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THE RELIGIOUS COMMUNITY AND THE COMMUNIST REGIME IN THE
CASE OF MONTENEGRO, 1945-1955

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Abstract: The paper analyses the relations of the Communist authorities with religious communities in Montenegro in the period 1945 - 1955. The paper separately problematises specific features of each confessional community in Montenegro (orthodox, Muslim, Roman Catholic), and establishes a typology of the expansion of regime control. The Communist Party did not use violent methods in the process of marginalising the religious community, but new authorities in Montenegro managed to marginalise its influence. By taking over the executive authority in the state, the Party began the process of marginalising the religious communities. The process of excluding religious communities from social life started. Their activity was limited to constitutional and legal provisions and later on prohibition of all forms of religious behaviour in public life. Results of the process of secularisation were much better than in other Yugoslav republics. Montenegro had 31.5% of the population atheists, and this was significantly more than the Yugoslavian average, which amounted for 12.5% of the population.

Key Words: religion, communism, Titoism, ideology, Montenegro, Yugoslavia.

The aim of the research is to present the position of religious communities in Montenegro, as well as to identify the mechanisms on the basis of which the Communist Party has tried to marginalise religion. Religious communities before the Second World War had a strong influence and were deeply rooted in the social life of Montenegro. The Communist Party after 1945 tried to change that and to eradicate the influence of religion in society. The paper analyses the relation of the Communist authorities towards the Orthodox Church, the Islamic community and the Catholic Church. It also explains the methods and mechanisms with the help of which the Communist Party has marginalised and excluded religious communities from social life, using a concrete set of actions and attitudes towards major religious representatives. The paper analyses the approach of the Communist Party to each of the three religious communities, since there was no uniform ideological and institutional approach towards the three religious communities in Montenegro. In addition to the analysis of the situation in Montenegro, the paper compares the attitude of the state towards religion in Yugoslavia and other Eastern European countries. The period within which the Party's attitude towards religion was viewed has been rounded with the first decade of the Communist government in Montenegro. This is the period in which the process of excluding religious communities from all major social processes was concluded, and in Montenegro it was determined by the organising of the most important party congresses. The research is based on the archival material of the State Archives of Montenegro, i.e. the fund of the Communist Party of Montenegro. Archival material from this fund provides a clear insight into the attitude of the Party and the state towards religious communities. Through the archival material, we could also trace all the mechanisms with which the Communist Party tried to restrict the activities of religious communities. The paper also used daily and periodic press from that period, through which we could keep track of all the ideological messages of the Party regarding religion, as well as the very attitude of the state towards religious traditions. In addition to this, the research uses relevant literature to explain the broader processes and comparison of the situation in Montenegro with other regions.

By taking over power, the Communist Parties in the countries of Eastern Europe initiated major changes that affected all aspects of social life. Under the influence of the communist ideology, traditional values of these countries were undermined, and a new system of values was introduced, based on the teachings of Marxism and Leninism. Religion in most countries of Eastern Europe was the "guardian of the national Christian tradition." Through such a position, religion had a monopoly over values fostered by the society. By taking over power, the Communist Party then generated a conflict between these two concepts. The communists wanted a monopoly over all aspects of social life, which is

why immediately after the takeover of power in whole Eastern Europe they began the process of excluding religious communities from social life.¹ The conflict between the Communist Party and religion was very traumatic, because religion has had its deep roots in the tradition of all the countries of Eastern Europe.² Here, after the end of the Second World War and after the Communist Party established its power, a conflict erupted between the new government with religious communities. The source of tension between the two sides stemmed from the different historical and cultural positions of religious communities in these countries and the new Marxist-Leninist view of the world. While in previous social systems, the religious community was one of the basic pillars of the system of government, in the new circumstances religion tried to be discredited, thus destroying all organised forms of religious life.³

After the invasion and occupation of April 1941, Yugoslavia was divided into several occupational zones. The civil war that soon erupted was accompanied with massive massacres of the civilian population.⁴ The largest part of crimes committed against civilians during the Second World War was inspired by religious and national hatred. That was one of the reasons why the Communist Party of Yugoslavia insisted on a policy of so-called brotherhood and unity during the war. This policy called for a religious and national equality for all people and religions in Yugoslavia. Indeed, this approach would enable the Communist Party to draw members from all national and religious communities in Yugoslavia. The Communist Party considered that religious and national conflicts were one of the biggest problems of the Yugoslav state. The Party identified religious organisations as causing this conflict, which was why after the establishment of government it attempted to marginalise their influence. Other than religious communities, consolidations of the regime's authority required the eliminations off all forms of political opposition.⁵

In the relationship between the religious communities and the Communist Party in Montenegro after the Second World War, a clear ambition of the Party was to move the religious communities on the margins of society. In the new socialist society, religiousness is recognised as a weakness, and every form of such behaviour is characterised to be a sign of "*retrograde*" thinking. Developed upon the values of the revolution, the new communist ideology perceived religion as a relic of defeated social forces. The Communist Party saw religious communities as opponents of the values of the system it promoted. There is room only for one ideology in a socialist system, which completely excludes the interference of religious communities in any of the social issues. That is why the struggle against religion, i.e. "superstition, primitivism, outdated customs and habits", as these phenomena were defined by the public discourse, are the main struggle in the adoption of a socialist perspective. The term "non-socialist" is used for all of the mentioned phenomena, which is why their eradication is a totally legitimate goal of the

authorities.⁶

The socialist doctrine includes the theoretical explanation of religion as well. It is explained that, by using Marxist-Leninist ideas, religion has no function in modern society. In the past, the communist ideologists argued, it was not possible to explain the phenomena of nature because of cultural backwardness, which was why a “supernatural character” had been ascribed to these phenomena. Such an atmosphere of “imaginary forms of consciousness” is suitable for the emergence of a religious society, but in a modern socialist society, in which science has provided answers to all the phenomena in nature as well as explaining their cause, there is no room for the religious elements.⁷ For the communist ideologists, religious beliefs contradicted the basic driving force of any society - revolutionary changes. These changes provide support for radical cuts and rapid adoption of new social rules, which is contradicting religious beliefs that foster traditional values. For the Communists, religion “supports what is old – in a reactionary manner and serves the bourgeoisie and capitalists to preserve their privileges and slow down social development”.⁸ In the process of constructing a socialist society in Montenegro following 1945, any religious behaviour was identified as heresy and interpreted as a direct opposition to the values of communism. Separation of religion from the state was adopted from the tradition of the Soviet Union. In USSR, the state has already been separated from the church within the first Constitution. This process was explained by the need to “enable citizens the freedom of conscience.” In the interpretation of the communist ideologists, religion has been a restrictive factor in the development of the free conscience of an individual.⁹

