The issue of civil religion is itself a contested one: Does the notion relate to a clear and separate set of social phenomena? Is it a useful tool in social science analysis? And how can it be analyzed empirically?¹

The problem is further complicated by the possibility of various levels of analysis of civil religion: official teachings and legitimation formulae versus folk civil religion², the dynamics of civil religion during the history of a single state or political regime, the issue of social stratificational differences and variances in civil religion (e.g., elite and popular civil religion).³ Nevertheless, civil religion as a notion has entered social scientific parlance and analysis, promising to be of explanatory value in the study of culture and society.

The issue of civil religion in Communist countries poses a separate set of questions: Can the ruling and officially imposed ideology be treated as a civil religion or even a quasi-religion (»the opium of the intellectuals«, as Raymond Aron titled one of his books)?⁴ As has often been noted, a »religion« of Marxism would not be able to answer the »existential questions of individual’s relationship to ultimate ends and concerns« (death, pain etc.), but that again is not the case of civil religion at all. In our understanding, furthermore, the civil religion would not be identical to the ruling ideology of a technically totalitarian, or at least authoritarian Tito’s state, but a wider amalgam of concepts, values and attitudes present and functioning in the society at large.

In this paper we will contend that a distinct phenomenon deserving to be called civil religion did exist in Communist Yugoslavia (lasting from 1945, as a product »forged during World War II«, until 1991, when it broke down in a most


² Cristi: From civil to political religion (footnote 1).


violent way\textsuperscript{5}, that it can be distinguished from Communist ideology, that this
civil religion can be comprehended best as being composed of two elements
(namely, the officially promoted ideas and the spontaneous folk civil religion
originating in the central Balkan heroic tradition), and that this civil religion had
societal functions and dysfunctions. We will not dwell extensively on a considera-
tion of the alleged disagreement between Rousseau and Durkheim as to whether
civil religion can best be understood as an instrument of ruling groups (Rousseau)
or as a spontaneously created cultural content of an integrative nature (Durkheim).

The Yugoslav civil religion, in our opinion, is a broader phenomenon than that
encompassed by the usual comprehension of Marxism as civil religion, as elabo-
rated, e.g., by Luke\textsuperscript{6}, who notes the following components of official Marxism as
civil religion (meaning, according to him a species of religion): 1. »a unified sys-
tem of beliefs and practices relative to secret things«, according to Durkheim, to
be found in Marxist-Leninist regimes' god-building and later ritualism; 2. »tran-
scendent images of a socialist paradise« and »sacred history«, bringing about a
»personal moral vocation«, and a »comprehensive ethical system« guided by
Marx's \textit{Early Writings} ideal of »total redemption of humanity«.\textsuperscript{7} This framework
may also serve as a demarcation line for the official level of civil religion in
Communist Yugoslavia, but it does not serve to depict its folk level, which
merges with the official level. Consequently, the theory is insufficient to explain
the entire role of civil religion in the political and social system; it does not enable
us to comprehend its uniqueness. Thus, a broader framework will be needed.

We find a broader concept in Bellah, the author of the modern civil religion
concept, who states that it is »a religious dimension, found, I think, in the life of
every people, through which it interprets its historical experience in the light of
transcendent reality«\textsuperscript{8}.

One might argue in advance that the issue of civil religion is to be posed in
radically different ways in democratic and totalitarian systems. There may be rea-
son to seriously doubt this contention, as in both cases the civil religion is a set of
ultimate politico-religious values and attitudes, the charismatic nature of political
authority and other religious and quasi-religious elements, partly extending legiti-
macy to the political order, partly challenging it for not living up to its highest
principles, for deviating from the mission, and for possessing both integrative
and disintegrative functions. On closer inspection, the ideals contained in every

\textsuperscript{5} Flere, Sergei: Blind alleys in ethnic essentialist explanations of the downfall of Yugoslavia, in:

\textsuperscript{6} Luke, Timothy W.: Civil religion and secularization: ideological revitalization in post-

\textsuperscript{7} Ibidem, pp. 110–113.

\textsuperscript{8} Bellah, Robert N.: The broken covenant: American civil religion in a time of trial, New York
1975, p. 3.
Civil religion are beyond rational and empirical investigation and inspection by the populace, as long as these ideals have the position of civil religion. Even the issue of the civil religion’s being imposed, manipulated and instrumentalized by the political elite is of a relative nature when comparing technically democratic and totalitarian systems, as in both cases we are dealing with amalgams of both spontaneous and planned, conscious, manipulative creation.9

The Yugoslav civil religion could not have been any form of nationalism, meaning anything pointing toward the sacralization of ethnicity, since Yugoslavia was a multi-ethnic formation (having a history of ethnic strife, with the Yugoslav state being functional in controlling this strife, in fact imposing harmony), was always regarded as such (only before World War II did there exist unconvincing official parlance of a »tri-tribal nation«), and special attention was paid to »ethnic parity« (equality of rights), leading to parity representation of the different ethnically based administrative units in all areas of federal power during Communist Yugoslavia. Thus, civil religion needed to be founded at another level of thinking, that of values and attitudes.

