and two actors Rade Šerbedija and Mira Furlan. As a basic distinction between the "old" and the "new" dissidents author emphasize the fact that "virtually none of them was legally persecuted, no one of them has been deprived of a right of citizenship;" simply "they didn't feel comfortable under Tuđman's regime. So they chose their own paths and destinies, not wanting to share anything with the rule they perceived as regimes."[40]

37 Krušelj, "Zapadu smetali."

38 Mira Bogdanović, "Jugoslavenski disidenti i hladni rat," accessed June 26, 2018, http://www.doiserbia.nb.rs/img/doi/0038-0318/2009/0038-03180902113B.pdf.

39 Jure Ilić, "Zašto su nestali hrvatski disidenti?," *Vjesnik*, April 4, 2001.

40 Ibid.

West and Yugoslav Dissidents

Probably the most important aspect of Yugoslav dissident status in regard to Titoism wasn't the objective critical potential or the effect of resistance to the authorities of the dissidents but the attitude of Western states and their political and intellectual elites. In the countries of liberal democracy, the perception of Yugoslav dissidents (as well as political emigration) was not the same as those towards the opponents to the Soviet Union and other communist states. One of the reasons for such distinction was embedded in the fact that Tito's regime was perceived "on the seductive theory of socialism with the 'human face'" which since the 1950s served as an alternative to a rigid Soviet model"; therefore, "it was not desirable that dissidents create an image on Tito's Yugoslavia as an unfree and repressive society."[41]

In a discussion of "communist renegades" at the meeting of Croatian and Serbian historians (under the 10th *Dialogue* at the Faculty of Philosophy in Osijek, 2005) former dissident Daniel Ivin testified: "The main factors of the West were in quite a disagreement with dissidents in Yugoslavia. Đilas and then others – *Praxis* first, Mihajlov group, then the Zagreb Spring and Belgrade Liberals, and others; Yugoslav dissidents were always more a nuisance than someone who should be supported… That is why the West's attitude to dissidents through whole Cold War period was a double–natured: a wholehearted support for those inside Soviet bloc and a somewhat confused or improper relationship with those in Yugoslavia, often none."[42] Ivin's observance was consistent with the thesis of Mira Bogdanović who analyzed the position of Yugoslav dissidents during the Cold War: "In Eastern European countries, during the Cold War, dissidents have played a prominent role as an instrument of anticommunist ideological subversion. By contrast, Yugoslav dissidents have sentenced to marginal position thanks to the peculiar position of Yugoslavia between two opposing blocks."[43]

Similar observations come from one of the most prominent intellectuals in the ranks of Croatian political emigration Bogdan Radica, who was in a position to communicate directly with some of the most famous Yugoslav dissidents. As an expert on geopolitics and international relations and a distinguished US and American culture expert Radica often published articles focusing on the relationship of the West – primarily America – to the rest of the world (*The World Between America and the Soviet Union*, *Democracy and Liberation from Communism*, *The World Revolution and America*, etc. published in *Croatian Review* in early 1960s). In his critical comments, he also recalls the position of Tito's Yugoslavia in cold–war conditions. Although the system embodied by the Yugoslav sovereign for Radica was a negation of liberty, and Tito himself was a communist Machiavellian dictator, he did not deny his statehood capacity, above all the ability to "manipulate" the West. Thus, he notes that Churchill's "Oxford and Cambridge boys who were so zealous on – so–called – Tito's charm – while they

41 Krušelj, "Zapadu smetali."
42 Ibid.
43 Bogdanović, "Jugoslavenski disidenti."

were in the Bosnian mountains and Dalmatian islands" (during WWII), mainly spoke on Josip Broz Tito affirmatively.[44] The roots of this phenomenon are more intriguing because he thinks that "English Machiavellianism is crueler than the one Machiavelli himself ever imagined;" and the Yugoslav leader overtook the Englishman himself with his Machiavellian skills.[45]

