Failure to Build Yugoslav and European Identity: Comparison between the 1950s Yugo Prophecy and 1980s Euro Prophecy

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ABSTRACT

The article discusses the main obstacles encountered in the course of the earliest stages of supranational identity – building that took place in Socialist Yugoslavia in the 1950s, and in the European Community in the 1980s. Due to World War II legacy, both supranational identities were predominantly built on a promise of peace and prosperity that exclusively related the emotional attachment of citizens to the economic and political success of the supranational polities. Since both polities originally brought fulfillment of (single) national goals to their constituencies, any cultural component of supranational identities could be successfully challenged by the narratives on hegemony of supranational center over national constituencies.

KEYWORDS: Socialist Yugoslavia; European Community; 1950s; 1980s; supranational identity – building; integration.

Introduction

Since the 2008 financial crisis, similarities between Socialist Yugoslavia and the European Union (EU) have been debated, especially by the public in Yugoslav successor states. Most of the debates have focused on comparing the current EU integration crisis and the 1980s crisis in Yugoslavia, using the latter as a calamitous historical example to warn of a potential outcome of the current crisis in the EU. These debates have pointed to similarities between the two polities, such as an everlasting search by the elites for compromise and agreement, a lack of citizens' participation in decision-making processes at the supranational level, and a similarity in relations between more and less developed constituencies.[1]

The public debates over prospective similarities did not resonate in the scientific community.[2] The very few writings that compared Socialist Yugoslavia and the EU mostly approached disintegration as an outcome of failure of the integration models to attenuate uneven development patterns or as a failure of structural adjustment to introduce full democratic participation by the citizens in decision-making processes at the supranational level (Acceto, 2007; Kovač, 2012; Badovinac, 2016; Kovačević & Samardžić, 2016; Becker, 2017).

However, some writings have pointed out the shortage of supranational identity as a factor in disintegration. Bojan Kovačević and Slobodan Samardžić (2016) emphasized how Socialist Yugoslavia and the EU have resided upon an output legitimacy that the authors defined as one that is based on the compliance of citizens while the system exercises an economic and political success. Subsequently, Aleksandar Pavković (2014) pointed out the indefinite character of Socialist Yugoslav and EU identities since their characters have only been conceptualized on the acceptance of a political statement by the citizens—that of European peace and prosperity, and brotherhood and unity of Yugoslav peoples, which was envisioned to bring prosperity through the practice of self-managing socialism.[3] The aforementioned authors claimed that the output legitimacy-based polities could not provide a definite answer to the question of: Who are we and why are we together? According to Bojan Kovačević (2017, pp. 201–206), the lack of a definite answer to the stated question deprives the supranational polities of the emotional attachment of their citizens, an attachment which in the case of modern national states has been supplied by national identity.

The answer to the shortcomings in the identities of Socialist Yugoslavia and the EU has usually been found in the concept of making the Yugoslav and European demos through the introduction of full democratic participation in decision-making processes at the supranational level (Mirić, 1984; Đinđić, 1988; McNamara, 2018, 2019, 2020; Pakier & Stråth, 2010; Stråth, 2000). It is expected that the creation of demos would help to boost the emotional attachment of the citizens to supranational polities. However, the very content of the identities has been much less debated. While the shortcomings of Socialist Yugoslav identity have been recently researched (Haug, 2012; Ivešić, 2020, 2021), the shortcomings of the EU identity have not yet been comprehensively researched. Here it is important to warn that even divergent scholars of nations, such as Anthony Smith (1991) and Rogers Brubaker (2006), agree on how every national identity has its civic and ethnic component that are inseparable even in cases usually considered to be role models of civic nations, such as the American and French nations.[4] Furthermore, as Anthony Smith emphasizes, “there can be no collective identity without shared memories or a sense of continuity on the part of those who feel they belong to that collectivity” (1992, p. 58). Since supranational identity is unlikely to supersede national identities any time soon, we approach the nexus of supranational and national identities from the perspective of *multi-identification* (Stavrakakis, 2005, p. 84), which enables a coexistence between prospective similar and closely interconnected subject positions (Smith, 1992, 1993). However, it should be emphasized here that unequal power relations between national constituencies could present serious obstacles to successful supranational identity-building, since the more powerful constituencies tend to project their own identity as supranational, in turn provoking resentment of less powerful nations toward the very idea of supranational identity-building (Obradovic & Sheehey-Skeffington, 2020). The intensity of resentment has been conditioned by a historical legacy of relations between constituencies, which includes a history of supranational identity-building. For sure, the historical legacies of conflict between Yugoslav and European nations seriously determined the success of supranational identity-building processes in the case of both polities.

This paper argues that the failure to build effective socialist Yugoslavia and European supranational identities stemmed from a combination of historical legacies tied to power relations between constituencies in both supranational polities. First, the article shows that leading elites hesitated to even begin the building of any kind of supranational identity on the assumption that this would be a prospective source of conflict due to the historical legacies of conflict between the Yugoslav and European nations. Subsequently, the article comprehends how supranational identity – building was hindered by the founding ideological concepts based on ‘output legitimacy’ that were conditioned in relation to historical legacies. In sum, both polities were founded on a core mission to bring fulfillment of single goals for each and every of their national constituencies. Next, this article argues that once the leading elites ‘invested into the creation’ of supranational identities, they were forcefully challenged as going against the very purpose for which the supranational polities were originally founded. Finally, the article comprehends how these challenging counter-narratives ended up as narratives on historical parallels between injustices done in the past and alleged injustices done to national constituencies by contemporaneous supranational identity – building processes.

