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Politics of Othering: Anglo-American Discourses of Representing Socialist Yugoslavia

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Abstract

The representing socialist Yugoslavia through discursive practices of othering falls into a common rubric of how we understand the self vis-à-vis the other. Edward Said and Maria Todorova have effectively deconstructed the Western discourses of the other by demonstrating the constitutive nature of the self and the other and by destabilizing the nexus between the empirical and the imaginative in creating geographical designations. While Orientalist and Balkanist discourses respectively construct the Western other almost as an entity without identity, and imply that the exteriority of representations is ought to be understood in terms of its negation, the Orientalist and Balkanist representations should not be given a status of axiom, for a discourse is by its very nature variable, and thus our subjectivity is in essence heterogeneous. This paper seeks to thematize this observation by exploring the discursive interaction between Anglo-American and Yugoslav intellectuals and politicians, arguing that their reciprocal construction of Yugoslavia as the in-between does not necessarily resonate with the Orientalist and Balkanist representations of the other, which are typically based on dominance and subordination, as well as on the center-periphery relationship. The initial attitude of the West towards the socialist development of Yugoslavia, which can be characterized as being indifferent, created a condition for possibility for the Yugoslavs to articulate the dialectic of nation, nationalism, and internationalism, and to develop an alternative claim to the universal. However, in so much as the Yugoslav dialectic constituted a challenge to the Western mode of the political, the later Anglo-American discourses of Yugoslavia exhibited degradation of the Yugoslav ideology in order to reinstate the centrality of the West as a zone of symbols, values and beliefs vis-à-vis reinforcing the familiar label and libel of the other.

Key words: Socialist Yugoslavia, othering, representation, socialist dialectic, center-periphery

Comment peut-on être ce que l'on est?: Theoretical thoughts on 'othering', identity and the political

Anglo-American intellectuals and politicians' representations of socialist Yugoslavia fall into a common rubric of how we understand the self vis-à-vis the other. Othering is often explained by unveiling political, economic, and cultural relationships between states, societies, or (groups of) individuals. It is a process of establishing a dichotomy between the self (the subject, the observer, the representing) and the other (the object, the observed, the represented). It is, thus, a mode of self-designation. Put otherwise, our identity is in juxtaposition with the representation of the other, both of which are constructed as a result of discursive practices. A discourse is an organized system of meanings – some may call it 'social imagery'¹, while others 'episteme'² – which ultimately governs absolute presuppositions of self-designation and othering. Meanings within such a system do not exist outside the system, insofar as a meaning is articulated only through its relation to the other meanings within the system. No meaning has a special independent status. Simultaneously, a discourse is embedded within and determined by a broader context, including the political and contingencies.³ The embeddedness of discourse entails that any representation of the other constructed through discursive practices of othering is always in a state of flux, and that, insofar as the other is constitutive of the self, our identity is neither fixed nor given a priori. The embeddedness also

means that we are not disengaged agent, which understanding negates a “view from nowhere”⁴: there is no realm of extradiscursive, nor the “faculty whereby we think properly” without “distortion” and “parochial perspectives.”⁵ Any intellectual, whose works are often considered objective, having little to do with subjective intuitions and political passion of nation, race, or class, are *of* their time and context. Hence, the political, within which Anglo-American intellectuals and politicians are embedded, determines the mode of representing Yugoslavia.

Regarding the relationship between the West and the East, othering is typically understood in terms of dominance and subordination. Edward Said’s magnum opus *Orientalism* (1978)⁶ is written exactly in this vein. His concern is primarily organized around what he calls a ‘corporate institution’ of a ‘style of thought’, developed in the West, thereby the abstractions such ‘Oriental’ and ‘European’, and the historical designation of the past greatness of ‘Oriental’ (Orientalism’s higher valuation) and the present degradation (Orientalism’s lower valuation) came to be in an active service for the Western colonial policies and the asymmetrical distribution of power. For Said, Orientalist’s representations of the East are equal to the act of colonization. Hence, othering is seemingly a commodity exclusive to the West.⁷ Insofar as negativity is always ascribed to the self-serving Orientalist representations, it is almost as if to claim that the exteriority of such representations also have to be understood in terms of its negation, whereby all the Orientalist scholars are reduced to the agents of colonial power. While Said effectively deconstructs the Western Orientalist thought, by demonstrating the constitutive nature of the self and the other and by destabilizing the nexus between the empirical and the imaginative in creating geographical designations, there still remains the pitfall of essentialism and ahistoricism. Although he emphasizes the fact that, “neither the term Orient nor the concept of the West has any ontological stability,”⁸ his treatment of, for instance, the earlier Western Orientalist literature presumes the existence of generic Orient; a presumption whereby the West is in turn essentialized as the opposition. The imagery of generic Orient presumes a historical continuity of the division between these geographical locations and the perpetually asymmetrical balance of power, whereby power is assumed as if it is a “commodity form which some possess and many other lack.”⁹ What has emerged is a representation of Orient with no subversive power, nor the capacity for self-designation: an entity without identity.

