

YUGOSLAVIA AND THE HUNGARIAN UPRISING OF 1956: Dilemmas and Controversies

Original Scientific Paper

Nikola SAMARDŽIĆ
Faculty of Philosophy,
University of Belgrade,
Serbia

The split-up of Yugoslavia with the Soviet Union from 1948 has encouraged centrifugal political forces in the Eastern Bloc. However, The Hungarian Uprising of 1956 was a serious temptation for The Yugoslav government. However, Yugoslav leader Josip Broz Tito although managed to seize the opportunity and redefine the status of Yugoslavia and his personal role in international relations. In the depths of the Yugoslav regime, there was enough understanding of the new approach to the Soviets dating from the previous year, and the cooperation in the suppression of the Hungarian Uprising. In one year, Tito met four times with Khrushchev. Apart from helping refugees and formal reactions, the West had no power to help Hungary to leave the Soviet orbit. The West remained inactive, and Yugoslavia silent, also during the suppression of the Prague Spring in 1968.

Key words: Hungarian Uprising, Yugoslavia, Josip Broz Tito, Imre Nagy, Nikita Khrushchev

* This article originated within the project Modernisation of Western Balkans (No. 177009) financed by Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development of the Republic of Serbia/Rad je nastao u okviru projekta Modernizacija Zapadnog Balkana (177009) koji finansira Ministarstvo za prosvetu, nauku i tehnološki razvoj Republike Srbije.

*T*HE HUNGARIAN REVOLUTION OF 1956 (THE Hungarian Uprising) has triggered dramatic events that have shifted from day to day. The dynamics of international relations and the dynamics of change require considering the role of neighboring Yugoslavia by taking into account the complex changes in the relations of strategic forces, political attitudes and concrete decisions. In a rush of disorder that pervaded relations between the West, the East and even the looming Third World in 1956, one paradigm is almost apparent, one that is contained in the efforts of the regime of Josip Broz Tito to preserve the political order and the new social architecture of the post-war communist Yugoslavia, but not without a careful reflection on her international reputation.

Recent researches have confirmed that the split-up of Yugoslavia with the Soviet Union from 1948 has encouraged centrifugal political forces in the Eastern Bloc. The Eastern European states otherwise mostly lagged in their democratic growth, compared to the West, however long-term controversial points in the relations between the Soviet Union and its strategic partners were obvious: Soviet military occupation, political terror and economic exploitation, and the continuity of Russian territorial and strategic politics. Historical misunderstandings with Russia neither were helpful.¹ “In Hungary the period from July, 1953, to March, 1955, referred to as the New Course, constituted the first liberalization of the communist

¹ “While the Soviet Union was gradually recovering from the social and economic devastation of World War II, the populations of Eastern Europe were subjected, mostly unwillingly, to occupation by Soviet forces and the rigid imposition of the Soviet system in its Stalinist form – a system that was widely but mostly silently resented as an ill-suited framework for economic, social and cultural life in the societies of Eastern Europe. By the end of the 1940s opposition political parties in Eastern Europe had either been banned and their leaders arrested, or they had been co-opted into popular front movements under communist leadership, which effectively reduced them to mere puppet status. The East European communist governments proceeded to take most workplaces into public ownership, introduce a system of centralised state ‘planning’ of the economy, and collectivise agriculture. Strict censorship of the media was introduced and freedom of expression was severely limited. The ruling parties and secret police organizations took on similar roles to their Soviet counterparts. Furthermore, in the late 1940s and early 1950s, struggles within the national communist parties resulted in similar mass political arrests, show trials and expansion of labour camps as had been experienced in the Soviet Union since the 1930s. Mirroring events in Stalin’s Soviet Union, the East European communist leaderships turned on their own party comrades, accusing them on treason, and staging show trials of the most prominent ‘revisionists’ such as, in the case of Hungary, former underground resistance leader of the early 1940s, László Rajk” (Cox 2006, IV).

regime in that country. This period marked the rise and fall of the government of Imre Nagy. At the time of his accession to the premiership in 1953, Nagy criticized the bankruptcy of the economy which had adopted the Soviet pattern without making allowances for the capabilities and needs of Hungary. Furthermore, he stated that the people cannot be free if the nation is not independent and if it lacks complete sovereignty” (Gripp 1960, 942).

On the other hand, the Soviet Union needed an important success in the international relations after a series of post-war failures. During the Greek Civil War from 1946 to 1949 the Greek government army, representing the clero-nationalist forces, backed by the United Kingdom and the United States has defeated the Democratic Army of Greece, the military branch of the Greek Communist Party, supported by Yugoslavia, Albania and Bulgaria. The Austrian State Treaty re-established Austria as a sovereign state on 15 May 1955, after Soviet troops had been withdrawn a declaration of neutrality guaranteed that Austria would not join NATO. However, it was clear that Austria was joining the Western orbit after being liberated from the presence of the Soviet occupation forces. The Soviet Union established the Warsaw Pact in 1955 as a strategic answer seeking a balance of power or counterweight to NATO, but also to the obvious attractiveness of the Western World.