Montenegro is a very specific example in the research of the relations between the communist authorities and religious communities. Only in this republic of Federal Yugoslavia existed a strong influence of the three religions and an active attitude of the Communist Party towards each of them. The multi-confessionality of Montenegro allows us to shed light upon the basic elements of the relation between the Communist Party and religious communities, by using concrete examples. We analysed the period starting with 1945, when the war ended and when the Communist Party took over the executive power in the state. Our analysis covers the period of one decade (until 1955), a period during which the relationship between the Communist authorities and the religious communities was examined. This period also includes two very important events which give us a comprehensive view on the relationship between the two parties, and these events are the first census in which religious affiliation was analysed – 1953, and the second Congress of the Communist Party of Montenegro in 1954, where the attitude of the Party towards religion was explained, as well as the results achieved in the previous period.

In the tradition of the Montenegrin society, the relationship between the socialist authorities and religious communities had been further

burdened by the legacy of the Second World War. Part of the religious dignitaries were on the side of the occupying forces and domestic collaborators during the war, which provided an additional reason for the Communist authorities to decide to isolate and exclude religious communities from social life. This process was not simple, since religion was one of the pillars of this patriarchal society. In the absence of cultural and social institutions, religious communities in Montenegro existed as organisations with great influence on the population. The Communists were aware of this fact, which is why they had tried to get closer to religious communities during the course of the war. The Executive Committee of the State Anti-Fascist Council, the most important legislative body of the liberation movement under the control of the Communists, organised the Assembly of Orthodox Priests at the end of 1943. Orthodox priests tried to join the liberation movement under the control of the Communists. It was pointed out that the clergy had always been with the people, and it should be the same this time. The invitation was there for all priests who “had not fled with the occupiers or had not been located in the woods.”¹⁰ In the following year, July 1944, when the victory of the communist liberation movement was certain, a special Religious Commission was formed. The Commission operated under the Montenegrin Anti-Fascist Assembly – the legislative body of the liberation movement. The Commission was supposed to normalise religious life in Montenegro and its members were instructed to “eradicate all treacherous tendencies among priests and preserve the achievements of our struggle.” However, the main task of the Commission was to provide support from religious communities to the new bodies of the national authorities.¹¹ With the Religious Commission, the communists wanted to include religious communities within their own ideological framework of the new society. The Commission became an instrument of ideological work, which aimed at shaping the new role of religious communities in Montenegro. However, in exercising their intentions, the Communist Party throughout the territory of the Yugoslav Federation, i.e. Montenegro, did not use repressive methods for the suppression of religious influence. The party was trying to limit the influence and social significance of religious communities, but it did not use repressive methods. This was a significant difference compared to the experience of the Soviet Union, where the Communist Party often used various repressive methods to neutralise the influence of religion.¹²

The borders, with which Montenegro enters federal Yugoslavia in 1945, do not constitute a single territory in a historical and a cultural sense. Different political, social and cultural influences have been interlaced in this area in the past. For these reasons, Montenegro is a multi-confessional community with a population of different political, social and cultural levels of development.

Statistical review of Montenegro's population based on religion ¹³

	Orthodox population	Muslim population	Catholic population	Atheists
1921	76%	18%	6%	/
1931	77%	17%	6%	/
1953	46%	18%	5%	31%

There has been a systematic misunderstanding between religious communities and the communist parties that came to power after the Second World War in Eastern Europe. Communism appeared on the social scene as a new model of the social community, which “radically changed and freed the world,” while religion represented a strong system of all what the past represented, all the things the communists fought against.¹⁴ This meant, above all, the restriction of any forms of religious practice. The communist system tried to prohibit any public expression of religion. Even children and young people were in every way being distanced from the influence of religious communities.¹⁵ In Eastern European countries such as Poland, Hungary and Romania, there was no open resistance from religious communities to the communist regime. After initial disagreements with the communist regime, religious communities in other countries of Eastern Europe eventually organised a specific system of cohabitation with the communist authorities. There was an attempt to maintain the current situation because of the fear of a return to the previous state, when open conflict occurred between church and state.¹⁶

After the Second World War, once the legitimacy of the communist authorities has been established on the international scene, and the circumstances in which the attitude towards religious communities had been established, changed. The Communists no longer sought support for their program; they unconditionally expected that such a support from religious communities. The attitude towards religious communities after 1945 was determined by the so-called ideal of brotherhood and unity, a model that the Communists tried to use to address national and religious antagonisms with. Instead of the ideas of state-church, privileged nations and vulnerable minority rights, as they existed in the Yugoslav community in the period 1918-1941, the communists promoted the model of absolute religious and ethnic tolerance. That is why the Communist Party saw inter-ethnic and inter-confessional conflicts as a direct confrontation with the official ideology. In Montenegro, where Orthodox, Islamic and Catholic communities had long been living together in a small area, such a policy had even greater significance.

In other countries of Eastern Europe, the Communist Parties developed mechanisms through which they controlled the social influence of religion. These methods were identical in almost all socialist countries and they included repressive methods towards religious officials, the abolition of property rights to religious communities and ideological influence on the individual to accept the ideas of the communist state and therefore turn their back on religion. Religious communities lacked ways to resist such pressure, even the Catholic Church which given its organisation, had the highest potential to fight against the totalitarian regime.¹⁷

Already in April 1945, during the formation of the first Montenegrin Government, Mr Blazo Jovanovic, its President, precisely outlined a model from which the Montenegrin society would develop. He stated that it was necessary for "Orthodox and Muslims and Catholics to get closer, to become brothers and there could be no dichotomy. It was necessary that our brothers. Albanians felt at home as if they were in their own house," the President of the government concluded.¹⁸ The new approach and experience of religion in the socialist society was soon provided with the constitutional and legal framework. Article 25 of the Constitution of the FPRY (Federal People's Republic of Yugoslavia) guaranteed citizens the freedom of religion, but the church was separated from the state. The Constitution prohibited any involvement of the church in politics as well as the existence of political organisations with religious bases.¹⁹ The Constitution of Montenegro defined its solutions based on the Federal Constitution. Relations between the state and religious communities were defined by the Article 25, which was identical to the Article from the Federal Constitution. Constitutional solutions in Montenegro guaranteed the freedom of religion, and religious communities were free to perform their rites and religious ceremonies, if such an activity was not contrary to the Constitution.²⁰ These relations were defined by the Law on the Legal Status of Religious Communities, adopted in the Federal Assembly in 1953. The Law confirmed Constitutional provisions concerning religious freedoms, but the state further marginalised the influence of religious communities with certain decisions. The focus of the law was on the individual practice of religion. The individuals could practice religious rituals without any restrictions, as long as they did not adhere to any religious community. The Party sought the position of mediator in the performance of religious rites.²¹ In this way, the Party limited the influence of religious communities in society, while improving its image on the international scene as a state allowing free exercise of religion. One of the most powerful mechanisms for weakening the social influence of religious communities was their economic isolation. Immediately after taking over power, the Communist Party tried to destroy every form of economic independence of religious communities. A law on the confiscation of land properties was adopted as early as 1945. The land,

which was the main source of economic power of the religious communities, passed under state control, and every land property over 35 hectares was confiscated and became property of the state.²²