Maria Todorova goes beyond this limitation of Orientalism in her outstanding work on Balkanism.¹⁰ *Imagining the Balkans* (1997) grapples with Paul Valéry’s rhetorical question “Comment peut-on être ce que l’on est?”¹¹ by endorsing Edward Shils’ conception of center-periphery relationship¹², and offers us a Foucauldian and Saidian reading of Western discursive construction of the Balkans and the Balkan’s self-designation.¹³ While identity of the center is articulated vis-à-vis questioning ‘how can one be what one is’, self-designation of peripheries is dependent on their distance from the center and likely to evoke “feelings of envy, insecurity, inferiority... [reinforcing] a mode of self-abuse... [and provoking] resentment that could... be transmuted, by way of compensation, into a superiority complex.”¹⁴ Balkanist discourses¹⁵, European repertoire of making the other, constructed the abstract of the Balkans as irredeemably oriental (compared to European political, economic, social and cultural standards) but simultaneously indisputably European (geographically and to a extent religiously): as an European periphery, a provincial part, or even a quasi-colony¹⁶: as the in-between existing between the West and the East, Christianity and Islam, modern and pre-modern, and civilization and barbarism: hence, as the embodiment of the incomplete self, a phantasm of the West in its foregone past. And as the opposition, the West became “not merely a spatial location but a central zone of symbols, values, and beliefs that govern society.”¹⁷ It is because of this peripheral status that the Balkans’ self-designation was based on the reciprocation of the Western imageries, creating a sense of perpetually being the in-between. “The Balkan people,” argues Todorova, “have not been the passive recipients of label and libel”; instead, the Balkanist imageries have been “internalized in the region itself.”¹⁸

However, as discussed earlier, no subjectivity singularly exists; it is rather a multiple and fluid conception. The heterogeneity of how we understand the self vis-à-vis the other and the variability of discourse constitute a condition of possibility for articulating a counter-discourse. The abusing mode of self-designation based on the center-periphery relationship is perhaps one way of understanding the self. However, it should not be given a status of axiom, insofar as it is merely *one* discourse among many of the Balkan’s self-designation. By the same token, we ought not to assume that the Balkans is an entity without identity, and othering is propriety of the West.¹⁹ The division between the representing and the represented is not as clear-cut as we might think otherwise. Just as the West gazes at the Balkans, the Balkans gazes back at the West. For blurring boundaries between the self and the other, Sanjay Seth writes, “one cannot assume... that all human past consist of subjects who endow the world with meanings, the objectified forms of

which allow us to recreate their world... One must remain alert to the possibility of its inadequacy to its object.²⁰ Even representations of the other is not entirely comprehensible in terms of “a relation between a knowing subject and an object known; we are not even all subjects; the world is not disenchanted.”²¹ If our understanding of the self vis-à-vis the other is heterogeneous and if the subject-object relation is characterized by ambiguity and inadequacy, the center-periphery relationship both as a means and a result of othering is neither static nor a priori. Paul Valéry’s question “Comment peut-on être ce que l’on est?” is thus a rhetorical one: no one can be what one is without the other. That being said, the following sections explore discourses of the Balkans, more specifically Socialist Yugoslavia, articulated by Anglo-American intellectuals and politicians and counter-discourses of the Yugoslav self-designation, and examines the extent to which Yugoslavia as the Western other was constitutive of the West and its identity.

Making Yugoslavia ‘the In-between’: Anglo-American discourses of othering

The mode of perceiving socialist Yugoslavia within the Anglo-American intellectual and political domains was initially determined by the political necessity in the immediate aftermath of the Second World War, wherein the politics of ideology came to be constitutive of the international political life. Ideology emerged as an important signifier for translating domestic politico-social / -economic orders, and patterns and the rationale of foreign policies of political entities. The Soviet expansion towards Eastern Europe was not merely in accordance with its military cordon sanitaire and economic aspiration, but also, and apparently, with its communist ideology and desire to expand its sphere of influence. “The political personality of Soviet power as we know it today,” wrote George Kennan, “is product of ideology and circumstances.”²² While the West, particularly the USA, did not have much at stake in Eastern Europe, a widespread feeling of insecurity was that if Eastern European states were integrated into the Soviet orbit, the communist pressure would be channeled to the next layer of countries in Central Europe, and subsequently in Western Europe, and a confrontation, whether violent or otherwise, seemed inevitable. And yet, the Soviet’s actual political intention, its foreign policies, as well as its internal political climate were, for the most part, obscure to the West.

Such was the context that the layer-by-layer theory constituted apparent paranoia within Anglo-American intellectual and political circles. However, the initial reaction of American and British intellectuals and politicians to the Yugoslav ideological move towards socialism was not monolithic. American politicians sought a plausible “proposal to save the Balkans from communism,”²³ which was, however, confronted by Churchill’s sympathetic view toward communist ideology in general and Tito’s leadership in particular. Following an advice from a communist historian James Klugmann, Churchill offered the diplomatic and economic provision to Tito and his partisan movement especially during their struggle for achieving self-determination and the Yugoslav national independence.²⁴ While some British diplomats warned Churchill that “ultimate aim [of Tito] would undoubtedly be to establish in Yugoslavia a Communist regime closely linked to Moscow,” Churchill nevertheless asserted that “so long... as the whole of Western civilization was threatened by the Nazi menace, we could not afford to let our attention be diverted from the immediate issue by consideration of long-term policy... Politics must be a secondary consideration.”²⁵ Churchill asked Fitzroy Maclean, a diplomat who were concerned with British provision to Tito, a rhetorical question. “Do you intend... to make Yugoslavia your home after the war?,” to which Maclean answered with negation.²⁶ Churchill then dismissed Maclean’s concern, saying, “neither do I... And, that being so, the less you and I worry about the form of government they set up.”²⁷ This arbitrary indifference inheres two opposing principles of international politics: liberal internationalism, more precisely Wilsonian doctrine, which advocates self-determination and national independence²⁸; and, realist doctrine of foreign policy, whereby the landscape of international politics is set out as “an independent sphere of action and understanding apart from other spheres,”²⁹ and as being organized on the basis of the Westphalian statist principles, namely the mutual respect of sovereignty and the rule of non-intervention into domestic affairs. Of course, both doctrines are not at all politically innocent. The claim to the universal embedded in Wilsonian ideals is criticized as neither absolute nor universal “but the unconscious reflexions of national policy based on a particular interpretation of national interest at a particular time.”³⁰ Wilsonian doctrine is thus utopian at best and the embodiment of a new Western civilizing mission at worst. Realist doctrine is criticized as being inherently good only for “problem-solving” but not for systemic changes of how we organize international relations.³¹ Realism is for changes *within* but not *of* the system. And yet, materialization of liberal principles and solving a problem were exactly the political objectives of the West: the problem of Germany was so perturbing that, albeit socialist in its nature, the Yugoslav partisan was seen to