In the meanwhile, after a personal conflict between the Yugoslav leader Josip Broz Tito and Stalin, Yugoslavia was expelled from Communist International in 1948. Otherwise Yugoslavia ran the fastest collectivization process of all East European communist regimes. Communism was victorious in Yugoslavia as an achieved authentic political force, and as a war prey of the armed resistance movement. The West also accomplished the intention of the communist partisans to take over all the political power. The Soviet troops did not set their permanent presence, like in the rest of Eastern Europe, neither took important part in establishing a new political order. Yugoslavia has applied its authentic model of collectivization. Even after the regime brutally punished the pro-Stalinist quislings, from the depths of the political and security order, otherwise a narrow minded dogmatic pillar of Yugoslav totalitarianism, Yugoslavia continued to uphold the practice of Sovietization. It was only the collapse of the economy with human casualties characteristic of all the collectivist socialist experiments of the XX century that brought Tito's regime to open cooperation with the West, at the beginning of the fifties. Thus, Tito implicitly and reluctantly acknowledged the Western aid from

the last war and early postwar days, usually covered up by his propaganda, then basically Stalinist mannered.

The subsequent Soviet failures in Southeastern Europe occurred in Greece and Albania. But there were also important gains for the Soviet Union. In 1949 they mastered their first atomic weapons and founded the Warsaw Pact in 1955. At the very beginnings of the Hungarian revolt, the Non-Aligned Movement was launched from the Brioni islands in Yugoslavia, on 19 July 1956. The Declaration was signed by Yugoslav president Tito, India's first Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru and Egypt's second president, Gamal Abdel Nasser. From its beginnings, the organization was politically and ideologically closer to the Soviet communist bloc, as based on anti-colonial and anti-American rhetoric that has offered legitimacy to new nationalist movements, anti-democratic regimes and violent dictatorships in Africa, Asia and Latin America.

Regardless of the political losses in Yugoslavia and Albania, the Soviets managed to curb the turmoil of dissatisfaction in Eastern Europe. They apparently had problems primarily with the majority Catholic and Protestant states: in occupied Baltic republics, German Democratic Republic (DDR), Poland, and later in Hungary and Czechoslovakia. More resistance was felt in Yugoslavia in its western republics, Slovenia and Croatia. East-orthodox peoples were more subdued, and less opposed. Only Romania exempted its foreign policy from the East-European pattern, while retaining Stalinist planning and practice. The „People's Uprising in East Germany“ that started with a strike by East Berlin construction workers on 16 June 1953 turned into a widespread uprising against the DDR government, and involved more than one million people in about 700 localities. The movement in East Berlin was violently suppressed the following day by Soviet tanks and the Volkspolizei, but the strikes and protests lasted even after the intervention. The Poznań uprising in Poland, with workers demonstrations on June 28, 1956, was also violently suppressed by the joined domestic and Soviet forces (Persak 2006, 1308).

The Hungarian Revolution of 1956 happened to become the first anti-Soviet uprising in Eastern Europe which implied important international involvement and chances to succeed. The Uprising lasted from 23 October until 11 November 1956.

A short overview:

110 Hungary became a communist state under the authoritarian leadership of Mátyás Rákosi, with radically nationalized economy and organized political op-

pression. The victims of the secret police (Államvédelmi Hatóság or ÁVH) were labeled as “Titoists,” “western agents,” “Trotskyites”. The thousands were arrested, tortured, tried, imprisoned in concentration camps, deported to the east, or executed, including ÁVH founder László Rajk. Russian language study and Communist propaganda became mandatory in schools and universities. In 1949 the leader of the Hungarian Catholic Church Cardinal József Mindszenty was arrested and sentenced to life imprisonment for treason. The economy suffered from war reparations, state management, collectivization and centralization, and also by the participation in the Soviet-sponsored Council of Mutual Economic Assistance that prevented free trading with the West. Real industrial wages fell by 18% between 1949 and 1952. The collectivization of agriculture caused a fall in production and hunger. After the Stalin’s death in 1953, the reformist Imre Nagy replaced Rákosi as Prime Minister. However, Rákosi remained the General Secretary of the Party, and removed Nagy in 1955. After Khrushchev’s “Secret Speech”, Rákosi was deposed replaced by Ernő Gerő on 18 July 1956. The change encouraged political process with a series of public debates (forums). Massive protests, preceded by the movements of students and the formulations of their political demands, began on 23 October 1956. The protester’s manifesto called on the state’s independence from all foreign powers and a political system based on democratic socialism. The first Party secretary Ernő Gerő condemned the demands, and demonstrators answered with the removal of Stalin’s public statue. The ÁVH was defending Radio Budapest building, and the Hungarian soldiers sided with the crowd. During the night of 23 October, Ernő Gerő requested Soviet military intervention. On 24 October, Soviet tanks entered Budapest. Armed revolutionaries set up barricades to defend Budapest, and captured several Soviet tanks. The same day, Imre Nagy replaced András Hegedüs as Prime Minister, and called for an end to violence promising political reforms. The protesters focused on the ÁVH, as the Soviet units were not fully engaged. On 25 October, ÁVH began shooting at the mass of protesters in front of the Parliament, and some Soviet soldiers mistakenly returned fire on the ÁVH. The attacks at the Parliament led to the collapse of the government. The re-burial of László Rajk, on 6 October 1956 (minister of police falsely accused and executed in 1949), was considered a general rehearsal of the revolution. Imre Nagy took the power with János Kádár as the First Secretary of the Communist Party. Hungarian army led by Béla Király attacked the Party Central Committee. After a cease-fire, by 30 October the most of Soviet troops had withdrawn from Budapest, and many

