
Between Cooperation and Rivalry: Attempts of Yugoslav and Italian Communists to Define Common Attitudes Towards Movements of the Early New Left in 1968

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Abstract

Deep structural changes of the Western European societies in the years after the Second World War and the creation of welfare state policies influenced leftist political thought in the countries of the Western Bloc to take many different paths of ideological evolution. Two of the most important currents that emerged on the European left in the aftermath of the political turmoil which marked the year 1968 were Eurocommunism and ideologies of the New Left. Meanwhile, the League of Communists of Yugoslavia developed close cooperation with the Italian Communist Party, which would soon become the first Eurocommunist party in Europe, and participated in creation of the Reformist Bloc, an informal group of European Marxist parties that would start numerous political initiatives in order to weaken the Soviet influence in the international socialist institutions. This paper will try to summarize the results of historical research conducted in three archives in modern-day Serbia on the subject of Yugoslav participation in the formation of the collective attitudes and policies of communist parties from the Reformist Bloc towards political organizations associated with ideologies of the New Left. Also, the aim of this paper is to contribute in the long research process that could eventually provide an answer to the question – was cooperation between Eurocommunists and the New Left ever possible, and to what extent did their rivalry influence the events on the European left?

Key words: *Eurocommunism, New Left, democratic socialism, League of Communists of Yugoslavia, Communist Party of Italy.*

Structural Origins of Eurocommunism and of the New Left Ideologies: The Italian Case as a Model for Understanding the Turmoil on the European Left

For the last six decades, numerous researchers from the fields of social science and humanities have invested significant effort in trying to define, distinguish, and estimate the different forms of influence that new social policies introduced after the Second World War (so-called “welfare state” policies) had on different societies in the countries of the Western Bloc (Weller & Sant’Ana, 2019, pp. 2–30). Though the costs and contributions of “welfare state” policies to this day remain a subject of debate among the parties from both the right and left wings of the political spectrum, many experts agree that deep structural changes that influenced societies of Western Europe and the United States had at least a noteworthy influence in creating the same ideological, cultural, and political developments that allowed for the previously mentioned debates to take their current forms (Obinger & Schmitt, 2011, pp. 246–270). One significant aspect of the aforementioned evolution in the sphere of ideas that is to a certain extent disregarded in historiography today was the change that occurred within those perceptions and beliefs, which shaped the policies of leading Marxist parties and unions in the countries of Western Europe (Petersen & Mioni, 2022, pp. 43–59). This process was exceptionally intense and fast in Italy, where swift social and political changes in the aftermath of the Second World War created an opening for leftist

movements to rapidly increase their political power and social influence, which in turn increased the ferocity of competition on the Italian left (Drake, 2004, pp. 47–63).

Analyzed sources are suggesting that Italian communists have developed new and rediscovered old ideas after witnessing the changes that Italian society was going through in the late 1950s and early 1960s, which they, as contemporaries, already perceived to be consequences of industrialization, technological modernization, urbanization, development of consumer culture, new artistic waves and other aspects of the long term historical and social process that was later named *Italian economic miracle* (Archives of Yugoslavia (AY), League of Communists of Yugoslavia (LCY), 507-IX, 48/I-490-525, Recorded conversations with Italian communists about the social and political situation in Italy). At the same time, the Italian working class became unprecedentedly unionized, while growingly influential unions were able to pressure the government into further expanding the same policies that led to the rise of the financial and political power of the unions, thus constantly renewing the phenomenon that would later be defined as the ``welfare state circle`` (Pons, 2001, pp. 3–27; Macdonald, 1996, pp. 152–188). However, this process had quite an unexpected effect on the popularity of far-left parties in Italy, and a certain number of Italian communists already in the early 1960s wrote about how the working class has lost interest in the concept of a ``global revolution``, as well as patience for complex Marxist theory, and is becoming increasingly more concerned with the local problems of their own social habitat, which they could now address through their communal representatives and unions (Brogi, 2018, pp. 134–157; Sassoon, 1992, 139–169). With the social and cultural changes, it was becoming ever more apparent that the age of right-wing dictatorships on the Mediterranean was over in Italy, and thus the fear of a new fascist takeover was no longer powerful enough to fuel the ideological radicalization of the Italian workers in their transition towards the consumer class (a phenomenon which at the same time became a primary subject of later famous debates in British sociology, see more in: Goldthorpe, 1967, pp. 11–37; Crewe, 1986, 620–638).

The effort of different leftist organizations to explain all new cultural phenomena and adopt political practices to the new social reality led towards the formation of two main directions of thought, the New Left and Eurocommunism. The case of the Italian left represents one of the best possible examples of the great changes on the European left in the late 1950s and early 1960s since in Italy, the ideas that would later define both paths of ideological evolution started forming during the immediate aftermath of the sudden economic changes. Yet, while the forces of the New Left were left largely outside the perspective of major political parties in Italy and Europe until the rebellions of 1968, Eurocommunist reforms attracted attention from many ``traditional`` parties of far-left in both Eastern and Western Europe (Kriegel, 1967, pp. 253–268; Raymond, 2005, pp. 40–63). Even during the times of the PCI's (*Partito Comunista Italiano*) Bolshevization there were some Italian Marxists who openly expressed doubts in the idea that Bolshevik socialist model is universally applicable to all countries, geographic regions, and societies in all historical periods. In the years that followed the split between the Yugoslav and Soviet parties in 1948, many members of analytical offices within the Yugoslav party enthusiastically reported about those Italian Marxists and some communist party members who returned to exploring the works of Antonio Gramsci, especially those in which he further elaborated on his famous words from his letters to the communists of Turin, where he stated that ``*there is no magical formula for creating socialism*`` (AY, LCY, 507-IX, 48/I-392-426, Reports about the attitudes of PCI leadership).