have done much to immobilize the Nazi, but to have little to do with the political of the West, which perception was primarily a reflection of the Anglo-American strategic political calculation.

The indifference attitude of Churchill towards the Yugoslav socialist development, in turn, constituted a condition of possibility for the Yugoslavs to reinforce a narrative that was rhetorically interlinking the concept of self-determination, national independence, and socialist revolution. The Yugoslav leaders had little intention of concealing their ideological principles from the West. In any case, ideological propagandas aiming at the outsiders became the central strategy for the Yugoslav communists in establishing their own milieu in the midst of various socialist models in Eastern European states and elsewhere, all of which were under the significant influence of the Soviet. Accordingly, in the early years of Socialist Yugoslavia, some of the cardinal texts on the Yugoslav socialist ideology and socialist governing, written by the Yugoslav intellectuals, were translated into English and became available for those outside. The fundamental rhetoric of these texts was, in fact, based on the reproduction of Balkanist imagery of the Balkans (including Yugoslavia) as a European periphery, a province, a quasi-colony, which had been subordinated to the external powers, from Ottoman Empire to Russian Empire, and from Austro-Hungary to Nazi Germany, and to the internal domination by bourgeoisie.³² In order to legitimize the partisan movement as a struggle for national independence from the hegemonic external powers and simultaneously from bourgeois domination, it was prerequisite to reproduce the peripheral and quasi-colonial status of Yugoslavia. The creation of a socialist nation, by means of materializing the Leninist mode of a definite political, cultural, and social community, was thought to be constitutive of achieving national independence, full sovereignty, freedom from any type of subjugation, and equal relationship with the Soviet and other socialist countries. Such a discourse effectively reduced socialism to a mere apparatus for more substantial and supposedly universal political ends.

The Yugoslav rhetoric of necessitating the construction of a socialist nation was further reinforced by the subsequent publications of the texts on constitutional debates, the Yugoslav democracy, and the role of socialists in materializing socialist ideals of the political. What was central to the debates was ideological justification of the socialist state building, which reflected the meticulous effort of the Yugoslav leaders in rationalizing what served them right and just, vis-à-vis portraying themselves as liberators and guarantors of independence. This logic of legitimation defined the goal of the Yugoslav socialists as to establish a state that was in line neither with the capitalist West nor with the authoritarian Soviet. In a metaphysical sense, the Yugoslav nation was imagined in the nexus between the particular and the universal: on one hand, the national differentiation, or else particularization of the Yugoslav socialism, was perceived as the method of struggle of the anti-capitalism and the anti-Stalinism par excellence; on the other, the dialectic relationship between socialist internationalism and the right of self-determination was understood as the latter being a prerequisite universal criterion for the former.³³ The metaphysical legitimation was of importance for transcending the internal ethnic differences and forming an imaginative community of fate³⁴. If a nation is “cultural creations” or “imagined community,”³⁵ then “the subjective dimension of national identity, the imaginary reconstruction of the past, the ever-new reinterpretation of history” are constitutive of “a community of fate just as much as ‘objective historical events are.’”³⁶ The Yugoslav community of fate was imagined as an entity that surpassed ethnic divisions. The history of the Balkan people was reinterpreted as a history of struggle for self-determination and national independence. And the ideal of the political was articulated as the ‘Yugoslav third way’, which combined Marxist theories of dialectical stages of development with Leninist practices of gradualist line of socialism. Tito reflected this development of the Yugoslav third way, stating, “Yugoslavia was not belonging to any bloc. If not attacked, she will not participate in any war,” and the Yugoslav people “are nationalists only to the exact degree necessary to develop a healthy socialist patriotism among our people, and socialist patriotism is in its essence internationalism.”³⁷

The earlier works of Anglo-American intellectuals were typically in line with the Anglo-American political discourse, being indifferent to, or even willingly praising the socialist development in Yugoslavia. For instance, G.E.R. Gedye wrote, nowhere else could we observe “a genuine revolt of a Communist proletariat or a natural revolution of any kind as there unquestionably was in Yugoslavia.”³⁸ Such an observation further expanded the repository of Western imagination. For the partisan struggle and subsequent independence of Yugoslavia, Frank Gervasi stated, “[Yugoslavia was] emerging from wilderness,” vis-à-vis achieving territorial integrity and emancipation of the people who had “never known freedom.”³⁹ This generally optimistic tone of intellectuals was further reinforced by detailed evaluations of the Yugoslav political, legal, social, and economic governing mechanisms. F.W. Neil, for instance, praised the Yugoslav leaders as having developed their own unique “road to socialism,” particularly since their breakup from Stalin in 1948.⁴⁰ For the Yugoslav attempt of paving its road to the third way, Neil later wrote,

