

## STUDIE

# Between the Nation and Socialism in Yugoslavia. The Debate between Dobrica Ćosić and Dušan Pirjevec in the 1960s

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## **Between the Nation and Socialism in Yugoslavia.**

### **The Debate between Dobrica Ćosić and Dušan Pirjevec in the 1960s**

From a perspective rooted in conceptual history, the following article studies the transformations of Yugoslav political discourse from the end of World War II until the 1960s, in order to later analyze the famous debate held by the Serbian writer Dobrica Ćosić and the Slovene critic Dušan Pirjevec regarding cultural cooperation between the Yugoslav republics. By examining the transition from a centralist model to a more decentralized model based on the conceptual paradigm of selfmanagement and the consequences of such a transformation on the official approach towards the national question, the text aims at taking a closer look to the development of the new political language of Yugoslav communism and its effects on the political and intellectual debates of the time.

**Key words:** Yugoslavia, nationalism, Marxism

The 1960s were thriving times in Yugoslavia. The country enjoyed the first transformations of selfmanagement decentralization, strongly backed up by a favorable po-

sition in the context of Cold War, a significant economic growth and a remarkable cultural bloom encouraged by the “struggle of opinions” established after the breakup with Stalin, which created an environment for freedom of thought and critique, an exceptional feat in the communist world. In that context, the granting of the Nobel Prize in Literature to the Bosnian writer Ivo Andrić, whose work expressed the dream of creating a syncretic supranational Yugoslav culture, was taken as a sign of recognition for a country that considered itself to be destined for a great future.

The celebration of Andrić’s work, however, covered a number of discussions and conflicts around the Yugoslav project. Despite the ever more generalized adoption of the language of socialist selfmanagement by Yugoslav political and intellectual elites, the transformations boosted by Edvard Kardelj’s (1910–1979) discourse produced a series of disagreements, disconformities and controversies within the party. Debates were most notorious in the field of culture and economics. On the one hand, in a country divided in republics and regions unequally developed, discussing economic decentralization had inevitable consequences in the approach towards the national question. On the other hand, this atmosphere of debate nurtured further discussions in the field of culture, reviving tensions around the meaning of Yugoslavism.

Among the many debates that took place during those years, one of the most famous was the one that pitted the Serbian writer Dobrica Ćosić (1921–2014) against the Slovene critic Dušan Pirjevec (1921–1977). Both were prominent characters of the Yugoslav intellectual elite, and members of the League of Communists [Savez Komunističke Jugoslavije, SKJ]. The Ćosić-Pirjevec polemic has been widely quoted and analyzed, be it as an expression in the field of culture of the internal struggles within the SKJ, or be it from the more specific perspective of intellectual history.<sup>1</sup> However, we hold that it is worth reviewing for a number of reasons.

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1 The discussion is mentioned in Dennison RUSSINOW, *The Yugoslav Experiment*, (London: MacMillan, 1977), 134–135; as well as in Jasna DRAGOVIĆ-SOSO, *Saviors of the Nation*, (Ithaca: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2004), 38. Milojković-Djurić reviews the debate in Jelena MILOJKOVIĆ-DJURIĆ, “Approaches to National Identities: Ćosić’s and Pirjevec’s debate on ideological and literary issues,” in *East European Quarterly* XXX, No.1 (1996): 63–73. A good analysis of the context in which the debate was held can be found in Hilde Katherine HAUG, *Creating a Socialist Yugoslavia. Tito, Communist Leadership and the National Question* (New York: I. B. Tauris, 2012). For an analysis of the debate centered in the Slovenian context, see Aleš GABRIČ, *Socijalistična kulturna revolucija. Slovenska kulturna politika 1953–1962*, (Ljubljana: Cankarjeva Založba, 1995). The debate is also briefly reviewed in Nick MILLER, *The*

Firstly, because of the way this polemic clearly reflected the divergent positions of Yugoslav intellectuals around the national question during the process of ideological and discursive renewal that characterized this period in Yugoslav socialism. From this point of view, the debate shows very specific tensions which emerge around Yugoslavism in that threshold of conceptual transformations that goes from the 1950s to the 1960s.

Moreover, we reckon that the debate becomes more important when taking into consideration later events and debates. It has been generally overlooked that many of the arguments deployed by both Ćosić and Pirjevec would reappear in some of the most important discussions that politicians and intellectuals would have during the critical decade of the 1980s, particularly concerning nationalism and national autonomies, as well as the political principles on which the Yugoslav union was based. In this sense, we can consider the debate as a prefigurative moment, a key episode in intellectual history that we must keep in mind to understand the meaning of conflicts that would occupy Yugoslav elites twenty years later.

Finally, the discussion between both intellectuals clearly shows how, despite having a common political vocabulary based on the idea of selfmanagement, the language of Yugoslav communism contained in fact great tensions concerning the national question, but also regarding the very nature of the Yugoslav federation as a historical project. This is something that has been widely disregarded: by analyzing the polemic specifically as a debate around Yugoslavism, most authors have overlooked its implications for the discourse of Yugoslav socialism as a whole.

As Reinhart Koselleck noted, the discipline of conceptual history shows the double nature of concepts, both as indexes of historical reality as well as real factors that operate on it.<sup>2</sup> Thus, one of the great questions of this discipline concerns precisely the relation between the linguistic and the extra-linguistic, and making progress in the explanation of historical change demands that we elucidate the complex dynamic between them. Throughout this text, therefore, we will try to restore some of these relations in the field of Yugoslav political and intellectual history, to finally examine the Ćosić-Pirjevec polemic in light of the conceptual transformations that the Yugoslav political discourse suffered from the end of World War II to the 1960s. For such a task, we will draw from the theoretical works of Edvard Kardelj and the original articles by Ćosić's and Pirjevec, which have been

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*Nonconformists* (Budapest: CEU Press, 2008) and in Andrew WACHTEL, *Making a Nation, Breaking a Nation* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998).

2 Reinhart KOSELLECK, *Futures past* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2005).

taken from the pages of *Naša sodobnost*, as well as from later compilations of Ćosić's work.

## 1. A founding myth for a new Yugoslavia

From the times of the national liberation struggle, when commanding the partisan movement, the Communist Party of Yugoslavia [Komunistička Partija Jugoslavije, KPJ] had held the slogan of "Brotherhood and Unity". The phrase expressed the traditional internationalism of the communist movement and the aspirations of solving the national problem in Yugoslavia through socialism, viewed as the only guarantee of national equality. According to the communists' discourse, both the Serbian hegemonic oppression in the interwar period and the interethnic violence during the Second World War were ultimately the result of the strategies of the local bourgeoisie. The only way towards equal and peaceful cohabitation between the Yugoslav nations was, therefore, building a socialist and federative union which respected the autonomy of each of them.