Since the historical legacies outstandingly conditioned the success of Yugoslav and respective European supranational identity-building, one should emphasize that Yugoslav and European historical legacies differ to a discernible extent. Although the ideas of Yugoslav and European identity were launched in the same way as national identity-building ideas, they differ outstandingly. Namely, while European identity was never enforced as a kind of a national idea, Yugoslavism was forged by sometimes contesting visions of Yugoslavia as a state of distinct nations, and a vision that South Slavic nations would eventually merge into one Yugoslav nation.[5] Unlike in the case of European integration, the Yugoslav state was forged at the end of World War (WW) I. Thus, prior to WW II the state used its power to forge what it saw as Yugoslav identity, especially when the royal dictatorship of the 1930s enforced the idea of a single Yugoslav nation projected upon the Serb national identity (Djokic, 2003; Nielsen, 2014). In contrast, the European Community that had been gradually constituted after WWII had no direct legacy of previous state and (supra)nation-building. Thus, the construction of European identity in the post-war period was much less burdened by historical legacy, especially since the interwar Yugoslav regime brought many non-Serbs to experience the Yugoslav idea as a Serb-dominated force (Djokic, 2003). Moreover, the interwar conflict over the very meaning of Yugoslavia and Yugoslavism contributed to a certain extent to mass-scale crimes against Serbs by the Croatian Nazi-puppet Ustasha state, and against Croats and Bosnian Muslims done by the Serb nationalist Chetnik movement. Eventually, the Ustasha and the Chetnik crimes conditioned the crimes done by the Yugoslav partisans at the very end of the War. During WWII in Western Europe, both the crimes committed against civilians by the Nazis, as well as those committed by the resistance movements against real or alleged Nazi collaborators, were of a much less scale in comparison to those committed in Yugoslavia .[6] The outlined differences of the interwar and wartime history in Yugoslavia and in Western Europe, respectively, inspired Yugoslav communists to be even more careful in respect to the very content of the Yugoslav supranational identity than the European elites should have been in respect to the European identity, although the armed conflicts of France and Germany had a much longer history than the Croato-Serb conflicts.

Since a comprehensive elaboration of the entire process of supranational identity-building in socialist Yugoslavia and throughout the European integration history would go beyond the scope of this article, this paper will focus on comparisons between the earliest stages of supranational identity-building, taking place in socialist Yugoslavia in the 1950s, and in the EC in the 1980s. Namely, the 1950s brought a definitive break of Yugoslavia from Soviet-type socialism, while the 1970s brought a first distancing of the European community from the United States. This triggered resentments that led to the construction of a new system of values hostile to the principles of role models, the USSR and the USA, respectively. This "transvaluation of values," as Liah Greenfeld (1992, pp. 15–17) termed the rejection of previous role model values and subsequent construction of a new system of values distinct from the previous role model, pushed socialist Yugoslavia to find its special road to socialism. In the case of the European community in the 1980s, a European social model developed in opposition to an American economic model at that time epitomized by Reaganism (Petrović 2016, 2017). Since the implementation of their own indigenous models of society required more internal cohesion than before, the ruling elites invested in the building of concepts of supranational socialist Yugoslavism, and supranational Euro-prophetism.

Ideological Foundations of Socialist Yugoslavia and the European Union: Avoidance to Forge (ethnocultural) Yugoslav and European Identity

Foundation of Socialist Yugoslavia: Yugoslavia without (Supra)national Yugoslavs?

In way to confront the previously described interwar legacy that to a certain extent caused the wartime bloody fratricidal conflict between south Slavic nations, the Communist Party started to appeal to the individual aspirations of each national group in Yugoslavia. Already in the early phase of the War, Tito emphasized that the communist-led antifascist struggle—called the People's Liberation Struggle—would be

> (…) a mere phrase and even a deception if it did not, besides a general Yugoslav sense, also have a national sense for each nation individually (…) which have in the past been oppressed by the protagonists of the greater Serbian hegemony (…) The banner of the People's Liberation Struggle (…) is at the same time also the banner for national freedom and equality of each nation's individuality (Tito, 2010, pp. 483–485).

Thus, the new Yugoslavia as envisioned by the communists meant nothing beyond tight cooperation between fraternal but distinctive national groups on their common path to peace and prosperity. Consecutively, the communists focused on building socialism in the new Yugoslav state in the very aftermath of the war, assuming that integration once set in motion would result in a decline in the importance of nationalism and national identity. Simultaneously, the war-time identity – building narrative remained unchanged. As Hilde Haug (2012, p.116) nicely pointed out, the party's focus on presenting itself as a guardian of true interests of each individual nation had the purpose to consolidate the leading role that the party had achieved during the war. By the same token the communists avoided any discussion on prospective supranational identity out of fear that its creation might provoke a conflict between the nations over the exact meaning of that identity. Instead, the communists focused on legitimizing the newly founded socialist Yugoslavia by exploiting narratives on ending the history of conflicts, and of subsequently bringing welfare to each individual nation and people (Banac, 1990, pp. 150–151; Haug, 2012, pp. 115–133).

However, since the long-term aspiration of the communists was to create a new socialist society within the Yugoslav framework, they simultaneously insisted on the monolithic character of the new state. Thus, the 1946 federal constitution assigned to the federal units only an administrative function, which was further restricted by a highly centralized party and state organization. However, the concept of monolithic Yugoslavia was not related to the concept of Yugoslav identity but rather to the state and society system. Although the federal units had only administrative character, they were designed as the rough equivalent of the homeland of dominant nationality within its boundaries and moreover constitutionally granted by the responsibility for culture and education (Shoup, 1968, pp. 113-115). Since the communists were bound to the Marxist–Leninist approach to nation that assumed nationalism to become obsolete once society progresses to the higher stage of socialism[7], they did not anticipate that assigning the federal units to be ‘lightning rod for national emotions’ (Shoup, 1968, p. 115) could have had a long-term consequence for further identity – building processes.

Early European Integration and the First Major Crisis

The period of “very little talk of European civilization” that is, of a particular European identity (Wintle, 2011, p. 3), lasted much longer than the period of silence on Yugoslav supranational identity. Contrary to the Yugoslav case, the end of WWII in Western Europe did not bring a supranational state with power to forge a new identity. There was a strong will from European founding fathers to promote European integration from the very beginning, but it lacked repressive and ideological state apparatuses to force it on the population. Also, European integration was not led by such dominant political agents as the Communist Party was in the Yugoslav case.

The early stage of integration was dominated by rather vague goals on how to proceed with unification and integration after WWII. In Winston Churchill's famous 1946 United States of Europe speech there was no clear idea who would be included in this united Europe and what it would look like. The goal was stated as:

> to recreate the European family, **or as much of it as we can**, and to provide it with a structure under which it can dwell in peace, safety and freedom. We must build **a kind** of United States of Europe (bold text by the authors) (Churchill, 1946).