By 1961... the first and most important stage of industrialization had been completed. Production showed the sharpest increases of any country in the world... Politically, Yugoslavia was not a democracy as American knew the term, but it was no longer a police state either. A new Communist system, permitting significance areas of free expression and widespread popular participation in public affairs, made even anti-Communist Yugoslav glad that they lived under Titoism rather than under any other regime in Eastern Europe.⁴¹

By the same token, *The Time Magazine* wrote, Yugoslav "notion of democracy is genuine, even if not of the Westminster variety," for it "stands for social and economic equality among the peoples of Yugoslavia."⁴² In effect, the West was witnessing "the rebirth of Yugoslavia," which "might provide a permanent solution to the problems of one third of the people of [European] continent," that is the problems of chronic poverty and underdevelopment, which had often the cause as well as the result of instability of the region.⁴³

In a nutshell, the initial Anglo-American perception reflected the geopolitical concern of the time, wherein the West saw the importance of Yugoslav independence from the Soviet hegemony for the stability of the region and for the Western containment policy. The perception also reflected the presumption that Tito and his communist party would successfully consolidate not only the ethnic tensions but also the internal disparities in Yugoslavia. In effect, the Anglo-American construction of Yugoslavia as an abstract entity seems to have little to do with the claims to the universal, nor with morality; rather it was a result of spatio-temporal strategic political considerations.

The dialectic of nation, nationalism, and internationalism

There is reasonable concordance between Anglo-American politicians and intellectuals, and the Yugoslav communist leaders, in constructing Yugoslavia as an abstraction that occupies a milieu between the West and the East, between liberalism and totalitarianism, and between *homo westermicus* and *homo sovieticus*. The repercussion of such a reciprocal representation, however, goes much beyond the politics of the Cold War. The rhetoric of Yugoslav self-designation and its claim to the universal vis-à-vis socialist development are fundamentally based on the dialectic of nation, nationalism, and internationalism in a socialist context, which challenges, if not negates completely, the Westphalian mode of the political and in effect the Western political modernity.

Our necessity of some forms of institutionalized organization is seemingly universal. Historical examples of a political, social and economic organization include both infra-national (or pre-national) and supranational (or trans-national) forms. The modern nation state emerged as a new category of political life in the 15th century Europe "with the rise of capitalism and the formation of the national market."⁴⁴ The new form of political life is distinguished from other forms precisely by its monopoly over legitimate use of violence as "the immediate bearer of political power," by which rhetoric the private and sectional violence become illegitimate.⁴⁵ However, the nation-state does not embed automatism; rather, "it is an imagined political community – and imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign."⁴⁶ What makes an imagined community imaginable is a set of apparatuses, an exquisite combination of the horizontal line of inclusion (citizenship, rights et cetera) and the vertical line of exclusion (territoriality, borders et cetera). In this context, nationalism is defined as a political ideology, which is demarcate the inside from the outside, and which is founded up the idea of nation-state "as the primary, fundamental and most important social and political value, to which all others are... subordinated."⁴⁷ At the same time, nationalism is by its nature irrational, for the nation-state as the primary category of political life is often dependent upon an appeal to, for example, the divinity and superiority of the nation and its people, ahistoricized rights and claims to geographical locations, and invented cultural and social traditions.⁴⁸

The Yugoslav socialist's attempt of dialectically linking nationalism and internationalism is based on two premises. The first is a particular understanding of how international relations is organized: the economic unification of the world on the basis of the capitalist system, which is fostered by the capitalist nation-states, but which is not the sum of national economies. The world capitalism is, as Marx understands it, organic, and thus the category of totality.⁴⁹ The Yugoslav ideology even goes beyond this Marxist conception, claiming that the world capitalism is not essentially a homogenizing force simply because even after the economic unification of the world national differences still persist, and national particularities are important features in making the working class as a historical agent in a given nation-state. The rhetoric is that, for transcending the totality of the capitalist system, articulating the dialectic relationship

between socialist national struggles and international socialist transformation, hence another kind of totality, is of importance. The second premise is that, although Marxists generally negate nationalism, the Yugoslav leaders acknowledge two different kinds of nationalism: nationalism of the oppressor and that of the oppressed. While refusing the former for it reinforces the idea of the nation as the final form of the modern political life, they consider the latter as the prerequisite for emancipation of the proletariat and for a new social relations based on freedom and on the revolutionary unity of the proletariat.⁵⁰ Here, the claim to self-determination and national independence becomes central for the overall socialist movement that is assumed as “an internationalist movement by virtue of the universalist and humanist character of its values and aims.”⁵¹

In constituting Yugoslavia as an embodiment of such a dialectic relationship between nation, nationalism, and internationalism, it was central for the Yugoslav leaders to define the status of Yugoslav people as the subject of oppression and subordination. Therefore, they consciously articulated the logic of justification not only for the internal political coherence but also more importantly for regulating the outsiders’ perception. The logic was often in line with, in one way or another, Edvard Kardelj’s pathological diagnosis of the problem of Yugoslav socialist struggle: “under-development of the country, with all the material, social and political consequences thus engendered, and the hegemonist pressure of Soviet ideology, under whose influence we were to a great extent.”⁵² As discussed, Anglo-American attitude towards Yugoslavia was a mere reflection of the strategic geopolitical calculation. But, nevertheless, the Yugoslav leaders arbitrarily regarded the Anglo-American tolerance towards the Yugoslav socialist development as the external justification for the attempt to pave their own way to achieve internationalism vis-à-vis national socialist struggle.