Moreover, the notion of "Brotherhood and Unity" had roots in the pan-Slavic tradition of the Illyrian movement, instrumental for the foundation of the Yugoslav idea in the 19th century. Aiming to build bridges between the different cultures of Southeastern Europe, this vision was also initially linked to the idea of an ethnic consanguinity than joined the South Slavs.

Above all, however, the notion of "Brotherhood and Unity" referred to the episode that would become the founding myth for the new Yugoslavia, the national liberation struggle that had set the Yugoslav nations free from the oppressing domination of fascism.<sup>3</sup> The grounds and the political program of the struggle had been set down in the founding documents of the country: the *Declaration* and the *Decision to Build Yugoslavia on a Federative Principle*, both sanctioned on November of 1943 by the AVNOJ [Antifašističko vijeće narodnog oslobođenja Jugoslavije, Antifascist Council for the National Liberation of Yugoslavia]. In these texts, the Partisans emphasized the multinational and plural character of their struggle. At the same time, they stressed the way in which war against a common enemy had

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3 A good analysis of the use of the national struggle epic and the Partisan struggle for the legitimization of the KPJ during the first years of government can be found in H. K. HAUG, *Creating a Socialist Yugoslavia*.

united the Yugoslav nations in diversity, and established the principles on which the new Yugoslavia was founded.

In the language of these documents both elements of unity and elements of plurality coexisted, by noting on the one hand the importance of singular national liberation movements in each republic and the right of every nation to secession, and on the other hand the unity of the country, expressed in the leadership of Marshall Josip Broz Tito.<sup>4</sup> Moreover, certain indeterminacy in the vocabulary of the documents added up to these tensions, as well as a notorious evanescence in the definitions of the true subjects of political representation. To refer to the Yugoslav nations, the texts used mostly the Slavic voice «narod», holding an ethnic meaning as well as a connotation related to the popular (which allows for it to be translated in English both as “nation” and “people”). Especially uncertain was, however, the relation between the «narodi», the subjects defined by the AVNOJ texts as the ultimate holders of sovereignty (such as the Serbian, Slovenian or Croatian people), and what the 1946 Constitution defined as the «republike», that is the political entities provided with limited sovereignty and specific government functions (such as the Socialist Republic of Serbia, or the Socialist Republic of Croatia). Thus, the *Decision* held that “Yugoslavia is being built and will be built on a federative principle, which will obey the equality of Serbs, Croats, Slovenes, Macedonians and Montenegrins, that is, the nations of Serbia, Croatia, Slovenia, Macedonia, Montenegro and Bosnia and Herzegovina.” However, in practice, the ethnically mixed distribution of the Yugoslav territory made it that nations and republics in fact did not identify.

Taking the formula “narod, odnosno republika” (“the nation, that is the republic”) used in the joint sessions that preceded the dismembering of Yugoslavia in 1991, a manifestation of the uncertain relation that existed between these two concepts, Audrey Budding has made an excellent analysis of the parallel concepts of self-determination that coexisted in the Yugoslav political language from 1943. The author claims: “The Partisans’ basic concept was simple: giving each nation its ‘own’ federal unit would satisfy the claims of self-determination and distance the new Yugoslavia from the old. Realities on the ground, however, were more complex. Much of Yugoslavia’s territory was nationally mixed, and important areas of

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<sup>4</sup> The complete texts of the *Decision* and the *Declaration* can be found in the digital Archive of Yugoslavia: [http://www.arhivju.gov.rs/active/sr-latin/home/glavna\\_navigacija/leksikon\\_jugoslavije/konstitutivni\\_akti\\_jugoslavije/deklaracija\\_drugog\\_zasedanja\\_avnoja.html](http://www.arhivju.gov.rs/active/sr-latin/home/glavna_navigacija/leksikon_jugoslavije/konstitutivni_akti_jugoslavije/deklaracija_drugog_zasedanja_avnoja.html) (August 8, 2015).

Serb settlement (in particular) were noncontiguous. Thus, even if the Partisans had taken a tabula rasa approach to organizing the new Yugoslavia – ignoring all previous political borders and constructing their federal unit on the basis of an ethn-national census– they could not have produced a perfect correspondence between territorial and personal nationality. In the event, they made no such attempt. Although their new federation was justified with the rhetoric of national self-determination, it was constructed on a far more complex basis.<sup>5</sup>

H. K. Haug notes that, already from the 1930s, Yugoslav communism had approached the national question in Yugoslavia not as a problem that demanded a regulation, but one that could be given a solution.<sup>6</sup> In this sense, it is worth saying that the vagueness of Yugoslav political vocabulary and the indeterminacy of its conceptual architecture reflected, to a certain extent, the Marxist belief that ultimately the development of productive forces and the equality of material conditions would make these national realities irrelevant, which would allow for the national question in socialist Yugoslavia to be solved by the natural course of things. In practice, moreover, the concentration of power on behalf of the KPJ promised a stability that went beyond the indeterminacy of the texts. However, this indeterminacy would in fact nurture a series of constitutional and political debates during the following decades, eventually having deeply conflictive consequences.

From the beginning, culture was a privileged area in which to discuss the approach towards the national problem. In the sphere of cultural policy, and facing the communist government's task to provide a solution for the national question, the discourse of "Brotherhood and Unity" translated into the abandonment of all attempts of forced ethnical and cultural assimilation that had characterized the times of the Karađorđević dynasty. The new government would not attempt to affirm the identical nature of the constitutive nations of the federation as before. It would, in exchange, encourage the rise of a docile and soft Yugoslavism, trying to establish dimensions of supranational identification parallel to the preexistent national cultures, ultimately aiming to gradually produce a bigger culture, a "Jugoslovenstvo".

An example of this new Yugoslavism, which pervaded cultural policy during the first years of the Federal Popular Republic of Yugoslavia [Federativna Narodna

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5 Audrey BUDDING, "Nation/People/Republic: Self-Determination in Socialist Yugoslavia", in *State Collapse in Southeastern Europe*, eds. Lenard COHEN and Jasna DRAGOVIĆ-SOSO (Indiana: Purdue University Press, 2008), 96.

6 H. K. HAUG, *Creating a Socialist Yugoslavia...*, 7.

Republika Jugoslavije, FNRJ], were the efforts concerning the unification of languages. The signing of the Novi Sad agreement in 1954, establishing that the language of Serbs, Croats and Montenegrins was the same, but with dialectal differences between ekavski and ijekavski, is a clear example of this search for common cultural grounds for the nations of Yugoslavia. A similar thing could be said about the importance given to cultural institutions at a federal level, such as the Yugoslav Writer's Association, as well as different pan-Yugoslav publishing houses.