Churchill's speech eventually led to the 1948 Congress of Europe, which gathered various European leaders and supporters of European integration together. They discussed future models of European integration, especially in respect to integrating Germany in the West European system (Gilbert, 2003, p. 30).[8] However, the Congress disclosed a sharp division between two camps: federalists and unionists. Federalists wanted a federal Europe with a stronger center and constitution, while unionists preferred intergovernmental Europe. Although the Hague Congress proved to be a disappointment for federalists, two federalists did contribute to the creation of what would eventually become the European Union: Jean Monnet and Altiero Spinelli (Burgess, 2000). On the other hand, Milward (2000) emphasized the importance of national leaders and the restructuring of post – war European economies. Milward's thesis was that the 'common policies of the European Community came into being in the attempt to uphold and stabilize the post-war consensus on which the European nation-state was rebuilt. (p. 38). Even though Milward was critical of ideational accounts of the history of European integration that emphasized the influence of supranational ideas, he acknowledged that Christian democratic beliefs played a role in the European rescue of nation – states by Alcide de Gasperi, Konrad Adenauer, and Robert Schuman. Burgess (2000) pointed out that although Monnet and Spinelli envisaged different paths to the same ultimate goal of European federation, they shared similar "views about history, the dangers of nationalism, the anachronistic nature of the state, the importance of common solutions to common problems, the role of new institutions and the need for lasting peace in Europe" (p. 31). Already during WWII Spinelli developed a clear vision of a federal United States of Europe with a constitution and a European army (Spinelli & Rossi, 1941). In his essay on the American constitutional model, Spinelli (1957) urged that European unification adopts the American federal model and criticized Monnet's approach as not being radical enough. Although Monnet also saw the US as a role model for European unity, he foresaw 'the method of building federal Europe by a series of steps' (Pinder, 2007, p. 581; Burgess, 2000). Monnet's methods prevailed and European integration proceeded during the 1950s through intensified economic cooperation: the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC) was established in 1951. Monnet described his method as 'starting with limited achievements, establishing de facto solidarity, from which a federation would gradually emerge. I have never believed that one fine day Europe would be created by some great political mutation' (cited in Burgess, 2000, p. 35).

European integration was not all success in the early 1950s, as both the building of a common European army and efforts at deeper political integration failed. The US, alarmed by the Korean War, sought to convince European leaders to rearm West Germany and weaken the Soviet threat. In 1950, Monnet initiated the European Defense Community (EDC), which proposed arming German forces, but putting them completely under supranational—both European and NATO—control. Compared to the ECSC, the EDC was a more supranational endeavor and ‘would, if ratified, have represented a remarkable voluntary surrender of sovereignty by the six countries’ (Gilbert, 2003, p. 50). Although the EDC was a plan of French federalists, Communists and Gaullists rejected it in the French parliament in 1954. According to Gilbert (2003), the Gaullists rejected the EDC out of fear of losing French sovereignty and of German dominance in future European armed forces, while the Communists saw in the treaty the strengthening of the influence of American capitalism.

Thus, European integration carried on without one of the most important agents in forging (supra)national identities: common armed forces. Monnet, as the president of the High Authority of the ECSC, was, however, able to push for the establishment of the Press Service of the ECSC in 1955, which had an objective of creating European citizens. Monnet stated that ‘our Community will only truly be realized if the actions it takes are made public and explained publicly . . . to the people of our Community’ (cited in Calligaro, 2013, p. 15). Monnet’s close associate Jacques-René Rabier became the creator of the information policy as a long-standing director of what would become the EC’s information service. Rabier ‘described himself and his collaborators as “fonctionnaires-militants” or “missionaries,” who openly admitted their desire to nurture a European consciousness’ (Calligaro, 2013, p. 15). After leaving his post in the High Authority in 1955, Monnet turned to Europeanizing academic institutions. In 1958 he created the *Institut de la Communauté Européenne pour les Études Universitaires* that aimed to motivate the scientific institutions in Europe to investigate ‘into the long-term problems raised by European integration’ (Calligaro, 2013, p. 20).

Although Monnet left his formal post in executive politics, his vision of building federal Europe by a series of steps continued with the 1957 Treaty of Rome that established the European Economic Community (EEC). The EEC's aim was to bring about economic integration, including a common market and customs union, among its members. The Treaty of Rome also established the European Commission as the executive body of the EEC. Although the Commission was granted very limited powers, its first president, Walter Hallstein—a committed federalist involved in helping Germany join the European integration from the very start—wanted to 'strengthen the position of the European Parliament and the Commission' (Loth, 1998, p. 9).

Charles de Gaulle, who became President of France in 1958, was not going to allow Hallstein's supranationalism, however. De Gaulle was never fond of supranationalism, but rather propagated the concept of a 'Europe of states'. De Gaulle's vision was of Europe led by France and as a third power beside the US and Soviet Union, which led to accusations of promoting the politics of French grandeur.[9] In 1962, he framed his vision of Europe of states:

> It is only the states that are valid, legitimate and capable of achievement. I have already said, and I repeat, that at the present time there cannot be any other Europe than a Europe of states, apart, of course, from myths, stories and parades. What is happening with regard to the Economic Community proves this every day, for it is the states, and only the states, that created this Economic Community (as cited in Mahoney, 2017, p. 134).

Similar to the case of the postwar Yugoslav communists' avoidance of investing in Yugoslav (supra)national identity-building while simultaneously emphasizing Yugoslav patriotism, Hallstein did not promote the quashing of constituent nations' identities, as de Gaulle accused him of doing (Loth, 1998). However, he hoped for an effective EC and the emergence of European patriotism. In his 1964 speech, Hallstein declared:

> Desiring the unity of Europe does not mean wanting to create a streamlined Europe. On the contrary, the aim of our work is to keep the productive diversity of Europe viable, a diversity which is a source of ever new mutual competitiveness. Respect for the individuality of the peoples of Europe is a strength and not a weakness of the Community, as long as its capacity to act is preserved. No one should disown his native country. Yet that does not exclude the awakening of a European patriotism (as cited in Loth, 1998, p. 136).

De Gaulle (1971) did not mince his words when talking about Brussels, which he said Hallstein made 'into a sort of capital' (p. 184). He called it the '*apatride*, irresponsible, technocratic word-machine' (Scheingold, 1966, p. 476). Similar to the Yugoslav case, accusations of promoting national interests under the guise of supranationalism eventually sprang forth. In his memoirs, published after he left the post of the French president, de Gaulle offered a scathing interpretation of Hallstein's motives:

> I felt that although Walter Hallstein was in his way a sincere European, he was first and foremost a German who was ambitious for his own country. For in the Europe that he sought lay the framework in which his country could first of all regain, free of charge, the respectability and equality of rights which the frenzy and defeat of Hitler had cost it, then acquire the preponderant influence which its economic strength would no doubt earn it, and finally ensure that the cause of its frontiers and its unity was backed by a powerful coalition

> in accordance with the doctrine to which, as Foreign Minister of the Federal Republic, he had formerly given his name (de Gaulle 1971, p. 184).

