

To cite text:

Bešlin, Milivoj; Žarković, Petar (2023), "The Rise and Fall of Democratic Socialism in Yugoslavia 1948-1972.", *Philosophy and Society* 34 (4): 550-570.

Milivoj Bešlin and Petar Žarković

THE RISE AND FALL OF DEMOCRATIC SOCIALISM IN YUGOSLAVIA 1948-1972.¹

ABSTRACT

This article examines the complex trajectory of democratic socialism in Yugoslavia from 1948 to 1972, a period characterized by groundbreaking experimentation and subsequent retreat from socialist ideals. The study begins with Yugoslavia's 1948 break from Stalin, marking the inception of its independent socialist path, distinct from the Soviet model. It highlights the implementation of innovative policies, particularly the model of worker self-management, reflecting Yugoslavia's endeavor to marry socialist principles with democratic practices. These policies, initially successful in fostering economic growth and a unique Yugoslav identity, faced internal challenges of ethnic and national complexities and external pressures owing to its non-aligned stance during the Cold War. The article delves into the internal political dynamics and leadership strategies of Yugoslavia during this transformative period, which is a domain that has received less scholarly attention compared to Yugoslav economic and foreign policies. It scrutinizes how Tito and his contemporaries navigated the challenges of maintaining a socialist state while balancing the ideals of democracy with the practicalities of governance. Special attention is given to the interplay between domestic policies and international influences, offering a comprehensive view of the Yugoslav socialist experiment. The decline of democratic socialism in Yugoslavia, culminating in the political shifts of 1972, is portrayed not as an abrupt collapse but as a gradual process, marked by changes in both policy and ideology. The authors conclude that the Yugoslav experience provides valuable insights into the complexities of implementing socialism in a diverse and multifaceted society, illustrating both the potential and limitations of merging socialism with democratic principles.

KEYWORDS

Yugoslavia, socialism, self-management, democratization, League of Communists, Josip Broz Tito, Marko Nikezić.

¹ This article was realised with the support of the Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development of the Republic of Serbia, according to the Agreement on the realisation and financing of scientific research.

Milivoj Bešlin: Senior Research Fellow, University of Belgrade, Institute for Philosophy and Social Theory; milivoj.beslin@ifdt.bg.ac.rs.

Petar Žarković: Research Fellow, University of Belgrade, Institute for Philosophy and Social Theory; petar.zarkovic@ifdt.bg.ac.rs.



The history of democratic socialism in Yugoslavia, particularly from 1948 to 1972, is a fascinating episode in the broader narrative of the 20th-century socialist experiment. This period stands out due to Yugoslavia's unique position during the Cold War era, marked by its break from Stalin and the subsequent pursuit of an independent path towards socialism. This article aims to unravel the complexities and nuances of Yugoslav experimenting with democratic socialism, situating it within the larger context of socialist governance and Cold War politics.

The existing body of research on Yugoslav socialism offers a comprehensive analysis of its economic and foreign policy dimensions. A significant portion of this scholarship has been dedicated to exploring Yugoslavia's groundbreaking economic policies, especially the model of worker self-management, which emerged as a distinctive feature of this socialist experiment (Rusinow 1978; Petranović 1988; Benson 2002; Bešlin 2022; Duda 2023). This model, characterized by workers' councils and decentralized decision-making in enterprises, represented a radical departure from the centralized economic structures prevalent in other socialist states and has been the subject of extensive academic scrutiny. Scholars have examined its origins, evolution, and impact on the Yugoslav economy and society, thus offering valuable insights into the possibilities and limitations of economic democratization in a socialist framework. In terms of foreign policy, Yugoslav socialism has been studied extensively regarding its non-aligned stance during the Cold War (Bogetić 2006; Jakovina 2011; Dimić 2014). Yugoslavia's role as a founding member of the Non-Aligned Movement and its efforts to chart a course independent of the two major power blocs of the era have been well-documented. This aspect of Yugoslav history has been pivotal in understanding the country's international positioning and diplomatic strategies in navigating the geopolitical tensions of the Cold War. However, despite the productivity of this scholarship, there remains a notable gap in the examination of Yugoslavia's internal political dynamics and leadership strategies, especially during the turbulent period of 1968-1972. The intricate interplay between ideological shifts, political decision-making, and leadership tactics that contributed significantly to the rise and subsequent decline of democratic socialist ideals in Yugoslavia has not been thoroughly explored.

Positioning itself at the intersection of political history and socialist theory, this study adopts a multidimensional approach. It scrutinizes the political decisions, ideological shifts, and leadership dynamics that shaped Yugoslavia's socialist trajectory. By doing so, it contributes to a deeper understanding of how the Yugoslav leadership navigated the challenges of implementing socialism in a diverse and complex national context. The analysis also pays particular attention to the interplay between domestic policies and international pressures, thus offering a comprehensive view of Yugoslav socialism. The research problem at the heart of this study is the exploration of the factors that led to the rise of democratic socialist aspirations in Yugoslavia and the factors that contributed to their decline. This involves a critical examination of the ideological foundations of Yugoslav socialism, the policy decisions made

by its leadership, and the socio-political context that influenced the making of these decisions.

The paper is structured as follows: it begins by exploring the ideological and political landscape of post-1948 Yugoslavia, setting the stage for the country's departure from Stalinist orthodoxy. It then delves into the key reforms and policies implemented during the height of Yugoslav democratic socialism, highlighting their impact on the political and social fabric of the nation. Following this, the paper examines the factors leading to the gradual decline of democratic socialism, culminating in the political shifts in 1972. The conclusion synthesizes these findings, reflecting on the broader implications of the Yugoslav experience for understanding the dynamics of socialist governance in general, together with the challenges of implementing socialist policies in a diverse and complex society.

The Conflict with the Soviet Union 1948: The Starting Point for Democratization

During World War II and the consequent socialist revolution in Yugoslavia (1941–1945), the Communist Party emerged as the central force driving political processes. It actively engaged the masses and the entire Yugoslav populace to secure its legitimacy and establish new sovereignty. This engagement was pivotal in forging a popular consensus and a sense of collective participation in the revolutionary process. The creation of the first national liberation committees, which functioned as “provisional organs of people’s governance,” underscored the fundamentally democratic underpinnings of the Yugoslav revolution, integrated within the broader anti-fascist movement (Bešlin 2023: 9–46). While Soviet models exerted some influence during the war and more prominently in the immediate post-liberation period by establishing the Communist Party of Yugoslavia’s (CPY) monopolistic rule, their applicability and relevance had their limits. These Soviet-inspired approaches were adopted to an extent in the early stages of the CPY’s governance, reflecting the initial alignment with Soviet policies and administrative methods. However, the reliance on Soviet models and their perception as ideological beacons and sources of legitimacy went through a significant shift following the Informburo Resolution 1948. This resolution, which condemned the Yugoslav government and led to the country’s expulsion from the Cominform (Communist Information Bureau), marked a critical turning point (Banac 1990; Dedijer 1978).