Hungarians believed that they were leaving Hungary. On 1 November Nagy declared Hungarian retirement from the Warsaw Pact and stance of neutrality. Many political prisoners were released, including Cardinal Mindszenty, and previously banned political parties revived. The state was mainly run by revolutionary councils, the communist and Soviet symbols removed from public life. The workers' councils took over the management over industrial enterprises. On 1 November, Imre Nagy was reported that Soviet forces had entered Hungary from the east and were moving towards Budapest, after false official assurances that the Soviet Union would not invade. The Soviets arrested a Hungarian delegation on 3 November invited to negotiate on Soviet withdrawal. In the meanwhile, Khrushchev informed his allies with the decision to intervene, and met with Yugoslav leader Tito on his resort island Brioni. Tito agreed to support the intervention, and persuaded Khrushchev to choose János Kádár as a new Hungarian leader. On 4 November the Soviet army again attacked Budapest. The second Soviet intervention "Operation Whirlwind" has split Budapest in half and established controls over main communication routes. Operation combined air strikes, artillery and tank-infantry actions. The Hungarian Army remained loyal to the revolution, however helpless to withstand more effective resistance. The fighting in Budapest lasted until 11 November. After the collapse of the uprising Nagy was given a refuge in the Yugoslav Embassy, however, despite of guarantees given by János Kádár, on 22 November, Nagy was thrown out of the embassy, arrested by the Soviet forces and abducted to Romania, where he was sentenced to death and executed.

The role of Yugoslavia was important for the events of 1956, including the failure of the Hungarian uprising and the fate of revolutionaries, and, in particular, of Hungarian refugees on Yugoslav territory. Using the position of Hungarian neighbor and the renegade from the hard-core pro-Soviet nucleus of the Eastern European states, Yugoslavia used the uprising to redefine the relations with the East, and thus with the West.

Simultaneously, Yugoslavia had to take care of its Hungarian minority, the state of the border and, finally, the Hungarian refugees.

Considering Yugoslavia important in the policy of de-Stalinization and revitalization of the Eastern Bloc, the new Soviet leader Nikita Khrushchev used conciliatory approach also as a stronghold of a rapid suppression of the Hungarian uprising. In 1948, Yugoslavia started only with the path of de-Stalinization.

112 Democratization of political system and social relations was not on the Yugoslav

regime's agenda yet. Democracy and tolerance were overwhelmed, and Tito remained their sworn enemy until their last days. While negotiating his personal treason of Hungarian rebels who had previously been given asylum, Tito complained that "the reaction raised his head, especially in Croatia". As he was taking a clear stand on Hungarian Uprising, Tito was ahead of the two options, equally sensitive and difficult: to support the anti-Stalinist course of Hungarian revolutionaries, or by supporting Soviet intervention protect his regime and the international communism from similar challenges.

Hungarian uprising was a dynamic and complex process, imbued with controversies. The revolution erupted under the shadow of the recent fascist heritage and participation of Hungary in the Second World War on the side of the Axis powers. Hungary was frustrated with the national borders plotted after the fall of Austro-Hungary after the First World War. Within the chaos of the 1956 uprising, anti-Semitism broke a decade after the Holocaust, as soon as being released from the clamps of the central state government. The uprising also reflected Hungarian attitudes towards Yugoslavia and the Yugoslav conflict with Stalin. Hungarian dictator Mátyás Rákosi was removed (on 18 July 1956) after the long-term anti-Titoist campaign led from 1948, in agreement with the official Moscow.²

Initially, from the Yugoslav perspective, Imre Nagy was acceptable alternative to Rákosi. (From 1955, the Yugoslav Embassy in Budapest held regular contacts with Imre Nagy and his associates.) But the uprising threatened the Yugoslav regime with both security and ideological challenges.

The particularity of Yugoslavia in the communist world and internal changes was an important challenge that sometimes escaped the immediate Soviet influence in Eastern Europe. "Many of the reforms in Poland and Hungary parallel so closely those which were worked out earlier in Yugoslavia as a simple explanation of coincidence, or nationalism. By Polish admission, Yugoslav obstinacy significantly influenced Polish Communists. As early as 1948 Gomulka demurred in

² "... in the Hungarian case, it was necessary to replace Rákosi to improve Soviet-Yugoslav relations. The Soviet rapprochement with Yugoslavia in 1955 became a major plank in Khrushchev's policy of destalinization.