The de Gaulle–Hallstein conflict left the impression that two main EC member states, Germany and France, were trying to dominate European integration. Their conflict led to the Empty Chair crisis in 1965, as France left European institutions objecting to a Hallstein-led Commission strengthening its position and pushing towards a more supranational integration. De Gaulle’s clash with Hallstein was resolved eventually by the Luxembourg Compromise of 1966 that gave member states a de facto veto power, so France returned to European institutions. In this way, de Gaulle's ideas prevailed, and the Commission was considerably weakened. Thus, supranationalist ideas were sidelined and European integration took an intergovernmentalist turn during the late 1960s and 1970s.

De Gaulle wanted to preserve French dominance in the EC. He saw both the rising of German-led federalism within the Commission and the potential entrance of Britain into the EC, which according to him would strengthen the US presence in Europe, as diluting French power. In the process, he alienated British elites from the European project and slowed the Franco-German push for deeper European integration, which would be reintroduced with the Schmidt-Giscard alliance in 1974. Nevertheless, despite his well-deserved image of being the disruptor of European integration, de Gaulle greatly contributed to the construction of one of its flagship programs, the Common Agricultural Policy (Keeler, 1990).

The 1950s Yugo-prophetism and the 1980s Euro-prophetism

1950s: Attempts to Build a 'Soft' Yugoslav National Identity

As Tomaž Ivešić (2021, p. 145) emphasized, the 1948 confrontation with the Soviet Bloc countries made the Yugoslav communist leadership realize that unity was at risk and that the merging of nations needed to be stimulated. The Fifth Congress of the Party, which was summoned in June 1948 as a response to the confrontation with the Soviet Bloc, announced as well an implementation of the new concept of socialist Yugoslavism. In his report to the Congress, one of the main ideologists of the party, Milovan Đilas, denounced the Stalinist accusations of nationalist aberrations of the Yugoslav communist leadership by declaring that Yugoslav communists cannot be Yugoslav nationalists since the Yugoslav nation is declared not to exist. By the same token, Đilas announced that the party should 'anticipate new lessons in the struggle for the building of socialism in our country…in the spirit of our new Yugoslav socialist patriotism' (1948, pp. 229, 268; translated by the authors).

A more precise meaning of the concept was given with the introduction of the self-management system in the early 1950s. The constitutional law that was introduced in 1953 amended the 1946 Federal Constitution so that sovereignty was ascribed to 'working people' rather than federal republics, while the Chamber of Nationalities of the Federal Assembly—in which the republics and provinces had been directly represented—was merged into the National Assembly (Haugh, 2012, p. 143). The intention to transform Yugoslavia from the federation of nations and peoples into the self-management community of Yugoslavs was obvious from the words of Edvard

Kardelj, the ideological mastermind behind the self-management project. He conceptualized self-management as the agent creating a new socialist community in which language and culture would be of no major importance (Ivešić, 2021, p. 147).[10] Moreover, the communal system that was introduced in 1955 designed communes as self-governed and self-sufficient local municipalities, subsequently trampling down the authorities of the republics (Ivešić, 2020, p. 85).

The party leadership also adopted the policy of promoting greater unity between Yugoslavia's principal nations within the field of language and culture. This strategy, which Ivešić (2020) rightly called 'Yugoslav socialist soft nation – building', included the establishment of the single Serbo-Croatian language in 1954 as the Party sought to create all-Yugoslav cultural institutions, such as federal publishing houses, Yugoslav cinema, and various all-Yugoslav cultural and scientific associations (Haug, 2012, p. 145). In terms of culture, the Party promoted Yugoslav socialist patriotism that was to be achieved by teaching people about the commonalities of a centuries-long struggle of Yugoslav peoples for their freedom (Đilas, 1949, pp. 11–18), mostly through partisan movies and partisan novels that were assigned as mandatory reading in schools as well by history education (Wachtel, 1998, pp. 151–154). Simultaneously, the leading communists, including Tito himself, kept relating the concept of national Yugoslavism to the legacy of interwar greater-Serbian nationalism.[11]

These divergent messages eventually brought about the opposite political outcomes. On the one hand, the introduction of the communal system gave birth to various ideas of Yugoslavia as a federation of communes. These ideas were most blatantly expressed by Dobrica Ćosić, at that time a member of the Serbian people's assembly and one of the most popular young writers, who said that 'through the commune Yugoslavism will grow and the borders of republics will be erased, so that someday people will write: I am a Yugoslav from such and such commune' (as cited in Miller, 2007, p. 64). On the other hand, socialist Yugoslavism was to be separately addressed by each and every republic since the responsibility for education and culture lay with the republics, and there was no federal department of culture or education. Although the topics addressed were the same, the 1950s Croatian and Serbian textbooks brought not only different perspectives but sometimes even competing interpretations of certain events in the history of Croatian and Serbian national identity – building (Koren, 2013, Ch. 3).

Since the communists perceived these divergent trends in identity – building to be a pure concomitant of economic disputes and thus of secondary importance, the Party leadership focused on coping with more urgent problems (Ivešić, 2016, pp. 116–122). Namely, the Party was occupied with tensions between the leaderships of the republics and provinces arising from disputes over centrally allocated investments and development priorities (Shoup, 1968, pp. 227–235).

While economic disputes were more or less successfully kept behind closed doors, disputes over the very meaning of socialist Yugoslavism were leaked to the public by 1956, when the parallels between socialist Yugoslavism and the Yugoslavism promoted in the interwar period were raised in Slovenia—the republic that besides Macedonia had the mother tongue that was different from the Serbo-Croatian language, which was a mother tongue in the four other federal republics.[12] Although the top-rank Party promotors of the 'Yugoslav socialist soft nation-building' had all-Yugoslav character—including Tito and Edvard Kardelj being a Croat and Slovenian, respectively—it was obvious that perceived inequality in power relations triggered resistance to supranational identity-building. One could see how the fact that the highly centralized Party and state power were nested in Belgrade—along with the fact that the modest authorities of federal republics were subsequently trimmed by the 1955 introduction of the communal system—would raise resentment in Slovenia and other non-Serb federal units that socialist Yugoslavism would (again) become Serb-dominated. This resentment took on a fully-fledged form in the years following.