All things considered, however, the official Yugoslavist discourse was a coat under which strong differences around the national problem of Yugoslavia still co-existed. Deep down, despite the existing consensus that held the soft Yugoslavism put forward by the KPJ, a conflict still persisted between those who looked up to the possibility that a supranational and universalist Yugoslav culture would finally mean the assimilation of national singularities in a greater nation and those who, on the contrary, expected this process to merely allow the emergence of a common cultural ground which could develop in parallel to existing cultural identities, but never suppressing national boundaries. During the first years of socialist Yugoslavia, these two conceptual poles would organize the discussion around the national question. The tension would endure, becoming visible in many political and intellectual debates inside the communist movement. In addition, beginning in the 1950s, the debate would be affected by the development of a new language that would produce a revolution in Yugoslavia's political discourse, as well as its political, social and cultural organization.

## 2. The rise of selfmanagement

In June, 1948, Tito's government broke up diplomatic relations with the USSR. The relationship between Belgrade and Moscow, already under tension due to the insistence by Yugoslav communists on the exceptional character of their revolution, was not strong enough to deal with a series of differences concerning external policy, such as the approach towards the Greek conflict or Yugoslavia's disagreement with Italy over Trieste, as well as the ever more hegemonic Soviet policy in Eastern Europe, which created negative expectations in the leaders in Belgrade.<sup>7</sup>

For the history of the country, the consequences of this event would be definitive. Yugoslavia would not only begin an external policy that would bring it

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7 D. RUSSINOW, *The Yugoslav Experiment*, 32–80.

closer to the West, thus gaining a great international prestige, later consolidated with the founding of the Non-Aligned Movement: from then on, by pursuing a strategic search for a new legitimacy to distance itself from Moscow, the KPJ would enter an era of reforms under the theoretical paradigm of selfmanagement [samoupravljanje], with lasting consequences on the administration of production, the political organization and even the approach of the national question in Yugoslavia.

This novel and decentralizing proposal, developed by intellectual cadres such as Edvard Kardelj and Milovan Đilas (1911–1995), would allow the communist leadership not only to draw a line against Yugoslavia's monarchic past but also to distinguish itself from the Soviet model, now accused by the KPJ of having perverted into bureaucratic centralism. Thus, as of the 1950s, the concept of selfmanagement would take a central role in the official ideology of the party, which would be renamed League of Communists of Yugoslavia [Savez Komunističke Jugoslavije, SKJ] in 1952, seeking to distance itself from further alignment with the Soviet model.

In June 27, 1950, the National Assembly passed the Basic Law on the Management of State Economic Enterprises and Higher Economic Associations by the Work Collectives. The bill would be presented as a symbol of the Yugoslav road to socialism, loyal to the principles of Leninism, which the Soviets had decided to abandon. By transforming most of the so far state-owned enterprises in “social property”, the bill made of the workers the formal owners of such companies. Although the real consequences regarding production and investment were certainly much less significant than announced, given that decision making was still in the hands of directors named by state agencies, the reform introduced a schism within the economic orthodoxy of communism.<sup>8</sup> Moreover, this new legislative wave would not be restricted to the economic sphere: if already in 1949, by passing the Law on People's Committees, the party had strengthened the prerogatives of local communities, the Constitutional Law of 1953, which almost entirely modified the 1946 Constitution, would push forward a general reorganization of political representation based on the principles of decentralization and selfmanagement. It was the beginning of an era of debates and reforms that would bring radical consequences in the organization of the economy, politics and culture. The chief ideologist of these changes would be Kardelj, main intellectual cadre, especially after the fall of Đilas in 1954.

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8 Ibidem, 57–58.



The idea of selfmanagement had significant precedents on Yugoslav soil, strongly connected to the traditions of autonomous administration of local communities [samouprava]. As early as in the 19th century, Svetozar Marković (1846–1875), founder of Serbian socialism under the influence of Russian populism, had already given a key role to selfmanagement when thinking about the institutional basis of a popular Serbian state.<sup>9</sup>

However, from a theoretical point of view, it was also a concept deeply rooted in Marxist thought. In this tradition, the notion of the “withering away of the state” was a response to the need to imagine the transition from socialism to communism after the taking of power by the working class, as well as a way to reply to the much more radical ideal of an “abolition of the state” put forward by anarchist thought. Already in his reply to Proudhon and most notably in the *Communist Manifesto*, Marx had anticipated the necessary disappearance of the state as a consequence of the implantation of a socialist regime, given that the state was in fact the product of a bourgeois society, organized violence aimed at the exploitation of one class by another.<sup>10</sup> As expressed by Engels in his famous letter to Bebel, when praising the experience of the Parisian commune in 1871, “as long as the proletariat *needs* the state, it will not need it on the interest of freedom, but in order to subdue its enemies; and as soon as it is possible to speak about freedom, the state as is it will cease to exist. That is why we would propose to always use instead of the word «state», the word «community» (*Gemeinwesen*), a good and old German word which is equivalent to the French word «Commune».”<sup>11</sup> The concept of the withering away of the state, recovered later by Lenin in his work *The State and Revolution*, would become the cornerstone of Marxist thought on the state and the transition from the dictatorship of the proletariat to communism. The “community” thus became the announced destination of society, after the gradual erosion of the government of men was replaced

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9 Svetozar MARKOVIĆ, *Srbija na istoku* (Belgrade: SANU Editions, 1995). Some of Marković’s ideas had persisted, with transformations that go beyond the reach of this work, in the radical language of the Serbian Narodna Radikalna Stranka and other popular political movements. On this tradition, a recommended reading are the works of Latinka Perović, such as Latinka PEROVIĆ, “Narodna radikalna stranka: utemeljenje ideologije socijalnog, nacionalnog i političkog jedinstva srpskog naroda,” in *Proces Vojislavu Šešelju. Raskrinkavanje projekta Velika Srbija*, ed. Sonja BISERKO (Belgrade: Helsinski odbor za ljudska prava u Srbiji, 2009).

10 Karl MARX and Friedrich ENGELS, *Communist Manifesto* (London: Penguin Classics, 2002).

11 Friedrich ENGELS, “Letter to Bebel,” in *Critique of the Gotha Programme*, ed. Karl MARX (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1970).

by “the administration of things and the direction of the processes of production”<sup>12</sup>.