The Yugoslav leader Josip Broz Tito detested Rákosi with his 'blood-soaked hands' so much for having 'staged trials, given false information and sentenced innocent men to death' for being Titoist spies that he even refused train through Hungary on his way to Moscow for the summit in June 1956, travelling through Romania" (Granville 2006, 483–484).

siding with Stalin against the Yugoslavs and declined to brand Tito as deviationist. When Gomulka was removed from Secretary-General of the Polish Communist party, Polish sources conceded that the dismissal was connected with the 'disgraceful Yugoslav affair.' In October, 1956, Gomulka stated that the paths for attaining socialism in different countries may vary. The model for socialism, he said, may be that of the Soviet Union, of Yugoslavia, or something still different. In 1957 when Gomulka and premier Cyrankiewicz visited Yugoslavia, they supposedly discussed separate roads to socialism with Tito. In Hungary, Nagy (who earlier had been accused of 'new Titoism') referred to Titoism in Yugoslavia as the creative application of Marxism-Leninism in building socialism under the specific social and economic conditions of Yugoslavia. Just prior to the 1956 Revolt, a delegation of top Hungarian Communists visited Yugoslavia to study that country's workers' councils" (Gripp 1960, 948).

In the process of approaching the new Soviet Union, after 1955, Tito was in no hurry. Regardless of the visit to Moscow in 1955, he maintained tense relations with Khrushchev and other Eastern European leaders (Granville 2001, 1057). He needed Soviet support to maintain the communist regime and the counterweight to the Western liberal challenges, but did not intend to return to the Soviet sphere of influence. He founded his dictatorship on a multifaceted basis (army, police, social utopianism, etc.) learning how to balance between the East, the West, and manipulating the rising Third World and its global impacts. The Korean War has dislocated the stage for a potential new world conflict outside the European scope, but Tito had to be careful about the increased threat of Soviet intervention. It is assumed that China also supported Soviet intervention in Hungary, but its appearance in international communism and world politics did not make the steps simpler, on the contrary.³ After the collapse of the Hungarian uprising, the Suez crisis confirmed the weaknesses of the West in the face of controversies that pervaded the process of decolonization: new independent states, new emancipated nations,

³ Mao Tse-tung recalled that at the end of October of that year the Chinese Embassy in Budapest had reported that the counter-revolution was gaining more and more ground and had warned that if the Soviet Union should fail to liquidate the Imre Nagy Government, the restoration of in Hungary would be unavoidable. Mao said that, on the basis of this and other information received from the various East Communist Parties, he had sent an urgent message to the Kremlin asking Khrushchev to take quick military action against the revisionists. He claimed that he had discounted the danger of any foreign intervention, or an American nuclear threat, for America was after all a paper tiger" (Rádvanyi 1970, 126–127).

sometimes even recently invented, could not always imply the development of political and economic freedoms in postcolonial world (Litván 2001, 212–214).

The Hungarian rebellion further illuminated even the complex relations of Yugoslavia with the United States. These relations were not straightforward, similarly to those with the USSR. The Yugoslav Communist regime was one of the indicative fallacies of the Western allies. The closing military operations at the end of the Second World War did not allow the fine-tuning of Yugoslavia and its political future. At the Yalta peace conference in 1945 Yugoslavia was reluctantly left to the Soviets in order to concentrate the Western Allied forces on Greece and the Eastern Mediterranean. In the process of establishing the totalitarian rule, Tito relied on a police and military forces concentrated in Belgrade and the general Serbian national majority within the repressive apparatus. Dissatisfactions with such instrumentalization of power he compensated with the federalization of the state while manipulating the internal identities, similarities and differences. With the priorities related to the needs of absolute and personal rule, Tito did not allow Yugoslavia to integrate in the sense of a state and ideological unity that will assimilate its national and cultural differences. His opening to the West at the beginning of the fifties did not imply democratization of the system. His opening to the West at the beginning of the fifties did not imply democratization of the system. Neither the international relations were always exactly followed by ideological matrices. The US and USSR did not approve the Tito's support of Greek communists during the Civil War. The Yugoslav pretensions on Trieste, used by Tito in order to feed the Slovenian nationalism, have disrupted the peace settlement for Austria. The US economic support that followed the defeat of communists in the Greek civil war helped Tito endure against Stalin, but Tito was eagerly waiting for a new opportunity to reestablish a partnership with the Soviets. That opportunity was Stalin's death in 1953. In the general context, he could use the dissatisfactions with Sovietization and Stalinism in Eastern Europe, but not allowing such dissatisfactions to erupt in Yugoslavia itself. Eastern European leaders were disturbed by Tito's independence. Tito's initial support of Imre Nagy was wrongly interpreted as his call on the substantial change of Hungarian political system. Tito relied on the West only to preserve communism, and previously opposed to Stalin in attempt to preserve personal independent regime. And as if he waited for a moment to seemingly change the sides again.