Yugoslavia was a very unusual Communist state (particularly as to its official organizational model), with a divisive nature of the major religions (Roman Catholicism, Eastern Christian Orthodoxy and Islam) as well as a history of religious strife in modern times, but also, owing to ideological reasons, committed to the suppression of religion. Civil religion cannot, therefore, be tied to the particular articulation of religious thought and the overarching of various traditional religions. On the contrary, civil religion could not be linked at all to religion in the standard meaning of the term.

Our analysis will be guided by the following framework of assertions and hypotheses, as adapted from Coleman, Gehrig and Cristi:10

Yugoslav civil religion was a religious symbol system relating to the Yugoslav state’s place in time, space and history, to its ultimate existence and meaning;

Yugoslav civil religion was structurally distinct from the dominant ideology and political system (and from religion in the standard meaning of the term);

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9 The issue of whether Eastern Christian Orthodoxy comprised only the Serbian Orthodox Church, or also included Macedonian and Montenegrin Orthodox churches is contested. If it is taken that the latter two are also legitimate. This would mean that the Serbian Orthodox Church was imposed on the other two ethnicities. At present, the Macedonian Orthodox Church does empirically exist, whereas the Montenegrin one is rudimentary. There is an attempt of reestablishment, the success of which will depend on whether the Montenegrin state will fully separate from the Serbian one.

Yugoslav civil religion performed certain integrative roles not performed by the state and the dominant political party, but also partly served and was manipulated by the ruling political elite;

Yugoslav civil religion evolved within the meaning of cultural evolution;

Yugoslav civil religion was an amalgam of spontaneously created and officially sponsored sets of values, beliefs and credos.

We will begin with the consideration of the first assertion, that Yugoslav civil religion was a religious symbol system relating to the Yugoslav state’s place in time, space and history, to its ultimate existence and meaning:

**Origin and Sacred History**

Every religion and every ethnic group, every society and state, needs to answer the question of its common origin, as a basic question, the answer to which needs to be contextualized by a wider cosmology. In this wider context, it primarily expresses the event of birth in order to confirm a common fate, a fateful and eternal bond.

The civil religion of Tito’s Yugoslavia definitely did contain such a »teaching of origin«, which could be understood to have cosmological dimensions. The explanation of origin is contextualized into World War II, a cosmic clash of good and evil. When the former Yugoslav state collapsed in 1941, (parts of) Yugoslav nationalities were – to continue this narrative – manipulated by evil forces into an inter-ethnic conflict instigated by the fascist forces. In contrast, the myth went, the good members of all the Yugoslav nationalities, striving and yearning towards emancipation and joint life within a state of equal nationalities, gathered within the Partisan movement and swept away both fascist forces and domestic Quislings, thus orchestrating the great metamorphosis or a collective »born again« experience, giving birth to (Tito’s) Yugoslavia. This collective endeavor of the good against the evil (the latter residing in forces within and allied to fascism) confirmed the collective will of the Yugoslav nationalities in an assembly that met in the small town of Jajce on the 29th of November, 1943 (a date that would become the national holiday). This assembly (delegates were far from being elected by popular vote representing the entire population) gave a quasi-rational (formalistic) legitimation to the »birth« of the state.

Therefore, the issue of common origin was solved not by proclaiming a common ethnic origin, but by a decisive act of will, under the most onerous circumstances, to erect a new republic of nationalities, a republic based on the equality and parity of nationalities. As regards the grave circumstances, and the situation offering little chance of renewal of the Yugoslav state during World War II, this story is not incorrect. The circumstances were ripe either for the dispersal of
Yugoslav nationalities or for a Phoenix-like renewal, which would need charismatic leadership. The other elements of the origin saga, itself much richer and more complex, are less factually veracious.

The consequent legitimacy was predominantly a charismatic one, heroic to be exact. It was heroes who by heroic deeds were to have constructed this »new« state and sacred-like community. Any rational-legal elements were, at least initially, more decorative in nature.

This aspect was touched upon in terms of civil religion by the Slovene sociologist Marko Kerševan, at the end of the existence of the Yugoslav state. At this time, with the end of the Yugoslav state nearing, he addressed the issue of the Slovene nationality’s sacred era. According to him, the National Liberation Struggle (official title for the Partisan Anti-fascist Movement during World War II) in Slovenia (and other Yugoslav lands) can be considered »sacred history«, on account of its overcoming of the peril of national extermination and projecting Slovenes into world history on the victorious and just side. He does not, however, consider this to be a full fledged civil religion, but incomplete, as he does not consider it a nationalistic civil religion, taking it to be part of a wider Yugoslav consciousness at the time of writing.