In the context of this process of ideological reinvention, the approach of the national question was slowly but decisively transformed in Yugoslavia. Initially, the KPJ had taken up the defense of national autonomies by following the principle of opposing the exploitation of the smaller by the bigger. However, in the new language of Yugoslav communism this approach would take a more historical and philosophical turn, and a recognition of the nation as a space of production still-potentially-progressive for the emancipation of humankind would emerge.

As early as in 1957, in the prologue to the second edition of his work *The Development of the Slovene National Question*, Kardelj claimed: “Stalin, proceeding from the basic premises of Marx, Engels and Lenin on the national question, rightfully observed that the nation is a historical phenomenon, the product of the capitalist epoch [...] he used the old Austro-Marxist definition of the nation, based on culture and language, and supplemented it with the element of economic linkage in a specific territory. Politically, it was certainly a progressive definition, for, deriving directly from it was the necessity of recognizing the right of every nation to self-determination and the indispensability of linking the workers’ movement with national liberation. But theoretically speaking, it merely skimmed the surface, explaining only what binds the nation together but not elucidating the social role of that historical phenomenon. It is clear, namely, that the nation does emerge by chance, and once it is established it must have a social function. It is precisely through that function that it becomes an element of the objective social laws governing the epoch in which it exists.”<sup>13</sup>

In that same text the Slovene theoretician devoted some paragraphs to rethink some of his old conceptions, rooted in Stalin’s work on the national question: “Stalin did not succeed in explaining the effects of ‘economic links’, that is, of the community of ‘economic interests’ in a ‘compact territory’ [...]. In other words, Stalin did not see the organic link between certain socio-economic structures and the phenomenon of the nation; he failed to see that the nation is a component part of certain economic and social relations and not only the manifestation of a specific consciousness growing on the grounds of technological and economic links and community of interest, which are its consequence [...] The struggle for the

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12 Idem, “Anti-Dühring,” in *The State and Revolution*, ed. Vladimir I. LENIN (Beijing: Foreign Languages Press, 1976), 10.

13 Edvard KARDELJ, *The Nations and Socialism* (Belgrade: STP, 1981), 128–129.

assertion of the nation in the epoch of capitalism was therefore not simply a struggle for the democratic and cultural rights of man, for the right to one's own language and independent cultural affirmation, for better economic conditions; it was also a struggle for the social and cultural advancement of mankind generally. And *that struggle will not cease as long as the nation objectively discharges the socio-economic function for which it emerged in history, that is, until the progress of productive forces and socialist relations outgrows that function* [Emphasis added].<sup>14</sup> The polemic with Stalin's work, posited as a representative of the traditional Marxist approach towards the national question, was not only a matter of theoretical terms. It implied a rejection of its political consequences as well: "Stalin sees the nation as a *bourgeois* construct and not as a construct of the *socio-economic relations* of the epoch of capitalism, of the degree of development of productive forces characteristic of that epoch. That is why he pits the 'socialist nation' against the 'bourgeois nation' although the former is the pure and simple result of change in the character of government and ownership. Obviously this is an explicitly idealistic theoretical approach to the national question. That such theories do not help the leading socialist forces to deal correctly with the national question in the period of transition from capitalism to socialism is equally obvious."<sup>15</sup>

Yugoslav communism was thus putting forward a new approach towards the national question. As Kardelj explains, opposition to unitarism was not only based on the need to resist the subtraction of surplus from small nations by big nations, but also on the recognition that, on account of its historical role, the national community was only to disappear when its historical potential would dry out, as a result of the transformation of social relations. In a nutshell: the only way towards the disappearance of the nation as the historical shape of the community and as a privileged space for production was the development of productive forces through socialism, which according to the theory of selfmanagement would be reached solely by means of empowering workers in their local communities and workplace.

During the following years, the notion of selfmanagement would prove strategic not only outside, but also inside Yugoslavia, in the context of the internal struggles of the SKJ. Many authors have pointed out the fact that, especially from the 1960s on, the new reforms that went along with selfmanagement discourse expressed the victory of the economically and politically more liberalizing fractions

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14 Ibidem, 130.

15 Ibidem, 133.

over the more conservative and unitarist sectors of the party.<sup>16</sup> The former were mostly entrenched in the Northern regions of the federation such as Slovenia, Croatia and Vojvodina, and represented by cadres such as the Slovene Boris Kraigher (1914–1967) or the Croat Vladimir Bakarić (1912–1983). For them, the discourse of selfmanagement would prove to be instrumental not only to propel revolutionary changes in the organization of production, by transferring the control of production and investment to workers: above all, this new language would allow them to open deep debates surrounding the distribution of political and economic tasks between the federal state and the republican states. Thus, against the most conservative fractions, mostly represented by more traditional cadres from Serbia proper such as the chief of the secret police, Aleksandar Ranković (1909–1983), the SKJ would launch a series of reforms aimed at giving more autonomy to republican governments in planning, investment and production, as well as in the educational and cultural spheres.<sup>17</sup>

Analyzing the discourse of selfmanagement, however, Dejan Jović also reminds us of the need to keep in mind the ideological density of the Yugoslav project, the ideocratic condition of Marxism.<sup>18</sup> According to Jović, the leaders of the SKJ did not act as representatives of the truly existent, but as a vanguard with projection towards the future. With the development of the paradigm of selfmanagement, the withering away of the state would become a real, not an abstract aim, of the Yugoslav project. Thus the SKJ would come to conceive itself as the carrier of a historic task: dissolving the central state to encourage a more rapid transition to communism, by strengthening the socialist republics and their selfmanaged communities.<sup>19</sup>

With the drive of selfmanagement, Yugoslav communism was to develop a new founding myth, which would overlap with the original myth of the national liberation struggle. Selfmanagement would come to be a whole new political language: based on the disqualification of centralist etatism, the rejection of bureaucratism and the fight against any form of forced unitarism, it would take a central role in the official ideology of the SKJ and the Yugoslav state. The grammar of self-

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16 The denominations of “liberals” and “conservatives” are quite common to refer to the struggle between these two groups. It can be found already in the classical study by Russinow.

17 This description should not be taken as a reflection of the entire spectrum of opinions among Serbian communists. Liberals were also active in the Serbian political scene, becoming especially prominent during the late 1960s.

18 Dejan JOVIĆ, *Jugoslavija, država koja je odumrla* (Zagreb: Prometej, 2003), 484.

19 Ibidem.

management would effectively organize every discussion in the following years: as a shared language for the Yugoslav communism, it would become the common ground for debates, setting the forms and symbolic frontiers of discussions. It also influenced, and at times with a special bitterness, when it came to debating the national problem, a question that would emerge again by the early 1960s.