Concerning this aspect of "the art of ruling", Radica's observations on the global influences of Tito's "third path" are also interesting. In his opinion it has overshadowed the critical sharpness of the West, leading to a disadvantage of the Yugoslav dissidents. In the analysis of the success of the phenomenon of Titoism among the small peoples, Radica, not with surprise but also with bitterness, notes that "Tito was right" when "politics of his country organized to set aside and see what side would be victorious" in the conflict between America and Russia. Tito has "given to the intelligentsia and leadership of these peoples a technique and a mechanism for exploiting the West, ideologically and economically supported by the same West." Moreover, "although Tito is still a communist who" in reality did not change his inner system, that fact did not concern anyone; "American official policy has supported Tito's experiment with financial aid," factually contributing to "increase Titos's position in that part of the world."[46] Following this observations, Radica also notes his own experiences from Cuba were "Russian, Chinese and Yugoslav communists ideologists operated by offering their own communist example." What Radica was annoyed with was the case of Tito: "While I was in Cuba talking to Castro's intelligentsia, I was listening to Tito's fairy tales, not through propaganda, spread by Tito's emissaries, but through what Cuban intelligentsia has read about Titoism in North American scientific publications. Whenever I was trying to suppress any system of argumentation, I was faced with the observation of an American economic writer from the most prominent US publications, such as *Foreign Affairs* or even *Problems of Communism*, which can not be said to be leftist, but rather represent the most responsible American point of view. So the USA breaks down and crashes the foundations of all its policies."[47]

Of course, the benevolent relationship between the West and the Tito's Yugoslavia – as Radica registers, reflected in the international circumstances of the divided block. First of all the West considered dissidents as "ideological ally in the Cold War."[48] However, in the case of Yugoslavia, the position of dissidents was determined by the inherent implications of the ambiguity of Tito's system. The openness of Yugoslavia and the relative freedom of action of the intelligentsia and the media, especially in later periods, weakened the interest for the Yugoslav dissidents. Dissident movements were certainly under the strong influence of Western perception on dissent as a form of struggle for democracy and human rights in a totalitarian environment. However, until

44 Bogdan Radica, "Demokracija i oslobođenje od komunizma," *Hrvatska revija*, December 1961, 341.
45 Ibid.
46 Bogdan Radica, "Svijet između Amerike i Sovjetskog Saveza – paradoksi našeg vremena," *Hrvatska revija*, June 1960, 168.
47 Ibid., 174.
48 Pavle Rak, *Disidenti, kultura i politika*, accessed June 26, 2018, http://www.yurope.com/zines/republika/arhiva/98/192/192_23.HTM.

the collapse of communism in the late eighties, there was no adequate social background that could give rise to a more significant autochthonous political movement.

Nevertheless, Western estimates of dissident potential are also interesting to consider. Thus Zbigniew Brzezinski, National Security Advisor at the time US President Jimmy Carter administration examines in 1978 what will happen with Yugoslavia after Tito's death (which "seeks to ensure the continuity of his truly great work through collective leadership").[49] Despite the recognition of Tito achievement "the ultimate goal of the United States in Yugoslavia was the removal of communist rule in any form." But the basic strategic goal of the United States for Yugoslavia is to preserve the status quo with respect to Soviet pretensions in the region after Titos's death. As a course of American strategy, he suggests taking the following measures: "To constantly and consistently point to the Stalinist tendencies in Soviet politics and thus 'intimidate' the Yugoslav communists and other leftists in the country and the world: – systematically assist and give publicity to various opposing groups in Yugoslavia. In connection with this much more 'advertise' should be put upon the various Yugoslav dissidents. In the same way, as it is done with Soviet and Czechoslovak dissidents. These 'dissidents' do not have to be highly anti–communist, perhaps even better, if they are 'humanistic' orientated (like members of *Praxis* and similar). These actions should be maximally linked to the 'human rights' campaign and the 'third basket' from Helsinki, which Yugoslav communists often call upon. Some international organizations for political convictions (Amnesty International) can also be used in this plan."[50]