Following Antonio Gramsci's ideas of adjusting the political practice and eventually the socialist model itself to the imperatives of local political and economic circumstances of numerous Italian provinces with different histories and cultures, Italian communists to a certain extent unknowingly started to create a new party ideology already in the early 1960s (AY, LCY, Ideological Commission, II/2-b-244-252, Documents for preparation for the sessions of the Ideological Commission). Although the new ideology of Italian party, which would later become known as *Eurocommunism*, was defined only after the split with Soviet party in 1968, and formally adopted during the famous "historical congress" (XII Congress of PCI) in 1969, prominent Italian communists have already started, as early as mid-60s, to elaborately inform their Yugoslav counterparts of their intentions to change the party ideology, as relations between the two parties slowly grew ever closer. However, Italian communists have been aware that the road of changing the party policies and eventually, the party ideology itself would certainly lead them to the point where it would be no longer possible to maintain good relations with the Soviets and communist parties of the Eastern Bloc. Subsequently, they were already searching for new friends and allies within growingly vast and diverse spheres of international socialist movements, which they have found within the ranks of the increasingly influential League of Communists of Yugoslavia (AY, Cabinet of the President of the Republic (CPR), I-3-a/44-59-62, Information about the visits of general secretaries of PCI Luigi Longo and Enrico Berlinguer).

Yugoslav Role in the Creation of the Reformist Bloc on the European Far-Left

Reconciliation of the Yugoslav and Soviet parties in mid to late 1950s was quickly followed by the development of close cooperation between the LCY and PCI, which was an exception in comparison to the usual development of relations between Yugoslav communists and Marxist parties of both Eastern and Western Europe, since the majority of these parties still held reservations towards evolving the cooperation with the LCY beyond what French communists defined as "coldly warm formalities" (AY, Socialist Alliance of the Working People of Yugoslavia (SAWPY), A-074-078, International Cooperation, Reports on cooperation with PCI and PCF). Besides the already existing determination of some structures within PCI to break away from the overwhelming influence of the Soviet party, another factor that contributed to the fast development of cordial relations between Yugoslav and Italian communist parties could have been the constant increase in the process of exchange between Yugoslavia and Italy. Almost immediately after the formal renewal of the relations between the League of Communists of Yugoslavia and communist parties of Western Europe in 1956 and 1957, delegations of the PCI Central Committee started to visit Yugoslavia almost regularly every year, while it was not uncommon for the individual members of the Italian Communist Party leadership to make more than a few visits to their Yugoslav comrades during the course of the same year (AY, CPR, I-3-a/44-59-62). At the same time, Italian Marxist papers started to gradually increase the number of articles dedicated to the questions related to the problems and successes of Yugoslav economy, foreign policy, and most frequently, about the evolution of the Yugoslav party ideology and the development of the Yugoslav socialist model (AY, LCY, 507-IX, 48/I-374-665, Reports about the articles concerning Yugoslavia published in PCI party press). Already in the late fifties and early sixties it became common for Palmiro Togliatti and Luigi Longo, as well as for other members of the PCI leadership, to openly criticize the policies of the Soviet party in their increasingly frequent conversations with Josip Broz Tito, Aleksandar Ranković, or Edvard Kardelj, and to propose such

changes to PCI policies that would be similar to the principles of Yugoslav conceptions of self-governance, internal democratization and decentralization of the party (AY, LCY, 507-IX, 48/I-392-426, Reports about cooperation and communication with the Italian Communist Party).

The Yugoslav party defined its first policies of financial support towards Italian communists even before the reforms of PCI political practices managed to attract the attention of other European Marxist parties. During the years that followed the informal beginnings of changes in PCI ideology and political practice, the League of Communists of Yugoslavia continued to develop cooperation with the Communist Party of Italy, while the increasingly closely connected Yugoslav and Italian communists worked together on organizing new collective political initiatives of European Marxist parties and lobbying in the international communist institutions in an endeavor to secure wider support of the numerous far-left parties for the new Eurocommunist ideology (AY, SAWPY, A-074-078). For example, analyzed sources show that in this period Italian and Yugoslav communists often engaged in long disputes with the communist parties of the Eastern Bloc and clashed with the leaderships of Soviet and Chinese parties over many different questions, from the debates about the influence of the Soviet party on the European far-left to the joint efforts of Italian and Yugoslav communists to support King Sihanouk against the Khmer Rouge in Cambodia (AY, CPR, I-3-a/44-66-69). Notes taken during the conversations between delegations of Italian and Yugoslav communists in the early seventies show that Enrico Berlinguer and others members of the Italian party leadership openly promised to follow the path of Yugoslav party in the affairs of international communist institutions, while Josip Broz Tito and members of LCY Central Committee promised that Yugoslavia will continue to provide financial aid to all the plans of Italian communists in regard of expanding their new ideology through Europe and the world, expand the policies of financing activities of Italian communists in Yugoslavia, while providing various forms of protection for the Italian communists against possible retribution of the Soviet party leadership (AY, LCY, 507-IX, 48/I-392-426).