The Yugoslav dialectic of nation, nationalism, and internationalism, and the reciprocal construction of Yugoslavia as the in-between incur some implications. First, the reciprocal representation of Yugoslavia as the in-between transcends the Orientalist patterns of domination and the Balkanist imperialism of imagination. The West is no longer the absolute subject in constructing a particular representation of the object, whose power of othering is thus not infrangible and whose hierarchical relationship to its other is no longer axiomatic. Second, the Yugoslav socialist dialectic constitutes a challenge to the Westphalian mode of international relations, wherein the nation-state is given a status of axiom as the final form of the modern political life. Third, the dialectic also implies that the path to the universal including freedom and emancipation does not necessarily have to follow the Western model of progress. This means that the criteria to evaluate one’s progress do not have to be complied with the standards of the Western political life. In any case, the dialectic constitutes a challenge to a particular historical consciousness that proclaims “first in Europe, then elsewhere structure of global historical time.”⁵³ In essence, the Yugoslav dialectic, together with the reciprocal representation of Yugoslavia as the in-between, challenges the Western self-designation as the central zone of symbols, values, and beliefs, thus problematizes the seemingly static center-periphery relationship.

Politics of othering

Then, how did Anglo-American politicians and intellectuals respond to the challenge? From 1950s onwards, Anglo-American intellectual works on Yugoslavia began to be increasingly critical, reflecting skepticism towards the Yugoslav socialist development. There was paradox: the more texts written by the Yugoslavs became accessible outside Yugoslavia, the more apparent it became that “the theoretical innovation for which Yugoslav communism was renowned, workers’ self-management, became one of its hollowest jokes and its greatest contradictions.”⁵⁴ The Yugoslav theoretical invention did not correspond to the practices and people’s lived experiences. Those intellectuals, who were originally from Yugoslavia but later emigrated to UK or USA and who experienced both the Yugoslav socialist democracy and the Western liberal democracy, were particularly critical and seemingly disillusioned by the Yugoslav ideology. For example, Ante Kadic examined the extent to which the socialist ideology penetrated into social and cultural realms in Yugoslavia, arguing that, while the Yugoslav people were, unlike those in the Soviet and other socialist states, well acquainted with the Western social standards and Western culture, the socialist ideology nevertheless penetrated so deep into not merely the political but also the social and cultural life of Yugoslav people that the Westerners ought not to assume that the Yugoslav democracy was synonymous to the Western democracy.⁵⁵ Garvesi’s work similarly embedded an element of skepticism, while his earlier observation suggested that Yugoslav democracy, albeit not yet perfect, was a sign of vitality of the new-born nation and that Yugoslav ideology was an embodiment of viability to achieve relatively humane, alternative mode of socialism. Now in the opposite manner, the Yugoslav socialist democracy

was regarded merely as a result of Tito's careful balancing between "ideology, expediency, self-interest, and maintaining peaceful relations within and without."⁵⁶ That is, the Yugoslav socialist development was labeled as autarchic, having little to do with emancipation and revolutionary unity of the proletariat. Branko M. Peselj examined the Yugoslav constitutional and legal system. On one hand, he acknowledged that the basic characteristics of the Yugoslav socialist constitutionalism formed a part of the uniqueness of the Yugoslav third way, and the Yugoslav constitution exemplified the Yugoslav communists' effort to differentiate Yugoslavia from other socialist states and to establish its own road to socialism by utilizing the Marxist-Leninist doctrine of the organization of a proletarian state.⁵⁷ And yet, the terms of constitutions were nevertheless "conflicting, and in several instances legally superfluous or incomprehensible," which Peselj criticized as a deliberate inconsistencies in order to invent new techniques of socialist legality and socialist governmentality.⁵⁸ Theoretically speaking, the socialist constitutionalism was supposed to be an apparatus for institutionalization of the state, and for the later process of 'withering away of the state'. And decentralization was understood as "a pre-condition for self-management to work, since self-management was the only real democracy... [and] decentralization was a precondition for democratization too."⁵⁹ For successful decentralization, the leadership of the communist party as the true representative of the solidarity of the proletariat was assumed to be indispensable. To this end, the constitution was a legal apparatus to link the Yugoslav self-management and the withering away of the state with the political and ideological authority of the party. And yet, for Anglo-American intellectuals, the Yugoslav rhetoric of legitimation was dogmatic, and the dogmatism was essentialized vis-à-vis reproducing the criticisms of Yugoslav socialism.

A criticism of the Yugoslav self-management often began with a generic statement that Yugoslavia was moving "from crisis to crisis,"⁶⁰ or Yugoslavia was constantly "in a state of flux,"⁶¹ which observations were typically based on quantitative economic measures including GDP, economic performance, unemployment rate, and trade deficit. For the problem of the self-management, Noam Chomsky and Robert S. Cohen wrote,

While preserving a political system far more elitist and utilitarian than a developed system of participatory democracy could tolerate, the political leadership introduced an economic reform that was to fail: returning to a 19th century model of laissez-faire economy, leaving Yugoslav economy at the mercy of big foreign firms in the 'free competition' at the International Market, causing mass unemployment and huge foreign debts, allowing speculation in real estate and a rapid increase of social differences, encouraging the growth of autarchic tendencies in the existing six republics of the Yugoslav federation – which later constituted a material basis for strong nationalist movements.⁶²

The general tendency of Anglo-American intellectuals was to problematize the contradictions between the concept and practices of participatory framework of the self-management. The fundamental line of argument was that, while the self-management had imbedded the concept of workers' participation and "participative structure," the system failed "to generate participative behavior,"⁶³ due to the discrepancy between what the ideology of self-management promised to do and what it actually did in practice. "The basic factor leading to high levels of individual and mass frustration in Yugoslavia lay in the discrepancy between what Yugoslav individuals and groups thought they deserved and what they felt capable of attaining within the context of Yugoslav federation," and the "frustration resulted from the discrepancy between, first, expectations related to key values and, secondly capabilities for fulfilling these expectations."⁶⁴ The discrepancy, the consequent relative deprivation, and the low work satisfaction⁶⁵, were understood as the inherent problems of the "oligarchic structure of power-distribution."⁶⁶