The language of selfmanagement was an effective weapon in the conflict that pitted the liberals against the conservatives within the SKJ, but it also proved to be tremendously useful to shield those who feared that the new Yugoslavia would encourage a process of assimilation capable of erasing the preexisting boundaries between national cultures. We must here address again the geographical dimension of the problem: even if debates surrounding the national question were not identical to the discussions over political and economic reform, when it came to the cultural and national questions of socialist Yugoslavia the main poles of tension did follow a very similar logic, organized around positions strongly identified with the republics of Slovenia and Serbia. While the former – economically developed, small and ethnically homogeneous – would become the main speaker for cultural autonomy, prominent leaders from the latter – economically heterogeneous, the biggest in size and population in the FNRJ, with territorial borders that did not follow ethnical borders, and holding two highly autonomous regions inside, Vojvodina and Kosovo – would generally identify with a more unitarist and supranational concept of Yugoslavism, thus finding it difficult to deal with some of the most radical consequences of the selfmanagement paradigm.<sup>20</sup>

During the following years, under the ideological renewal brought by the discourse of selfmanagement, the official approach towards the national question would keep on transforming. From the early 1960s on, along with a political language of radical decentralization, the country would be witness to a progressive weakening of Yugoslavism, or any other vision that would imply some way of assimilation between the national cultures of Yugoslavia. In Haug's words, "[...] in 1958, the promotion of socialist Yugoslavism was conceived as a progressive internationalist concept, but by 1966, it was viewed with considerable suspicion, as a centralist concept promoting unity that denied individual republics the right to play a significant role. In addition, attempts to promote Yugoslav unity of this kind

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20 For a detailed analysis of Slovenian cultural policies during this period, including the republic's position regarding cultural unitarism, see A. GABRIĆ, *Socijalistična kulturna revolucija*. Moreover, a brief account of the Slovenian stance regarding the national question in Yugoslavia throughout the years can be found in Božo REPE, "Slovenians and the Federal Yugoslavia," in *Balkan Forum* 3, No. 1 (1995): 139–154.

were increasingly labeled with a Serbian connotation. Although the SKJ leaders never announced the abandonment of a strategy to create a unified Yugoslav culture through the promotion of socialist Yugoslavism, this strategy was discarded piecemeal during the first half of the 1960s.”<sup>21</sup>

In terms of cultural policy, this would translate into the abandonment of Yugoslavism as an official policy of the Yugoslav state towards the national question. As Wachtel has clearly stated, “Cultural policy changed to meet the new decentralized vision of Yugoslavia as well. Significantly, for the first time in its history as a state, Yugoslavia gave up the goal of creating some form of unified culture for all its citizens, embracing instead what could be called a multinational self-image. Instead of seeing national cultural particularities as something to be overcome by one means or another, Yugoslav leaders decided to embrace cultural difference and use it as a sign of strength.”<sup>22</sup>

These changes started to manifest also in specific interventions by the leaders of the SKJ. In 1962, facing the passing of the new Constitution, which aimed at establishing selfmanagement as a central concept of Yugoslav order, in a statement that involved a strong disqualification of any centralist attempt, Kardelj came to claim: “The federation of Yugoslav republics is not a framework for creating a new Yugoslav nation, or a framework for pursuing the kind of national integration that was, in its time, the dream of various protagonists of hegemony and denationalization by terror. It is a community of free, equal and independent nations and working people unified by their common interests and the progressive socio-economic, political, cultural and other aspirations and tendencies of the working people in the epoch of socialism.”<sup>23</sup> The central notion that followed was that the only acceptable form of Yugoslavism was understanding the union of the nations of Yugoslavia as a “community of common selfmanagement interests”. The idea was strongly connected to the Marxist notion of the withering away of the state: if the nation was destined to disappear through the development of productive forces and the coming of communism, it would do so through the emergence of a community of free and equal producers, and not by means of a bigger, binding and unifying nation.

A vision became established signaling the defeat of those who had seen Yugoslavism as a chance to create a unifying culture that would leave national particularisms behind. From then on, Yugoslavism would only persist in name: the Ju-

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21 Ibidem, 163.

22 A. WACHTEL, *Making a Nation...*, 174.

23 E. KARDELJ, *The Nations and Socialism*, 137.

goslovenstvo would become an uncertain and ubiquitous reference in the official discourse, associated to the multinational and plural character of Yugoslavia, but voided of any real effect in the policies of the Yugoslav state.

### 3. Opposing and resisting: the Ćosić-Pirjevec polemic

In January, 1961, Dobrica Ćosić gave an interview to the Croat daily *Telegram*, where he discussed the cultural relations between Yugoslav republics. To the journalist's question "is it still a present issue that we are too passive in our inter-republican contacts?", Ćosić replied: "It will be, as long as republics exist. And as long as we talk about cooperation between them."<sup>24</sup> Dušan Pirjevec, a literary critic, decided to use the pages of his own journal, *Naša Sodobnost*, to respond to Ćosić's claims. In March that same year here he wrote a brief but sharp commentary entitled "Excuse me, what did you say?" In his own words: "We have to question Ćosić's claim that this issue will persist as long as republics exist, which may mean that we will have passive inter-republican relations as long as we have our republics. From this it is not hard to draw the conclusion that the very existence of republics is the cause of the passivity in inter-republican relations. And from this point it is not hard to conceive the twisted idea that everything will be solved, including the passivity in inter-republican treatment, when republics cease to exist. To a certain point, this is true, because if there were no republics there would be no inter-republican relations of any kind, nor active, nor passive."<sup>25</sup>

Responding to Ćosić, Pirjevec went on to reaffirm the sanctity of republics, defining them as national organisms, "inviolable as it is inviolable the national will that created them, as it is inviolable the blood that it was necessary to spill so they could exist."<sup>26</sup> Finally, he attacked what he saw as a slanted vision in Ćosić's statements: if the Serbian writer had noted that the most important duty for cultural cooperation in Yugoslavia was the fight against the "nationalist vampires" of every republic, the Slovene critic instead emphasized the danger not of particularist nationalisms, but of the unitarism traditionally tied to the ambitions of Serbian hegemonism: "Since we are talking about vampires, we should talk about all, and not

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24 The question is quoted in Dobrica ĆOSIĆ, "O nesavremenom savremenom nacionalizmu," in *Odgovornosti: Akcija II, Sabrana dela, vol. 8*, ed. Eadem (Belgrade: Prosveta, 1966), 18.