**Eschatology**

The eschatology present in the civil religion of Tito’s Yugoslavia pertains to an ever present element asserting that the Yugoslav peoples were »chosen«, entrusted with the historical task of constructing a better and more just world. They were a people »providentially« been chosen to implement and achieve the following goals: the Marxist ideal of a society in which persons would not be instruments to each other but ends, where social relations would be »transparent«, a goal which was to be achieved primarily by way of »socialist self-management« leading to a classless and oppression-free Communist society. The »system« of »socialist self-management« was an evolving one, from the establishment of workers’ councils being established in factories in 1950, to the ever more elaborate and

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11 Kerševan, Marko: Religija in slovenska kultura [Religion and Slovenian culture], Ljubljana 1989.
12 Ibidem, pp. 72 f.
13 In a general poll taken as late as 1986, an absolute majority of the general population expressed belief in the »comings of Communism, even though this majority was slight. Most of those not expressing this faith did not express lack of belief, but a condition of »not knowings«. »Not believing pertained to about one tenth of the sample. Toš, Niko (ed.): Klasno biće jugoslovenskog društva. Sumarni prikaz rezultata [The class nature of Yugoslav society. Summary result presentation], Ljubljana 1987, p. 93.
complicated institutional arrangement of »organizations of associated labor« (firms), of »socio-political communities« (administrative territorial units), of »socio-political organizations« (instruments for political mobilization) and not to complete the list, of »the delegate system«, a system of indirect elections and appointments, with an alleged permanent influence of electors upon delegates. As industrialization and modernization advanced, this institutional arrangement was increasingly less able to produce economic and political effects, in particular, by blocking instrumental rationality and market relations in the economy. The number of people taking part in self-management decision-making was huge and the people did believe in it, though this belief may have been less firm than other tenets of the civil religion. In a general opinion poll in 1986, taken throughout Yugoslavia, in answering a question about what self-management meant to them, only about one fourth answered they did not know, »knowledge« being most scarce in Kosovo and most frequent in Montenegro. Those »knowing« would rarely opt (about one tenth, depending on their republic-province affiliation) for a restrictive and empirically founded answer in which self-management was just a mode of economic decision making. Answers linking it to achievement of social justice, the need of every man to achieve personal fulfilment and self-management as the right of every man to decide on all social matters prevailed, indicating an eschatological and not an empirical understanding of self-management among the populace.

Non-alignment policy in the area of foreign relations, where Yugoslavia was to be a »leader« in the establishment of just and harmonious relations in the world, not only preventing nuclear war, but also creating just and parity relations among states, large and small. This was also understood not only as a temporary and circumstance based foreign policy, but as an almost providential calling. Even in 1959, before the formal establishment of the movement of non-aligned countries, in a speech to the populace of the capital, upon returning from a journey to Asia and Africa (the very continents which were to constitute the bulk of non-aligned states), Tito prophetically stated: »Yugoslavia is struggling for peace, existing not

14 E.g., President Tito at a Communist Party session, taking care not to provoke the Soviets, stated: »In Marx’s idea of the association of free producers and in the laws of such development of socialist relations of production, the League of Communists attained new insights. The thought of (the associations) was achieved by our practice and further theoretical development [author’s remark: in contrast to other Communist regimes]. The League of Communists discerned in time the essential characteristics of the contemporary world,«, implying that »scientific insights« was discerned and applied. Tito, Josip Broz: Referati sa kongresa KPJ i SKJ [Reports to Congresses of CPY and LCY], Belgrade 1977, vol. 1, p. 526.

15 Toš: Klasno bić jugoslovenskog društva (footnote 13), p. 133.
only for itself, but for all the oppressed in the world, indicating his vision of the messianic role of Yugoslavia in the world. In 1964, the then minister for foreign affairs Marko Nikezić stated in an address to the faithful: »From the very beginning [i.e., even before the technical establishment of the non-aligned movement], we considered the policy of non-alignment not solely as an alternative to the division of the world, but also as a prospect for and hope of creating international relations without the use of force and without domination of one state over another.«17. The eschatological component of transcending the unjust world is discernible in these words, a belief which was common and often repeated at the time.

This eschatology was complemented by two official demiurgical notions: of the workers’ class as a decisive emancipatory agent in human history,18 and of the League of Communists being »the directive force in this metamorphosis,« but not being politically in power (that position was »reserved« for the self-managing »direct producers«). In contrast to the de facto civil religion, we purport that these official elements allegedly were more decorative in nature than actual, functioning elements of the civil religion.

