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WORKERS IN POST-SOCIALISM: BETWEEN CLASS AND NATIONAL IDENTITIES

Abstract: *Social transformation and transition from socialist to liberal market economy in Bosnia and Herzegovina and other countries of former Yugoslavia, followed by war atrocities, initiated a series of economic and social challenges: deindustrialization, high unemployment, dubious privatizations, impoverishment, ethnic rivalries and structural changes. In this paper, we observe the mentioned social processes focusing on identity politics resulting in transformation of class identity into workers' national identity. The main presumption is that certain critical social moments serve as a trigger for „shift" in primacy of class compared to national identity and vice versa. To address this, we are using cases of workers' resistance/strikes/protests during the social transformation from socialist into market economy, and after the completed privatization and reign of ethno-national policies in former Yugoslavia countries.*

Keywords: *class, identity, national identity, workers, post-socialism.*

INTRODUCTION: IDENTITIES ARE BORN OUT OF CRISIS

While searching for a meaning, individuals rely on their identities - they are the bearers of purpose, symbols and significance. Although earlier understandings define identity as the essence of human being, his unchangeable nature, thus pointing to the fundamental values that are inscribed in man, contemporary definitions are far from this. Identity research is followed by certain dichotomy, which groups the understanding of identity at different poles of the same continuum. Smith (1991) discusses the Western and non-Western (most common in colonial countries) understanding of national identity - while the first relies on the existence of political community, equality of all citizens and the sharing of common political institutions, non-Western understanding of collective national identity is based on belief into common ancestors. Similarly, there is a polarization to the primordialistic concept, which explains collective ethnic and national identities as fixed and unchanged cultural patterns acquired by

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birth, while on the other hand there is an instrumentalist concept, based of their variability and fluidity (Horovitz, 2000). To explain collective identities, this dichotomy is insufficient and outdated, especially in circumstances where the dynamism of identity is expressed through the emphasis on other types of collective identifications, in addition to national ones.

In this paper, we are focusing on another type of dichotomy – the dichotomy between the national and class identities in (post-)socialist contexts. After a careful theoretical distinction of types of solid identities in former Yugoslavia (supra-ethnic identity and working-class identity), we use different social and historical periods to show their changes and shifts. We use secondary data from different sources: official documents (particularly Program of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia), media reporting and also other theoretical and practical insights stemming from various research across different disciplines (ethnographic, sociological, labor history studies etc). The analytical approach relies on content and discourse analysis, whereby we have engaged in uncovering the narratives and commonalities across the 6 different time-periods (starting from the formation of SFRY up to present). Additionally, we use comparative approach to show the similarities between the cases in different SFRY successor-states.

Our main lead is that different social events, especially crises (political and economic), are the drivers of deeper social transformations and changes in the way an individual is identified with a group. When it comes to identity, it is necessary to distinguish between the emergent forms of identity as well as the mode of emergence, and ultimately distinction should be made between the points of view of the formation and expression of certain identities (the process of identification). Individual identity, which is most often the subject of research in psychology, is built up in stages through one's own perceptions and activities, and through relation to others and seeing others (Halpern and Borbalan, 2009).

According to Zygmunt Bauman, the state of late modernity is marked by chosen identities, or more precisely by the awareness that identities are not something that is acquired, but something that is invented. In his view, "the idea of 'identity' was born out of a crisis of belonging […]" (Bauman, 2004: 20). According to the available resources, choices made in this reality in the pluralism of the offer and without confidence in the durability of belonging influence the strengthening of collective ideas about the community and return to the fundamental truths, as guarantors of stability. Whether it is fluid modernity and related class affiliation (Bauman, 2004), or a network society in which reflexivity becomes difficult when organizing lifestyles (Castells, 1997), contemporary observation of identity construction primarily takes into account the social context. Identities never stand as

separate and unique, but are often intertwined and intersected by being constructed within a particular discourse and through differences between "me"/"we" and "others" (Hall, 2001). Although, according to Castells (1997), globalization and technological progress have contributed to the increasing number and form of "fluid" identities as changing categories considering a given situation in which the individual is (such as consumer identity, media consumer identity, migrant identity, etc.), they have also contributed to further consolidating and rooting so-called "solid" identities (ethnic, national, religious, cultural and territorial).