However, by far the most discussed sphere of constantly expanding cooperation between Yugoslav and Italian communists, both in the reports of analytical offices of the LCY and during the conversations between the two party leaderships, was the creation of the ``Reformist Bloc`` of the European Marxist parties. State institutions of Yugoslavia and party commissions of the LCY invested a considerable amount of effort and resources in building and maintaining close relations with the reformist fractions of French, Greek, and Spanish communist parties, as well as in helping the Italian communists in their endeavors to integrate these fractions in the early international initiatives of the future Eurocommunist parties. Since LCY leadership opposed the usage of the term ``Eurocommunism``, a compromise was made between Josip Broz Tito and Enrico Berlinguer that the new bloc of the European Marxist parties will refer to themselves as democratic socialists, thus using the ``old`` term, which implied a connection with the earlier ideology of German communists under the leadership of Rosa Luxembourg, with whom Lenin and Trotsky had famous disputes about the necessity of creating one party dictatorship in order to insure transition from capitalist reality to Marxist utopia. Aiming to deny even the Marxist character of new ideologies that were forming on the European far-left, members of the Soviet and other Eastern Bloc parties started using the term ``Reformist Bloc`` to define the new informal political alliance between Yugoslav and Italian communists and other Mediterranean democratic socialists. In doing so, the Soviets and their allies were referring to old debates between Lenin and the social democrats of the late XIX and early XX century, majority of whom were back then still devoted Marxists, and symbolically

marking supporters of new leftist ideologies from the ever growing spectrum of democratic socialism as ``outcasts`` and ``traitors`` from the perspective of those who believed in the universal and timeless character of those principles that defined the Bolshevik socialist model (AY, LCY, 507-IX, 122/1-52-81; AY, LCY, 507-IX, 48/I-392-426; AY, LCY, 507-IX, 33/I-210-255; AY, LCY, 507-IX, 33/I-712-779; Analytical reports on the development of cooperation between LCY and PCI, PCF, PCE and KKE).

On the other side, Eurocommunist parties and LCY adopted the term ``Reformist Bloc`` when addressing their own group formed in opposition to the Soviet influence in the international communist organizations. Yugoslav and Italian communists concluded that Soviets ``*have provided LCY and PCI with a favor*`` by granting them a term that is short and convenient to, and, at the same time, allows them to express the crucial point of their cooperation against the Soviet without getting into debates about how Yugoslav party wants its socialist model to continuously be seen as a unique alternative to the Soviet model, while avoiding to make the same model seem indistinguishable from the new Eurocommunist ideologies whose development LCY supported (AY, SAWPY, A-074-078, International Cooperation, Reports on cooperation with PCI). Recorded conversations between the members of Yugoslav and Italian party leaderships show that leaders of the two parties sometimes even went as far as to mock the Soviets and joke about the fact that Soviet party leadership is still expecting ordinary working, and consumer middle-class voters, as well as university students in Western Europe during the late 1960s to find and comprehend some contemporary relevance in old debates between Lenin and social democrats. Yet, with the great student rebellions of 1968 and the appearance of the New Left movements in the United States and Western Europe, Italian and Yugoslav communists would soon come to the rather disappointing realization that their understanding of new leftist competition and the social causes of its emergence is surprisingly similar to the Soviet understanding of numerous phenomena in regard to the evolution of Eurocommunist ideologies or rediscovery of democratic socialism in Western Europe (AY, LCY, 507-IX, 48/I-490-525, Recorded conversations with Italian communists about the social and political situation in Italy).

Year of Shock: The Efforts of European Communists to Understand and to Define the New Movements and Rebellions of 1968

When great student rebellions of 1968 broke out in the countries of Western Europe and in the United States, communist parties of both the Eastern and Western blocs found themselves in a situation that members of French Communist Party's (PCF) leadership described as ``*a state of shock and disbelief*`` (AY, LCY, 507-IX, 33/I-210-255, Reports on cooperation with the Communist Party of France). Analyzed sources indicate that communist parties of the Mediterranean showed considerably more concern with the rising of the new movements and with them, new leftist ideologies, than was the case with communist parties of the Eastern Bloc, which didn't have to fear the possible appearance of new political competition. According to later testimonies of leading Eurocommunists, up until the spring and summer of 1968, members of Italian and French communist parties shared a belief that they were the only force on the Western European left, beside the socialist parties of both countries, that enjoyed enough popularity, had the required resources, and possessed the necessary social influence to organize and lead demonstrations that would look similar to those that occurred during the ``Red Spring`` of Europe (1946-1949) and later during the 1950s, which had numbered more than a million participants. During

one of the increasingly frequent meetings with the LCY leadership, a member of the PCI Central Committee stated: *“It is not the ideology of the new movements that French communists find to be so shocking...It is the fact that bourgeoisie scribes from Sorbonne have rallied a hundred thousand workers to participate in their rebellion, even some from unions under PCF control, thus the party itself may be forced to join them...”* (AY, LCY, 507-IX, 48/I-431, Reports about visits of Carlo Galluci and Giancarlo Pajetta).