Charisma

The charisma of Tito was definitely the most fundamental and powerful element in this civil religion. In contrast to the other imposed, would-be charismas of leaders in other Communist countries, this charisma was authentic, original and spontaneously created. Its appearance was in keeping with what Weber said of the ideal type of charisma: »[C]harismatic leadership occurs most frequently in emergencies, it is associated with a collective excitement through which masses of people respond to some extraordinary experience and by virtue of which they surrender themselves to a heroic leader.«19

It would take much space to depict this charisma. Its origin goes back to World War II, when it came about in dire, exigent circumstances, threatening extinction for all the nationalities of the former Yugoslav state. Tito was able, together with the small Communist Party of Yugoslavia, to organize a pan-Yugoslav, anti-Fascist and anti-Nazi movement, while simultaneously conducting

18 In one of his last major speeches, Tito bluntly said: »The workers’ class is the motor force of our socialist revolution. Its revolutionary character is immanent to its social nature.« Tito: Referati sa kongresa (footnote 14), p. 515.
a civil war. His movement’s peculiarity was that it was based on ethnic coexistence and cooperation, within a very complex ethnic picture and concomitant with genocidal events among the major groups (involving both the occupying and the Quisling forces). This soon earned him the aura of a saviour, of a mythical figure. The augmentation in his charisma can be illustrated by the popular, collectively authored and sung ballads about him and by the fact that his movement’s members wanted to disperse when they heard of his alleged death (he was only wounded).

This was the basis of his charisma: the power to withstand overwhelming difficulties in a super-human capacity, while also uniting various ethnic groups. In terms of power to withstand surmounting forces, his charisma was again proven in 1948, when he, though imposing a stern Communist regime, antagonized and broke away from Stalin and the Soviet camp and was ostracized by the Communist movement and the Soviet block of countries, a mighty power at the time.

From that moment on, the political system increasingly relied on his charisma as the ultimate source of political guidance and arbitration, particularly in resolving inter-ethnic and inter-republic disputes. His manner of dealing not only with dissent, but with the potential for disruption, was the Communist technique of the purge, though combined with the growth of an elaborate system of »socialist self-management«, and an ever more elaborate institutional system, having less and less to do with the actual functioning of the social system, or, more accurately, becoming a hindrance to the assertion of instrumental rationality and efficaciousness.

During this period, approximately from the middle of the 50s until his death in 1980, his charisma was carefully developed in a conscious and planned manner, though he tended to become himself at times an unpredictable factor for his entourage and elite, e.g., by initiating illusory politico-moral campaigns, manipulating the people’s grievances (e.g., against the growth of socioeconomic inequalities in the campaign »you have a house, return your apartment!« around 1970) and conducting political purges. His charisma cannot categorically be considered as a

20 These songs were numerous, originating from the Dinaric tradition herdsmen’s collective singing, particularly about heroic war deeds. The best known verse goes, »Comrade Tito, white violet, we give the oath not to depart from your road«. »White violet« indicates the preciousness and exceptionality of the person, while »the promise not to deviate« indicates the unconditional nature of loyalty. One must note, though, that these World War II songs mostly originated in the Dinaric parts of Yugoslavia, particularly Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and the mountainous parts of Croatia. Such songs were practically inexistant in Slovenia, where such a tradition of epic singing no longer existed. Dedijer, Vladimir: Novi prilozi za biografiju Josipa Broza Tita [New contributions to the biography of Josip Broz Tito], Rijeka 1981, vol. 2, p. 924–976. Other such songs indicated other pledges, e.g., to work incessantly, to die at Tito’s call etc.

21 Ibidem, p. 827.
negative force in the development of Yugoslav society and the ethnic groups composing it. In some instances, it was instrumental in bringing about modernization, particularly in some ethnic groups and historical lands and in various means towards the assertion of independence and international affirmation, these being the only way of joint life for these nationalities. On the whole, however, Tito’s rule did not and was not able to lead to the formation of a lasting social system and an »organic« integration, in Durkheim’s meaning, of Yugoslavia.

All this charisma planning and control took a paradoxical and almost humorous twist after his death, when all the difficulties of »routinization of charisma« and its transformation into an impersonal character became evident. The collective Presidency of the former state, which was to have succeeded him, along with the also collective leadership of the Communist Party, attempted to appropriate the charisma, and to inherit it, presenting themselves as apostles, while simultaneously controlling and blowing out of proportion a cult of Tito (it was applied by techniques as the motto »After Tito – Tito!«, naming one town in each republic and province after him, planting 88 trees, the law on the safeguarding of his name, incessant invoking of his name, etc.). In the face of mounting economic and political difficulties, this proved to be a completely unsuccessful endeavor. The charisma was both out of step with what was happening in Europe and in contrast to the lack of success in solving difficulties. Not only because of infighting among the »apostolic«, »collective leaderships«, but also because of deeper rooted problems, the legitimation gap began to be filled by ethnonationalism among the various ethnic groups, instigated and manipulated by intellectual and the successors of Tito’s own political elite (once devoted to inter-ethnic parity, cooperation and Yugoslav unity). From this point of view, Yugoslavia failed in the attempt to depersonalize and routinize Tito’s charisma, and this was the imminent end, since in contemporary Europe charismatic rule is »out of line« with the prevailing trends of political democracy, rule of law and human rights as legitimation formulae. It also failed to transform the political system into a more rational-legal one (traditional domination being out of the question).