25 Dušan PIRJEVEC, "Oprostite, kako ste rekli?" in *Naša sodobnost*, No. 3 (1961): 287.

26 Ibidem, 287.

only some of them. And that is why we should say a few words about the unitarist and integralist vampires [...] that don't know what republics are, nor what nations are [...]. What is not right, what hurts all of us and irritates Ćosić, is not only the consequence of Serbian, Croatian or Slovenian vampires, but it grows in the shadow of the wings of the double-headed vampire that Ćosić doesn't even mention [...] Let there be no mistake: we are in favor of expelling every vampire, not only some of them, but all of them, and for good."<sup>27</sup>

Pirjevec's objections produced a swift reaction by Ćosić, who decided to respond with an article published in the journal *Delo* from Belgrade, in December, 1961. Under the title "On the Non-Contemporary Contemporary Nationalism", the text began by quoting Pirjevec's reply, expressing shock for how his own sayings had been misinterpreted, and explaining his words. However, Ćosić would go further, using the pages of *Delo* to debate with Pirjevec in theoretical and political terms about the national question and the challenges posed to socialism in Yugoslavia.

The main arguments of this debate have been previously reviewed: through-out his articles, drawing strongly on Marxist theory, Ćosić would defend a universalist approach towards the national question, putting forward the creation of a Jugoslovenstvo, understood not as a new nation but as the social process of coming together of the Yugoslav nations on the road to socialism; Pirjevec, in turn, would draw on a very singular interpretation of Marxist thought and elements from the discourse of Kardelj to justify cultural autonomy for the Yugoslav nations, holding a strongly positive view about the national dimension, as essential and constitutive to human nature.

From the point of view of these arguments, the exchange manifested itself as paradigmatic of the time, as the expression of two different ways to approach the national problem in Yugoslavia. However, there was more: to the extent that both Ćosić and Pirjevec were thinking about Yugoslavia as a revolutionary project, and that the need to give a solution to the national problem was a key part of such a project, the polemic around the present would end up opening a discussion about the origins, the principles and the ends of the Yugoslav revolution. Thus, the historical dimension would emerge in the debate, interweaving the past, the present and the future, that is the appearance of what Reinhart Koselleck has called "the contemporaneity of the non contemporaneous."<sup>28</sup>

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27 Ibidem, 287–288. The double-headed vampire metaphor refers here to the coat of arms of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia.

28 R. KOSELLECK, *Futures past*.



In his comments, Pirjevec had not only deployed his rejection of Serbian hegemonism, a typical and traditional critique in Yugoslav communism, which Čosić, as a former fighter during the war, an activist and cadre in the SKJ, could only respect and share; what is more, the Slovene critic had introduced arguments which seemed to express a singular interpretation of the struggle for national liberation, the founding myth of socialist Yugoslavia. Čosić would take this chance to express his own interpretation of these principles: “In the analysis of the relations between the national cultures of Yugoslav nations, in the determination of our tasks in this historical process, in the consideration of the perspective of these relations, I reckon we should not lose sight of the fact that Yugoslav national republics are part of a socialist, not a bourgeois-national revolution; they are part of a single Yugoslav worker’s movement, and not of separate bourgeois national movements; they are part of the united and common struggle for national liberation of all Yugoslav nations towards a socialist Yugoslavia. Only thus could our national republics arise, as the national political form of the achieved national freedom and equality; because they were thus created so that Yugoslav nations, nationally free and equal, were united in the creation of a socialist society.”<sup>29</sup>

As it was mentioned before, the constitutional texts in socialist Yugoslavia enabled such a polemic, as they harbored deep tensions and indeterminations when it came to defining the ultimate holders of political sovereignty. The uncertain relation between the «republika» and the «narod», both practically identical in the case of Slovenia but not in the case of Serbia, contributed significantly to this controversy. Thus, a space opened up in the breach of the present to debate the very historical dimension of the Yugoslav project, its origins as well as its future. Revolutionary language was articulating all of these dimensions at once.

Pirjevec had replied to Čosić’s suggestions that republics could cease to exist by reaffirming the inviolability of the national wills that these republics represented; Čosić would respond, in turn, with a universalist hope in the ultimate union of Yugoslav nations under socialism. In his own words, “The brotherhood of nations and people is one of the greatest communist ideals. Achieving it is as hard and distant as realizing the principle of ‘from each according to their capability, to each according to their need’. In fact, only in such a future, in a life with such social conditions, will national problems cease to exist, because objectively there will not be reasons for people with different histories, cultures, languages and geography not

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29 D. ČOSIĆ, “O nesavremenom savremenom nacionalizmu,” 26–27.

to become brothers.”<sup>30</sup> Defining the task of communist intellectuals as the fight against nationalism in their own cultures (“Each one in his home, first”) and the development of national cultures in a way compatible with the aims of Yugoslav socialism, Čosić stated, “He who nowadays does not see that the historical and social sense of cultural creation lies in the socialist rapprochement of all Yugoslav nations, and then of all nations in the world, is a second-rate traditional nationalist.”<sup>31</sup>

To Čosić’s reply in *Delo*, Pirjevec responded with a long article in *Naša Sodobnost* with the title “Slovenedom, Jugoslavdom and Socialism”. In the text, the Slovenian critic claimed it wasn’t necessary to bring back the basic Marxist definitions regarding the national phenomenon: the origins of the nation in the epoch of capitalism were a shared premise in this debate. However, he took on the preface of the second edition of *The Development of the Slovene National Question* and Kardelj’s debate with Stalin to defend the national as “a specific manifestation of social life”: “But clearly it is important to underline the following: the nation is indeed a historical category and it arose in a determined epoch of capitalism, so we can declare it is a particular form in the development of bourgeois society. However, the nation is not a capitalist or bourgeois category, and it doesn’t cease to exist in the moment when capitalism and the bourgeoisie are historically liquidated. The nation and the nationality are two categories that live, develop and also arise when there is no more capitalism or bourgeoisie. That doesn’t mean that I believe the nation is an eternal and inviolable category of development. Allow me here to bring back how Kardelj in the introduction to the second edition of *The Development of the Slovene National Question* resists Stalin’s thesis about ‘capitalist’ and ‘socialist’ nations, and how he emphasizes that the nation is a ‘specific manifestation of social life’. The nation and the nationality are thus, in a way, categories that are above class, or at least outside of it. That is why it is not hard to understand that nationality represents a fundamental constituent element of the human person, that it represents in a certain way the base of his existence, the starting point for his communication with the world. Destroying the nation means then to destroy the human person, to endanger his existence.”<sup>32</sup>

However, the Slovenian critic would not limit himself to debating with Čosić in the field of theory. What is more, he would put forward a whole interpre-

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30 Ibidem, 33.