The initial major rift within the socialist bloc had profound implications for the Communist Party of Yugoslavia (CPY) and its societal structure, leading to significant changes in Yugoslav society. While some international observers, particularly American sources, were surprised by the conflict – perceiving Yugoslavia as “the most loyal Soviet satellite” – its roots lay in internal dynamics and Stalin’s ambition for uncontested authority over the states and societies within his sphere (Jakovina 2003: 232–242; Lis 2003: 17). This quest

for hegemony met with opposition in Yugoslavia. The CPY, credited with leading a victorious liberation war, and Yugoslavia, renowned for its robust anti-fascist movement and independently-driven socialist revolution, refused a subordinate role. Their stance, originating from a movement for social and national emancipation, independent from the Soviets, was inherently incompatible with any form of external dominance. Yugoslav burgeoning socialist patriotism, reinforced by global acclaim for its role in defeating fascism, was evident in its early resistance to unequal Soviet-Yugoslav partnerships. By mid-1946, Yugoslavia had objected to forming joint Soviet-Yugoslav companies and declined to establish a mixed bank. The Yugoslavs' critique of Soviet military and civilian advisors in the FNRJ (Federal People's Republic of Yugoslavia) particularly aggrieved the Soviets. Such insubordination was at odds with the expected unwavering compliance to Stalin and risked setting a negative example for other Eastern Bloc nations. As a result, aligning Yugoslavia swiftly with Kremlin directives became a Soviet imperative. Conflict seemed inescapable. When subtler tactics proved ineffective, Stalin employed direct coercion and attacks on Yugoslavia's state and party leadership, erroneously believing this would precipitate their swift downfall and the installation of a puppet regime. Stalin's strategy, underestimating the CPY as merely an adjunct of the Soviet party, failed to acknowledge its pivotal role in the anti-fascist struggle and revolution. He assumed that by undermining the CPY, Yugoslavia would capitulate and conform to Soviet imperialistic policies. The Informburo, designed as an instrument for Stalinist imperial ambitions, mirrored the roles of the now-defunct Comintern. This strategy became glaringly apparent during the final meeting of the Yugoslav delegation (including Milovan Đilas, Koča Popović, and Edvard Kardelj) in Moscow in February 1948. Stalin subjected them to severe coercion and humiliation, treating them as subordinate satellites and striving to impose a policy of "subordination". As recounted by Milovan Đilas, a delegation member, this meeting sought to demote Yugoslavia to the status of other Soviet-occupied Eastern European countries (Đilas 1990: 110–119).

The decisive rejection of Stalin's demands by Yugoslavia's party authorities in March 1948 signified a pivotal moment in the history of the international labor movement, eliciting an immediate reaction from the Kremlin. Stalin criticized the CPY's foreign and domestic policies, attributing this rebuke to the perceived spread of anti-Soviet attitudes and the reinforcement of capitalist elements in Yugoslavia. Subsequently, he declared that the CPY no longer qualified as a communist party. Nonetheless, Tito's approach, framing the conflict as a matter of Yugoslav sovereignty and inter-state relations rather than internal party dynamics, enabled the CPY leadership to articulate a vital thesis: despite their commitment to the USSR as the forefront of socialism, Yugoslav communists should not "in any case love their country less, which is also endeavoring to establish socialism" (Đilas 1990: 357; Štaubringer 1980: 41–43). This perspective distilled the crux of the conflict to a fundamental question of the nature of relationships between socialist nations. Should these relationships be defined by deference to the Kremlin or mutual respect, allowing for

distinct models of socialism? This difficulty would remain a critical issue in Yugoslav-Soviet relations in the following decades.

The confrontation with the Soviet Union posed an immense challenge for Yugoslav communists and their leaders. Yet, their staunch defense of national autonomy laid the foundation for the evolution of unique Yugoslav socialism and the establishment of independent foreign and domestic policies. Yugoslavia's resistance against Stalinist imperialism significantly boosted its international stature, a prominence akin to its role in the anti-fascist struggle. This episode marked Stalin's initial major post-war defeat on the global stage, heralding the fragmentation of the Soviet bloc and initiating shifts within the Eastern Bloc with extensive international ramifications. This development catapulted Yugoslavia into the spotlight of global politics, amplifying its influence and prestige beyond what its inherent capabilities, size, and resources would ordinarily suggest. These events profoundly impacted the international labor movement, especially the European left. Stalin's authoritarian approach had stifled any alternatives or efforts towards a more humanistic socialism, primarily by obstructing reforms and democratization. In this milieu, Yugoslavia's pursuit of self-managed socialism, a direct result of the 1948 rift, was an inspiration and a blueprint for democratic socialism. This model resonated with left-wing, socialist, and communist parties and movements across both East and West, in Europe and globally, in their search for a feasible and democratic socialist framework.

The schism between the Yugoslav communists and the Soviet paradigm was crucial in promoting a reformist and democratic inclination within the CPY, later evolving into the LCY (League of Communists of Yugoslavia). For advocates of this direction, 1948 represented the inception and primary source of inspiration and legitimacy in their efforts to democratize both the party and society. This era highlighted the imperative to distinguish the Yugoslav model of self-managed socialism from the Soviet model, which was initially totalitarian and later, post-1953, state socialist. While for the CPY's revolutionary old guard, severing ties with Stalin and breaking free from the Soviet mode was a difficult transition, for the younger, reform-oriented factions within the CPY, as well as the increasingly liberal segments of the movement, the events of 1948 – and the ensuing period of de-Stalinization and democratization in various sectors – held profound formative importance. This epoch not only established but also consistently inspired their initiatives.

Self-Government – the Yugoslav Model of Socialism

The defense of Yugoslavia's independence in 1948, coupled with its resistance to the aggressive maneuvers of the Soviet Union and its allies, forged a foundation for an alternative socialist concept. Initially, Stalin's allegations inadvertently intensified Soviet traits within the Yugoslav framework (Petranović 1988: 216–227; Popov 2003; Pirjevec 2012: 234–290). However, by 1949, this model proved increasingly unsustainable. Repudiating Stalin's supremacy and

infallibility while adhering to his version of socialism as the definitive approach became an untenable contradiction. A realization gradually emerged, later serving as the cornerstone for Yugoslav reforms, that only through the transformation and democratization of its society, distancing from the Soviet totalitarian, Stalinist mold, could Yugoslavia's sovereignty be sustainably preserved.

In the early 1950s, the quest to formulate an alternative Yugoslav socialism commenced. Amidst profound crises, the solution emerged from the Yugoslav War of Liberation and the socialist revolution – precisely, the popular masses. Additionally, rather than clinging to a distorted Stalinist doctrine, a re-engagement with the original works of Marx and Engels took place. In 1949, a symbolic gesture of de-Stalinization occurred in Yugoslavia – thousands of Stalin's portraits were removed from public spaces and discarded, along with the Short Course of History of the CPSU (b), the epitome of Stalinism. This marked the beginning of ideological emancipation from Soviet influence and the search for a unique framework for constructing socialist social and economic relations. Embracing Marxist classics, the LCY was progressively diverging from the Soviet model, transitioning from a defensive stance and validation of its legitimacy to a critical and contentious phase, accusing the CPSU (b) of straying away from Marx, fostering state capitalism in the USSR and devolving into a "bureaucratic caste governance" that maintained a nationalist-dominated occupation of "six civilized European countries" (Đilas 1950: 4). The Yugoslav communists rapidly evolved; by 1950, Stalinism was identified as the labor movement's most formidable threat. Figures such as Tito, Edvard Kardelj, and Boris Kidrič, in resisting Stalin and orchestrating Yugoslav de-Stalinization and socialist democratization, shaped Yugoslavia's socialism.