The charismatic nature of political rule and legitimacy was, of course, in contrast to the official dimension of civil religion. This contrast was noted by Stojanović in particular who characterized the system as a »charismocratic« one. Anecdotally, Tito was himself said to have considered this a compliment, until it was explained to him that it was at variance with official teaching.

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Community

This was also a tenet of the Yugoslav civil religion. Allegedly, social conflicts as well as exploitative and ruthless market relations had been (or were on the verge of being) replaced by the formation of a communitarian type of social organization, approximately in Tönnies’ meaning. This was in line with Marxist idealization of the coming society, but also with the Catholic roots of Kardelj’s (the major political ideologue’s) background in Slovenia, doctrine which also declared conflicts and the ruthless market to be pathological and to be done away with. Traces of this concept are to be found in the terms »socio-political communities«, »associations of free labors«, »self-management agreements«, all of which were official terms of the 1974 Constitution of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (SFRY), to be repeated endlessly in public speech, which were to become instruments of economic exchange instead of spontaneous market mechanisms, and the most frequent use of the term »our community« to denote the society during the Tito years.

The idea of community, as opposed to association or society, where the individual would prevail in achieving his private interests and goals, giving up the least number of rights and entitlements, was complemented by another, possibly more dangerous idea, of a special brand of republicanism, a problem Bellah addresses. Bellah speaks for the need of »love of the republic«, as a necessary precondition for its functioning, in contrast to liberalist and greedy individualism.

The idea was that the individual would selflessly take part in joint general political endeavors: their content changed through time — from »voluntary work« at rebuilding the war ravaged state and »youth work drives« to institutional decision making in self-management institutions, which were to become an extremely elaborate and complex system of decision making, based on the supposition that those taking part would selflessly strive towards the achievement of general, societally beneficial goals only. Owing to this anthropological »defect«, such a system never proved to be the basic decision making process, the most important levers of power remaining outside it.

24 In 1972 Kardelj wrote of »self-management communities of interest« (in fact funds for the financing of education, health, culture, etc.) that they were a form of exchange of labor, eg., in health, »where partners whose work is exchanged are mediated neither by the market nor by the state budget, but in specific forms of direct mutual agreement. The partners are evidently in a parity position.« Kardelj, Edvard: Izbor iz dela [Chosen works], Belgrade 1979, vol. 2, p. 163. Furthermore, »a second characteristic is to be found in solidarity, i.e. common care of the people and their social, cultural and political position.« Ibidem, p. 163. A panacea is envisaged. »The area of self-management freedom will expand so much that self-management democracy will no longer be a form of democracy for the protection of socialist relations of production, but a free relationship of creative cooperation among people.« Ibidem, p. 165.

Equalitarianism

This was an important element of civil religion that definitely originated not solely from the Communist and Marxist background, but, as noticed by some sociologists early on, also from roots in the pre-industrial, herdsmen culture of some parts of Yugoslavia. Županov identified distributive and redistributive equalitarianism as both the central implicit value in Yugoslav society and the decisive factor limiting Yugoslavia’s industrialization as a social system. He empirically found redistributive equalitarianism not to be more frequent among Communist Party members, but among the less educated, hence those with direct links to preindustrial society. Components of this distributive concept of equalitarianism as the equal distribution of economic goods were to be tied to: a view of the omnipotent state as the »just« redistributor, a presupposition of a limited economic good needing to be distributed equally, a phobia about entrepreneurship, a negative stand towards intellectuals, professionalism, intellectual work and innovation and a negative obsession with private ownership and enrichment. Of these, enrichment, entrepreneurship and private ownership can be regarded as firmly rooted taboos of this civil religion, taboos which could not have been mitigated by attempts at economic reform, particularly because of popular support for these taboos.Županov and other sociologists did not identify this as a civil religious tenet, but it suffices to say that they considered it the »central« and »dominant value« of Yugoslav society, to be found also in political campaigns initiated from above (Tito’s occasional speeches, the letters by the Party leadership in 1958 and 1972), but also from below (student unrest 1968, particularly at Belgrade University underscored the »equality of stomachs« and the »red bourgeoisie« as the main adversary to the completion of the socialist project, slogans from workers’ strikes. It would have been inopportune to speak of a civil religion at the time). The strength of this value stand may be proven by the fact that it survived Communism, and could be detected by empirical investigations of public opinion even later, even in the most industrially advanced part of Slovenia. A similar finding