31 Ibidem, 44.

32 Dušan PIRJEVEC, “Slovenstvo, Jugoslovanstvo in Socializem,” in *Naša sodobnost*, No.12 (1961): 1117–1118.

tation of the ends of the Yugoslav project by claiming that his defense of the nation did not imply questioning the withering away of the state as an ultimate goal of socialism. In his words, "It is absolutely clear that our final goal is not the state. Our goal is the withering away of the state, our goal is a free society of free people. Having that in mind, I am of the opinion that the correct process of the withering away of the state is that which eliminates at the same time and in the same extent all state forms and institutions, no matter which is their place in the temporary, stable or agreed hierarchies of the state. This process involves simultaneously and with the same force all forms, all structures and all instances, from the lowest to the highest. I hope this goes without saying to all democratic minds and that no more proof or explanation is needed [...] at the same time, I think that with time this process will emphasize the category of the nation. What is more, as socio-legal categories will weaken, those forms of association which are in a way more primary will become in turn more important. It is precisely here that I see one of the strongest evidences for the thesis that only socialism allows for the possibility of a universal development of nation and nationality, and that it creates precisely with this universal, complete and intensive development a firm base for true abolition of national narrowness, for this qualitative leap, once the nations overcome themselves."<sup>33</sup>

Pirjevec embraced the fact that socialism, with its universalist program, carried a vision of a united humankind. However, he considered that the notion of integration was not transparent. In particular, he was opposed to what he called "a mathematical-geometrical utopia": the idea that smaller units and organisms should melt into bigger ones, a vision that in Yugoslavia would translate into the hegemony of the Serbo-Croatian over the Slovene or Macedonian environments.<sup>34</sup> By contrast, he saw the proper way towards integration as the full affirmation of each of the organisms individually: "The road to integration is the road of maximum development of these individual organisms, a development in which, by their own logic, these organisms come to deny or overcome themselves. That is why the road to integration is also a fight against limitation and violence, a fight for true freedom and complete equality of all units and organisms. That is why we cannot claim that some units will disintegrate more or less, that some organisms will lose their individuality before and to a greater extent, while other will do it later and to a lesser extent. It is precisely like the withering away of the state. The true integration of humankind will affect all existing units at the same time. If we were to talk

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33 Ibidem, 1119–1120.

34 Ibidem, 1120.

in utopian terms, we would state that we cannot agree with any integration that does not treat all units and organisms equally. That is why it is unacceptable for us that in the name of future integration something is carried out that, in one way or another, follows a non-reasonable form of geometrical-mathematical combination, rigidly bureaucratic and extremely antidemocratic. In circumstances such as the ones we have now, it is the fight against violence, the fight for equality and at the same time for the most effective and unrestricted development of all units and organisms that proves true faith in future integration of humankind.”<sup>35</sup>

Pirjevec’s vision was not capricious: on the contrary, it was grounded on many passages from Kardelj’s theoretical and political work. As we have seen, this was a discourse defined to a great extent by its reaffirmation of a stronger economic, political and cultural role for the national space, compared to the traditional Marxist perspective. His approach was also different, however, to the one held by many of the intellectual and political cadres of the Yugoslav communist movement.

Ćosić would respond in a new article in February, 1962, entitled “Nation, integration, socialism”, in which he discussed Pirjevec’s claims about the essential character of the nation. In the text, the Serbian novelist recovered the Marxist idea that the nation is a product of a certain time in the development of productive forces, and insisted on the need to overcome it in the socialist perspective towards the future: “I ask, if we really accept the notion that the nation is a historical phenomenon whose social affirmation is reached in the epoch of capitalism, or in some spaces only in the social system of socialism, how is it possible to claim that ‘nationality represents a fundamental constituent element of the human person’ and that it is ‘the base of his existence’? [...] How do we limit and impoverish our thought! How do we believe traditionally that our European and national history makes the history of mankind; that European culture makes world culture; that the culture of the epoch of capitalism and modernity make European culture; that only national cultures make the whole of European culture; and, strictly and consequently, that culture, therefore, is only national culture.”<sup>36</sup>

Moreover, in the article Ćosić discussed the terms in which Pirjevec thought the utopia of the withering away of the state, displaying a critique to the “bureaucratic nationalism” which he identified as a major enemy of the Yugoslav project: “I think Pirjevec’s vision that the withering away of the state is a unique and simul-

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35 Ibidem.

36 Dobrica ĆOSIĆ, “Nacija, integracija, socijalizam,” in *Odgovornosti: Akcija II, Sabrana dela*, vol. 8, ed. Eadem (Belgrade: Prosveta, 1966), 58–59.

taneous process in all federal and republican structures is correct. Of course, the withering away of the state doesn't only imply the withering away of republics and republican statehood; and, of course, the decentralization of public administration and the development of the system of social selfmanagement does not lead, and should not lead, to the strengthening of republican centralism and national bureaucracies. If Pirjevec thinks that this 'emphasizing of the nation' means also the weakening of republican centralism and the strengthening of true social selfmanagement, then it won't be hard for us to reach an agreement [...] in a developed communal system, in a system of social management and in the conditions of socialist democracy, in conditions of free exposure of economic laws in the areas of production, the market and consumption, in the conditions of direction of economic, cultural and social life in general in Yugoslavia, these primary forms of association, it is understood, will not limit themselves to republican borders, and the content of such associations will not be of 'national' nature; their content will be economic, cultural, technical, that is social in general. Otherwise, *for most republics, republican borders do not represent national borders*. That association is an already active process, and the development and interests of a faster and more progressive movement reach and demand an association not only in a national-territorial line, but in a line of fellowship of economic sectors and interests. Or, like Kardelj would say, 'a vertical line' of Yugoslav reach [Emphasis added].<sup>37</sup> The horizon of the Yugoslav revolution necessarily involved, for Ćosić, some kind of greater integration. As Jelena Milojković-Djurić holds, the brotherhood of the Yugoslav nations was not a literary notion for Ćosić, but a real political project.<sup>38</sup> Thus, his last response to Pirjevec stated: "Resisting Yugoslav integration – the rapprochement and unification of nations and people according to their socialist interests and their future, and on a egalitarian and coherently democratic basis – is resisting socialism, resisting the birth of a socialist world and man's liberation."<sup>39</sup>

The exchange held between Ćosić and Pirjevec showed the difficulties of defining an approach towards the national question in socialist Yugoslavia, contrary to the generally accepted idea that nationalism was a ghost from the past. Moreover, the polemic reflected tensions which did not only concern the present of the FNRJ, but also its very sense as a historical project, by interweaving the interpretation of the past with the expectations towards the future.