Between 1948 and 1955, Tito understood the benefits of strategic neutrality. (Granville 1998, 504). In time he learned to behave according to the weaknesses of each strategic group. Gradually abandoning the brutal violence and collective utopianism, Tito was also placing his mechanisms of power in a global framework, by concluding the international partnerships beyond the dualism of the East and the West. The sovereignty of Yugoslav communism and neutrality in American-Soviet relations were unacceptable for the Soviet Union. The Soviet Union considered that the approach to Greece and Turkey in 1954 was a Yugoslav threat with the accession to the NATO from the back door. For the West, Yugoslavia was becoming a kind of dictatorship without tyranny, for the East democracy deprived of democracy. When John Foster Dulles met Tito in May 1955, Tito expressed the views on Yugoslav independence, denying the similarity with Eastern European national communism. Tito had negative attitude toward the Yugoslav unitarism. His career was already based on the antithesis of the previous order in the Kingdom of Yugoslavia and its official integrative aspirations in attempts to overcome the national differences.

Tito welcomed the announcement of the possible “third way” of neighboring Hungary. Imre Nagy could become the support of Yugoslav independent policy. Tito could have settled his personal rule in a broader, more comfortable neighboring context. “The Third Way” was also Tito’s opportunity for international leadership that concealed the political essence of his regime, for the West undemocratic and for the East insufficiently loyal to the Communist international community, even too liberal. In this sense, Tito simultaneously worked on establishing the Non-Aligned Movement as the anti-colonialist and nationalist substitute for global democratization. As the idea of an integrated Yugoslavia was for Tito a symbol of monarchist and capitalist “dictatorship”, in the arising “Third World” democracy was a symbol of colonial governance.

Tito was gradually mastering the increasingly complex international relations. The initial power was given him by the unwritten Yalta agreement when Yugoslavia was considered as being “fifty-fifty” under Eastern and Western influences. The Hungarian Uprising and the Suez Crisis of 1956 confirmed that the world is rapidly changing. But the Yalta paradigm did not imply the permanence in international relations. Even Tito was surprised with the Hungarian Uprising. For Tito, however, the Soviet bloc was just a distant strategic shield against unwanted Western influence. While he considered the future of the Soviet bloc from the

Hungarian Uprising perspective, he primarily took care of his personal regime. Tito kept his power by any means necessary. After being pressed to collaborate also with the West, he raised the opportunity to reveal more openness and tolerance while preserving the order established by revolutionary violence.

But the Hungarian Uprising threatened to spill into Yugoslavia.⁴ Anti-Soviet mood in Hungary grew into the anti-Communist anger.⁵ This did not happen in Yugoslavia in 1948. The attitude towards Hungary Tito definitely changed in late October, when the Yugoslav officials began to make statements on violence and anarchy. By abandoning the rebel Hungarian government Tito sought to draw profit from Khrushchev. Anyway, Tito could easily agree to a Soviet military intervention in his immediate neighborhood and after the Soviet similar threats to Yugoslavia and himself in 1948. But Tito considered the Hungarian rebel government to be weak, and the revolutionary violence as a more serious threat than the announced Soviet intervention, most likely restricted to the restoration of the pro-Soviet regime.⁶

And although his behavior seemed volatile, Tito's attitudes were consistent with himself. When he betrayed the Hungarian Uprising he supported communism in the neighborhood. He acted identically during the Civil War in Greece. He kept the solidarity with Imre Nagy remembering the 1948. Tito was actually consistent with himself when he offered Nagy the asylum in the Yugoslav embassy,

4 We can see that, although the Soviet leaders were the prime movers in 1956, they were not the only ones who feared the possible unravelling of the Warsaw Pact and 'spillover' of anti-communist ideas across their own borders. Leaders in Czechoslovakia and Romania, for example, reported popular unrest in their own countries during the Hungarian conflict. Even Josip Broz Tito's Yugoslavia ended up supporting the Soviet use of military force against Hungary. Yugoslavia was the only independent communist state since the 1948 Moscow-Belgrade rift, aloof from the Warsaw Pact or Soviet bloc, courted in the 1950s by both the United States and the Soviet Union, admired by the increasingly independent Asian and African countries, and vehemently critical of Soviet great power chauvinism" (Granville 1998, 493).

5 Hungarian communists did not have enough resources to incorporate enough middle class layers into a privileged regime structure, although the members of the middle class "found success both in education and the workplace despite being officially excluded from the Communist state" (Mark 2005, 500).

6 "No effort appears to have been made by the Soviet Union to justify its action on the grounds of necessary self-defense. The Soviet territory was not threatened by events in Hungary. Doubtless there was a Soviet desire to maintain the satellite status of Hungary, but under inter-national law and the United Nations Charter, Hungary was entitled to sovereign equality with all other Members" (Wright 1957, 275).

and when he ordered ambassador Soldatić expel Nagy out, on the street, when it was clear that this one is expected with certain death.