In 1950, Kardelj contended that socialism could not be constructed by any bureaucratic system, regardless of its leadership, but only through the initiative of the masses, guided by the proletarian party. This assertion directly challenged the Soviet system's core principles. Boris Kidrič's "Theses on the Economy of the Transitional Period" laid the groundwork for socialist socio-economic relations, offering initial guidelines for practical changes and amalgamating market and administrative-economic mechanisms. In addition to the initial propositions and the works of Marx and Engels, the experiences from the revolution, which included specific segments of self-governance through the national liberation committees, were given due consideration (Milosavljević 1983: 30–33; Petranović 1988: 288–291; Bešlin 2023: 9–46). Kidrič acknowledged the necessity of accommodating "spontaneous action of economic laws," asserting that socialism, neither complete nor final, encompassed capitalist elements while fostering new socialist ones. The central challenge was integrating commodity production and market mechanisms within the socialist framework – a foundational dilemma for every Yugoslav reform. In the early 1950s, Kidrič envisioned a progressive solution through companies' economic and legal autonomy, tempered by the state's centralization of accumulation (profit) through investment funds – federal, republican, and local – to prevent capitalist anarchy (Kidrič 1985: 133–134). These anti-Stalinist

tenets underpinned a non-dogmatic approach to the Yugoslav socialist path. The economic and social democratization efforts were envisioned to pave the way for political democratization as well.

Rooted in the principles previously established, Boris Kidrič, the President of the Economic Council, and Đuro Salaj, the leading trade union figure, enacted the 1949 Instruction on establishing and operating workers' councils in state-owned enterprises. This guideline was circulated to all trade union representatives and the initial 215 collectives designated for the implementation of workers' councils, signaling the inception of workers' self-management. Following the success of these initial efforts, on June 27, 1950, the Federal Assembly passed the *Basic Law on the Management of State Enterprises and Higher Economic Associations by Labor Collectives*. Also known as the *Law on Handing Over Factories to Workers or the Law on Workers' Self-Management*, this act marked a pivotal departure from the Soviet state-centric model (Petranović, Zečević 1988: 1017–1027). During the assembly session, Tito elaborated on the CPY's near-complete framework for establishing socialist socio-economic relations that starkly contrast the Soviet state system. The Yugoslav communists embraced the non-dogmatic concept of the "withering away of the state", advocating for its immediate and gradual realization. Tito critiqued the previously unquestioned adoption and replication of Soviet methods, which resulted in an undesirable amalgamation of party and government structures, with the party evolving into an instrument of oppression rather than a representation of the proletariat. As a response, the CPY sought to extricate itself from the bureaucratic system, converting state ownership into social ownership under the stewardship of the direct producers (Petranović 1988: 291–294; Istorija SKJ 1985: 373–378). The delegation of factories to workers was seen as the first step in the transition from a state-centric to a socially self-administered system. While workers' councils, elected by the workforce, managed these enterprises, the establishments remained state property. The state continued to collect all profits, precluding the labor collectives from governing these resources. This maintenance of a centralized and state-oriented component, though markedly progressive in comparison to the Soviet Stalinist model, represented just the initial phase of a broader socio-economic and political evolution.

Throughout 1952, Kidrič further enhanced this system. By the time of the CPY's Sixth Congress, the reforms transforming the state-centric to the self-managed system had culminated, and enterprises momentarily engaged in the market, freed from state planning mandates and entrusted to the management of labor collectives, despite the state's ongoing control over most profits. This innovative socio-economic model spurred additional democratization in Yugoslavia. The brisk advancement and practical implementation of the Yugoslav communists' theoretical concepts stand as a historically singular occurrence. This rapid transition from an ultra-centralist and hyper-statist framework to one encompassing the "three D" – Decentralization, De-bureaucratization, and Democratization – illustrates a significant stride in the country's socialist development (Bilandzić 1999: 321–329; Petranović 1988: 296–299).

Reform of the Party as a Presumption of the Democratization of the System

The Sixth Congress of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia, held in Zagreb from November 2-7, 1952, epitomized the pinnacle of reform and de-Stalinization in Yugoslavia. Notably referred to as the “renaming congress” for a significant transformation marked it: the Communist Party of Yugoslavia renamed itself as the League of Communists of Yugoslavia (LCY), a gesture symbolizing a recommitment to the foundations of Marxism, particularly to Karl Marx, whose organization was known by the latter name. At the Congress, the Soviet statist-bureaucratic social relations model was resoundingly rejected, setting the stage for the rapid evolution of the new Yugoslav socialism, anchored in self-management. This model was designed to enhance and deepen the rights of direct producers in the distribution of surplus, national income, and new investments (Šesti kongres KPJ 1952: 263). The Congress encapsulated four years of de-Stalinization and democratization, offering a comprehensive critique of Soviet practices. It characterized the initial worker-peasant government in the USSR as having degenerated into a “bureaucratic counter-revolution”, resurrecting the “tsarist-despotic regime”, instituting slave labor systems, suppressing non-Russian ethnic groups, and engaging in imperialistic endeavors reminiscent of Russian emperors. The Soviet regime, in an unparalleled censure, was equated with fascism, which represents the peak of the condemnation of Stalinism. However, these stark assessments of the Soviet system were later softened or omitted in the party’s historical narrative. The renaming of the party and the intense critique of the USSR highlighted Yugoslavia’s self-governing approach to socialism. The rebranded party was expected to shift from a commanding to a guiding role, focusing on ideological and political leadership and stepping back from direct governance to support self-management. Despite these changes, the political monopoly of the LCY remained unchallenged.

The comprehensive social and economic reforms warranted a parallel transformation within the party. Emerging and surviving under the conditions of the monarchist regime’s prohibition and severe repression, the LCY evolved as a tightly-knit, cadre-based party, emphasizing secrecy and trust (Dobrivojević 2006; Bešlin 2014: 199–222). The development of the Yugoslav socialism concept necessitated restructuring the LCY into an “ideological vanguard” for both the working class and society at large. To meet these requirements and to unite the masses against Stalinism, the LCY substantially increased its membership by 63% from 1948 to 1952, reaching nearly 800,000 members. In line with these changes in the party, other mass organizations underwent restructuring. The People’s Front of Yugoslavia transitioned into the Socialist Union of Working People in 1953, indicative of a wider social diversity, and the Women’s Anti-Fascist Front was reformed into the Union of Women’s Societies of Yugoslavia (Petranović 1988: 302–308; Bilandzić 1999: 342–343). Thus, the Sixth Congress of the LCY set a precedent for all future party reform structures. However, in subsequent years, Tito occasionally referenced

it negatively, attributing its influences to Đilas and associating it with a period of party weakening and attempts at its “liquidation”. Criticism of the Sixth Congress became notably pronounced following the 1972 crackdown on democratic and reformist factions within the party and the subsequent campaign (Marković, Križavac 1978: 30–33).