In this regard, two examples of the most common reactions in relation to new university movements can be recognized in the comparison of how French and Italian party leadership reacted to student rebellions. More conservative French party leadership quickly came into conflict with the university professors and students who led the rebellion at Sorbonne University, while the youth of the French party often clashed with the members of the new movements on the streets of Paris. Diplomatic representatives of Yugoslavia in France reported that physical conflicts between young French communists from the provinces and some student groups didn't stop even after the French party joined most of the communist unions in support of the general strike and demonstrations that followed the uprising at Sorbonne (Diplomatic Archives of Serbia (DAS), Federal Secretariat for Foreign Affairs (FSFA), F-41, France, year 1968, Information about the attitudes and activities of the French communists). On the other hand, Italian communists wrote to their Yugoslav counterparts about their fears that they weren't fast enough in implementing changes to their political practice and have thus missed out on the opportunity to integrate new movements into the PCI sphere of influence on the Italian far left. Some authors of articles in Italian Marxist papers even went as far as to openly suggest that the Italian party must accelerate the process of changing its party ideology even at the cost of permanently damaging relations with the Soviet party, arguing that a split with the Soviets will eventually come, if not in the near future, then ten years from that point, but should Italian party continue to prolong implementing reforms, the PCI itself may not be a politically relevant force in a decade (AY, LCY, 507-IX, 48/I-392-426, Information about the writing of the Italian press and recorded conversations with PCI members).

However, both Italian and French communists displayed a considerable amount of concern about the agenda of new movements on the European left, and especially about the perceived *“lack of class consciousness”* and traditional Marxist principles in the political agenda of those movements that later became known as the first organization of the New Left in Europe (DAS, FSFA, F-41, France, year 1968, Reports on the writings of PCF party's press). Beside the differences in defining priorities of their social and political engagement, Italian and French communists alike emphasized that the perceived anti-authoritarian character of the new movements went too far from the perspective of the traditional Marxist parties, leaving the materialistic aspect and attaching itself to more abstract, cultural questions the new movements have opened. For example, while students at Sorbonne declared PCF party bureaucracy to be *“as authoritarian in both spirit and action as De Gaulle and his administration”*, prominent Italian Marxists and members of the PCI Central Committee wrote numerous essays in which they explained how many student movements view authoritarian elements in government and within state institutions as a problem that arrived from the reproduction of dominant conservative culture, rather than as just a small part in the larger mechanism in which the class-based system conducts its generational reproduction and oppression. Another aspect in which ideologies of the new movements and old communist parties differed was the relationship between the *“individual”* and the *“collective”* in the context of organized political action. While many of the early university movements declared that the goal of collective struggle was to

free the individual, leadership of French and Italian communist parties claimed that everything except the individual contribution in collective struggle leads to leftist parties falling a step away from the idea that nothing from the spectrum of individual hardships exists outside the influences of social reality and a step closer to those liberal parties that explain social problems through individual responsibility and/or lack of meritocratic principles (AY, LCY, 507-IX, 33/I-210-255; AY, LCY, 507-IX, 48/I-392-426, Reports about the important attitudes of PCI and PCF).

It is interesting to note that both PCI and PCF leadership expressed great admiration for the way in which the Yugoslav party was able to politically crush the opposition in 1968 and then to integrate a significant number of students and professors who participated in the rebellion into the party structures of the LCY (AY, LCY, 507-IX, 33/I-210-255, AY, LCY, 507-IX, 48/I-392-426). After the famous speech delivered by Josip Broz Tito on 9th of June 1968, in which the Yugoslav president publicly offered to resolve the problems of Yugoslav society that the student movement pointed out within the sphere of LCY party ideology and subtly offered amnesty in exchange for abandoning the demonstrations, the student movement in Yugoslavia became deeply divided, with the majority of students and professors accepting the compromise with the party and the state. Analyzed sources show that almost immediately after the end of student demonstrations in Yugoslavia, representative organizations of the students who were close to LCY rapidly expanded their membership and afterwards engaged in numerous political, and sometimes even physical confrontations with those students who remained determined to insist on fulfillment of their movement's initial demands (State Archives of Serbia (SAS), Fond of the Security and Intelligence Agency (BIA), XIII-3-8, Reports about occurrences on the Faculty of Philosophy, University of Belgrade, after the speech of Josip Broz Tito). Even before that point, Yugoslav students failed to incite wider rebellions (notable attempts being the examples of students entering factories and military facilities and finding nothing but dismissal of their agenda and even anger towards the idea of participation in actions against the party) and to gather larger support from the general public, as was the case in Italy and especially in France, where many unions declared support for the rebellion at Sorbonne and subsequently went on strike (AY, LCY, 507-IX, 30/I-331, Information about the internal changes in French party and changes of PCF attitudes).