26 Županov, Josip: Sociologija i samoupravljanje [Sociology and self-management], Zagreb 1977.
27 Ibidem.
29 Toš, Niko (ed.): Vrednote v prehodu I. Slovensko javno mnenje 1968–1990 [Values in transition I. Slovenian public opinion 1968–1990], Ljubljana 1997, p. 854. E.g., in a public opinion poll taken in 1995 in Slovenia, the most western, most industrialized former republic and the only one to join the European Union by 2004, where the transition was smooth, 70 percent of the general populace favored diminishing income disparities, a further 7 percent favored doing away with such disparities at all. Toš, Niko (ed.): Vrednote v prehodu II. Slovensko javno mnenje 1990-1999 [Values in Transition II. Slovenian public opinion 1990–1999], Ljubljana 1999, p. 482).
pertains to which of the »deviations« underscored by President Tito in a speech of 1976 did members of the general public view as the most acute problems (the poll was taken in Slovenia only). All the »weaknesses and drawbacks« listed received majority support, but those with the highest support were »unjustified disparities in incomes« (81 percent agreeing) and »too much competition for income and material standards« (84 percent agreeing).30

The fact that this tenet was rooted both in the pre-existing agrarian, herdsman tribal and extended family mentality, as well as in some elements of the political ideology enables us to hold that it was not a predominantly imposed and culturally alien element of some form of socially illegitimate consciousness.

Broken covenant

One can view Yugoslav civil religion as containing a number of »internal« and »external« pledges, having a sacred aura, whose contravention would represent a violation deserving expulsion from the »community«, or at least from the ranks of true believers. The »internal« pledge would pertain to how the Yugoslav state should be organized, what its sacred moral basis would be, whereas the external pledge would pertain to achieving its mission in world history, its eschatology (dealt with elsewhere). The internal pledge contained two basic elements: a pledge to uphold »fraternity and unity«31, a universal pledge to safeguard and promote the Yugoslav state on the basis of ethnic parity, operationalized by equality in representation for the republics in the federal government, but also in ethnic non-discrimination and even in a »love« for other ethnicities. This element was the first one to erode and was later watered down to »Yugoslav communitarianism« and equality of representation for the republics. The second element pertained to equalitarianism.

The »broken covenant« was a particular dimension of Yugoslav civil religion, where all actors in the political and intellectual processes could accuse each other of not quite living up to the tenets of the civil religion. This was an element to which the entire (non-Weberian type) bureaucracy was particularly vulnerable. At times, Tito used this, criticizing (addressing implicitly the bureaucracy) for not yet having achieved the true »rule of the working class« (particularly to introduce measures to purge and achieve greater discipline in Party ranks); workers and ordinary people used this to criticize the emergence of overly large social disparities,

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30 Toš: Vrednote v prehodu I (footnote 29), p. 189 f.
31 In almost every speech Tito repeated the commandment to »safeguard fraternity and unity [among ethnicities] as the pupil of your eye«.
and intellectuals (particularly the *Praxis* group) used this metaphor to critique socialism for not having yet done away with nationality, the market and the state as instruments of «human alienation».

The «broken covenant» theme was specifically raised by Tito himself, pointing to elements of behavior and of thought not in keeping with «the covenant». Tito addressed accusations of breaking away from the covenant particularly to those who were to be the purest and firmest believers, the functionaries, thus manipulating and redirecting people’s grievances. These addresses of his were often followed by demonstrations of mass support for catharsis, which was to lead to a pure society, cleansed from a situation in which those not behaving in line with the covenant would have decision making responsibility. Possibly the best example was his 1962 speech in Split, criticizing too great disparities in incomes and salaries, instances of enrichment of functionaries, the very ambition for wealth in the society.

32 The «Praxis group» was a group of intellectuals well known in the world, publishing in Zagreb a journal entitled of *Praxis*, which criticized the regime by radicalizing its own tenets. Herbert Marcuse and Erich Fromm took part in their summer schools in Korčula. See Flere, Sergej: The development of sociology as a contested science in Yugoslavia, in: Keen, Michael/Mucha, Janus (ed.): Eastern Europe in transformation. The impact of sociology, Westport 1994, p. 113–124.

33 Tito’s quotations of people, particularly leaders not working and living in line with the commandments and morality, with the vision of a just society, are innumerable. He made particular use of this technique in addressing the people directly, outside bureaucratically orchestrated ceremonies. The main alleged violations pertained to ethno-chauvinism of the would-be believers (the «fraternity and unity» pledge), but those resonating best pertained to «illicit» enrichment of those in power (while they were supposed to be applying the covenant and safeguarding the vows) and lack of unity, all indicative of a mechanical concept of solidarity and integration of society, including a segmentary arrangement of republics. At a key meeting with the leaders of Serbia, before his last purge, he mentioned, inter alia: «I must say that leadership since the VIII Congress has been, until recently, very weak and lax» (Tito, Josip Broz: Radnička klasa i Savez komunista Jugoslavije [The workers class and the League of Communists of Yugoslavia], Belgrade 1977, p. 470). «What was lacking was the implementation of Constitutional amendments» (of 1971, which were allegedly to give greater power to workers within self-management vs. the managers – author’s comment), (Ibidem, p. 480). Further: «It is not incidental that it is at this time that faction activity has appeared.» (Ibidem, p. 484). Faction activity was a taboo phenomenon within an allegedly unified society and the one Party system. A few years earlier he said: «I must say that the leading bodies proved themselves to be uncapable to carry out the decisions of the VIII Congress (of the LCY)». (Ibidem, p. 366). The most explicit statement at the 1962 speech in Split is not to be found in his Collected Works: «There are other illicit phenomena (beside power authority being too lax, ethno-chauvinism – author’s comment). There are those who would like to enrich themselves.» (Govor v Splitu, footnote 16) The last statement might be in contrast to the official ideology, to legal precepts and guarantees, but the people wanted to hear it. All these quotes indicate the conclusion that key persons have not met and fulfilled their obligations to the covenant, but have experienced a moral fall.