“On 2 November, Khrushchev and Malenkov flew to Yugoslavia, where they met with Tito at his villa on Brioni from 7.00 pm until 5.00 am the following day” (Kramer 1998, 204). A question is whether Tito decided to trade with the Soviets before or after the affirmed certainty that a definitive military intervention would take place. It may be also a matter of doubt if Imre Nagy was given the refuge in the Yugoslav embassy after the November 4 intervention began to take place, as Tito could charge more expensively his favors by doing so. Soviet officials have attacked Tito personally, as he dared to protect the counterrevolutionary leaders. But Tito was self-confidently regardless the pressure. He agreed to the Soviet intervention, and promised the Soviets that he would try to persuade Nagy to withdraw, in order to stop the violence. By giving the asylum, and by renouncing the asylum, Tito transferred the burden and responsibility to Khrushchev, and Khrushchev was imposed to pay the full political price. The later execution of Imre Nagy confirmed the character of the Soviet regime, and the justification of the Hungarian Uprising. The legitimacy of Soviet intervention was brought into question. Yugoslav support provided the assumed normalization of Hungary, and Tito succeeded in not paying a price for his actions. On the contrary, after manipulating with Nagy and the Hungarian Uprising, he strengthened his position both in the East and the West. The Soviets could be grateful to his support of the intervention, even though they had previously condemned the asylum to the rebels. The West could not condemn Tito after leaving Hungary to its destiny. As the West subsequently betrayed Israel during the Suez crisis.

The events were accelerating, becoming extremely serious and complex. The Soviet intervention began less than 24 hours after Khrushchev left Brioni. The Soviets assumed that Tito would not easily decide to betray Nagy, so a tank on November 5 shot the Yugoslav embassy when the cultural attaché was killed. Yugoslav foreign minister Koča Popović accused the Soviet authorities that they did so with purpose. Yugoslav Ambassador to the Soviet Union, Veljko Mićunović, similarly protested to the Soviet Minister of Foreign Affairs Dmitri Shepilov. Ambassador Dalibor Soldatić complained to the Soviet ambassador in Budapest, Yuri Andropov. Tito has decided to expel Nagy taking into account the credibility of Yugoslavia and his personal reputation. The meeting with Khrushchev on Brioni, although was a confirmation of his importance, Tito kept secret from the Yugo-

slav public for several days. The asylum in the Yugoslav embassy implied that the Nagy government ceased to exist. Thus Tito opened the way of cooperation with Kádár's government. By accepting the asylum Nagy was discredited, as he allegedly betrayed the revolution. By discrediting Nagy, Tito prevented the overflowing of anti-communism in Yugoslavia.

Tito decided to charge the Soviets costly for his services in order to conceal his dishonor, and to prevent the Soviets from considering Yugoslavia their satellite again.⁷ The asylum could also be a Tito's message that he would preserve independence regardless of the previous normalization with the Soviet Union. The Soviets decided to arrest Nagy as soon as he leaves the Yugoslav embassy, and thus agreed to the Tito's game that would transfer the blame to their domain exclusively. Tito concealed his betrayal, and of his associates, with faked disappointment, as Kádár violated the promise that at Nagy will not be kidnapped. He recalled that during the meeting at Brioni he personally recommended Kádár to be appointed for the new president of the Hungarian government. Tito warned Kádár knew about the KGB plan of kidnapping, and the spinning was launched that Kádár opposed the Nagy future presence in Hungary, as he would encourage the "reactionaries". The "Nagy Affair" caused the deterioration in Yugoslav-Hungarian relations which helped Tito to seize a pleasant distance from the event. Yugoslavia also refused to participate in the celebration of the forty-year anniversary of the October Bolshevik Revolution. Imre Nagy was hanged on June 16, 1958.⁸ The Hungarian

7 "Even though Khrushchev suspected that the Warsaw Pact countries would remain vulnerable to recurrent crises unless the indigenous regimes became more 'viable' and the Soviet Union forged a more equitable relationship, he was determined to proceed far more cautiously in the future. Repressive leaders in Eastern Europe, such as Walter Ulbricht in East Germany, Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej in Romania, Todor Zhivkov in Bulgaria and Antonin Novotny in Czechoslovakia, were able to win even stronger backing from Khrushchev because they convinced him that their presence was the only safeguard against 'unexpected developments' of the sort that occurred in Hungary and Poland. When faced with a trade-off between the 'viability' of the East European regimes and the 'cohesion' of the Eastern bloc after 1956, Khrushchev consistently chose to emphasize cohesion, thus forestalling any real movement toward a more durable political order" (Kramer 1998, 213).

8 "On 16 June 1958 Imre Nagy, who had been the prime minister of Hungary during the ill-fated Revolution of 1956, was put to death by the Soviet-backed regime of János Kádár and buried in an unmarked grave. Thirty-three years later, in a spectacular reversal of fortune, the communist regime was delegitimized by the funeral and reburial of Imre Nagy. Well over 300,000 Hungarians attended the ceremony, a very sizable portion of the population for a country with less than ten million citizens. In a force-

authorities have demanded from Yugoslavia to keep restrained, warning that he will reveal important disclosed details on Yugoslav engagement. However, the new Yugoslav ambassador Jovo Kapičić stated that the Nagy trial is “another link in the chain of the new anti-Yugoslav campaign, being conducted by the USSR and other bloc countries” (Granville 1998, 710–702).

The Hungarian Uprising raised the tensions between the East and the West. The success of the intervention confirmed the rise of the Soviet prestige in the Middle East and Asia. The United States have planned to encourage the East European states to leave the Soviet bloc, but the success was prevented by the unwillingness of any global confrontation on this matter.⁹ The United States containment policy was therefore reduced to less immediate actions in the domains of economic and psychological influence and intelligence network. Hungary was obviously left to its destiny.¹⁰

ful assertion of the collective will, the Hungarian people demonstrated their power to resist the tyranny of foreign occupation and made plain their desire for an autonomous state. The funeral dramatically symbolized how Hungarian memory culture reasserted its demand for sovereignty and was powerful enough to sweep aside the thin veneer of legitimacy of the Soviet-backed regime” (Benziger 2000, 142).