We can trace the process of exclusion of religious communities from social life in Montenegro on two levels. The first one was institutional, through which the Communist Party created a legal framework preventing religious communities from being included in the social processes. The second level was the direct action of the Party, limiting the influence of religious communities. Through its members and institutions, the Party tried to eliminate all forms of religious behaviour, in order to present it as a threat to the socialist society and punish any behaviour of this kind. The Party did not have a direct impact on the whole population, but it was committed to eradicating and neutralising religious influences among its membership. Party members were forbidden to practice religious rituals or customs, as well as going to places of worship. Those who would violate the rule would firstly follow the punishment of "strict reprimand with the final warning" and, later, the punishment of exclusion from membership.²³ Apart from that, the Communist Party monitored and controlled the activities of the clergy. The Central Committee of the Communist Party of Montenegro explained precisely to the local party organisations that "religious views in the Party and the masses cannot be seen separate from the influence of the clergy." Therefore, the party activists were required to follow the way the clergy influenced "the preservation and propagating of religious customs, methods and procedures used".²⁴ The Party was trying to narrow the room for religious communities in any possible manner. An interesting example was that in schools, during religious holidays, field trips and nature schools were organised in order to prevent any possibility for the children to mark religious holidays. The education system was used to promote ideology and deployed its mechanisms to distance children from religious content.²⁵ After 1952, such attitude towards religion was further intensified. The lack of understanding between the Yugoslav authorities and the Catholic Church led to the harsh condemnation of religiousness by the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia. Following that condemnation, the leadership of the republics got included in stronger critique of religiousness. In Montenegro, after 1952, in print media, at party gatherings and public life in general, all forms of religiousness were harshly condemned. The focus was on the ideological work with youth, who were required to abandon the celebration of religious holidays and the practice of religious rituals.²⁶

The Communist Party in Montenegro wanted to neutralise all forms of religiousness among their members. They criticised all members who "had not parted with religious ideas" and who marked their family patron's day, baptised their children, fasted during the Ramadan, or visited places of worship.²⁷ The practice of religious rituals was also

incompatible with membership in the party. Every visit made by a communist party member to a church or mosque was registered, strongly condemned and forbidden.²⁸

In practice it was difficult to uproot the traditional attitude towards religion. Analysis of religiousness among the members of the Communist Party of Montenegro from March 1951 showed that one in four Communists, in their everyday life, respected and followed some form of religious customs. Out of 21,389 members and candidates, 5,004 of them practiced such customs. The Party suspected that the number of those who practiced some form of religion was much higher, since these figures were based solely on the testimony of the party members. These were mainly the celebration of the biggest religious holidays (Christmas, Bayram), and this was the reason why 80 members were excluded from the party during 1950. Apart from the celebration of the major religious holidays, other forms of religiousness were quite moderate. Consequently, 80 Communists of the total membership or 0.37% of the total number baptised their children, while the number of those who got married in the church was negligible - only 7 members, or 0.03% of the total number of members in Montenegro.²⁹ Secularisation was not noticeable only among party members, but also within the Montenegrin society in general. According to the census of 1953, 31.5% of the population identified themselves as atheists, which was considerably more than the Yugoslav average, which amounted 12.5%.³⁰

In the Communist Party of Montenegro believed that religion had an impact on the core values of brotherhood and unity, which the communists projected as one of the central elements of their ideology. These statements were confirmed by the reports mentioning that the religious antagonisms were mostly evident in mixed environments. It was explained that the deepest roots the religiousness and "religious fanaticism" had been in environments inhabited with mixed Orthodox - Muslim population. It was noted that religious rites and customs had led to the weakening of brotherhood and unity, and that the majority of the population had carried out their religious rites.³¹ How much the values of ideals of brotherhood and unity were unacceptable to communists in any combination with religion was illustrated with the case of the cult of St. Vladimir of Bar. That the cult in the town where members of the three religions lived had centuries-long tradition and represented an unusual example of confessional harmony and coexistence. On a certain day of the year, members of Orthodox, Muslim and Catholic congregations carried together the cross of St. Vladimir on top of the Rumija Mountain, in memory of this medieval hero and the legend associated with him. An impartial analysis of that event would prove that a gathering of members of three confessions was a confirmation of the policy of brotherhood and unity, advocated by the Communist Party. Three religions, in peace and harmony at the same place, seemed to be an ideal symbol of the policy of

brotherhood and unity. However, that was unacceptable for the Communist Party in Montenegro, because of the religious content that was symbolised by the cross, carried towards the mountaintop. Communists considered that the cross of St. Vladimir was the symbol that brought people together. Regardless of its function in this case, the religious symbol was not supposed to be a factor of cohesion, which is why this custom was banned by decision the local authorities in 1954.³²

One way to minimise the social impact of religious communities was also to limit their economic independence. With a strict attitude towards religion, the Communist Party significantly reduced the number of people who visited religious sites, hence diminishing the donations of the population. With the agrarian reform and nationalisation in 1946 religious communities were left without significant estates, and thus revenues. One could not even count on the state aid, which had been generous during the previous system. It was true that immediately after the liberation the state provided certain financial support, but only for the priests individually, not the religious communities. These were minor financial helpings provided first for the priests of the Orthodox Church and later for the Catholic Church and for the Islamic community.³³ At the beginning of 1947, referring to the constitutional decision on the separation of church and state, the Government announced that it would end the practice of financially supporting religious officials.³⁴