and ethnochauvinism (a breach of the fraternity and unity pledge). His examples of enrichment in the form of automobile ownership by illicit means, private holiday homes in the country or tending to the welfare of one’s own region and ethnic group may sound naïve today, but the speech itself echoed extremely well in the populace, bringing about a campaign of »investigating the origin of property«, with special »democratic self-management« bodies set up for the purpose. The equalitarian minded populace by and large supported the entire campaign. In fact it brought about turbulence which presented an obstacle to rational instrumentalization of the economy (as indicated above).

In considering the second assertion, we can say that Yugoslav civil religion was structurally distinct from the official component of the dominant ideology (and from religion in the standard meaning of the term). This has been indicated particularly in the equalitarianism component, which had an autonomous origin, going further back than Communist ideology, to the pastoral economy and the extended Balkan family. Tito’s charisma can be partly considered in the same manner, at least in terms of its origin, as being external to Communist ideology. Even the »fraternity and unity« tenet was initially with a substantial degree of mystification about the limits to which ethnicity could be asserted.

The third assertion is that the Yugoslav civil religion performed certain integrative roles not performed by the state and dominant political party, but also partly served the and was manipulated by the ruling political elite. At first glance, it was entirely functional and integrative within the societal framework, until that framework broke down. On closer inspection, however, even during its functioning, the issue was more complicated. Equalitarianism, as it was elaborated, could serve various groups and purposes (the charismocrat, the ordinary people, the intelligentsia), although it can be negatively assessed, in line with Županov, as inhibiting societal modernization and integration along rational-functional lines. Tito’s charisma was also an unpredictable factor, definitely always accompanied by great mobilizational power and sometimes directed at pro-modernization, but Tito could make use of it and did so in various ways: by mobilizing, speeding up modernization, but not modern organizational management, by purging lesser leaders, conducting campaigns of moral »purity«, etc. Owing to this unlimited and unpredictable nature of his charisma, his entourage – the highest leaders – controlled his contacts during his last years of life, including severing contact with his wife, a potential successor to his charisma.

Furthermore, one could hold that, in twentieth century Europe the construction of societal integration on a civil religious basis is a futile task, which can only temporarily and transitionally be successful; thus the entire structure of civil religion was not on a firm ground of long term social integration.

In terms of the fourth assertion, that Yugoslav civil religion did evolve within the meaning of cultural evolution, one should note that this civil religion primarily was
the victim of »secularization«. Until Tito’s death, civil religion »held up well« in the face of countervailing forces exposing its variance to the substance of social life. It was also accompanied by an elaborate quasi-rational legal system at the time, since self-management institutions needed to be arranged in a technical manner, and this process of constituting also needed to be technically democratic and proceduralized. Possibly the most important rationalizing factor was the need to separate the competences of the federal and republican governments, but this was always superseded by Tito’s final arbitration. Elements of legalism did enter into the system, opening a tiny path which could have evolved into the dominant organizational pattern, but did not. »Fraternity and unity« were, from rather early on, secularized by the possibility of being turned into an operational principle, but it was the other tenets which made this transformation impossible.

One should, probably, note that this civil religion evolved from a stress on the joint emancipation of the peoples of Yugoslavia, via Tito’s cult of self-management as the ultimate form of human emancipation, to a final stress on Yugoslavia’s world role and mission to prevent world and apocalyptic war and to lead the way to just and paritarian inter-state relations, based on parity among small and large nations.

This civil religion and the society itself became ever less plausible during the 80s, when economic problems became insurmountable and unmanageable, when circumstances in the wider environment began to change, and Yugoslavia was beginning to lose its »buffer« nature between the two »camps« (Communist East and democratic West).

The early 1980s' attempt at »routinization« and »depersonalization« of charisma, as well as the inflation of Tito’s personality from that of a demi-God into a God-like status, was a very peculiar phenomenon. Both the collective head of state and the Communist Party attempted to »inherit« Tito’s charisma »in a collective manner«, while the Tito cult was promoted in an uncontrolled and disproportionate manner, and while the existential social circumstances of the people became ever more acute, precarious and uncertain. On the other hand, differences as to the future organization of Yugoslavia became ever more apparent. Some officials and intellectuals put forward ideas of market reforms for the economy (to replace the non-market, non-functioning »self-management associative economy«), which were not accepted, owing to resistance by a fearful bureaucracy, which (correctly) assumed that withdrawing one block will allow all the others to fall in domino fashion. This was followed by intellectuals demanding pluralist democracy, an idea which received increasing favour, particularly in Slovenia, which – disenchanted with non-response – found the answer to its problems in secession, bringing about (and independently speaking) an escalation of ethnonationalist feelings and movements.