Italian and French communists estimated that main reasons for the LCY's success was the fact that university movement in Yugoslavia was all along much closer to traditional Marxist ideologies than to those new ideologies in Western Europe and US they already started defining as New Left. One of the letters sent to the Yugoslav party headquarters from the party office for international relations of PCI reads: *“If there is any movements in Yugoslavia similar to the New Left in Italy and France, those should be searched for only among those students that refused the compromise offered by Josip Broz Tito in his speech on the 9th of jun...”* (AY, LCY, 507-IX, 48/I-427-456, Correspondence between PCI and LCY departments for international relations). Even the minority comprised of Yugoslav professors and students who refused to accept compromise offered by LCY were, according to PCI and PCF members who communicated with LCY institutions, much closer to their own Eurocommunist ideology or some other form of democratic socialism, then they were to the ideologies of New Left (AY, LCY, 507-IX, 33/I-210-255; AY, LCY, 507-IX, 48/I-392-426, Reports about the important attitudes of PCI and PCF). However, it is also important to note that documents from Yugoslav secret service and party ideological commissions show a considerable amount of concern within the Yugoslav regime about the possible cooperation of

Yugoslav students with their counterparts in Italy, France and even Czechoslovakia (Yugoslav party was the first Marxist party of Europe to support rebellion in Czechoslovakia and new reformist policies of Dubček, and yet Yugoslav secret service followed those students who had family members at the University of Prague), and almost obsessive effort to prove that university movements in Yugoslavia were under various potential "Western" influences, including the supposed ideological connection between Yugoslav student movement and organizations of New Left in Western Europe (SAS, Fond BIA, XIII-4, Analysis of student movement and their activities).

While it is important to consider to what extent were Italian and French communists aware of social reality and political situation in Yugoslavia, reports of the LCY party institutions testify that authors of the articles in PCI and PCF party newspapers claimed that it was precisely the supposed "class based approachment" in defining the agenda of the university based movement and concern about the rise of social inequalities that differentiated the student rebellion in Yugoslavia from the student rebellions in major financial centres of Western Europe (AY, LCY, 507-IX, 33/I-255-310; AY, LCY, 507-IX, 48/I-427-456; Information about the writings of Italian and French press about the social and political situation in Yugoslavia). Apart from that aspect, Italian and French communists on multiple occasions confessed to their Yugoslav counterparts that they don't see how it can be possible for a student movement that accuses a communist party of betraying its own revolutionary idealism to be even remotely similar to those movements in Western Europe, which refused even to consider cooperating with the "old" communist parties of Italy and France. Granted, the Italian communists did recognize the concern of their Yugoslav counterparts that the perceived anti-authoritarian agenda and supposed attraction to cultural issues of the Yugoslav student movement were somewhat similar to what they had witnessed in Rome or Paris, but they had a strong counterargument, which stated that those aspects had been present in such a small portion of the Yugoslav student movement that they may as well be interpreted as nothing more than an expected consequence of cultural Westernization in rich and urban parts of Yugoslavia. Besides, Italian communists argued, the majority of those who actively participated in the Yugoslav student movement were never as distant from their traditional culture and local community as was the case with members of university movements in Western Europe, which, according to leading Italian experts in Marxist theory, made Yugoslav rebels of 1968 unable to even understand some of the global occurrences, let alone articulate their own attitudes towards them. Authors of some articles in the French party press, who were not concerned with keeping good relations with LCY like analysts who came from the ranks of PCI membership, soon added in their own version of this commentary – "*And more importantly, Yugoslav students are more concerned with the problems of their own society (Than their French counterparts)*" (DAS, FSFA, F-41, France, year 1968, Information about the attitudes and activities of the French communists). Thus, although dissidents from the Yugoslav theater of the global "year of the rebellions" were largely politically ineffective and irrelevant from the perspective of the socialist regime and of the larger Yugoslav society, narratives created by the French and Italian communists alike portrayed the same dissidents as much less elitist, and much more compassionate and empathetic than their Western counterparts. Consequently, neither Yugoslav communists nor their French and Italian counterparts expected either a radical, violent organization of the New Left to be formed in Yugoslavia or a more liberal, academically oriented one. (AY, LCY, 507-IX, 48/I-431-336, Conversations with Luigi Longo, Enrico Berlinguer, Giancarlo Pajetta and Carlo Galluci).