9 “The irony was that the Soviets, by their abandonment of Egypt until 5 November, and the Americans, by their policy of ‘active non-involvement’ in Hungary and Poland, aided each other’s attempts to quell the crises in their own sphere of influence. In areas of the world where they were relatively powerless, both the Soviet Union and the United States felt that in times of crisis, the status quo was preferable to a complete breakdown in the existing power balance. Neither was prepared to risk a major war over an area it had little prospect of controlling. Geography, then, played a central role in determining the responses of the Soviet Union to the Suez Crisis and the United States to the Hungarian revolt” (McCauley 1981, 795).

10 “At the October 26, 1956, meeting of the National Security Council, Eisenhower asked worriedly whether the Soviet Union might not ‘be tempted to resort to extreme measures, even global war,’ and advised that ‘this possibility [be watched] with the greatest care.’ And several years after the invasion of Hungary, Eisenhower, though nothing that Hungary was shielded from the reach of US forces by neutral Austria and Warsaw Pact member Czechoslovakia, admitted that fear of major conflict with the Soviet Union was the main reason for US inaction. Dulles subsequently added that US military intervention in Hungary would have been ‘madness’ because of the danger of nuclear war and the faint likelihood of success. ‘The only way we can save Hungary at this time would be through all-out nuclear war. Does anyone in his senses want us to start a nuclear war over Hungary? As for simply sending American divisions into Hungary, they would be wiped out by the superior Soviet ground forces.’ Similar considerations encouraged Moscow to cut short what is called the Prague Spring of 1968” (Valenta 1983, 88).

Postwar dissatisfactions in Eastern Europe were driven by misery and the lack of freedom, by the consequences of war destruction and socialist collectivization, the Soviet political domination and economic exploitation. Hungary ruled by the Stalinists (Rákosi, Farkas, Gerö) became a repressive police state reminiscent of the pre-war fascist dictatorship. The resistance to communism revealed, however, the nationalist conservative attitudes. The nationalist utopianism opposed the official social utopianism. From the margins of the Hungarian Uprising also appeared the anti-Semitism. Anti-Semitism was a crawling global trending within the context of decolonization and the Middle East Crisis. The official Yugoslav policy was becoming anti-Israel orientated. In the later period Yugoslavia has provided systematic support to Palestinian separatists and terrorists. The totalitarian realities of Hungary and Yugoslavia contributed to the relativization of antifascism. The Janos Kadar restoration of the “real communism” retained the anti-fascist rhetoric, considering the 1956 Uprising as counterrevolutionary. Initially opposed, fascism and communism eventually gained the similarities: totalitarian dictatorship and alien (Soviet) occupation. The nationalist resistances to communism warned that anti-fascism is limited by complex realities. Antifascism was an important political conviction in Hungary, after the Horti era, the coalition with Nazi Germany and the “Arrow Cross” regime.¹¹ But already since the end of the 1940-s the anti-fascist sentiments started to fade while facing the horrors and despair under the communism. The break-up of Tito with Stalin in 1948, and the concentration of the Soviet troops on the Hungarian border with Yugoslavia were sufficiently overwhelming. The Red Army was no longer considered as liberating, but rather as the occupation force. The renunciation of anti-fascism remained the basis of Hungarian resistance to the Soviet domination both before and after 1956. Conservative nationalism became a dominant alternative to the Stalinist state and Soviet imperialism. The political conservatives and the radical right enabled Janos Kadar to characterize the Uprising as an attempt by fascists to confront the communist rule (Mark 2006, 2013).

The Hungarian Uprising was a serious temptation for the Yugoslav government. However, Tito managed to seize the opportunity and redefine the status

¹¹ “Hungarian communists conferred legitimacy on their regime by referring to (and in most cases, exaggerating) their role in the antifascist struggle – as partisans and in alliance with the Red Army – and bolstered their authority by claiming to be the best protectors of Hungary from the return of Fascism” (Mark 2006, 2012).

of Yugoslavia and his personal role in international relations. He already had a certain experience in that. In the depths of the Yugoslav regime, there was enough understanding of the new approach to the Soviets, and the concrete cooperation in the suppression of the Hungarian Uprising. In one year, Tito met four times with Khrushchev. Apart from helping refugees and formal reactions, the West had no power to help Hungary to leave the Soviet orbit. The West remained inactive, and Yugoslavia silent, also during the suppression of the Prague Spring in 1968.