It was precisely this essentialization of the oligarchic character of the Yugoslavia that the boundary between the West and Yugoslavia was redrawn, by comparing the Western European concept of participation to the Yugoslav equivalent concept, or the lack thereof. Insofar as the oligarchic character was 'the essence' of Yugoslav politico-economic / -social system, or else "the particular problems of Yugoslav society,"⁶⁷ the self-management system was seen as serving merely as "a useful function for the dominant political elites,"⁶⁸ and creating further "problems" and "obstacles" for an appropriate resource allocations, a healthy economic development, and a democratic social relationship.⁶⁹ Whatever the nomenclature, the essentialization and subsequent degradation of Yugoslav governing mechanism formed a basis for Anglo-American intellectuals to predicate that such an oligarchic nature was a perceptible indication of Yugoslavia still being 'a developing country', with its political life intrinsically incommensurable with the Western equivalent, and with its 'inherent inability' of achieving what its ideology promised to achieve.⁷⁰ Of course, the Yugoslav leaders

were aware of such a criticism, and thus attempted to justify the one party system vis-à-vis reiterating the rhetoric of ‘leading’. That is to say, as Jovan Djordjevic argued, the politics could be truly socialist and democratic only when the Yugoslav workers were ‘led’, but not ‘ruled’, by the vanguard, because a collective scientific thought of socialist society, a prerequisite for effective socialist transformation, ought to be articulated by those ‘leaders’ but not ‘rulers’, and because politics would not be collective if it was not founded on ‘a leadership’.⁷¹ Nevertheless, the efficacy of the essentialization of Yugoslav character is worth considering here. The seeming failure of Yugoslav socialism was understood as the exemplification of the inconsistency of the socialist dialectic. The negation of the socialist dialectic allowed Anglo-American intellectuals to reinstate the familiar label (‘Yugoslavia as being a developing country’) and libel (‘inherently incapable of achieving its ideals’), which reconstituted hierarchy between the spatial designations, while ahistoricizing the division between the abstractions such as the West and Yugoslavia. It is precisely this reinstatement of the hierarchy that constituted a condition for possibility for the West to rearticulate the center-periphery relations between the West and Yugoslavia, and to universalize the idea, on the basis of a particular linear historical consciousness, that the Western mode of political life, its conception of the nation-state, and its Westphalian configuration of international relations, as the most advanced form of the political.

¹Charles Taylor, *Modern Social Imaginaries*, Durham: Duke University Press, 2004

²Michel Foucault, *Archaeology of Knowledge*, New York: Pantheon Books, 1972 [1969]

³Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe, *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy: Towards a Radical democratic Politics, 2nd Edition*, London and New York: Verso, 2001: 85. ‘The political’, in the Heideggerian notion, is understood as something having to do with the ontological level. It is “the ontological [that] concerns the very way in which society is instituted,” (Mouffe 2005: 8-9) while ‘politics’ refers to a set of institutions and practices by which politico-social and politico-economic orders are implemented and maintained. See, Chantal Mouffe, *On The Political*, New York: Routledge, 2005.

⁴Thomas Nagel, *The View from Nowhere*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1983

⁵Charles Taylor, “Engaged agency and background in Heidegger,” in Charles B. Guignon (ed.) *The Cambridge Companion to Heidegger*, New York: Cambridge University Press, 1993: 320

⁶Edward Said, *Orientalism*, New York: Random House, Inc., 1978

⁷To this end, Othering is not merely an act of categorization of the object according to geography, race, ethnicity, or religion; it represents the power of the subject to carry out such an act, transforming the immediacy of categorization into an ontologically stable fact. “The development and maintenance of every culture requires,” said Edward Said, “the existence of another different and competing alter ego.” (Said 1978: 332) The object becomes, by means of othering, a body of knowledge, which constitutes a reference point for the opposition.

⁸Said, *Orientalism*, 330-1

⁹Michael Dutton and Peter Williams, “Translating theories: Edward Said on orientalism, imperialism and alterity,” *Southern Review*, 26: 3, 1993: 318

¹⁰Todorova, *Imagining the Balkans*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997

¹¹Paul Valéry, quoted in Todorova, *Imagining the Balkans*, 57

¹²Edward Shils, *The Logic of Personal Knowledge: Essay Presented to Michael Polanyi*, New York: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1961

¹³ A Balkanist discourse, an independent and particularistic Western rhetorical paradigm, was often articulated in order for the ideal type construction of the self-serving imageries of the West vis-à-vis the Balkans as a radically different other within Europe. Todorova identifies three closely related dimensions of a Balkanist discourse: the spatial (where is the Balkans and where is the West?); the temporal (who are the Balkans and who are we?); and, the ethical (what responsibility do we owe to the Balkans?). (Todorova 1997: 62) In addition, the ideals of Enlightenment and linear historical consciousness added a new desire of the West to determine “one’s place in the history of civilization.” (Ibid: 63)

¹⁴Todorova, *Imagining the Balkans*, 57

¹⁵‘Balkanization’ was first termed by Paul Scott Mowrer to describe the process of creating “in a region of hopelessly mixed race, . . . a medley of small states with more or less backward populations, economically and financially weak, covetous, intriguing, afraid, a continual prey to the machinations of the great powers, and the violent promptings of their own passion.” (Mowrer 1921: 34) For Mowrer’s detailed observation, see: Paul Scott Mowrer, *Balkanized Europe: A Study in Political Analysis and Reconstruction*, New York: E.P. Dutton, 1921. The term, which was initially used as to describe, hence to represent, the Balkan region, later entered into political vocabulary and has been utilized to depict backwardness, violence, racial and ethnic antagonisms, and segmentalization of a given entity or of a given realm including politics, demography, culture, and cyberspace.