Adopting Policies of Tolerance and Restraint in Cooperation with the New Left

Although the Yugoslav party and secret service privately tried to find both communicational and ideological connections between not just the student movement but wider opposition in Yugoslavia with the new global movements and ideologies that only appeared in the perceptions of a large number of Yugoslav and Italian communists after the turmoil of 1968, the official LCY institutions formally denounced even the possibility that such relations may exist (DAS, FSFA, F-41, France, year 1968, Conversations with French communists and socialists). One of the factors that may have influenced the formation of such a narrative could be the fact that it was, to a certain degree at least, expected from the official party and state institutions to follow the pattern in which Josip Broz Tito addressed the students in his famous speech, and he denied the existence of any connection between the then contemporary student rebellions in Poland or France and the student movement in Yugoslavia (Museum of Yugoslav History, television recordings of the speech of Josip Broz Tito from 9th of June 1968, available on the following link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Nne2feNUEu8>). On the other hand, this position made it very easy for Yugoslav communists to agree with the previously explained conclusions of their Italian and French counterparts that there wasn't any significant similarities between the Yugoslav students and the participants of university movements in Western Europe and the United States, including those early political parties and other organizations formally founded in the aftermath of the global wave of rebellions which adopted some of those ideologies that were being increasingly referred to by contemporaries as ideologies of the New Left (AY, LCY, 507-IX, 33/I-210-255, AJ, SKJ, 507-IX, 48/I-392-426, Reports on conversations with the members of PCI and PCF).

Despite that, Yugoslav communists still had to participate in the establishment of the common attitudes and policies of the "Reformist Bloc" towards the movements of the New Left in Europe. Consequently, actions and ideologies of the New Left organizations became a recurring subject of numerous meetings, seminars, and conferences organized by future Eurocommunists, who at that point still used the term democratic socialists to define themselves, and their Yugoslav allies. It is interesting to note that, despite significant efforts of LCY office for international relations to explain in detail various new ideas presented by those thinkers of the New Left whose works have already been published in countries of Western Europe, many leading Yugoslav communists still found it hard to participate in discussions about the New Left with their Italian counterparts, and on a few occasions Yugoslav representatives openly stated that they don't have even the slightest understanding of complex ideological distinctions that Italian Marxists have described during the course of the mentioned occasions. This may be considered a potential reason why Yugoslav party representatives were almost always quick to declare support for the perceptions and suggestions explained by Italian communists, and even to go as far as suggesting that French, Spanish and Greek communists should also "have faith" in the judgment of the Italian party leadership when it comes not just to the issue at hand, but to all matters related with the current development of Marxist theory and other leftist ideologies in Western Europe and in the world (AY, LCY, 507-IX, 48/I-395-439, Recorded conversations with the members of PCI leadership; AY, LCY, 507-IX, 30/I-213, Information on the development of cooperation between LCY and PCF).

Other significant factor that may have influenced the Yugoslav attitude in regard of defining collective decisions of communist parties involved in "Reformist bloc" could potentially be deduced

from analyses of LCY party records, in which we can find debates of Yugoslav communists that have been concluded with the assessment that many new movements on the European far-left are deeply entrenched in a state of almost permanent conflict with the dominant parties of the moderate right and centre left, the same parties which participated in Italian and French governments at the time (AY, LCY, Ideological Commission, II/2-b-(244-252), Documents for preparation for the sessions of the Ideological Commission). Italian democratic Christians and French DeGaullists were strongly opposed not just to all the new movements and student rebellions, but in particular to the rise of New Left ideologies, and Yugoslav communists on more than a few occasions stated that they see the emergence of the *“common enemy”* as a potential factor that will contribute towards the development of cooperation between communist parties and the governments of Italy and France. The Yugoslav party has by then already, in a couple of instances, taken the role of a mediator between the Italian communists and democratic Christians, as well as between the French communists and a fraction of the socialist party led by the future president François Mitterrand. To this end, Yugoslav communists have organized seminars, conferences and, most importantly, collective vacations in Yugoslav towns on the Adriatic coast for the members of Italian and French communist and socialist parties, as well as for the leaderships of the unions associated with either communist or socialist parties in Italy or France. On one particular occasion an anonymous author of the report from LCY office for international relations concluded, *“improvement in relations between communists and socialists in Italy and France, and the relations between PCI and PCF with the governments can be considered a state interest of Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia”* (AY, SAWPY, A-074-078, International Cooperation, Reports on cooperation with PCI and PCF). Consequently, it is safe to assume that the interest of participating in development of cooperation between communist and socialist parties, as well as between communist parties and the governments of Italy and France, was always a matter which would take precedence over any Yugoslav interest concerning the *“Reformist Bloc”*, and especially in comparison to a seemingly trivial matter, as were the relations between communist parties and organizations of New Left perceived in perspective of LCY’s party leadership (for more information about this subject see Filipović, 2023, pp. 505-527).

However, the League of Communists of Yugoslavia was also a firm supporter of those PCI policies which were concerned with improving cooperation between Italian communists and other parties on the Italian left and even insisted upon making the principle of tolerance and communication with political adversaries one of the official policies of all international initiatives started by the parties of the *“Reformist Bloc”*. This can be regarded as especially significant in the case of forming Italian party attitudes towards the new movements, since Enrico Berlinguer on numerous occasions stated that Josip Broz Tito’s speech, as well as Yugoslav reaction towards the student demonstrations, inspired certain aspects of PCI policies towards the university movements and some organizations of the New Left in Italy (AY, CPR, I-3-a/44-62-66 Information about conversations between Josip Broz Tito and Enrico Berlinguer). It is also worthy to note that LCY institutions offered to pay for the participation of the new political parties coming from the Italian left in all the conferences, seminars and group gatherings of the European reformists organized in Yugoslavia, provided that PCI leadership assess the ideology of these new movements as *“progressive enough”* for them to be invited to such events. Having this in mind, it is relatively safe to assume that in regard to relations with the New Left, the Yugoslav party would support any course of action the PCI, the other leading party of the *“Reformist Bloc”*, decides to implement in Italy and even would go as far as

presenting these stances of Italian communists as the official attitude of the entire reformist group (AY, SAWPY, A-074-078, About the organization of the Mediterranean conference of communist and socialist parties).