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37 Ibidem, 69–70.

38 J. MILOJKOVIĆ-DJURIĆ, "Approaches to National Identities..." 69.

39 D. ĆOSIĆ, "Nacija, integracija, socijalizam," 84.

At the same time, another phenomenon comes to light in the debate, which concerns both the specific context of discussion that surrounds Ćosić and Pirjevec, as well as their inclusion in a tradition that precedes them and that will transcend them until the last days of existence of the federation: the use of the concept of nationalism as a form of marking and political denunciation. In the language of the SKJ and the whole Yugoslav communist movement, the strong linkage between opposition and nationalism would be very recurring, and the very vagueness of the concept would allow for it to be used to tag counterrevolutionary enemies, be it under the shape of unitarism and centralism, or under the shape of separatism and autonomism. Something of this becomes visible in the use by Ćosić of the word «vampire» to refer to nationalism in Yugoslavia: in the Marxist tradition, the vampire has long symbolized the capital, the class enemy par excellence, and it is worth remembering how Marx used the term in more than one opportunity.<sup>40</sup> The backside of this phenomenon would be the persistent impossibility to see the nationalism in one's own political project. It was a constant of the Yugoslav political discourse that we must underline, because it would go from the national liberation struggle to the 1990's: in the language of Yugoslav communism, nationalism is always the other.

Finally, it is important to point again at the fact that both speakers were capable of finding arguments in the official discourse of the SKJ to hold their stances. In this sense, the debate signals a historical moment of multiple possibilities in the Yugoslav political discourse, some of which would become stronger with time, while others would weaken. On the one hand, even though time would make it lose in legitimacy, Ćosić's position was then still consistent with a vision shared by many in Yugoslavia. According to some authors and to Ćosić, it was the position of the Serbian communist Jovan Veselinov (1906–1982), and even Tito's.<sup>41</sup> The enraged speech the President gave in Split in May, 1962, expressing a critique to the accelerated pace of decentralization in Yugoslavia, which was interpreted as a sign of support for the centralist faction led by Ranković, favors this theory. Pirjevec's position, on the other hand, represented the vision of liberals such as Boris Kraigher, lined up with the economic reforms of the 1960s.

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40 Karl MARX, "The Working Day," in *Capital*, vol. 1, Chapter VIII (London: Penguin Books, 1976), 342.

Marx resorts to the image of the vampire many times, and starts by defining capital as "dead labor, that, vampire-like, only lives by sucking living labor, and lives the more, the more labor it sucks."

41 A. WACHTEL, *Making a Nation...* and N. MILLER, *The Nonconformists*.

Boosted by the economic success of the time, this faction would eventually prevail in the SKJ, at least until the early 1970s. A detailed study of their rise goes beyond the purpose of this article, and the ideological, economic and political dimensions of such a process have been analyzed elsewhere.<sup>42</sup> However, the fall of Aleksandar Ranković in 1966, accused of great Serbian nationalism as a result of his opposition to follow the new line of the party, signaled a decisive victory for Kardelj and a clear indication of the new path taken. The expulsion of Čosić from the Central Committee in 1968, due to his strong criticism of bureaucratic nationalisms and his questioning of the party's approach towards Kosovo, would be another clear symptom of this new time.

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<sup>42</sup> A good analysis of this process, emphasizing the economic dimension, can be found in John LAMPE, *Yugoslavia as History: Twice There Was a Country* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000).

## SUMMARY

From a perspective rooted in conceptual history, the article aims at examining the conceptual transformations of Yugoslav political discourse from the end of World War II until the 1960s, in order to later analyze the famous debate held by the Serbian writer Dobrica Ćosić and the Slovene critic Dušan Pirjevec regarding cultural cooperation between the Yugoslav republics.

Firstly, the text draws from the founding documents of socialist Yugoslavia to analyze the centralist political paradigm embodied in the slogan of “Brotherhood and Unity”, as well as the ever conflicting relations between the concepts of «republika» and «narod». Moreover, the progressive development of the discourse of socialist selfmanagement and the contributions of Edvard Kardelj are examined, in light of political events such as the breakup with the USSR, but also in relation to their insertion in the Marxist tradition of political thought. The text emphasizes the effects of these theoretical and political developments on the official approach towards the national question in Yugoslavia. Thus, the process of gradual abandonment of Yugoslavism and the strengthening of national autonomies are interpreted as a structural dimension of this new conceptual and political language of Yugoslav communism.

Finally, the article analyzes the debate held by Ćosić and Pirjevec in the early 1960s concerning nationalisms and cultural cooperation, strongly emphasizing how this disagreement regarding the official approach towards the national question involved a greater controversy on the very nature of the Yugoslav federation as a historical project.



## RESUMÉ

### **Mezi národem a socialismem v Jugoslávii. Debata mezi Dobricou Ćosićem a Dušanem Pirjevcem v šedesátých letech**

Cílem studie je posoudit koncepční změny v rámci jugoslávského politického diskursu v období od konce druhé světové války do 60. let z pohledu dějin pojmů za účelem analýzy tehdejší věhlasné debaty mezi srbským spisovatelem Dobricou Ćosićem a slovinským kritikem Dušanem Pirjevcem o kulturní spolupráci mezi jugoslávskými republikami.

Text nejprve zkoumá základní státoprávní dokumenty socialistické Jugoslávie, aby bylo možné analyzovat sjednocující politické paradigma vyjádřené sloganem „bratrství a jednota“, stejně jako nepřetržitý rozpor mezi pojmy „republika“ a „národ“. Kromě toho je zkoumán také další vývoj názorů a vyjadřování socialistického vedení a zejména podílu Edvarda Kardelje, a to nejen ve světle politických událostí, jako byla roztržka se SSSR, ale také ve vztahu k jeho implementaci do marxistické tradice politického myšlení. Článek zdůrazňuje vlivy tohoto teoretického a politického vývoje na oficiální postoj k národnostním otázkám v Jugoslávii. Proto byl proces postupného opouštění ideje jugoslávství a posilování prvků národnostní autonomie interpretován jako strukturální dimenze tohoto nového koncepčního a politického jazyka jugoslávského komunismu.

Závěrem je ve studii analyzována debata mezi Ćosićem a Pirjevcem, kterou vedli na počátku 60. let, týkající se jugoslávských nacionalismů a kulturní spolupráce. Přitom zdůrazňuje, že nesouhlas s oficiálním přístupem k národnostní otázce způsobil značné kontroverze týkající se samotné podstaty jugoslávské federace jako historického projektu.