The launch of the public debate over identity that triggered an immediate response from the Party came in the preface to the second edition of Kardelj's significant book *Development of the Slovene National Question* (Razvoj slovenačkog nacionalnog pitanja), published in 1957. Notwithstanding the different and sometimes diverging interpretations that were ascribed to the book's preface,[13] it is important to emphasize that Kardelj intended to pacify resentment toward the Yugoslav supranational identity, and thus eventually emphasized how 'bureaucratic centralism, linked to vestiges of the old Greater-Serbian nationalism… deform relations among the people…in even greater measure than nationalism' (1981, p. 113). By the same token, Kardelj stressed that socialist Yugoslavism 'is not a matter of artificial merger of languages and culture, or of creation of a new Yugoslav nation of classical type, but first and foremost of the organic growth and strengthening of the self-management *socialist community of working people*' (1981, p. 125; italics in original). Eventually Kardelj defined the socialist Yugoslavism to reside exclusively on output legitimacy since:

> No doubt the ethnical and cultural relatedness of the peoples of Yugoslavia is an extremely important factor in their rapprochement…Nonetheless, it is not the decisive essence of the present Yugoslav community of nations…In brief, the essence of today's Yugoslavism can be only the socialist interest and socialist consciousness. (p. 126)

However, Kardelj's narrative as expressed in his 1957 preface brought a quite opposite response to the intended purpose, since it offered a platform to challenge any conceptualization of socialist Yugoslavism behind its socialist content as a return to 'vestiges of the greater-Serbian nationalism'. The challenge came in a fully- fledged manner at the Seventh Congress of the Party in 1958. During the Congress debate, some Bosnian and Serbian Party members argued in favor of the transformation of Yugoslavia to a federation of communes as a further step in rapprochement of Yugoslav peoples. The idea was immediately challenged by the Macedonian and Slovenian delegations who labeled the idea of Yugoslavia as a federation of communes as a 'misconception confusing a positive notion of cultural rapprochement of Yugoslav peoples with a negative legacy of bureaucratic centralism and unitarism' (Gabrič, 1995, pp. 330–332). The latter arguments were tacitly backed by the Croatian Party leadership, and they subsequently received open support by the Kosovo leadership in the aftermath of the Congress (Ivešić, 2020, pp. 91–92). Thus, it could be argued that most of the non-Serb federal units became afraid that the Serb identity would be prospectively nested within the emerging socialist Yugoslavism.

With respect to the debate, the Party Program adopted at the Congress outlined 'a Yugoslav socialist patriotism, which is not the opposite of but rather a necessary internationalist supplement to democratic national consciousness' (Budding, 2007, p. 408). The quoted definition of socialist Yugoslavism seems to be a compromise between the positions that crystalized in the Congress debate. Although it seems to anticipate the Slovenian and Macedonian arguments raised during the debate, the understanding of socialist Yugoslavism as a necessary supplement to national identities still left a door open for prospective implementation of some kind of 'Yugoslav soft nation – building', which was argued by the Serbian and the federal party leadership, including Tito himself (Perović, 2005, pp. 198–199). The ongoing clash between the two camps that constituted the Seventh Congress eventually burst out in the public in the form of a 1961–62 polemic between the Serbian writer Dobrica Ćosić and the Slovene literary critic Dušan Pirjevec. Both Ćosić and Pirjevec were members of the central committees of the Party in their respective republics; thus, it could be concluded that both of them served as proxies for their respective leaderships (Perović, 2005, p. 196). Although both Ćosić and Pirjevec called upon Kardelj's Preface, the polemic was important since Pirjevec used Ćosić's arguments to relate the concept of socialist Yugoslavism to greater-Serb nationalism. Ćosić (1961) understood socialist Yugoslavism as an international identity that should exist along national identities; however, he conceptualized socialist Yugoslavism as an identity that should eventually supersede national identities. Pirjevec (1962) countered Ćosić's arguments firstly by expounding on how Yugoslavism could not be truly internationalist since internationalism was by definition worldwide. Pirjevec subsequently argued that Ćosić's concept of socialist Yugoslavism would inevitably lead to a dominance of the most numerous nation, meaning the Serbs. Since Pirjevec was obviously concerned that the Serb national identity would eventually be nested in the Yugoslav supranational identity, he eventually argued that socialist Yugoslavism could only mean rapprochement between distinct national cultures if Socialist Yugoslavia is to fulfill its goals as defined during the war.[14]

The Ćosić–Pirjevec polemic represented a part of the cleavage inside the party's leadership that was related to the prospect of future development of the entire socialist system in Yugoslavia. The clash was between two camps: the first one was commonly referred to as the reformists, and they were in favor of further self-management reforms, including empowerment of the authorities of the republics at the expense of the federation. The second camp was commonly referred to as the centralists, and they argued in favor of keeping a strong federal authority in Belgrade. By the mid-1960s, the reformist camp, eventually represented by the leadership of the most of the non-Serb federal units, gained an advantage over the centralists, made up of the Serbian Party leadership, the army, and the federal administration (Haug, 2012, pp. 169–172). The final victory of the reformists eventually led to abandonment of the Yugoslav soft nation – building project, and instead to the forging of the concept of Yugoslav as only state identification (Ivešić, 2021, p. 150).

Establishing European Identity(ies)

Similar to the Yugoslav case, the new European identity was forged in an ideological battle with the significant other. Throughout the history of European integration, the worsening of relations between the US and Western European nations had regularly led to the intensification of debates on European identity. The context of the Cold War did not allow for independence from the US and a stronger emphasis on European values. However, the Vietnam War did produce resentment towards the US and transvaluation of American values in intellectual spheres not directly connected with the process of European integration. French publicist Jean Jacques Servan-Schreiber (1967) deemed the Vietnam War as barbaric and called for an autonomous Europe that would not be imperialistic but would contribute to world equilibrium. While European leaders did not support the US militarily in Vietnam, they—except for de Gaulle—were not openly criticizing the Americans (Ricard, 2005).