In accordance with the previously defined attitudes of leading Italian communists, which have, in light of the latest agreements between Mediterranean communist parties, received support from the League of Communists of Yugoslavia as well as from the Spanish communist party in exile, the XII Congress of PCI defined two different groups of the New Left organizations while using as determining criteria only their political practice, not the ideology of the new movements. The first group was defined as consisting of those New Left organizations which have a pacifist way of conducting their political and social activities and thus exclusively engage in peaceful demonstrations, are not opposed to participation in institutionalized politics, and/or remain open to possible cooperation with other leftist parties and movements. The second group of New Left movements was defined as an ideologically heterogeneous group of those parties which have chosen a radical and at times violent approach in their activist practices, which shun the electoral process and mainstream politics, and which refuse the notion of collaborating with the communist, socialist or other "old" parties of the European far-left. In the case of the first group, Italian communists decided to engage in cordial communication but restrained cooperation until it could be more clearly assessed to what degree are parties of New Left from this group critical toward the Marxist ideologies. In the case of the second group, Italian communists concluded that if those leftist organizations already refuse to cooperate with PCI, with some of them even having expressed serious animosities towards the traditional Marxist parties and Eurocommunists in general, then at least by accepting to participate in the conflict that they haven't started, Italian communists would be able to contribute towards further development of their cooperation with socialists and democratic Christians, and other parties in Italian governments who are viewed as primary enemies from the perspective of these new and radical left-wing movements (AY, LCY, 507-IX, 48/I-429, Conclusions of the XII Congress of PCI).

This assessment, which was stated and repeated during the course of discussion, couldn't for obvious reasons become a part of the official PCI declaration about the New Left adopted at the XII Congress, and consequently Italian communists resorted to defining a very long and complex thesis which criticizes political practices and even some ideologies of organizations associated with the second group of the New Left ideologies. In this document, PCI adopted a critique of New Left movements from the previously defined second group which emphasizes the similarities between their radical political practices and those of Marxist parties which insist upon zealously guarding the principles of the Bolshevik socialist model in their most literal form. In severe contrast to them, the declaration of Italian communists then brings up "bright examples" of the university movements that have been opposing Bolshevik and anarchist zealotry, but have not transitioned from the ideas of democratic socialism to liberalism either, as some university movements, especially in the US, have already done. In relation to what principles should Italian communists implement when defining their policies towards these examples from the first group of New Left movements, resolutions of the XII Congress advise future Italian party leaders to follow the example of the LCY in regard to the tolerance and understanding shown to the student movements, but also in regard of trying to integrate these smaller organizations into the PCI sphere of influence and to, if possible, "guide" their party ideologies towards democratic socialism (meaning the new PCI party ideology). The League of Communists of Yugoslavia and the Communist Party of Spain immediately after

the XII Congress of the Italian party agreed to make the PCI resolution about the movements and ideologies of the New Left the official policy of the future European and global political initiatives that would be started by the parties of the ``Reformist Bloc`` (AY, LCY, 507-IX, 48/I-427-428, Reports about the activities of Yugoslav delegation present in Bologna for the XII Congress of PCI).

Years of Lead: Losing the Distinction between Two Groups of the New Left Movements

Even during the political turmoil of 1968, Yugoslav and Italian communists perceived some aspects that would later be associated with the time period both historians and authors of articles in the contemporary press often defined as the ``years of lead`` (*Anni di piombo*) that have lasted from late 1960s to late 1980s. This time period, which was later described as a part of the political crisis that marked the last decade of the welfare state in Europe, was soon to become known for severe political violence, frequent armed clashes of militant groups associated with far-right and far-left ideologies, as well as for assassinations, kidnappings, bombings and other aspects of terrorism (Bull, 2008, pp. 473-488). During this time period, many new radical groups of far-left-inclining youth in Italy, Greece, France, West Germany, Great Britain and later in Spain that were formed during or after the global wave of demonstrations and rebellions in 1968 participated in the acts of terrorism and other violent forms of political activism. Political parties that comprised the governments of the Western European countries have then, with the support of the United States, started attacking ideologies of the New Left in the media, branding them as a cause of the many tragic events that happened during the course of the ``years of lead`` and establishing a political narrative that will soon start to erase the difference between various fractions of new movements (Ronchay, 1979, pp. 921-940). In the early seventies, Italian communists have already assessed that perceived ``moral panic`` raised by popular media and political propaganda of Italian democratic christians and former French DeGaullists will succeed in not just turning the public opinion against the university movements and many notable critics of the Italian and French governments that were associated with them, but in establishing an idea that New Left is not a complex and heterogenous spectrum of ideologies, but instead a unique ideology shared by both rebellious students and far-left terrorists (AY, LCY, 507-IX, 48/I-490-525, Recorded conversations with Italian communists about the social and political situation in Italy).