THEORETICAL APPROACHES TO THE CONCEPT OF CLASS IDENTITY

Class and class identity can be interpreted and viewed from the perspective of the combination of individual possibilities and material status, and from the aspect of interrelationships of different class groups in terms of domination and exploitation of one class group over another. The complexity of class analysis is reflected in the choice of class approach that will be taken as the basis of analysis. If we analyze a class according to Pierre Bourdieu's work, we will focus on individual attributes, by which we mean the different conditions in which an individual finds themselves and which determine his/her affiliation with a particular class (economic capital, cultural and social capital).

Max Weber, on the other hand, defines class as a sum of individual class situations, while class being only one element of social stratification along with existing status groups and political parties. "'Class situation' means the typical probability to: 1. procuring goods, 2. gaining a position in life and 3. finding inner satisfactions" (Weber, 1978: 302). Thus, this class approach implies so-called "opportunity hoarding" which depends on the power relations and regulations that give individuals effective control over economic resources by allowing others to be excluded (usually in the context of access to employment / position) depending on social positions.

The Marxist approach to class and class analysis looks at class division through exploitation (appropriation of the economic benefits from the work activities of those who dominate) and domination (the ability to control the activities of others), with the basic class division in capitalist society into capitalists (those who own and control means of production in the economy) and workers (those hired to use means of production) (Wright, 2015).

The authors of this paper are closer to the Marxist position in class observation and analysis, especially when it comes to the space of post-socialist countries of the former Yugoslavia. We start from the position that

in this territory the classes are determined by economic inequalities, i.e. that the multidimensionality of social stratification (differences in talents, personal abilities, charisma, etc.) is stifled by the pressure of a lack of power resulting from the capitalists' economic domination.

In modern capitalism, it is necessary to bear in mind two concepts of class: (1) the traditional concept of the working class that focuses on material existence and the role of exploitation, and economic inequality resulting from poor distribution of income and wealth, and (2) the concept of social categorization which refers to the identities and role of diversity, that is, the stigmatization of those groups that do not fit into a given social group. The first concept is based on the Marxist approach, while the second concept is the result of shifting the scientific focus from exploring material conditions of living and exploitative relationships to exploring the construction of psycho-social identities, that is, developing (post) modern concepts of fluid identities that practically avoid clear naming of particular groups, and are viewed in the context of their activation. Unlike the class approach, which is based on political economy at a particular historical moment, the concept or theory of social identity developed by Tajfel and Turner is based on a historical observation of groups made up of individuals who share the same characteristics (Hanappi and Hanappi-Egger, 2014: 3, 9). The aforementioned differences in the conceptual approach to class and class identity as a collective identity are expressed during the analysis of social change, as well as in shifting the primacy of expressing a particular identity in relation to others. Since the concept of social groups is based on methodological individualism, and the concept of class and class relations is based on the observation of society as a whole from the perspective of political economy, for the purposes of this paper we will focus on the latter instead of the analysis of social groups in the context of shifting the primacy of class versus national identity and vice versa. That is, the construction and dominance of different types of identities must be placed in a particular historical and social context in order to understand identity policies (Castells, 1997).

NATION AND NATIONAL IDENTITY: DIFFERENT SENSE OF TOGETHERNESS

Anthony D. Smith discussed in detail the concept, elements and formation of national identity, and considered the functions and problems arising from national identity. National identity includes a sense of political community, that is, a shared institution and code of rights and duties for all members of the community, and the particular social space occupied

by that community. The fundamental elements of any nationalism are civil, territorial, ethnic and vernacular. According to Smith, the important characteristics of national identity, as collective identity, are:

1. historic territory, or homeland
2. common myths and historical memories
3. common, mass public culture
4. common legal rights and duties for all members
5. common economy with territorial mobility for members. (1991: 14).