After intense transatlantic cooperation in the period after WWII and strong US support for European integration, the EC gradually sought more independence from the US. The 'Declaration on European Identity' in 1973 was the first official document mentioning European identity, and it was intended to establish the EC as 'a distinct and original entity' in international relations. An important goal of the Declaration was to contribute to 'international progress', as the member states 'conscious of their responsibilities and particular obligations … attach very great importance to the struggle against under-development' (European Communities, 1973). The Declaration was published in the context of American disengagement from the Bretton Woods international system and the transatlantic partnership.[15] President Nixon was introducing economic nationalism and espousing American superiority over European allies (McGuire & Smith, 2008, p. 19). European elites realized that the international economy was undergoing major changes that were then further exacerbated by the 1973 Oil Crisis. As a response to the changing global economic order, in 1977 the EC's MacDougall Report called for a common European Keynesian approach, although this did not come to fruition (Stråth, 2002). From the beginning of the 1980s, pro-European left and liberal politicians and intellectuals began to position Europe as a bastion of hope for the rest of the world in order to give new meaning to European identity and establish it in contrast to rising American neoconservatism. Simone Veil, liberal French politician, who championed women's rights and was at that time the first president of the elected European Parliament[16], proclaimed that:

> Europeans do not always have a conscience of the hope that the European Community constitutes throughout the world, for millions of people, in Europe itself, on our eastern borders, as in Africa, America, Asia. If we fail to carry out the fundamental historical task of the European Union, it is not only ourselves that we would betray, it is also all these people who look towards us with hope and confidence. (Veil, 1980; translated by the authors)

Hendrik Brugmans (1985), a European historian, a long-time rector of the College of Europe, and an ardent federalist, wrote a book in which he argued that amidst global turmoil and American failures, Europe was best suited to be the future global role model. Thus, during the 1980s, narratives of Euro-prophetism were developing in pro-European intellectual circles. These narratives were giving new meaning to European integration by gradually promoting Europe as a global role model—a region of peace, freedom, and respect for human rights. These narratives were also meant to mobilize the European elites and the public for deeper European integration.

However, there was no such radical break with the US nor immediate transvaluation of values as in the case of the Tito–Stalin split. Moreover, the EC was significantly changed in 1973 as Ireland, the UK and Denmark became new member states. The latter two were characterized by significant Euroscepticism within political elites and the public. The so-called EFTA enlargement also had an influence on the Commission's information policy. In 1973, a director-general from Ireland was appointed, but he was not as enthusiastic about the Commission's information policy as French originators of the policy were, those who managed to shape it through Rabier's directing of the press information service (Calligaro, 2013).

European connections with the US and the ideologies that were emerging there had never been broken, and US–UK relations were particularly strong. The case in point was the neoliberal and neoconservative alliance of President Ronald Reagan and Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher during the 1980s (Marsh & Baylis, 2006). Thatcher's ideology of small state, anti-unionism, and monetarism (Gillingham, 2003) was influential during the mid-1980s relaunch of European integration in several ways. Thatcher had a significant role in the creation of the European single market, that is, the elimination of barriers to European trade that she thought would help British economy and particularly British services (Gilbert, 2003, p. 175). However, the neoconservative agenda of Thatcher and Reagan prompted a response from European social democratic forces led by the most influential European Commission president Jacques Delors. Delors started to emphasize social cohesion and promote a distinct European social model. Delors (1988) drew on his personalist ideological background and argued that Europe should be based on similar principles:

> A model based on a skillful balance between the individual and society. This model varies from country to country, but throughout Europe we encounter similar mechanisms of social solidarity, of protection of the weakest and of collective bargaining. (pp. 3–4)

And he connected this model to the project of constructing the European Union:

> The European Community will be characterized by cooperation as well as competition. It will encourage individual initiative as well as solidarity. If these characteristics are not present, the goals will not be achieved. (…) 1992 is much more than the creation of an internal market abolishing barriers to the free movement of goods services and investment. (Delors 1988, pp. 7, 11).

Delors ([1988] 1992 p. 17) elaborated upon this in his book, as he saw the EC as a unique grouping in the world with shared values of democracy, human rights and 'concern for world equilibrium'. Delors also noted that Europe is 'homogeneous even in its extreme diversity, which doubtless, no other region of the world can claim' ([1988] 1992, p. 17). In this book, he even introduced the expression that would eventually become the motto of the EU, 'a Europe united in diversity' ([1988] 1992, p. 158).

During Delors' first term as the EC president the initiatives for building European identity intensified. In 1984, the European Council meeting at Fontainebleau concluded 'that the Community should respond to the expectations of the people of Europe by adopting measures to strengthen and promote its identity and its image both for its citizens and for the rest of the world' (European Communities, 1985). It was indicative how the Council wanted to present that this was a sort of bottom-up initiative by calling it 'A People's Europe'. Proposed measures included:

> (i) symbols of the Community's existence, such as a flag and an anthem; (ii) formation of European sports teams; (iii) streamlining procedures at frontier posts; (iiii) minting of a European coinage, namely the ECU. … and … to support the creation of national committees of European volunteers for development, bringing together young Europeans who wish to work on development projects in the Third World' (European Communities, 1985, p. 5).

Thus, some of the most prominent nation – building symbols plus a Euro-prophetist project for young Europeans were proposed. A Committee chaired by Pietro Adonnino in its report confirmed the need for those measures—excepting the minting of the ECU coinage, which as they stated at that time 'could only be of value to collectors' (European Communities, 1985, p. 17). However, the report was simultaneously careful not to give an impression of trying to surpass national identities; it proclaimed that the European flag 'will be used at appropriate places and on suitable occasions, without of course affecting the use of national flags' (European Communities, 1985, p. 29)

The concept of European cultural heritage was another project that aimed to create European identity, but it reflected diverging European values. British Conservative MEP Baroness Elles promoted European cultural heritage in 1974 as a possible answer to Europeans rejecting 'traditional cultural and spiritual values' (cited in Calligaro, 2013, p. 86), and it centered on safeguarding archaeological and architectural heritage. On the other hand, in the beginning of the 1980s Socialists in the European Parliament promoted Europe's social heritage to give a special emphasis to the legacy of ‘man’s achievements in the social, industrial and rural spheres’, trade unions, and ‘the progressive liberation of man through workers’ and peasants’ struggles’ (cited in Calligaro, 2013, p. 99). This was meant to be achieved through projects, such as converting coalmines to mining museums and preserving industrial sites.