The extensive political, social, and economic reforms initiated in Yugoslavia between 1949 and 1953 were formally entrenched and legally endorsed by the Federal National Assembly in January 1953. The promulgation of the Constitutional Law on the Basics of the Social and Political Organization of the FNRJ superseded the 1946 Constitution. This new constitutional structure aimed not only to consolidate the reforms already implemented but also to encourage further changes aligned with the ideology of the Sixth Congress. It confirmed the social ownership of means of production and the self-management of direct producers, marking a notable transition in the nation’s economic and political realms. The constitutional law reformed the political system as well, introducing councils of producers as a secondary chamber in both federal and republican assemblies. In addition, the role of the President of the Republic was instituted, with Tito, formerly the Prime Minister, assuming the inaugural head-of-state position. Simultaneously, the Federal Executive Council was reorganized under this new framework (Petranović, Zečević 1987: 351–354). These constitutional alterations established the groundwork for self-governing socialism in Yugoslavia, delineating it as a distinct third path divergent from Soviet Stalinist totalitarianism and Western liberal capitalism.

Yet, the momentum of these democratizing reforms soon encountered limitations and a temporary suspension. Stalin’s death in March 1953 reduced the existential menace to Yugoslavia, leading to a *détente* with the new Soviet leadership, which in turn influenced domestic reforms and democratization efforts. The same year saw the loss of Boris Kidrič, a principal architect of socio-economic transformations and de-Stalinization. This period also witnessed the dramatic expulsion of Milovan Đilas, a prominent Yugoslav critic of Soviet state socialism (Stanić 2008). In response to these developments, along with growing apprehensions about potential Sovietophobia and excessively liberal inclinations stemming from the reformist ambiance of the Sixth Congress, Tito convened the Second Plenum of the Central Committee of the C in the Brijuni in mid-June 1953. This assembly released a directive to all communists, critiquing the emergence of “anti-Marxist theories”, rebuking “bourgeois-liberalist tendencies”, and reproving a perceived inertia among communists. Đilas, who opposed the deceleration of democratization, became increasingly marginalized (Istorija SKJ 1985: 396–397; Đilas 1983: 251–253). As Yugoslav-Soviet relations improved and anti-Western sentiment heightened, partly due to Western signals of transferring Trieste to Italy, Đilas began publishing critical essays on ideology, politics, and morality in *Borba* in October 1953. His writings, especially the article “Anatomy of a Moral” in *Nova Misao*, garnered public attention but eventually precipitated his political demise. The Third Plenum of the Central Committee of the LCY in January 1954 repudiated Đilas’s

concepts and political conduct as anarchistic, as characterized by Tito. This clash and the subsequent exclusion of Đilas from the party leadership significantly stalled the advancement of democratization and reforms (Kovačević 2006: 321–387; Pirjevec 2012: 357–370; Đilas 1983: 267–280). The conservative stance established by the Second Plenum intensified, resulting in a closer association with the Soviets, though without intentions of rejoining their bloc. Party forums intensively debated Đilas's case in the ensuing months, concentrating on Tito's and Kardelj's reports that denounced Đilas's political ideology. This era marked the introduction of 'liberalism' as a derogatory term in public discourse, along with the pejorative 'đilasovština'.

The dynamic, unpredictable, and often paradoxical defining Yugoslav socialism reached its climax with the constitutional revisions and the confrontation with Đilas. Following these events, further changes and deeper reforms were temporarily paused to stabilize, fortify, and solidify the accomplishments. This phase was characterized by a prudent stance towards additional Western engagement and the initial normalization of relations with the USSR. The latter half of the 1950s evolved into a period of consolidating order, where the fundamentals of Yugoslav self-governing socialism were entrenched. These foundations, distinct from the Soviet state-socialist model, also received acknowledgment in Western theoretical discourse. While the USSR sought to build socialism through a strong state apparatus, Yugoslavia strived for the dissolution of the state. The Soviet model centralized ownership of production means, contrasting with Yugoslavia's emphasis on workers' management of socially owned assets. The methodologies to achieve these objectives varied markedly between the two socialist frameworks. The Soviet model depended on a hierarchical state structure, whereas the Yugoslav approach leveraged autonomous enterprises. There were pronounced differences between the state-socialist and self-management systems. The former operated on state ownership, centralized planning, and administrative distribution of goods, with wages and economic activities being centrally dictated within a unified state budget. Conversely, the Yugoslav system underscored social ownership, social planning, market economic mechanisms, financial tools for management, and a decentralized state architecture. Within certain boundaries, workers' councils influenced wage determination, and consumption was regarded as an autonomous priority and a factor in development (Sekelj 1990: 244; Rusinow 1978: 47–107). Notwithstanding these theoretical distinctions, both systems exhibited deviations from their ideal archetypes in both theory and practice, with the Yugoslav model perhaps displaying more instances of voluntarism and deviation.

The Party Program from 1958. The Magna Carta of Democratic Socialism in Yugoslavia.

Yugoslav socialism, initially conceptualized as reformist during its foundational phase from 1949 to 1953, maintained a degree of dynamism, even in times lacking significant alterations. Despite occasional conservative tendencies, the

ethos of reform and democracy endured within both the societal fabric and the party's structure. This enduring spirit continued to foster opposition to Stalinism and nurtured an increasing recognition of the necessity for further democratization of Yugoslav socialism. This was seen as the only assurance of a definitive break from the Soviet model. The democratic sentiment within the LCY actively embraced every chance to influence the party's reformist agenda, particularly notable in the program of 1958. This was achieved through a combination of Tito's strategic initiatives and the societal demands for continued transformation. The party's approach was characterized by an astute balance between its foundational principles and adapting to evolving internal and external pressures. This adaptability was crucial in steering Yugoslav socialism on its unique trajectory, distinct from both Soviet and Western models. The commitment to reform and democratization within the LCY underpinned these efforts, reflecting a conscious determination to evolve and refine the Yugoslav socialist model continually.

The 1958 LCY Program emerged as a pivotal instrument in establishing more enduring coordinates for the evolution of Yugoslav socialism, with the gradual dissolution of the state identified as a key objective. It underscored the importance of liberating labor to transform Yugoslavia into a free community of producers, accentuating the ongoing expansion of personal, economic, cultural, and artistic freedoms. The Program enshrined the pursuit of individual happiness as the paramount goal of socialism, advocating that it should not be subordinate to any overarching objectives (Sedmi kongres SKJ 1958: 1100–1103). A significant portion of the Program was devoted to the principles and objectives of socialism construction in Yugoslavia, asserting that socialism must emerge from a country's inherent conditions and resources and cannot be externally imposed without internal proponents and mechanisms. The architects of the Program perceived socialist democratization and the transformation of the state under social ownership as essential for the advancement of socialism. This perspective represented a distinct break from the Soviet model of socialism and established a foundation for broadening the reform base and further democratizing society.