¹⁶This quasi-colonial status was what differentiated the region from Said’s Orient. And this is where the difference is marked between Orientalism and Balkanism, in that “in the case of the Balkans’ European allegiance, the discrepancy is based on the different territorial span between the geographic, economic, political, and cultural Europe.” (Todorova 1997: 17) While Orientalism is “a discourse about an imputed opposition,” Balkanism is understood as “a discourse about an imputed ambiguity.” (Ibid)

¹⁷Todorova, *Imagining the Balkans*, 40

¹⁸Ibid, 39

¹⁹Such problematization is shared among scholars such as Milca Bakic-Hayden, Frank Wilmer, and David Campbell. Bakic-Hayden investigates what she has termed ‘nesting orientalism’, which acknowledges the complexity of the dichotomy between the East and the West, or the gradation of the ‘Oriental’. Wilmer problematizes the Balkanist monolithic imagery of Yugoslavia, arguing that the antagonism between different kinds of human subjectivity (between Yugoslav identity and various ethnic identities) have determined the way in which the Yugoslavs encountered the internal other. In a similar vein, Campbell examines the multiplicity of the Yugoslav self-imagery particularly during the war in Bosnia, and demonstrated how the distorted multiple imageries have been negotiated, homogenized, and naturalized as autonomous, ahistorical essences. See: Milca Bakic-Hayden, “Nesting Orientalism: The Case of Former Yugoslavia,” *Slavic Review*, 54: 4, 1995: 917-31; Frank Wilmer, *Social Construction of Man, the State, and War: Identity, Conflict, and violence in Former Yugoslavia*, New York: Routledge, 2002; David Campbell, *National Deconstruction: Violence, Identity, and Justice in Bosnia*, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1998.

²⁰Sanjay Seth, *Subject Lesson: The Western Education of Colonial India*, Durham: Duke University Press, 2007: 186

²¹Ibid, 195

²²George Kennan, "The Sources of Soviet Conduct," *Foreign Affairs*, July, 1947: 566

²³Albert Coady Wedmeyer, *Wedmeyer Reports!*, New York: Holt, 1958: 230

²⁴John V. Denson, *The Cost of War: America's Pyrrhic Victories*, New Brunswick: Transaction Publisher, 1999: 346-7

²⁵Fitzroy Maclean, *Eastern Approaches*, London: Penguin Books, 1949: 281

²⁶Lefte Stavros Stavrianos, *Balkans Since 1453*, New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1958: 801-2

²⁷Ibid.

²⁸The principle of self-determination and national independence were specified in Woodrow Wilson's "Fourteen Points" statement. In particular the 5th point of the statement declares, "A free, open-minded, and absolutely impartial adjustment of all colonial claims, based upon a strict observance of the principle that in determining all such questions of sovereignty the interests of the populations concerned must have equal weight with the equitable claims of the government whose title is to be determined." (Wilson, 8 January, 1918) The document is available at: The Avalon Project, Yale Law School (http://avalon.law.yale.edu/20th_century/wilson14.asp) (Accessed 5 March, 2014).

²⁹Hans J. Morgenthau, *Politics Among Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace*, New York: Knopf, 1955: 5

³⁰Edward H. Carr, *The Twenty Years Crisis, 1919-1939*, London: Harper Collins, 1939: 87

³¹Robert W. Cox, *Production, Power, and World Order: Social Forces in the Making of History*, New York: Columbia University Press, 1987. See also: Alexander Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999: 10.

³²Boris Zihel, *Communism and Fatherland*, Belgrade: Jugoslovenska Knjiga, 1949: Part One. The manuscript is available at <https://www.marxists.org/subject/yugoslavia/zihel/communism-fatherland/index.htm> (Accessed 5 March, 2014)

³³Such rhetoric is characteristic of Leninist discourse of the dialectic relationship between socialist internationalism and the right of self-determination. Michael Lowy aptly summarizes Lenin's claim. "[Lenin] understood, first, that only the *freedom* to secede makes possible *free* and voluntary union, association, cooperation, and... fusion between nations," to achieve socialist internationalism. And second, "only the recognition by the workers' movement in the oppressor nation of the right of the oppressed nation to self-determination can help to eliminate the hostility and suspicion of the oppressed and unite the proletariat of both nations in the international struggle against the bourgeoisie." (Lowy 1998: 40) In a nutshell, the right of self-determination is thought to be the necessary grounding for achieving the unity of socialists that cuts across the boundaries of nations. See: Michael Lowy, *Fatherland or Mother Earth? Essays on the National Question*, London: Pluto Press, 1998: 40-4.

³⁴This claim resonates Otto Bauer's conception of nation as "a set of human beings linked by a common fate and common character." (Bauer 2000: 135) Although Lenin initially criticized such an understanding of nation as merely "psychological," (Foley 2003: 115), it shaped the official position of Bolshevik on self-determination, of which Lenin himself nonetheless approved. For Bauer's conception of nation, see: Otto Bauer, *The Question of Nationality and Social Democracy*, Minneapolis: The University of Minnesota Press, 2000 [1924]. See also: Barbara Foley, *Spectres of 1919: Class & Nation in the Making of the New Negro*, Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2003.