Different conceptions of European cultural heritage were reflected in two different visions of Europe presented in the Delors-Thatcher debate. In contrast to Gaulle–Hallstein debates, and similar to the Ćosić–Pirjevec debate in Yugoslavia, the Delors–Thatcher debate had far broader ideological repercussions as it reflected a growing ideological pluralism in the EC. Apart from questions concerning the arrangement of supranational communities, the Delors–Thatcher debate dealt with major geopolitical, economic, and social issues, initiating a debate on the values upon which the relaunched European integration should be based (Petrović, 2013). In her famous 1988 Bruges Speech, Thatcher attacked what she saw as an attempt to define European integration by leftist ideologies and create ‘a European super-state exercising a new dominance from Brussels’ akin to the centralized Soviet Union. Years later, Thatcher (2002, p. 167) proclaimed that the concept of Europe was used for disguised national interests and quoted Bismarck who said that he ‘always found the word ‘Europe’ in the mouths of those politicians who wanted from other powers something they did not dare to demand in their own name’. She also wrote about the dominant Franco-German axis and compared the ideas of an ever closer union and European superstate with the Habsburg Empire, Napoleon Bonaparte, and Adolf Hitler. In her Bruges speech, she offered a predominantly British perspective and, similarly to de Gaulle’s narrative of grandeur[17], emphasized that ‘we British have in a very special way contributed to Europe. Over the centuries we have fought to prevent Europe from falling under the dominance of a single power. We have fought and we have died for her freedom’ (1988). Thatcher also emphasized Europe’s Christian roots and its common European cultural heritage. [18] Eventually, she challenged the core concepts of the Euro-prophetist ideology, namely the promotion of peace, freedom, and human rights by claiming that ‘the story of how Europeans explored and colonized—and yes, without apology—civilized much of the world is an extraordinary tale of talent, skill and courage’ (Thatcher, 1988).

The Bruges speech became a clarion call for Eurosceptics all over Europe[19]. It helped turn European integration from a state of permissive consensus (i.e. European elites pushing European integration forward) into one of constraining dissensus after the Maastricht Treaty and the establishment of the European Union in 1992, as politicians from the opposition and public opinion constrained the deepening of European integration (Hooghe & Marks, 2009). Delors, on the other hand, became a founding father of today’s European Union, with the monetary union and European citizenship as its biggest accomplishments. His emphasis on social cohesion and solidarity became a point of reference for evaluating the EU’s output legitimacy. Also, European symbols promoted during the 1980s relaunch became part of everyday life. The *Ode to Joy* has been played during solemn occasions since 1985; the European flag was raised in front of the seat of the European Commission in 1986; euro coins and banknotes have been used by EU citizens in their daily transactions since 2002; and ‘united in diversity’ became the motto of the EU in 2000.

Conclusions

Identity – building in the case of supranational polities shows outstanding similarities as well as some outstanding differences. The most important similarity is a nexus between historical legacy and supranational identity – building. World War II atrocities and their legacy of devastation to relations among nations, especially in Yugoslavia, led elites in both Yugoslav and

Western Europe to avoid transparent identity – building politics out of fear that identity creation might provoke internal conflicts over the exact meaning of that identity. This fear was especially present in Socialist Yugoslavia, not only due to the World War II legacy of bloody fratricidal conflict between south Slavic nations but also since any cultural component of Yugoslav identity could be related to the legacy of Serbian Yugoslavism and Serbian nationalism that dominated the interwar Kingdom of Yugoslavia. Although European integration had a somewhat less burdening historical legacy, it offered leverage to accusations of the promotion of particular national interests under the guise of European supranationalism, as can be seen in the depicted narratives of Charles de Gaulle and Margaret Thatcher. However, the disintegrational potential of accusations that the most powerful constituency tends to project its own identity as supranational was much less prominent during European integration than in the case of Yugoslavia's, first and foremost because the former lacked any history of the state using its power to strengthen a European identity. Thus, there could be no historically conditioned resentments of less powerful nations towards the very idea of supranational identity-building, or at least not direct resentments. Besides, the country that has raised by far the most powerful economic force in Europe from the 1960s onwards —namely West Germany—was significantly restricted by its Nazi legacy in its potential to nest its own identity within the supranational one. Also, West Germany's foreign policy was constrained by its attempts to reunify with East Germany.

Although different in respect to their dynamic, the embryonic phase in constituting the 1950s Socialist Yugoslav and the 1980s European identity had a common trait in that they were forged out of conflict with previous role-model states. However, the 1948 Soviet–Yugoslav break was much more radical than the 1980s US–EC break, and thus, it had much more radical consequences. Since Socialist Yugoslavia was a monolithic authoritarian state (at least in the

1950s), the Party and Tito had room to impose a much stronger Yugoslav supranational identity – building politics than was the case with the European Community, which was an alliance of independent states with very restricted powers delegated to the Community institutions. On the other hand, due to the interwar and war-time historical legacy, the Yugoslav Communist Party had much less space to maneuver with respect to identity – building than was the case with European integration. In European integration, the concept of European identity could at least be publicly debated and negotiated. From Conservative leaders who gave outside advice (Churchill) and Christian Democratic founding fathers (Schuman, Adenauer, de Gasperi, and Hallstein) to technocrats (Monnet) and left leaning federalists (Spinelli, Delors), actors from different ideological backgrounds contributed to the framing of these debates. They debated the future of the continent with leaders who opposed supranationalism (de Gaulle, Thatcher) but who also contributed to European integration. This was also reflected in different conceptions of European cultural heritage in the 1980s, which contained both conservative and social democratic emphases. However, the EC of the 1980s lacked strong nation-building instruments, such as a common currency and a common armed force. Thus, the European supranational identity-building could proceed during 40 postwar years only through a piecemeal and cautious process because it was constrained by the powerful economic and foreign policy interests of member states. On the other hand, although socialist Yugoslavia was an authoritarian regime, the interwar legacy of Yugoslavism and the accompanying wartime legacy of the fratricidal bloodshed seriously restricted the possibilities of the Communist Party to use its power to strengthen what it saw as Yugoslav identity.