The Program dismissed both the bourgeois democracy model, seen as a facade for capitalist exploitation, and the Communist Party's political monopoly, highlighting the unsustainability of a perpetual "transitional" phase, which could result in an excessive fusion of the state with the party, leading to conservatism and bureaucratization. Advocating for democratic socialism, the Program proposed novel democratic forms within socialist social relations, focusing on reinforcing these relations in tandem with the state. It repudiated the maintenance of the LCY's monopolistic status, warning that it would lead to bureaucratization and undemocratic practices. The Program formalized and systematized the self-governing model of socialism, foreseeing the further strengthening of communes, social property, social policy, and a deeper humanization of society. It also delineated the relationships among different government tiers – federation, republics, and provinces—and defined the

party's role with mass organizations representing societal diversity. The Program promoted the demonopolization of power and advocated ideological and political contestation over repressive actions against political adversaries and "anti-socialist phenomena". It championed "genuine freedom" from inhibiting influences for science and art, stipulating that these fields should not become subservient to day-to-day political interests. The Program's authors viewed religion as a manifestation of backward consciousness, to be countered not by administrative means but through scientific enlightenment and elevating consciousness, as well as ensuring "true freedom" for every individual. It supported secularism and the firm separation of church from state and education (Sedmi kongres SKJ 1958: 1100–1103).

In essence, the Program's goals encompassed enhancing living standards, promoting self-management and social ownership of means of production, deepening socialist democracy, enabling more effective expression of social consciousness, and augmenting public participation in political processes. It underscored the necessity for Yugoslav communists to practice self-critique, maintain creative fidelity to Marxism, and resist all forms of dogmatism while aspiring for continuous progress, movement, and ideological vibrancy. The Program envisioned the creation of a society devoid of state, class, and party distinctions, characterized by perpetual evolution and self-reflection: "In order to perform our historical role in the creation of a socialist society in our country, we must devote all our energies to that goal, be critical of ourselves and our work, be irreconcilable enemies of all dogmatism and faithful to the revolutionary creative spirit of Marxism. Nothing created must be so sacred to us that it cannot be surpassed and does not give way to something more advanced, more free, and more human." (Sedmi kongres SKJ 1958: 926–1105).

The Program, while delineating boundaries on the extent of democratic orientation, showcased a distinctly modern, reform-focused, and dynamic character. It embodied the conviction that a socialist society must perpetually strive for "constant progress, constant movement, constant reckoning with ideological conservatism and any tendencies towards stagnation". This aspiration to cultivate a free individuality and a society devoid of state, classes, and parties, inherently self-critical, epitomized the evolved essence of Marxist thought and the concept of Hegelian dialectical belief in unceasing, linear, and purposeful human advancement. The Program's inherently modern and democratic spirit was frequently referenced in subsequent years by the reformists within the party to justify their stance and fortify their positions amidst the ongoing internal conflict between differing currents within the monopolistic party. Consequently, it drew significant criticism from Moscow, being branded as revisionist and anti-Marxist, precipitating the second major crisis in Yugoslav-Soviet relations. The Soviet critique labeled the new LCY Program as national communism, urging Yugoslavia to renounce it (Bešlin 2019: 11–13; Žarković, Bešlin 2023: 18–19; Bogetić 2004: 123–153).

A year after adopting the LCY Program at the Ljubljana Congress, inspired by its resolutions and the increasingly apparent economic stagnation, Yugoslav

leaders initiated the so-called small economic reform in 1961, grounded in market principles. Proponents of this reform aimed to diminish centralist inclinations, while the conservative faction at the party's apex preferred to maintain the existing state of affairs. The 1961 reform raised a critical question: who should control the means of extended reproduction, the state or the producers and their organizations? Demands from lower tiers, including unions and local offices, advocated for leaving the funds predominantly with the companies, believing them to be the most rational investors. The reform measures concerning the distribution of the social product between economic organizations and the state were viewed as the most significant and fundamental shift in the Yugoslav socio-economic system since the introduction of workers' self-management in 1950. For the first time, the allocation of income-generated funds became an autonomous right of labor collectives, devoid of any legal mandates on its distribution (Bilandžić 1999: 407–412; Lempi 2004: 246–247). This marked a significant step in the evolution of the Yugoslav socio-economic model, further distancing it from centralized state control and aligning it more closely with the principles of self-management and market-oriented socialism.

Following the swift failure of the 1961 economic reform, Yugoslavia grappled with an economic downturn and the crisis of the 1960s, prompting state and party leaders to embark on a more comprehensive economic reform in 1965. This reform initiative was foreshadowed by the Eighth Congress of the LCY in 1964 and gained momentum following the ousting of the conservative Yugoslav vice-president, Aleksandar Ranković, at the Brijuni meeting in 1966. The dismissal of Ranković opened the door for broader reforms, extending into the realms of the party and political system. This led to the establishment of the Party Reorganization Commission, which produced the Theses for the Reorganization of the LCY in 1969 after three years of deliberation. In these Theses, the Party articulated a clear stance, declaring that “it is not a political party in the classic sense of the word, and it does not have any special party interests of its own”. A critical element of the Thesis was the emphasis on “Democratism in the internal life of the LCY”, which was identified as a fundamental prerequisite for the successful fulfillment of the communists' progressive social role. Democratization was defined as the active participation of all members in decision-making processes, not merely in their execution. This approach involved the entire membership and organizations in continuous party activities. The Theses advocated for building unity through discussion, analysis, and dialogue, encouraging the confrontation of opinions in a context of democratic relations, as opposed to achieving “mechanical unity” through unchallenged discipline. Key aspects of the Theses included the democratic constitution of leadership and party bodies, the replaceability of leadership, equal participation in elections, equitable national representation in leadership elections, separation of state and party functions, and activities in other socio-political organizations. Furthermore, the Theses anticipated the decentralization or federalization of the party. Although Tito viewed these proposals with skepticism, concerned about the potential erosion of the LCY's

monopolistic position, the Theses represented the zenith of reform efforts aimed at democratizing the party. Many of these proposals were later incorporated into the documents of the Ninth Congress in 1969 (Bešlin 2022: 238–253). Subsequently, these changes catalyzed transformations in state organization within the federalist framework, a political shift in party generations, and the rise of reformist leaders in the republican parties, notably in Serbia and Croatia. This period marked the peak of democratic tendencies within Yugoslav socialism, reflecting an era of significant transition and transformation within the socialist framework of Yugoslavia.

Reforming Leadership in Serbia, 1968-1972: The Highest Level of Democratic Socialism in Yugoslavia

The era of Marko Nikezić's leadership in Serbia, from late 1968 to October 1972, stands out as a particularly significant phase in the evolution of democratic socialism in Yugoslavia. This period is often regarded as the top and most comprehensive realization of the democratization of Yugoslav socialism. The significance of this phase is attributed not only to Serbia's status as the largest and most influential republic within Yugoslavia but also to the clarity, determination, and substance of the reform agenda pursued by its political elite. Ultimately, the political downfall of Nikezić's leadership in Serbia in October 1972 marked a turning point, leading to the broader defeat of the concept of democratic socialism throughout Yugoslavia. From 1968 to 1972, Yugoslavia experienced a period of intense political, social, economic, and cultural development. This era was characterized by accelerated reforms, modernization, and an incomplete yet steady democratization of the unique Yugoslav integration model. The rise of Marko Nikezić and his team to the leadership of the League of Communists of Serbia (LCS) represented the culmination of ongoing reform tendencies within the party, which had become increasingly dominant in Yugoslavia and the LCY during this period.