Taking the last assertion, of the Yugoslav civil religion being an amalgam of spontaneously created or planned and officially sponsored sets of values, beliefs
and stands, we have indicated that it was an amalgam of both. The origins were mostly of a spontaneous nature. They pertain to World War II, officially styled as the National Liberation Struggle by the Communists and having itself the nature of a »sacred history«. These ideas formed a nucleus, upon which it was possible to build and to begin conscious, planned manipulation of the political and quasi-religious sentiments of the populace centering on Tito’s heroic and statesmanly »unique« character. But charisma manipulation can never be a fully planned process, since the bearer of charisma must continuously reaffirm his super-human qualities. Charisma began to dissolve and be less persuasive even during Tito’s lifetime, as inter-republic disputes lasted, and it became evident that the economy was lagging behind Yugoslavia’s capitalist neighbors.

Conclusion

The concept of civil religion in Bellah and Coleman is of direct explanatory value for the case of Yugoslavia between 1945 and 1991, the dominant values not being merely directly imposed and manipulated, nor remaining external to the populace, but being well rooted and enjoying major popularity, to a large extent replacing religion in the standard meaning of the term.

This civil religion had a number of components, »tenets«, which as a whole meet the definition of civil religion. These values and tenets were technically atheistic, but a religious character prevailed in them, both in the attitude towards them, as one of unquestionable faith, and in their substance, containing many an element of a religious nature. The religious nature of the phenomenon which was depicted is attested by the findings in the only empirical study of civil religion conducted in the former state in 1986 (after Tito’s death and as the end of the state approached). The study was conducted in Belgrade, the then capital, on a sample of the general city population, operationalizing civil religion in rather general terms, including political idolatry and the idea of Communism in an eschatological perspective, but not indicating Tito’s name. The study found a relative prevalence of civil religion (47 percent) over its absence, but what should be noted is that civil religiosity coincided with the then still rather minoritarian standard religiosity and was found among the less educated and psychologically authoritarian.35 Civil religion and religiosity were also to be found in the same social groups and among subjects with similar psychological profiles, in spite of the social desirability and expectations pushing in the opposite direction (though weakly, since the social system was to disintegrate soon).

This civil religion, having Tito’s charisma as its central tenet, could not meet the demands of »depersonalization« and »routinization« in a world increasingly more permeated by ideas of human rights, rule of law and by functional-rational organization. It was also unable to transform itself and successfully blend with these latter elements and societal demands. Its downfall was imminent, though not necessarily in such a violent dismemberment of state and society.

Of course, this civil religion and in fact most ties within the Yugoslav state were torn down to the full in 1991, with nothing – except possibly traces of nostalgia among parts of the older population – remaining of this bond. In fact events lead to a bloody war. In total, this downfall was indicative that such a civil religion, in an wider environment of societal rationalization, was anachronistic at the time of its inception, though understandable due the fact that Tito and his movement were able to master the most difficult historical obstacles and impose themselves politically. They were unable, however, to overturn the long term historic trends of rationalization, in Weber’s meaning, as the cultural basis of modernization and the fundamental culturo-historical divisions among the nationalities of the former Yugoslavia.

Another way of explaining the sudden dismemberment and fall of Yugoslavia is by Bellah’s wording that a republic presupposes love by its members\textsuperscript{36} (members of the community being mutually bound). In Yugoslavia, this authentic love did not exist, and the »fraternity and unity« pledge was only a provisional surrogate, even though one may say that the situation differed by region. Possibly, love for the Yugoslav political community was the greatest in Bosnia and Herzegovina and in Istria, both of which were perceived to have a precarious and insecure position outside Yugoslavia. »Love« was more reserved for ethnicity, while Yugoslavia was perceived very differently by the various ethnic and regional groups, not only affectively, but also cognitively: some comprehended it as an »expanded Serbia«, some as a forum for permanent inter-ethnic and inter-regional negotiation (and double-dealing), others still as a temporary arrangement until something better could be constituted, until the ethnic groups matured more.

In the social sciences, »love« may be considered an elusive concept. More structurally discernible elements were missing: a courageous and committed public, a political process relatively in conformity with the one officially declared and a relatively competitive economic system based on instrumental rationality. The social system was doomed to be quickly corrupted and to disappear from the face of the earth, though leaving behind the story of an interesting and unique utopian historical endeavor.

\textsuperscript{36} Bellah: Religion and legitimation (footnote 1).