Socialist authorities and the Orthodox Church

For the Orthodox population, religious affiliation was a very important factor of national consciousness. The largest part of the liberation movement against the Ottoman rule was inspired by religion, which is why, for the Orthodox population, religion was not only a spiritual category, but an important segment of identity.³⁵ The Communist Party put the largest confessional community and its leaders under control via the so-called "Association of the Montenegrin Orthodox clergy". This association was formed on the 15th of June 1945 with the function to absolve the Orthodox church of all crimes and activities of the clergy during the Second World War and approaching of this religious community to the communist authorities. The founding act stated that the task of the Association is "the elimination of unhealthy conditions in the church and among the clergy, many of whom were swayed by the occupiers, and turned away from the true national path."³⁶

Immediately after the liberation, the Communist Party consciously used the Orthodox Church to support its policies. In a liberated Cetinje, the historic royal capital of the country, in January 1945, Christmas was celebrated and celebration details were published on the cover of *Pobjeda* - the most important newspaper in Montenegro. Putting aside the fact that religious content did not fit into the new ideological framework, the

newspaper wrote about Christmas as a “great Christian holiday, which had bathed in blood for three years, had burned three times because of avenging guns against foreign intruders, for our freedom, for our victory, for this Christmas and many ahead to be celebrated in freedom.”³⁷ The burning of the badnjak (yule log in other European traditions, in the Orthodox tradition, usually of oak tree, which it catches fire morning before Christmas – *prim. prev.*) in front of the Cetinje Monastery was accompanied by the national anthem “Hey, Slavs”, and all military and civilian representatives of the communist authorities stood in front of the fire.³⁸ Celebrations of Orthodox religious holidays, with the presence of the highest Communist Party officials in Montenegro, were followed by church services in the Cetinje Monastery on the eve of the celebration of the Orthodox New Year. The Orthodox Church was put at the service of the new ideology, and the results of the communist liberation movement had been praised in religious services, prayers and liturgies. Church services provided the opportunity for the Orthodox clergy to distance themselves from priests who had been against the communists during the war, and on the side of the invaders. Archpriest Jovo Radovic, disassociated the Orthodox Church from the actions of the preceding metropolitan bishop, Mr Joanikijae Lipovac, whom he called “razmitropolit” (metropolitan liable to sin – *prim. prev.*). Mr Radovic pointed out that Mr Lipovac “betrayed both the people and the Church of St. Sava, and that he branded himself with the brand of shame and betrayal together with the part of the clergy.” In his speech, Mr Radovic completely sided with the communists, praising their merits during the liberation, pleased that the USSR was on the same side.³⁹

Via associations of priests, the Orthodox clergy accepts and affirms principles of the new socialist society. From their assembly they sent messages that they wanted to put their skills at the service of the people, “in the spirit of national liberation traditions and achieved heritage.” Judgments could be heard that the Orthodox clergy should fight for their people supporting “Tito’s plan, the People’s Front, with people’s authorities”. Commitment to put themselves at the service of the new authorities was also confirmed by the resolution stating that “the Orthodox clergy considered the service to the people and the country the most supreme duty of every true priest.” They promised “to spread the idea of brotherhood and unity and help to rebuild the country, as well as to execute the five-year plan.”⁴⁰ The adoption of this resolution laid the foundation for the cooperation of the Orthodox Church in Montenegro and the new authorities. The Orthodox Church would thus support ideological positions of the new system in the period to follow, and take part in certain stages. The closeness of the Orthodox Church and the communist authorities was not only in the specificity of Montenegro. Even at the level of Federation, in Yugoslavia, the Orthodox Church had very close relations with the communist authorities. A similar situation was

happening in Romania, where the Patriarch of the Romanian Orthodox Church was called the “Red Patriarch”. Romanian patriarch, Justinian Marina, who was elected with the support of the communist authorities, was so dedicated to his role that he eventually started to unite the Christian dogma with Marxist materialism.⁴¹

Regardless of the clear ambition of Communists to marginalise the influence of religious communities, violent methods and repression were not used. Communist authorities treated the Orthodox clergy with great caution. In party reports, the Communists recognised “enemies” among the Orthodox clergy, noting that their influence was weak and insignificant.⁴² The Orthodox Church registered several party members attacking priests. There was also the case from Pljevlja, where several young men forcefully entered the monastery, broke the inventory and insulted priests. Party reports also recorded a case of breaking the action of the residents of a village to celebrate the religious holiday and collect donations for the reconstruction of the church. This action was directly prevented by the party organisation from Cetinje.⁴³ However, although these cases were not organised by the Party, each of them concluded without a court judgment. The Party interpreted the incidents as extremism, namely the “excessive revolutionism towards the church.”⁴⁴ The Communist Party did not organise attacks on property and priests of the Orthodox Church, but did nothing to protect them and prosecute perpetrators of attacks on religious officials.

Socialist authorities and the Islamic community

The influence of the communist ideology on the Muslim population was specific in all countries of Eastern Europe. In the Soviet Union this process was limited due to the fact that most of the Muslims were of non-Slavic origin. However, in every country of Eastern Europe, the spread of communist ideology among the Muslim population was not simple because of their strong identification with religion and the Islamic way of life.⁴⁵ The Islamic religious community and its officials accepted the role the Communist Party had prepared for them immediately after the liberation. The rhetoric and messages to the Muslim population were immediately synchronised with the principles of the new system. Imam Abdulah Hodžić, member of a religious commission, told Muslims in Montenegro in a Bayram message in November 1945 that Muslims in Montenegro should look forward to Kurban Bayram both because of freedom and survival under the fascist knife. Recalling wartime and war crimes, Mr Hodžić pointed out that the war crystallized “the new kind of people, new community of brotherhood, new state, whose sons and members we the Muslims also were, with our own human rights.” Bayram congratulatory message was fully compliant with the new ideology, and Mr Hodžić confirmed its meaning using the words of the Prophet

Mohammed, who had said that “love of one’s country, is a part of faith.”⁴⁶ The attitude of the Islamic religious community towards the new authorities and their acceptance of the values of the new system were confirmed on the occasion of the adoption of the Constitution of the Islamic Religious Community in Montenegro. In the message sent to the President of the Government, Mr Blažo Jovanović, after its adoption, representatives of the Islamic clergy stated that they were “deeply faithful and loyal to the democratic people’s authorities”. The clergy of the Islamic Community said that they would do everything together with the Orthodox and Catholic populations to fulfill all the tasks that the reconstruction of the country entailed and the execution of the five-year plan.⁴⁷