Finally, it could be claimed that neither Yugoslav nor European elites comprehensively invested in the forging of (ethno)cultural supra-national identity in a scope of multi-identification that would empower people to feel e.g. Croat or Serb and Yugoslav on equal footing, or respectively French or German and European on equal footing. More precisely, the question would be how to successfully challenge the expected resentments towards the supranational identity building even in the scope of multi-identification, taking into consideration that the most powerful constituencies would probably tend to project, at least partially, their own identity as supranational. Probably, the only way to avoid a power-relation distortion to prospective supranational identity-building would be to precisely conceptualize the very content of identity, as well as its further policies of implementation via prior negotiations of the member states. Any other way to promote supranational identity would most probably fuel narratives that raise accusations of the promotion of particular national interests under the guise of supranationalism, or narratives of hegemony of the supranational center over national constituencies, in which the center is usually characterized as dominated by a particular nation. This narrative became especially significant in the subsequent phases of Yugoslav and European supranational identity – building that started in the mid-1960s in Socialist Yugoslavia and in the early 2000s in the European Union.

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Notes

[1] For the most comprehensive debate on the topic, see Radić (2011), Gligorov (2016), Lakić (2019), and Pavičić (2020). In the Croatian right – wing, drawing parallels between supranational oppression by 'the Belgrade' and 'the Brussels' have quite often occurred (exp. Ivkošić, 2017).

[2] It is understandable since pointing to similarities between Socialist Yugoslavia and the EU inevitably alludes to a kind of catastrophic prophecy about a forthcoming (violent) breakdown of the EU.

[3] Output-based legitimacy very much resembles the concept of civic identity. However, while the core of civic identity has been the attachment to rights and freedoms of individual citizens, Kovačević and Samardžić (2016) place economic success at the center of the concept of output legitimacy.

[4] Anthony Smith offered one of the earliest comprehensive proposals of the cultural component of the European identity, arguing that it should be built upon 'at least partially shared historical traditions and cultural heritage' which should include the socio-political legacy of Roman law, democracy, parliamentarism, Judeo–Christian ethics, and the cultural heritage of humanism, rationalism and empiricism, romanticism and classicism (Smith, 1992, pp. 70–71; Smith, 1993). The concept of a common European historical tradition has been harshly debated ever since. For a good summary of the debates, see Assman (2006).

[5] A good comprehensive summary of the genesis of the Yugoslav idea prior to 1918 is given in Part I of Banac (1992a). For a development of the idea of Europe before the first European integration projects, see Delanty (1995) and Pagden (2022)..

[6] In Yugoslavia, which lost around than 10% of its population during WWII, 80% of its dead were noncombatant deaths. In France, which lost under 5% of its population during WWII, 59% were noncombatant deaths (Clodfelter, 2017, p. 527). Note that one finds different accounts of WWII casualties, so comparisons are only approximations. See also Keegan (1989, pp. 204–205), which gives a lower share of French noncombatant deaths. In France, some 18 000 people were executed as collaborators, while in the case of Yugoslavia this number goes to 100 000. For a good overview on WWII in Yugoslavia, see Tomasevich (2002), and on the war in Western Europe, see Baldoli, Knapp, & Overy (2001).

[7] For a good analysis of the Marxist–Leninist approach to nation, see Connor (1989).

[8] However, integrating West Germany in West European system also lowered the prospects of German unification, which prompted initial opposition to European integration by German Social Democrats (Bulmer & Paterson 2019).

[9] He often framed French grandeur as follows: 'There is a pact twenty centuries old between the grandeur of France and the liberty of others' (as cited in Mahoney, 2017, p. 140).

[10] In 1952/53, Tito even spoke openly in public about his hopes 'to see the day when Yugoslavia would (…) no longer be a formal community, but a community of a single Yugoslav nation, in which our five peoples would become a single nation' (as cited in Banac, 1990, p. 135).

[11] In his famous report to the Fifth Congress of the Yugoslav Communist party in 1948—the speech that thereafter became the canon for dealing with twentieth century history (Banac, 1992b, p. 1086; Koren, 2013, pp. 235, 350)—Tito singled out 'the greater- Serbian hegemony and bourgeois power' as the main source of conflicts in interwar Yugoslavia (Tito, 1948, p. 12; translated by the authors).

[12] It was a 1956 public debate between a Serbian writer, Zoran Mišić, and Slovenian literary historian Drago Šega. In sum, Mišić was arguing for the so-called 'Yugoslav criterium' in culture, which Šega labeled as a

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cloak to promote a unitarist vision of Yugoslav culture similar to one promoted in 'old Yugoslavia' (Gabrič, 1995, pp. 322-323). Although the Federal and Slovenian Party organizations condemned the polemic, it would have been difficult for such polemics to have appeared in print without at least the tacit approval of the Party, as Hilde Haugh pointed out (Haugh, 2012, p. 152).

[13] An entirely new preface was added to this new edition in respect to the first edition from 1939. Some scholars have argued that the 1957 Preface was the critical turning point in abandoning the Yugoslav national concept, while others saw the Preface as the last attempt to forge 'soft socialist Yugoslav nation - building'. For a concise overview on diverging scholarly interpretations, see Ivešić 2021, pp. 147–148.

[14] For a detailed account on the polemics, see Perović (2005), Budding (2007), Milojković-Djurić (1996), Haugh (2012, pp. 164–169), and Miller (2007, pp. 95–99).

[15] The Declaration also promoted successes of the German Chancellor Willy Brandt's so called *Ostpolitik* i.e. détente with the Eastern Bloc countries, although *Ostpolitik* created tension with German European policies (Gilbert, 2003; Bulmer & Paterson, 2019).

[16] Direct elections for the European parliament were a result of decisions made at the 1974 Paris Summit at the beginning of the Schmidt-Giscard alliance, which marked the end of intergovernmental domination. This was meant to make the EC more democratic and federal and closer to citizens.

[17] Contrary to de Gaulle, she did not see her homeland as a leader of Europe but wanted to have a strong alliance with the US (Marsh & Baylis, 2006).

[18] She also presented common European cultural heritage from a British perspective and, at the same time, promoted British culture: 'Visit the great churches and cathedrals of Britain, read our literature and listen to our language: all bear witness to the cultural riches which we have drawn from Europe and other Europeans from us' (Thatcher, 1988).

[19] Although the UK left the EU in 2020, similar arguments against Brussels are still used, while left, liberal, and national conservative forces quarrel over the meaning of European integration.

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