On the other hand, ideological evolution of both Eurocommunist parties and organizations that followed some of the ideologies of the New Left was starting to gain unprecedented momentum in the early seventies, with the beginning of political crises in leading countries of Western Europe, years of *détente*, the collapse of the last military dictatorships on the Mediterranean and the arrival of many new cultural phenomena that developed in the aftermath of rebellions in 1968. Consequently, some ideological differences that could be considered to be minor at the beginning of this process were starting to appear more significant, while political parties and organizations were constantly searching for more ideological distinctions which would help solidify their social role in the rapidly changing world. Thus, it can be concluded that if there ever was a window of opportunity for cooperation between the communist parties of the ``Reformist Bloc`` and political organizations of the New Left, that opportunity appeared in the immediate aftermath of the student rebellions, Czechoslovakian crisis, ``great split`` in the International Workers Movement and other significant events which marked the years 1968 and 1969. However, this opportunity failed to materialize while both the Eurocommunists and followers of the New Left ideologies

held significant animosities towards the parties that comprised governments of the Western Bloc and perhaps more importantly, while they shared a status of ``renegades`` from the institutions of ``socialist world`` controlled by the Soviet party and rebels against its power in Moscow (Filipović, 2023, pp. 147–185).

In later years, Eurocommunist parties and their Yugoslav allies became more and more interested in expanding the cooperation with parties of the moderate left and even right centre, while at the same time becoming less tolerant towards liberal parties and university movements of the New Left, whom they had declared to be ``progressive and cooperative`` at first, as well as towards parties from the more radical ``second group``, as defined in the PCI declaration about New Left ideologies, with whom they seemingly never intended to have a relationship past rivalry. From their part, organizations of the New Left defined as participants of ``second groups`` according to their political practices, became even more radical in both their ideologies and their activist roles and thus more distant towards Eurocommunists, who were approaching the age of ``historical compromises`` with their governments. On the other hand, parties from the ``first group`` of New Left ideologies evolved in the same direction former social democrats took at the turn of the century, as they were gradually becoming closer and closer with liberal parties and viewing both Eurocommunists and their own former allies from the ``second group`` of New Left movements as being too radical to cooperate with. In the end, the last permanent barrier for potential cooperation of leading parties of the ``Reformist Bloc`` and both groups of organizations whose party ideology can be considered to be among the ideologies of the New Left was the assassination of Aldo Moro in 1978, ten years after the rebellions of 1968, for which members of the Red Brigades (*Brigate Rosse*) claimed responsibility. Afterwards, PCI offered to cooperate with the government in the struggle not just against the parties originating from the previously defined ``second group`` of New Left movements, but against all possible organizations whose ideology can be defined as belonging to the New Left, which at that point stopped being a complex spectrum of ideologies from the perspective of Italian communists and became solely a synonym for far-left terrorism in Europe.

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Između saradnje i rivalstva: pokušaji jugoslovenskih i italijanskih komunista da definišu zajedničke stavove prema pokretima rane nove levice 1968. godine

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Sažetak

U godinama nakon završetka Drugog svetskog rata, strukturalne promene u društvima Zapadne Evrope i stvaranje politika "države blagostanja" uticali su da se partije levice u zemljama Zapadnog bloka nađu na različitim i veoma raznovrsim putevima evolucije svojih partijskih ideologija. Evrokomunizam i ideologije Nove levice bile su dve najuticajnije struje koje su se pojavile na krajnjoj evropskoj levisi tokom nemira 1968 godine. Za to vreme, Savez komunista Jugoslavije razvio je blisku saradnju sa Komunističkom partijom Italije, koja će uskoro postati prva evrokomunistička partija u Evropi, i učestvovati u stvaranju tzv. Reformističkog bloka, neformalne grupe marksističkih partija Evrope koja će pokrenuti brojne političke inicijative sa ciljem smanjivanja uticaja Sovjetskog Saveza na međunarodne socijalističke institucije. Ovaj rad će pokušati da pruži pregled rezultata istorijskog istraživanja arhivske građe u tri arhiva koja se nalaze u savremenoj Srbiji, sa ciljem rasvetljavanja jugoslovenske uloge u definisanju kolektivnih stavova i politika komunističkih partija Reformističkog bloka prema novim organizacijama koje su osnovali krugovi sledbenika ideologija Nove levice. Takođe, cilj ovog članka je da doprinese dugom procesu arhivskog istraživanja koji bi jednog dana mogao da ponudi odgovor na pitanje – da li je saradnja između evrokomunista i Nove levice uopšte bila moguća, i do koje mere je rivalstvo ovih struja uticalo na događaje na krajnjoj evropskoj levisi?

Ključne reči: Evrokomunizam, Nova levica, demokratski socijalizam, Savez komunista Jugoslavije, Komunistička partija Italije.