The election of Marko Nikezić, a former head of Yugoslav diplomacy, as the party leader in Serbia and Latinka Perović as secretary marked a significant shift from the previous party leadership in Serbia. Until July 1966, the largest Yugoslav republic had been under the strong influence of the conservative Yugoslav vice-president, Aleksandar Ranković. With the suppression of Ranković and other dogmatic cadres, who represented the war generation and were resistant to the need for democratization, ideological and political legitimation, and alignment with the socialist and revolutionary movement, a new path was opened for the party leadership in Serbia. The new direction under Nikezić and Perović was supported unreservedly by prominent reformists from the older generation, including figures like Koča Popović, Mijalko Todorović, Milentije Popović, Predrag Ajtić, Mirko Tepavac and initially Petar Stambolić (Vuković 1989; Perović 1991; Nenadović 1989; Tepavac 1998; Bešlin 2022: 505–537).

The leadership of Marko Nikezić and his associates during this historical period in Serbia and Yugoslavia was anchored in the principle of democratization. Their approach revolved around a vision for modern Serbia and Yugoslavia, where reforms were directed toward empowering various societal segments at the expense of centralized state control and party oversight. This vision entailed a significant reduction in the party's role as the overseer of social movements and a robust emphasis on the self-governing concept, advocating for the autonomy of diverse sectors ranging from the economy and media to provinces, local self-governments, and state institutions. The new leadership, notably youthful with an average age not exceeding 40, initiated a practice of decentralization, symbolically stepping outside the confines of Belgrade. This approach, referred to as "demetropolization", was demonstrated through regular interactions with secretaries of municipal and city committees and inter-municipal conferences of the LCS in various regions. It also involved ongoing dialogues with business leaders and trade unions, secretaries of university LCS committees, university representatives, cultural figures, army officials, and media personnel, including newspapers, radio, and television editors, as well as local publications. An essential aspect of this approach was the introduction of frequent press conferences and interviews with journalists, emphasizing transparency and a modern approach to public relations in their governance. The essence of socialist democratization under Nikezić's leadership was the horizontal and vertical liberation from party control, fostering independence and equipping all sectors of society for autonomous operation. This was envisioned as a form of direct democracy, integral to the self-governing concept that underpinned the political integration of the Yugoslav community. By encouraging autonomy and self-governance across various societal layers, the leadership aimed to create a more dynamic, responsive, democratically-oriented socialist society in Yugoslavia (Nikezić 2003; Nenadović 2003; Perović 1991.)

Marko Nikezić and his team brought two types of complexities into focus in Serbia, the most heterogeneous of the Yugoslav republics, through the concept of democratization. The first complexity revolved around the expression of societal diversity through the plurality of interests represented by various social groups. This aspect acknowledged the multifaceted nature of society and aimed to give voice to its numerous interests. The second complexity involved recognizing and valuing Serbia's national, developmental, historical, and other disparities. This recognition encompassed acknowledging the developmental unevenness, diverse social structures, national heterogeneity, and the complex constitutional character of Serbia. Embracing these complexities was a crucial component of the reformist leadership's approach to democratizing Serbia. This appreciation of complexity was also extended to the broader understanding of Yugoslavia as a complex state. Under Nikezić's leadership, Serbia moved away from being perceived as a center resistant to change, reform, and decentralization and as a bastion of centralist and conservative forces. Instead, it embraced a role more conducive to progressive transformations. A key area of focus was the media, which underwent significant professionalization and

liberalization. The leadership's approach towards the media reflected a departure from merely transmitting political will. Instead, there was a concerted effort to support media expansion and democratization, encouraging a shift in political patterns and fostering a culture of dialogue. This approach was evident in the frequent interactions between the political leadership and media representatives and in the regular press conferences held by Serbian political leaders. Similarly, cultural and scientific institutions, traditionally strongholds of critical thought, experienced a change in atmosphere due to new, non-repressive methods. The leadership systematically worked towards modernizing solutions for various issues, spreading reformist ideas, and creating a cultural alternative aimed at limiting the influence of nationalism. In essence, the leadership of the LCS pursued a unique approach to reconcile and address the contradictions within Serbian society. This approach steered clear of authoritarian political culture and outdated dogmatic solutions, which typically veered towards power centralization and oversimplified responses to societal complexities. Instead, Nikezić's leadership aimed to establish a more inclusive, open, and dialogic political environment, fostering an atmosphere where diverse interests and perspectives could coexist and contribute to the broader societal reform and development process (Bešlin 2022; Nenadović 2003).

Marko Nikezić's reformists, in their political agenda and democratization efforts, strongly emphasized strengthening the institutional framework of Yugoslavia, particularly in Serbia. Their approach was grounded in the belief that political life should operate within a predictable rule-of-law framework characterized by a clear division of responsibilities. This stance was compatible with their rejection of the direct exercise of power by the Communist Party, advocating instead for operational tasks to be carried out by system institutions as established by the constitution and laws. The reformists underscored that democratization, a prerequisite for any modernization effort, necessitated respect for the institutional structure of society. By adhering to this principle, they aimed to eradicate authoritarianism, demagoguery, and oppressive political culture. A key aspect of this approach was the emphasis on transparency and public engagement in the political process, fostering a political orientation in Serbia that would align with the roles and functions of various institutions within the political system. These institutions included the Assembly, the Executive Council, the Socialist Alliance, the Trade Unions, the Youth Alliance, and the League of Communists, which was envisaged as the ideological and political foundation of the system. Focusing on these institutional structures, the reformists sought to move away from extra-institutional agreements and close the door to political voluntarism and arbitrariness. This approach also meant limiting extra-institutional influences, including those of the Yugoslav President, Josip Broz Tito. As such, the Socialist Republic of Serbia, under Nikezić's leadership, vigorously advocated for the efficient and legal functioning of constitutionally defined and parity-based Yugoslav institutions. They saw these institutions as crucial for the sustainable survival of the federation, offering an acceptable and viable framework for equitable decision-making and

the representation of Yugoslavia's diversity and complexity (Perović 2003: 53–79; Bešlin 2022).

Under Marko Nikezić, Serbia's reformist leadership introduced a new political model that significantly involved bilateral talks with representatives from other Yugoslav republics. This approach was a practical manifestation of the LCS policy, which viewed Yugoslavia as a complex, multi-national state. According to this perspective, Yugoslavia was not merely a platform for agreements or confrontations between the largest national groups but a community of equals (Bešlin, Žarković 2021: 791–818). Decision-making was to be inclusive, considering the interests of all constituents, and carried out in legitimate federal institutions designed for this purpose. Central to the democratic concept of Yugoslav socialism under this model was the rejection of nationalist ideologies, which were seen as incompatible with the political system of a nationally diverse community. Therefore, dialogues with representatives of other Yugoslav republics were not only crucial for understanding and cooperation but also served as an opportunity for Serbia to shed its historical image of dominance. These interactions allowed Serbia to reposition itself as an equal participant, renouncing any claims to superior rights. In these bilateral talks, Serbian authorities conveyed their commitment to genuine national equality and the equality of all Yugoslav peoples and national communities. This stance represented a significant break from the centralist model that had long been associated with Serbia and its political establishments. By advocating for a democratic, socialist Yugoslav federation, Nikezić's reformists sought to establish a constitutional and legally sound framework to serve all its people optimally. This approach was a modern counter to the nationalist critical intelligentsia's intentions, which often harbored territorial ambitions as a substitute for democratization and modernization (Bešlin 2022: 314–348).