REFERENCES:

- Balázs, Eszter and Phil Casoar. 2006. "An Emblematic Picture of the Hungarian 1956 Revolution: Photojournalism during the Hungarian Revolution." *Europe-Asia Studies* Vol. 58(8): 1241–1260.
- Benziger, Karl P. 2000. "The Funeral of Imre Nagy: Contested History and the Power of Memory Culture." *History and Memory* Vol. 12(2): 142–164.
- Cox, Terry. "1956: Discoveries, Legacies and Memory." *Europe-Asia Studies* Vol. 58(8), *1956 and Its Legacy*: III–XVI.
- Granville, Johanna. 1998. "Hungary, 1956: The Yugoslav Connection." *Europe-Asia Studies* Vol. 50(3): 493–517.
- Granville, Johanna. 1998. "Josip Broz Tito's Role in the 1956 'Nagy Affair'." *The Slavonic and East European Review* Vol. 76(4): 672–702.
- Granville, Johanna. 2001. "Hungarian and Polish Reactions to the Events of 1956: New Archival Evidence." *Europe-Asia Studies* Vol. 53(7): 1051–1076.
- Granville, Johanna. 2002. "1956 Reconsidered: Why Hungary and Not Poland?" *The Slavonic and East European Review* Vol. 80(4): 656–687.
- Granville, Johanna. "Reactions to the Events of 1956: New Findings from the Budapest and Warsaw Archives." *Journal of Contemporary History* Vol. 38(2): 261–290.
- Gripp, Richard C. "Eastern Europe's Ten Years of National Communism: 1948–1958." *The Western Political Quarterly* Vol. 13(4): 934–949.
- Hellema, Duco. 1995. "The Relevance and Irrelevance of Dutch Anti-Communism: The Netherlands and the Hungarian Revolution, 1956–57." *Journal of Contemporary History* Vol. 30(1): 169–186.
- Heller, Agnes and Ferenc Feher. 1983. *The Message of a Revolution A Quarter of a Century Later*. London & Boston : Allen & Unwin.
- Kramer, Mark. 1998. "The Soviet Union and the 1956 Crises in Hungary and Poland: Reassessments and New Findings." *Journal of Contemporary History* Vol. 33(2): 163–214.
- Litván, György. 2001. "1956: Crise de Hongrie, Crise de Suez." *Guerres mondiales et conflits contemporains*, 200, *Dossier: La Hongrie dans les conflits du XXe siècle*: 99–114.
- Ludanyi, Andrew. 1979. "Titoist Integration of Yugoslavia: The Partisan Myth & the Hungarians of the Vojvodina, 1945–1975." *Polity* Vol. 12(2): 225–252.
- Mark, James. 2005. "Society, Resistance and Revolution: The Budapest Middle Class and the Hungarian Communist State 1948–56." *The English Historical Review* Vol. 120(488): 963–986.

- Mark, James. 2006. "Antifascism, the 1956 Revolution and the Politics of Communist Autobiographies in Hungary 1944–2000." *Europe-Asia Studies* Vol. 58, 8, *1956 and Its Legacy*: 1209–1240.
- McCauley, Brian. 1981. "Hungary and Suez, 1956: The Limits of Soviet and American Power." *Journal of Contemporary History* Vol. 16(4): 777–800.
- Persak, Krzysztof. 2006. "The Polish: Soviet Confrontation in 1956 and the Attempted Soviet Military Intervention in Poland." *Europe-Asia Studies* Vol. 58(8), *1956 and Its Legacy*: 1285–1310.
- Rádványi, János. 1970. "The Hungarian Revolution and the Hundred Flowers Campaign." *The China Quarterly* No. 43: 121–129.
- Rainer, János M. 2006. "1956: The Mid-Twentieth Century Seen from the Vantage Point of the Beginning of the Next Century." *Europe-Asia Studies* Vol. 58(8), *1956 and Its Legacy*: 1189–1198.
- Valenta, Jiri. 1983. "The Explosive Soviet Periphery." *Foreign Policy* No. 51: 84–100.
- Wright, Quincy. 1957. "Intervention, 1956." *The American Journal of International Law* Vol. 51(2): 257–276.

Jugoslavija i mađarska pobuna 1956: dileme i kontroverze

Sukob Jugoslavije sa Sovjetskim Savezom 1948. ohrabrio je centrifugalne političke snage u Istočnom bloku. Mađarska pobuna iz 1956. bila je, ipak, ozbiljno iskušenje za jugoslovensku vladu, mada je jugoslovenski lider Josip Broz Tito uspeo da iskoristi priliku kako bi redefinisao status Jugoslavije, i sopstvenu ulogu, u međunarodnim odnosima. U dubinama jugoslovenskog režima bilo je dovoljno razumevanja za novo približavanje Sovjetima iz prethodne godine, i saradnju u sovjetskom gušenju mađarske pobune. Tito se u jednoj godini četiri puta sastao s Hruščovim. Osim pomoći izbeglicama i zvaničnih reakcija, Zapad je bio nemoćan, i Mađarska je prepuštena sovjetskoj orbiti. Zapad je ostao neaktivan, a Jugoslavija začutila, i to se ponovilo tokom gušenja Praškog proleća 1968.

Ključne reči: Mađarska revolucija, Jugoslavija, Josip Broz Tito, Imre Nađ, Nikita Hruščov

Paper received: 24. VII 2017.

Paper reviewed: 4. VIII 2017.

Paper accepted: 22. VIII 2017.