The behaviour of the Islamic clergy was entirely expected, because they promoted the idea that the National Liberation Movement had been responsible for the survival of the Muslim population in Montenegro during the Second World War. They went even further, supporting the policies of the Communist Party, convinced that their approach provided religious and national equality of the Muslim population. Mr Hasan Slaković, member of the Supreme Waqf Assembly of the Islamic Community - the highest executive body of the Muslim clergy, said that Muslims in Montenegro should not lose sight of the achievements of the national liberation struggle and that precisely Muslims must be the ones who should fight the most to preserve those achievements, because without them “the Muslim people would not exist”. An additional reason for the satisfaction of the Muslim population was that it was recognised in religious equality, which was not the case with the previous state.⁴⁸ In Montenegro, examples of use of force and repression against officers of the Islamic community were not registered. Such methods were registered in other countries of the Eastern Bloc, primarily in the Soviet Union, where the Muslim religious officials were being accused of anti-socialist propaganda. Accusations in some cases were only the beginning of repression, since the attacks on religious officials and assets of the Islamic religious community in the Soviet Union were recorded.⁴⁹

The fact that officials of the Islamic community in Montenegro accepted all ideological and political positions of the Communist Party was the introduction into the absolute political instrumentalisation. Soon enough, the Communist Party began using the Islamic community to achieve its own goals. First such case was the support in providing labor force for the country’s reconstruction. For communists, the reconstruction of the country, immediately after the liberation, was the most important task, and the Islamic officials began encouraging Muslims to voluntarily join work actions. Members of the religious committee explained that there were no obstacles for the participation of Muslim men and women in the execution of the tasks of the first five-year plan.⁵⁰ Senior official of the Communist Party and the Minister of Trade, Mr Vuko

Tmušić, explained the expectations of the Islamic priests. He informed them “that they should carry out a huge task in raising awareness of the broad Muslim masses, which needed to be persuaded that the fulfillment of the plan was a sacred duty of every citizen. The Muslim priests should take active part and mobilize broad masses for a working camp of our people.”⁵¹ The extent to which the Islamic community accepted the ideology of the new socialist authorities in Montenegro was best illustrated by the ideological instrumentalisation of religious rituals. The Waqf Assembly - the executive body of the Muslim clergy in Montenegro, gave recommendation to imams that they should bring regular weekly address to the congregation in accordance with the official ideology. The officials were also asked to “promote, apart from religion, love for the country, for the reconstruction of the country in their religious speeches.”⁵²

Regardless of the absolute support to the communist authorities in Montenegro, there was room for the eradication of religious traditions among the Islamic community. In the Muslim community, religious covering of Muslim women was recognised as a bad influence of religion in a socialist society. The approach to Muslim female population in Montenegro was quite similar to the approach that the Communists developed regarding Muslim women in the Soviet Union. The experience of USSR showed that the Communist Party paid enormous attention to its ideological influence on women. Propaganda among women from the Muslim population took place through special schools, where they taught women of household jobs, childcare, and education that was aligned with the ideological values of the system.⁵³ Plenty of similar elements of ideological influence on women were registered in Montenegro.

Removal of these features, the prohibition of the *zar* and *feredza* (long hooded overdress and outer dress worn by Muslim women - *prim. prev.*) among Muslim women, would be one of the most effective party actions which were focused on the elimination of the religious influence in society. The Communist Party interpreted the religious covering of the Muslim women as a form of cultural and gender backwardness and thus supported the removal of those features as a form of emancipation of women. Religious covering was interpreted as “remnants of the dark past.” This feature of the social isolation of women preventing them from education, involvement in the community and what was especially important to the Communists, “involvement in the reconstruction of the country.”

Working closely with officials from the Islamic community and with the involvement of women's mass organisations close to the Communist Party (Women's Antifascist Front) impressive results were achieved for a short period of time. Organised action that was supposed to stop religious covering of Muslim women began in mid-1947. Series of lectures, visits and meetings were organised with the help of prominent Muslim

members of the Communist Party and religious officials, where the campaign for the abolition of this custom was conducted. The entire process was explained by the cultural emancipation of the Muslim women, who had been deprived of their rights and were culturally backward in previous social systems, so the conditions for their “cultural resurgence” and emancipation was created no sooner than in the “people's state - new Yugoslavia.” Religious covering was presented as a relic of the past and the press wrote that Muslim women understood this as well. They had enthusiastically taken down the religious symbols, and got involved in society as free women. The Communist Party organised the action of the removal of religious symbols with Muslim women, but officials of the Islamic community were the main protagonists. They looked more like party ideologists, consciously deceiving Muslim women and violating some of the basic principles of the religion that they promoted. Although Muslim tradition and religious rules dictated that women had to be covered in public, Muslim officials at gatherings and in the media convinced Muslim women “that the removal of these features did not interfere with religious conceptions.” Some of them, such as the local *hodža* (Moslem priest – *prim. prev.*), Mr Husein Redžepagić, went even further, explaining that the removal of religious symbols was a condition for the inclusion of Muslim women in the country's reconstruction, which was the basic task of every patriot.⁵⁴ The results achieved in the action of the removal of religious symbols from the wardrobe of Muslim women in Montenegro were impressive. In some regions with predominantly Muslim population, as much as 90% of women, who for religious reasons covered themselves, rejected such form of dressing themselves.⁵⁵

Thus, for a very short time, the Communist Party in Montenegro achieved significant results regarding the Muslim population. The religious influence among the population was reduced to a minimum, the leaders of the Islamic community accepted the policy of the Communist Party, and important results were also achieved by working with women. Similar results were also achieved in other Eastern Bloc countries, but they would take much longer to achieve concrete results. Thus, in the Soviet Union the influence of Islam in schools and everyday life was eradicated to a large extent. The compromise that was made between religion and communist ideology enabled an atmosphere to be created in which it was possible to be a “good Muslim and a good communist.” However, the communist ideology in the USSR was not so successful in eliminating Muslim identity that was trapped in the context of ethno-national identity.⁵⁶ In addition, the Muslim population in the USSR proved to be resistant to the influence of the ideology of the Communist Party, although it did not directly confront it.⁵⁷ Unlike the Soviet Union and the countries of Eastern Europe, the influence of communist ideology in Montenegro was much more efficient. The communists thus fulfilled their

primary objective – they gained new potential workforce and religious traditions were excluded from public life.