³⁵Eric Hobsbawm, *Nation and Nationalism since 1780: Programme, Myth, Reality*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990; Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, London: Verso, 1983.

³⁶Lowy, *Fatherland*, 49

³⁷Kalamesh Banerji, "Interview with Marshal Tito," *Forth International*, 11: 6, November-December, 1950: 188-92. Available at: <http://www.marxists.org/history/etol/newspape/fi/vol11/no06/banerji.html> (Accessed 7 March, 2014)

³⁸G. E.R. Gedye, "Tito versus Stalin," *Contemporary Review*, January, 117: 1-5, 1950: 1

³⁹Frank Gervasi, "Tito's Revolution is Unique," *New Republic*, 121:24, 1949:12, 15

⁴⁰Fred Warner Neil, *Titoism in Action: The Reforms in Yugoslavia after 1948*, Berkeley C.A.: University of California Press, 1952

⁴¹Fred Warner Neil, "Yugoslavia at Crossroads," *The Atlantic*, December, 1962. The digital edition is available at: <http://www.theatlantic.com/past/docs/unbound/flashbks/balkans/nealf.htm> (Accessed 7 March 2014)

⁴²*The Time Magazine*, "Election in Yugoslavia," 9th November edition, 1945: 4.

⁴³Frank Gervasi, "Tito," *Collier's Weekly*, 19th February, 1944. Available at: <http://www.unz.org/Pub/Colliers-1944feb19-00018> (Accessed 7 March 2014)

⁴⁴Lowy, *Fatherland or Mother Earth*, 61

⁴⁵Max Weber, "Politics as a Vocation," in H.H. Garth and C. Wright Mills, (eds.), *Essays in Sociology*, New York: Macmillan, 1946: 26-45, paraphrased in Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism*, Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1983: 3

⁴⁶Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 49

⁴⁷Lowy, *Fatherland or Mother Earth*, 52

⁴⁸Eric Hobsbawm, *The Invention of Tradition*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992

⁴⁹Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Communist Manifesto*, London: Penguin Classics, 2002 [1848]

⁵⁰Edvard Kardelj, "Introduction," *Fundamental Law: Pertaining to the Bases of the Social and Political Organization of the Federal People's Republic of Yugoslavia and of the Federal Organs of State Authority*, Belgrade: Union of Jurists' Associations of Yugoslavia, 1953

⁵¹Lowy, *Fatherland or Mother Earth*, 53

⁵²Kardelj, "Introduction," 5

⁵³Dipesh Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe: Postcolonial Thought and Historical Difference*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000: 7

⁵⁴Vesna Drapac, *Constructing Yugoslavia: A Transnational History*, New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010: 225

⁵⁵Ante Kadic, *Socialist Realism and Modernism in Present-day Yugoslavia*, Oklahoma: University of Oklahoma Press, 1959:143

⁵⁶Drapac, *Constructing Yugoslavia*, 227

⁵⁷Branko M. Peselj, *The Socialist Character of Yugoslav Law*, Dorking: Bartholomew Press, 1961

⁵⁸Ibid.

⁵⁹Dejan Jovic, "Yugoslavism and Yugoslav Communism: From Tito to Kardelj," in Dejan Djokic (ed.) *Yugoslavism: Histories of a Failed Idea 1918-1992*, London: C. Hurst & Co. Ltd., 2003: 174-5

⁶⁰Fred Singleton, "Yugoslavia: From Crisis to Crisis," *New Society*, 23rd November, 1972: 451

⁶¹Malcolm Warner, "Wither Yugoslav Self-Management?," *Industrial Relations Journal*, 6: 1, 1975: 65-72

⁶²Noam Chomsky and Robert S. Cohen, "The Repression at Belgrade University," *The New York Review of Books*, 7th February, 1974. Available at: <http://www.nybooks.com/articles/archives/1974/feb/07/the-repression-at-belgrade-university/> (Accessed 7 March 2014)

⁶³Warner, "Wither Yugoslav Self-Management?," 72

⁶⁴Gary K. Bertsch, "Currents in Yugoslavia: The Revival of Nationalisms," *Problems of Communism*, XXII: Nov-Dec., 1973: 10

⁶⁵Patricia A. Taylor, "Work satisfaction under Yugoslav self-management: On participation, authority, and ownership," *Social Forces*, 65: 4, 1987:

⁶⁶ Josip Obradovic, "Distribution of Participation in the Process of Decision-Making," in Eugen Pusic (ed.), *Participation and Self-Management*, Zagreb: First International Sociological Conference on Participation and Self-Management, 1972: 137

⁶⁷ Ibid.

⁶⁸ Warner, "Wither Yugoslav Self-Management?," 68

⁶⁹ Frank H. Stephen, *Workers' Participation: A Basis for Discussion*, Belfast: Irish Congress of Trade Unions, Northern Ireland Committee, 1975: 56

⁷⁰ Warner, "Wither Yugoslav Self-Management?," 69-70; Ivan Szelenyi, "Social Inequalities in State Socialist Redistributive Economics: Dilemmas for Social Policy in Contemporary Socialist Societies of Eastern Europe," *International Journal of Comparative Sociology*, 19:1-2, 1978: 82

⁷¹ Jovan Dzhordhevic, "The Creation of the 1974 Constitution of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia," in R.A. Goldwin and A. Kaufman (eds.), *Constitution Makers on Constitution Making: The Experience of Eight Nations*, Washington D.C.: American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research, 1988

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