Marko Nikezić's reformist orientation, particularly evident in economic aspects, was a defining feature of his leadership in Serbia. The LCS viewed its essential role in the economic realm as fostering the development of self-governing relations and ensuring the genuine participation of workers in enterprise management. A key focus was on the independence of the economic sector from political constraints, its modernization, and the integration of economic entities into large, competitive systems on the world market. Nikezić and his team were dedicated to constructing a system where various social actors would make key economic decisions, from labor organizations to trade unions. This approach aimed to shift the decision-making center from the state and party to the economic entities. This shift was seen as a fundamental distinction between the reformist Yugoslav model of socialism and the Soviet authoritarian state-socialist model. Additionally, the leadership supported capable and successful businessmen who operated on a reform platform, contributing to Serbia and Yugoslavia's development and economic growth in the early 1970s. The concept of integration in the economy and the creation of large economic systems were central to the program foundations of Marko Nikezić's reforms. This integration was understood in a broader context, aiming to overcome

closure and autarky at local, regional, and republic levels. It was seen as a step towards connecting the Yugoslav economy with the world market (Nikezić 2003; Vuković 1989).

Nikezić perceived the Soviet Union as the ideological stronghold and source of conservatism in Yugoslavia, especially in Serbia. He often highlighted that Serbian nationalism, communist dogmatism, national unitarism, state centralism, conservatism, the policy of national exclusivity, and ultimately, what he saw as the most dangerous for Yugoslav independence – imperialism – all found their roots in the Soviet political system. Under Nikezić's leadership, the LCS significantly contributed to the expansion of individual and institutional freedom in Serbia and indirectly in Yugoslavia. This was achieved within the existing framework of social-property relations and the mono-party system. The leadership advocated for modernization, against conservatism and oppression, promoting dialogue, system reforms, and a new political culture. It also supported the plurality of different social interests, thus embodying the highest expression of the ideas of democratic socialism in Yugoslavia (Đukić 1990; Perović 1991; Bešlin 2022).

Epilogue: Defeat of Democratic Socialism in Yugoslavia

Yugoslavia's break from Stalin in 1948 set the stage for an independent socialist path, diverging significantly from the Soviet model. This period saw the implementation of innovative policies, particularly the model of worker self-management, which exemplified Yugoslavia's commitment to integrating socialist principles with democratic practices. The success of these policies was evident in the initial years, as they fostered economic growth and a distinct Yugoslav identity, albeit with underlying ethnic and national complexities. However, as the evolution progressed, it became clear that the challenges facing Yugoslavia were multifaceted. Internally, managing a diverse multi-ethnic state posed significant hurdles, often leading to regional disparities and ethnic tensions. Economically, the limitations of the self-management model began to surface, highlighting the difficulties in sustaining economic growth and social welfare within this framework. Externally, Yugoslavia's position as a non-aligned state during the Cold War presented both opportunities and challenges. While it allowed some degree of diplomatic maneuvering between the East and West, it also exposed the country to pressures and influences from both blocs, impacting its internal policies and international standing. The culmination of these internal and external pressures became increasingly evident in the late 1960s and early 1970s.

The peak of the democratization of the Yugoslav model of socialism can be traced to the years 1970 and 1971, a period marked by notable advances in political and media freedoms, societal autonomy and strength, the separation of economic power from political influence, and vibrant public debates in a culturally and nationally diverse society. However, these developments simultaneously engendered instability and insecurity among the more conservative

elements within the political leadership. As a response, President Josip Broz Tito, the federal political center, and the dogmatic factions within the party apparatus moved to resolve the dichotomy within the LCY. They sought to consolidate the party's monopoly by establishing a singular concept for the development of socialism, thereby ensuring the indivisibility of the party's power. Between the end of 1971 and throughout 1972, faced with a choice between decentralization and democratization, Tito and the party's conservatives opted solely for the former. They operated under the belief that the combination of decentralization and democratization generated excessive instability. Unprepared for the profound liberalization of society that could potentially weaken the monopolistic party's position and concerned that the blend of decentralization with strong reformist leadership in the republics would undermine Tito's role as an unchallenged authority and arbiter, the Yugoslav president, backed by conservative party members, exerted significant pressure on the respective republican parties. This pressure led to upheavals within the party structures in Croatia, Serbia, Slovenia, and Macedonia, aiming to replace democratically-oriented leaderships. The crucial moment in this conservative turn occurred in Serbia. In October 1972, amid intense pressure and sharp attacks, the leaders of the LCS resigned, effectively withdrawing from the political and public sphere. This event marked a critical juncture, signaling not only the closing of the historical perspective of the Yugoslav community but also the definitive defeat of its democratic socialism concept. This concept has been variably influential but consistently present in party structures and the political scene since the break with Stalin in 1948. Following the defeat of democratic socialism in Yugoslavia post-1972, the self-governing system gradually began to take on characteristics more akin to the Soviet model. By the 1980s, Yugoslavia increasingly resembled the Eastern Bloc countries, shaping the trajectory of the post-socialist unraveling of the Yugoslav crisis during the collapse of European socialism and the end of the Cold War. This historical evolution highlights the complex interplay of political dynamics, leadership decisions, and ideological shifts that ultimately influenced the fate of Yugoslav socialism and the nation's subsequent dissolution.

References

- Banac, Ivo (1990), *Sa Staljinom protiv Tita*, Zagreb: Globus.
- Bešlin, Milivoj (2014), „Kraljevina Jugoslavija u borbi protiv antifašizma. Istorijski izazov Španskog građanskog rata kao kristalizaciona tačka političke aktivnosti u Jugoslaviji“, in Milo Petrović (ed.), *Preispitivanje prošlosti i istorijski revizionizam*, Beograd, pp. 199–222.
- . (2019), „Usvajanje Programa SKJ 1958. i reformske tendencije u jugoslovenskom društvu i partiji“, in Igor Duda (ed.), *Komunisti i komunističke partije: politike, akcije, debate*. Zbornik odabranih radova s Trećeg međunarodnog znanstvenog skupa „Socijalizam na klupi“, Srednja Europa; Filozofski fakultet u Puli, pp. 11–33.
- . (2022), *Ideja moderne Srbije u socijalističkoj Jugoslaviji*, Novi Sad: Akademaska knjiga.