Socialist authorities and the Catholic Church

The Catholic Church in all countries of Eastern Europe came into direct conflict with the communist authorities after the Second World War. This was not only because of a specific organisational model of the Catholic Church, but also because of its historical role in the national development of these countries. In some Eastern Bloc countries like Poland and Hungary, the Catholic Church was one of the most serious opponents of the communist regime.⁵⁸ In Hungary, the highest officials of the Catholic Church were direct opponents of the communist regime, which led to sharp conflicts between the two sides. These conflicts caused the closure of Catholic monasteries, and religious schools to be set up under state control. Similar confrontation happened in Poland, but in this country, in the first years of Communist rule, there was a principle agreement between the communist government and the Catholic Church. In accordance with this agreement the Catholic Church promised support to the communist authorities in economic reforms, including the process of collectivisation in agriculture.⁵⁹

The Catholic Church in Yugoslavia, after the unification in 1918, strongly opposed the centralist tendencies coming from Belgrade. The Catholic Church in that period emerged with a form of support to Slovenian and Croatian nationalism within the Kingdom of Yugoslavia.⁶⁰ Immediately after the liberation in 1945, the Catholic clergy was also included in the ideological concept of the new state. For the Communist Party in Montenegro, the situation with the Catholic community was the most complicated. What differentiated the Catholic Church in Montenegro from other religious communities was extremely educated composition of religious officials. In contrast to the Orthodox and Muslim clergy, who had gained mainly secondary religious education, the Catholic clergy had members with a university degree and knowledge of several foreign languages. The Communist authorities believed that the greatest danger to the new system came from the Catholic priests who “were almost all antagonistic and worked in a quite ably manner.” Catholic priests, according to these sources, influenced the population in Boka and Catholic congregation among Albanians through masses and other religious services.⁶¹

In the reports of the highest party organs it was stated that the Catholic priests had powerful influence on the congregation, which in party circles was immediately defined as a problem. The Communist Party wanted to control all the processes, which was problematic, because in Boka “Catholic priests had a strong influence on the entire congregation,

and this was the situation with the national Albanian community, which was predominantly catholic.”⁶²

The strong influence on the population was recognised as the main problem among the Catholic clergy. This influence was reflected in the fact that large number of Catholic families visited religious ceremonies.⁶³ The Communist Party in its reports explained that the Catholic clergy led their campaign through individual work, sermons in churches and summons of the people to return to religion. One of the ways to attract the congregation was often by organising church ceremonies and choirs that involved large numbers of people. Although there was no evidence, the Communist Party in Montenegro insisted that the Catholic clergy organised “unfriendly actions against the state and socialism.” The evidence for this did not exist, since every report quoted that their work was focused on “attracting people to the church,” but in spite of that, reports insisted that the Catholic clergy was working against the state and against socialism “from the underground, skillfully and covertly”.⁶⁴ Cooperation of Catholic priests and the communist authorities was not only characteristic for Montenegro. A similar case was recorded in Hungary, where the close cooperation was established through a special bureau for relations with the church. Catholic priests worked closely with the communist authorities within the Bureau, and through it tried to achieve some of their rights.⁶⁵

In the coastal part of Montenegro, attacks on Catholic priests were registered as well. In some places, individuals banned Catholic priests from entering the church, but this practice was condemned and stopped by the Montenegrin Government.⁶⁶ The strong message of cooperation of the state and the Catholic Church was sent with the election of Don Niko Luković, the Catholic priest from Boka, as a member of the Montenegrin Assembly. Mr Luković promoted values of religious unity in the Montenegrin Parliament, stating that the new state had provided all the conditions to religious communities “to exercise freedom of conscience and religion, but not to use the altar for political purposes.”⁶⁷

Despite the insistence of members of the Religious Commission of Montenegro that each religion had its own association, Catholic priests were not in favour of such a solution. At the Conference of the Roman Catholic Episcopate in April 1950, they clearly stated that for them any classification in priest associations was unacceptable.⁶⁸ Thus, the organisation of the Catholic Episcopate in Montenegro initially began to function though the so-called steering committee. Eventually, the association of Catholic priests was not established until mid-1953. The tasks of the association, as it was pointed out, would be the fight of Catholic priests for “spreading Yugoslav patriotism, preservation of brotherhood and unity and cooperation with the national authorities.”⁶⁹ With the formation of the association, more than half of the Catholic priests, by the opinion of the Communist Party, “had sent a clear message

to the enemy of our country - among them the Vatican, that love for your own nation was stronger than any order sent from the Vatican.”⁷⁰ Aside from the fact that it took more than eight years to gather more than half of Catholic priests, the Communist Party believed that by forming the association it controlled the work of the Catholic Church in Montenegro.

Conclusion

The Socialist authorities in Montenegro managed to marginalise the influence of religious communities in the first decade after the Second World War. By limiting the space for social activity and with continuous ideological work, religious communities were shifted to the margins of society, and the communists recognised any mentioning of religiousness as a sign of “backwards” thinking from the previous period. The whole process took place in the shade of a theoretical understanding of religion in a socialist society. According to the Communist interpretation, religion was a reflection of outdated and primitive traditions that had no place in a socialist society.

The relationship between the Communist Party in Montenegro and religious communities in the first ten years after liberation could be followed in several stages. Even during the war and immediately after the liberation, the Party recognised religious communities as partners. During that time, it sought support for its program, insisting that as many priests as possible supported the liberation movement and condemned priests who had been on the enemy side during the war.

The Communist Party very quickly moved into a new phase, expecting support from religious communities for its policies. Senior party officials, in their addresses to religious officials, said they could not make good believers if they were not good front-line men, i.e. if they did not support the program of the National Front - the political organisation under the control of the Communist Party, which formally appeared in the elections.

The attitude of the state towards religious communities in Montenegro in the period from 1945 to 1955 could be placed on two levels. The first level, in which the state limited the influence of religious communities with constitutional and legal norms, and very much narrowed the space for their action. The second level was the gradual opening of processes where the state institutionally, through the formation of priest associations, tied confessional communities to its policy. A special segment in the process of marginalisation of the religious influence was the exclusion of religiousness from the activities of the party membership. There were party members who celebrated religious holidays, but the Party registered all such behaviour and characterised it as “non-socialist”. Going to a religious service, a celebration of religious customs or any similar activity was not permitted to members of the Communist Party. Such behaviour was

sanctioned with a warning first and later with the exclusion from membership.

The results of the process of secularisation within the Montenegrin society were much better than in other republics. According to the 1953 census, Montenegro had 132,000 atheists, which represented 31.5% of the population. This was significantly more than the Yugoslav average, which amounted 12.5%. This was confirmed at the Second Congress of the Communist Party of Montenegro in October, with the statement that they were satisfied with their relation and level of cooperation with religious communities. The Party continued to recognise the “enemies of socialism” among the religious officials, but their influence in society was marginalised. The Communist Party did not use violent methods in the process of marginalising religious community. In the first decade after the liberation, few isolated cases of attacks on priests and property were registered. The party condemned these attacks, but none were prosecuted in court.