The ratings of the disadvantaged position of Yugoslav dissidents (and political emigration from Yugoslavia) in the West – in relation to the dissidents from the communist states of the East Bloc, coincide with experiences of the dissidents themselves (Marko Veselica, Mihajlo Mihajlov, Zdravko Gvero, Daniel Ivin…): "Dissidents in the former Yugoslavia had utterly different meaning – but also as an echo to the West – in comparison to those in the Soviet Union and other real–socialist countries."[51] In this context it is also interesting to note Daniel Ivin's observation who claims that the posture of the West influenced the general attitude of the Yugoslav society towards dissidents: "The members of the wider civil and intellectual milieu, who usually give tone and color to the whole society, felt disdain to dissidents, so the sour and unwelcome support of the West was to a great extent justification for their behavior and their conscience. Enjoying certain advantages and benefits of the Yugoslav Liberalism of the Communist State vis–à–vis those in the Soviet bloc, those members of our society dissident was an unnecessary concern and even in their eyes the danger of losing their benefits and advantages. That is why the dissidents in Yugoslavia – unlike those in the Soviet bloc who lived only under one malediction – of their own authority, seemed to be under the triple curse: from their own authorities, then from their own society and partly from the West."[52]

49 Mirko Đekić, *Upotreba Srbije – optužbe i priznanja Draže Markovića* (Beograd: Beseda, 1990), 82.
50 Ibid., 83.
51 Krušelj, "Zapadu smetali."
52 Ibid.

Conclusion

Yugoslav dissidents have been profiled as a very different set of oppositions to communist rule. For these reasons, it is not possible to unambiguously determine the character of the Yugoslav dissident. To a large extent, the dissidents were linked to the various forms of a critical–oriented intelligentsia and political motives that developed after the opening of Yugoslavia towards the West in the early 1950s. As a system of authority and values, Titoism was based on ambivalences made up of the repression and control exercised by the communist authorities and on the other hand by allowing certain liberties whose boundary as the supreme arbitrator was mainly determined by Tito himself. Despite the periodic purges of political opponents who often become dissidents it can be argued that the development of critical thought and peculiar culture of dissent has been a persistent tendency in the development of the Yugoslav society. With the collapse of communism and the SFRY the Yugoslav dissidents lost importance as a political alternative.

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Albert Bing

TITOISM, DISSIDENTS AND CULTURE OF DISSENT

SUMMARY

The article deals with the phenomenon of specific Yugoslav dissidence and culture of dissent, primarily due to the international status of Tito's Yugoslavia and *Titoism* as a system of values and governance. The opening up of Yugoslavia to the West after the split with Stalin in 1948 led to the significant influence of Western culture on the Yugoslav communist society. This influence contributed to the appearance of criticism, which sometimes led to various forms of dissidence. However, due to a tolerant attitude of the Western countries towards Tito's communist regime, dissidents did not have the same status as those from the Soviet Union and other states of real socialism. Furthermore, Tito's ambivalent cultural politics – as an important aspect of his governance – also affected the status of Yugoslav dissidents. During the phases of liberalization of Yugoslav society criticism was tolerated and even encouraged to a certain extent. At the same time, the Communist party tried to control all aspect of the public sphere. The supreme arbitrator was often Tito himself.

Albert Bing

TITOIZEM, DISIDENTI IN KULTURA DISIDENTSTVA

POVZETEK

Prispevek obravnava fenomen specifičnega jugoslovanskega disidentstva (in kulture disidentstva) kot posledico mednarodnega statusa Titove Jugoslavije in *titoizma* kot sistema vrednot in upravljanja. Odpiranje Jugoslavije proti Zahodu je po sporu s Stalinom leta 1948 pomembno vplivalo na jugoslovansko komunistično družbo. Vpliv zahodne kulture je porajal razne kritike, kar je včasih pripeljalo do različnih oblik disidentstva. Zaradi strpnega odnosa zahodnih držav do Titovega komunističnega režima pa disidenti niso imeli enakega statusa kot tisti iz Sovjetske zveze in drugih realsocialističnih držav. Poleg tega je tudi Titova ambivalentna kulturna politika kot pomemben vidik njegovega upravljanja vplivala na status jugoslovanskih disidentov. V fazah liberalizacije jugoslovanske družbe so kritike do neke mere tolerirali in celo spodbujali. Hkrati pa je Komunistična partija poskušala nadzorovati vse vidike javne sfere. Vrhovni arbiter je bil pogosto Tito sam.