- . (2023), „AVNOJ u revoluciji: Konstituisanje federativne Jugoslavije u Drugom svetskom ratu 1941–1945“, *Historia moderna (Tematski broj: 80 godina od Drugog zasjedanja AVNOJ-a)* 4 (4): 9–46.
- Bešlin, Milivoj; Žarković, Petar (2021), „Srpski liberali i Hrvatsko proljeće: hrvatsko-srpski odnosi i novi koncepti Jugoslavije krajem 1960-ih i početkom 1970-ih“, *Časopis za suvremenu povijest* 3: 791–821.
- Benson, Leslie (2001), *Yugoslavia: A Concise History*, New York: Palgrave.
- Bilandžić, Dušan (1999), *Hrvatska moderna povijest*, Zagreb: Golden marketing.
- Bogetić, Dragan (2006), *Nova strategija spoljne politike Jugoslavije 1956-1961*, Beograd: Institut za savremenu istoriju.
- Duda, Igor (2023), *Socijalizam na kućnom pragu: Mjesna zajednica i svakodnevica društvenog samoupravljanja u Jugoslaviji*, Zagreb: Srednja Europa.
- Dobrivojević, Ivana (2006), *Državna represija u dobra diktature kralja Aleksandra*, Beograd: Institut za savremenu istoriju.
- Dimić, Ljubodrag (2014), *Jugoslavija i Hladni rat*, Beograd: Arhipelag.
- Istorija SKJ* (1985), Beograd: Komunist; Narodna knjiga; Rad.
- Jakovina, Tvrtko (2003), *Američki komunistički saveznik 1945-1955*, Zagreb: Profil international: Srednja Europa.
- . (2011), *Treća strana Hladnog rata*, Zagreb: Faktura.
- Kidrič, Boris (1985), *Sabrana dela*, tom 6, Beograd: Komunist.
- Kovačević, Branislav (2006), *Đilas, heroj-antiheroj*, Podgorica: Pobjeda.
- Lempi, Džon (2004), *Jugoslavija kao istorija. Bila dvaput jedna zemlja*, Beograd: Dangraf.
- Lorejn, M. Lis (2003), *Održavanje Tita na površini. Sjedinjene Države, Jugoslavija i Hladni rat*, Beograd: BMG.
- Milosavljević, Olivera (1983), *Radnički saveti u Beogradu 1949-1953*, Beograd: Istorijski arhiv Beograda.
- Marković, Dragan ; Kržavac, Savo (1978), *Liberalizam od Đilasa do danas*, knjiga 2, Beograd: Sloboda.
- Sekelj, Laslo (1990), *Jugoslavija – struktura raspadanja*, Beograd:Rad.
- Đilas, Milovan (1950), *Savremene teme*, Beograd:Borba.
- . (1983), *Vlast*, London: Naša reč.
- . (1990), *Razgovori sa Staljinom*, Beograd: Književne novine.
- Đukić, Slavoljub (1990), *Slom srpskih liberala. Tehnologija političkih obračuna Josipa Broza*, Beograd: “Filip Višnjić”.
- Nenadović, Aleksandar (1989), *Razgovori s Kočom*, Zagreb: Globus
- . (1998), *Mirko Tepavac. Secanja i komentari*, Beograd: Radio B92.
- . (2003), *Glavni urednik. “Politika” i pad srpskih liberala 1969-1972*, Beograd: Politika.
- Nikezić, Marko (2003), *Srpska krhka vertikala*, Beograd: Helsinški odbor za ljudska prava u Srbiji.
- Petranović, Branko (1988), *Istorija Jugoslavije : 1918-1988. Knj. 3, Socijalistička Jugoslavija: 1945–1988*, Beograd: Nolit.
- Petranović, Branko; Zečević, Momčilo (1988), *Jugoslavija 1918–1988. Tematska zbirka dokumenata*, Beograd: Rad.
- Perović, Latinka (1991), *Zatvaranje kruga. Ishod političkog raseca u SKJ 1971/1972*, Sarajevo: Svjetlost.
- . (2003), „Na tragu srpske liberalne tradicije. Ko su i šta su bili srpski liberali početkom sedamdesetih godina XX veka“, in Marko Nikezić, *Srpska krhka vertikala*, Beograd: Helsinški odbor za ljudska prava u Srbiji, pp. 7–93.
- Pirjevec, Jože (2012), *Tito i drugovi*, Zagreb: Mozaik knjiga.

- Popov, Jelena (2002), *Drama na vojvođanskom selu (1945–1952)*, Novi Sad: Platoneum.
- Rusinow, Denison (1978), *The Yugoslav experiment 1948–1974*, University of California Press.
- Stanić, Veljko (2008), „Milovan Đilas 1953/54 – između revolucije i slobode“, *Tokovi istorije*, 3/2008, 251–278.
- Sedmi kongres SKJ. Stenografske beleške* (1958), Beograd: Kultura.
- Šesti Kongres KPJ (1952), Beograd: Kultura.
- Štaunbringer, Zvonko (1980), *Ne staljinizmu*, Zagreb: Globus.
- Vuković, Zdravko (1989), *Od deformacija SDB do maspoka i liberalizma. Moji stenografski zapisi 1966–1972*, Beograd: Narodna knjiga.
- Žanin-Čalić, Marin (2013), *Istorija Jugoslavije u XX veku*, Beograd: Klio.
- Žarković, Petar; Bešlin, Milivoj (2023), „Od demokratskog do realnog socijalizma: jugoslovensko-sovjetski ideološki spor i njegovi rezultati“, *Montenegrin Journal for Social Sciences* 7 (1): 9–34.

Milivoj Bešlin i Petar Žarković

Uspon i pad demokratskog socijalizma u Jugoslaviji 1948–1972.

Apstrakt

Ovaj članak istražuje složeni razvoj demokratskog socijalizma u Jugoslaviji od 1948. do 1972. godine, što je period koji se odlikuje pionirskim eksperimentisanjem i kasnijim odstupanjem od prvobitnih socijalističkih ideala. Studija počinje jugoslovenskim raskidom sa Staljinom 1948. godine, čime počinje njen nezavisni socijalistički pravac razvoja, različit od sovjetskog modela. Naglašava se implementacija inovativnih politika, posebno modela radničkog samoupravljanja, koji odražava jugoslovensku težnju da spoji socijalističke principe sa demokratskim praksama. Ove politike, prvobitno uspešne u podsticanju ekonomskog rasta i stvaranju jedinstvenog jugoslovenskog identiteta, suočile su se sa unutrašnjim izazovima etničke i nacionalne složenosti i spoljnim pritiscima zbog nesvrstanog stava tokom Hladnog rata. Članak se bavi unutrašnjom političkom dinamikom i strategijama liderstva Jugoslavije tokom ovog transformacijskog perioda, domenom koji je bio manje zastupljen u akademskim istraživanjima za naznačeni period, naročito za period druge polovine 1960-tih. Analizira se kako su Tito i njegovi savremenici upravljali socijalističkom državom, balansirajući između ideala demokratije i ideoloških zahteva. Posebna pažnja posvećena je preplitanju domaćih politika i međunarodnih uticaja, čime se nudi sveobuhvatan pogled na jugoslovenski socijalistički eksperiment. Pad demokratskog socijalizma u Jugoslaviji, koji kulminira političkim promenama 1972. godine, prikazuje se ne kao nagli kolaps, već kao postepeni proces, obeležen promenama u politici i ideologiji. Studija zaključuje da jugoslovensko iskustvo pruža dragocene uvide u složenosti implementacije socijalizma u jednom raznolikom društvu, ilustrujući i potencijale i ograničenja spajanja autoritarnog socijalizma sa demokratskim principima.

Ključne reči: Jugoslavija, socijalizam, samoupravljanje, demokratizacija, Savez komunista, Josip Broz Tito, Marko Nikezić.