Bringing religious communities together was achieved with priest associations that fully supported the policy of the new authorities. Over 95% of the Orthodox clergy was involved in the work of the association that was close to the Communist Party, and similar results were achieved with the Islamic Community. The Communist authorities in Montenegro had the most problematic relations with the Catholic clergy. Not until 1953 did the new authorities succeed to gather more than half of the representatives of the priests of this church in order to form an association.

Results of secularisation of Montenegrin society, which amounted above the Yugoslav average, showed that the process of excluding religious organisations from social life in Montenegro was very efficient. The dominant reason for this efficiency was a rigid stance of the Communist Party towards religiousness. Beside the uncompromising attitude of the Communist Party, some other circumstances favoured the social isolation of religious communities. The largest religious community - the Orthodox Church, significantly compromised its position with its actions during the Second World War. Officials of the Orthodox Church collaborated with the occupying authorities, and with a significant part of priests who were close to the Chetnik movement, which officially collaborated with the occupiers. These circumstances limited capacities of the Orthodox Church and placed it in a situation where its position in the new system depended solely on the attitude of the Communist Party. It was for these reasons, that we could interpret the fact that at the census of 1953, the largest number of citizens who declared themselves as atheists came from among the Orthodox population.

The Islamic community in Montenegro accepted the system of values and all the ideals of the socialist society immediately after the liberation. Already in the first expressed positions of representatives of the Islamic

clergy, we witness a complete agreement between the state and the religious community. Leading people of the Islamic Community referred to the values of national and religious equality, promoted by the Communist Party during the liberation war. Such a policy, in the opinion of religious representatives of Muslims, has saved the population during the war years and provided an opportunity for those values to be improved in peace with brotherhood and unity. The fact that Islamic officials often explained some of the social processes by quoting the Quran spoke in favour of a complete commitment to the values of the new system among the members of the Islamic community. With the religious form, they tried to convince their congregation in the correctness of the new social powers. An open support of the Islamic Community was manifested through the inclusion of Islamic priests in the ideological work of the Communist Party. During religious prayers, in coordination with the Communist Party, Muslim religious officials promoted and requested the inclusion of Muslims in the processes of the reconstruction of the country and other actions organised by the Party.

Most of controversy and misunderstanding was with the Catholic Church. Unlike the Orthodox Church and the Islamic community, a religious organisation of the Catholic Church was centralised. The essential difference in comparison to other religious communities was also the economic independence of the Catholic Church, as well as its highly educated clergy. Accusations of the “unfriendly attitude” of the Catholic clergy could often be heard from the party reports, but not any document explained what that phrase meant. When we see that the Catholic clergy gathered its congregation mainly through humanitarian associations, church choirs and similar religious manifestations, it was difficult to identify any unfriendly behaviour in these activities. However, the fact was that the Communist Party was unable to establish absolute control over the Catholic clergy. The very fact that they could not influence the processes in that religious organisation led to the formulation of the alleged hostile work. Despite the fact that some prominent Catholic priests were among their members, some even Members of Parliament, it would take eight years for the Communist Party to provide more than half of the support of the clergy for the formation of the pro-government Association of the Catholic clergy.

In the socialist society that was built up in Montenegro after the Second World War, every social process was shaped within the new ideology. Classic religiousness in that system was a form of competition, which had been eliminated from public discourse by all means. That was the beginning of the creation of the new political religion resting on the socialist doctrines, beliefs and rituals, which occupied the whole of social life. Political religion that way assumed the space previously occupied by traditional confessional communities. Secular religion filled the public space, not allowing any competition with religious contents. The Church

and the State were not rivals in the new system, but a form of enemies, because only the complete isolation of religious communities could later make room for the ideological and spiritual monopoly of the Communist ideology.

Notes:

¹ Ingo W. Schröder, "Religious Pluralism In The Post-Socialist Societies Of East-Central Europe: Theoretical Reflections On A Lithuanian Research Project", *Acta Historica Universitatis Klaipedensis*, XII, *Studia Antropologica* I, (2006): 63.

² Josef Korbel, *Tito communism*, (Denver: The University of Denver Press, 1951), 146.

³ Daniela Angi, "Three instances of church and anti-communist opposition: Hungary, Poland and Romania", *Journal for the Study of Religions and Ideologies*, vol. 10, issue 28 (2011): 30.

⁴ Vjekoslav Perica, *Balkan Idols: Religion and Nationalism in Yugoslav States* (Oxford University Press, 2002), 21.

⁵ Fred Singleton, *A Short History of the Yugoslav Peoples* (Cambridge University press, 1989), 213.

⁶ "Some problems of education of youth", *Partiski rad - newspaper of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Montenegro*, January 15, 1951.

⁷ "The emergence of religion and its sources first part", *Pobjeda*, - daily newspaper, February 6, (1952).

⁸ "The emergence of religion and its sources fourth part", *Pobjeda*, - daily newspaper, February 9, (1952).

⁹ Fulton J. Sheen, *Communism and Religion* (New York: The Pauust Press, 1936), 5.

¹⁰ Zoran Lakic, *Zemaljsko antifasisticko vijece narodnog oslobodjenja Crne Gore i Boke* [The Assembly of National Liberation of Montenegro and Boca- collection of documents] (Podgorica, 1963), 107-123.

¹¹ Zvezdan Folic, *Drzava i vjerske zajednice u Crnoj Gori 1945-1965* [The state and religious communities in Montenegro 1945-1965], (Podgorica: Historical Institute of Montenegro, 2007), 105-195.

¹² Sheen, 20.

¹³ Adnan Prekic, *Islamska zajednica u Crnoj Gori 1918-1941* [The Islamic community in Montenegro 1918-1941] (Podgorica: independent publication, 2011), 96.

¹⁴ Sinisa Zrinscak, "Generations and Atheism. Patterns of Response to Communist Rule among Different Generations and Countries", *Social Compass*, Vol. 51 No. 2 (2004): 223.

¹⁵ David E. Powell, *Antireligious Propaganda in the Soviet Union*, (Cambridge, MIT Press, London, 1975), 97.

¹⁶ Daniela Angi, "Three instances", 35.

¹⁷ Daniela Angi, "Three instances", 28.

¹⁸ Blazo Jovanovic, "Speech of the Prime Minister in the parliament after appointment of the Government", *Pobjeda*, - daily newspaper, April 2, 1945.

¹⁹ "Constitution of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia", *Sluzbeni list DFJ*, [The Official magazine for publishing legal norm of the DFY] February 13, 1945.

²⁰ "The draft Constitution of the People's Republic of Montenegro", *Pobjeda*, - daily newspaper, December 15, (1946).

²¹ Folic, 169.

²² Korbel, 149.

²³ National Archives of Montenegro (NAM), The Fund of the Central Committee of the Communist Party in Montenegro (FCCCPM), 80/52, Information on religiosity in the area of the district committee, Pljevlja, February 1952.

²⁴ NAM, FCCCPM, 80/52, Instructions Central Committee of the religious ideas, Titograd, December, 1952.

²⁵ NAM, FCCCPM, 80/52, Religious beliefs and the role of district committees, Titograd, December, 1952.

²⁶ Folic, 473.

²⁷ NAM, FCCCPM, 80/52, The order Central Committee the district committees to submit their reports on religiousness in their territory, Cetinje, December, 1951.

²⁸ NAM, FCCCPM, 2/46, Minutes from the meeting local committee of the Communist Party, Bijelo Polje, May, 1946.

²⁹ NAM, FCCCPM, 87/51, Analysis of religiousness members and candidates of the Communist Party of Montenegro, Titograd, March 1951.

³⁰ Folic, 373.

³¹ NAM, FCCCPM, 80/52, Information on of religiousness in the area of the district committee of the Communist Party, Pljevlja, February 1952.

³² Folic, 378.

³³ Jovan Bojovic, *Zapisnici sjednica Vlade Narodne Republike Crne Gore 1945-1955 [Records of the Government session of Peoples Republic of of Montenegro 1945-1955]*, (Podgorica: Historical Institute of Montenegro, 1994), 49-59.

³⁴ Bojovic, 147.

³⁵ Korbel, 148.

³⁶ T. Gajovic, „The Assembly of Orthodox clergy Montenegro”, *Pobjeda*, - daily newspaper, March 14, (1948).

³⁷ „Christmas in the freedom”, *Pobjeda*, - daily newspaper, January 6, (1945).

³⁸ „Christmas tree is in the released Cetinje”, *Pobjeda*, - daily newspaper, January 14, (1945).

³⁹ A. Markovic, „Church Holy Mass in Monastery of Cetinje on the occasion of the liberation of the country”, *Pobjeda*, - daily newspaper, January 22, (1945).

⁴⁰ T. Gajovic, „The conclusions of Assembly Orthodox clergy of Montenegro”, *Pobjeda*, - daily newspaper, March 14, (1948).

⁴¹ Daniela Angi, „Three instances”, 30.

⁴² NAM, FCCCPM, 6/4. The report the Provincial Committee of the Communist Party of Montenegro for 1947.

⁴³ NAM, FCCCPM, 80/52, Information on religious traditions in the area of the district committee in Cetinje, Cetinje, February, 1952.

⁴⁴ Folic, 368.

⁴⁵ Yaacov Ro'i, „The Task of Creating the New Soviet Man: 'Atheistic Propaganda' in the Soviet Muslim Areas”, *Soviet Studies*, Vol. 36, No. 1 (Jan., 1984): 26.

⁴⁶ B. Sredanovic, „The Muslims of the Federal republic of Montenegro”, *Pobjeda*, - daily newspaper, November 18, (1945).

⁴⁷ N. Jovanovic, „Meeting between representatives of Muslims in Montenegro”, *Pobjeda*, - daily newspaper, August 16, (1947).

⁴⁸ NAM, FCCCPM, 85/51, Minutes of the fifth session of the Parliament of the Islamic Waqf religious communities of Montenegro, Titograd, Jun, 1951.

⁴⁹ Ayşegül Aydingün, „Islam as a Symbolic Element of National Identity Used by the Nationalist Ideology in the Nation and State Building Process in Post-soviet

Kazakhstan", *Journal for the Study of Religions and Ideologies*, Vol. 6, Issue 17 (2007): 72.

⁵⁰ S. Milic, „Meeting between representatives of Muslims in Montenegro”, *Pobjeda*, - daily newspaper, August 16, (1947).

⁵¹ Z. Kazic, „In Cetinje took place session of the Waqf Parliament”, *Pobjeda*, - daily newspaper, January 18, (1948).

⁵² NAM, FCCCPM, 85/51, Minutes of the fifth session of the Parliament of the Islamic Waqf religious communities of Montenegro, Titograd, Jun, 1951.

⁵³ Ro'i, „The Task”, 32.

⁵⁴ „Campaign was launched to lift the veil in the territory of the local committees of Plav and Gusinje”, *Pobjeda*, - daily newspaper, Jun 4, (1947).

⁵⁵ S. Mitrovic, „During the last year 6 300 Muslim women removed the veil and a headscarf”, *Pobjeda*, - daily newspaper, January 4, (1948).

⁵⁶ Aydingün, „Islam as a Symbolic” 72.

⁵⁷ Ro'i, „The Task”, 41.

⁵⁸ Dorren Warriner, *Revolution in Eastern Europe* (London: Turnstile Press, 1950), 31.

⁵⁹ Daniela Angi, „Three instances”, 33.

⁶⁰ Korbel, 153.

⁶¹ NAM, FCCCPM, 6/47. The report of the Provincial Committee of the Communist Party of Montenegro for 1947.

⁶² NAM, FCCCPM, 30/1/48, Minutes of the meeting of the Provincial Committee of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia for Montenegro, Titograd, February, 1948.

⁶³ NAM, FCCCPM, 30/1/48, Minutes of the meeting of the Local Committee of the Communist Party for Herceg Novi, Herceg Novi, February, 1948.

⁶⁴ NAM, FCCCPM, 30/48, The report of the District Committee of the Communist Party of Kotor on the religious belief, Kotor, February, 1948.

⁶⁵ Zsolt Enyedi, „The Contested Politics of Positive Neutrality in Hungary”, in *Church and State in Contemporary Europe*, ed. Zsolt Enyedi and John T.S. Madeley (London: Routledge, 2003), 154.

⁶⁶ Folic, 369.

⁶⁷ Niko Lukovic, „Addressing monk Niko Lukovic at the session of the Montenegrin Parliament”, *Pobjeda*, - daily newspaper, September 12, (1946).

⁶⁸ Folic, 218.

⁶⁹ N. Tadic, „Founded Association of Catholic Priests in Montenegro”, *Pobjeda*, - daily newspaper, Jun 11, (1953).

⁷⁰ V. Milatovic, „Insufficient attention of members of the Communist Party of the problem of economic crime”, *Pobjeda*, - daily newspaper, October 24, (1954).

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