Nationalism, as an ideological movement for achieving and maintaining the national identity of a particular population, manifests itself as civic and territorial (such as anti-colonial and integrational) or as ethnic and genealogical (such as secessionist and irredentist). In this context, ethnocentric nationalism calls for a common "ethnic community" as the basis for the existence and preservation of national identity. Marx criticized ethnocentric nationalism in Germany of his time, aware that national identities has strengthened as a reaction to the global expansion of capitalism and that this led to neglecting of the social consequences of capitalism, especially in terms of maintaining class divisions within what was then Germany (Brenner, 2018: 81-82).

In his work "Imagined Communities", Benedict Anderson defined the nation as an imagined political community, conceived as simultaneously inherently limited and sovereign (Anderson, 2006: 6). The hallmark of the imaginary arises from the fact that an individual - a member of a particular nation - will never get to know most of the other members of his nation, but will nevertheless imagine their fellowship. Such structure of community produces constraint and sovereignty. In this sense, each nation imagines itself as fenced off from other nations, whereby differentiation from others is established. Sovereignty of the nation is established the moment when "Enlightenment and Revolution were destroying the legitimacy of the divinely-ordained, hierarchical dynastic realm" (Anderson, 2006: 7). On the other hand, the foundation of community formation in the most realistic form is achieved by neglecting potential inequalities and its conception of "horizontal camaraderie", that is, by establishing an ideology that gives a sense of brotherhood. In relation to the primordial concept of national identity, according to which the nation was based on a common origin, language and history, Anderson points out the changes in these very fundamentals, which make the very understanding of the nation as a collective change. Primarily, the development of writing, printing and language learning were ways in which writers, journalists, and historians altered the notion of "simultaneity" (Anderson, 2006: 63), developing the idea of the parallel

existence of individuals who do not know each other, but they coexist in a community of similar interests and goals, leading to the development of a "national imagination" (Anderson, 2006: 30) or the creation of a nation as a collective imagination.

The influential distinction in the understanding of the nation was, as early as 1908, set by the German historian Friedrich Meinecke in his book "Weltbürgertum und Nationalstaat". According to him, there is a difference between *Staatsnation* (state-defined nation) and *Kulturnation* (culturally defined nation). The nation-state is mainly based on political history and constitution recognized by its members and represents a characteristic of Western European countries (French model), while the cultural nation is based on the accepted common cultural and religious traditions and goods - such as the common language and it represents a characteristic of the countries of Central and Eastern Europe (German model). Aforementioned results in fact that a nation-state can encompass those groups that differ from each other in terms of their perceptions of cultural values and goals, and that expression of will is crucial to state-building (Kremer, 2016: 55).

Whether we accept the Friedrich Meinecke dichotomy of an ethnically based nation (Kulturnation) or a politically established nation (Staatsnation), or we accept Anderson's view of the nation as an imagined community, the existence of an overlapping nation with state sovereignty is important for researching the relationship between national and class identity. The modern nation-state, according to Anthony Giddens, has specific forms of territoriality and is characterized by its ability to oversee and monopolize effective control over means of coercion. As a modern organization, it is characterized by reflexive monitoring that allows regulation of social relations in unlimited temporal-spatial distances (Giddens, 1991: 15-16). Such reflexivity and control are in the hands of the national capitalist class, which is at the head of the nation-state, providing itself a monopoly to legitimize all other identities, which does not allow the collision or overriding of national identities, but only its coalition (eg. religious and ethnic identity).

When it comes to the relationship between national and class identities, their contradictions and conflicts are especially pronounced from the beginning of the 20th century and later, beginning with the First World War, in which workers put their class interests and identities at odds with the national goals propagated by national capitalist classes of France and Germany (Hanappi and Hannapi-Egger, 2014: 7). Looking through the prism of "nation-state" unity, Marx observed that national interest was assumed by the class especially in times of crisis (such as external crisis or war), while in times of peace, class identity was under political repression of the capitalist class (Brenner, 2018: 31). In addition, lessons learned from the

World Wars, and especially from World War II, highlighted the dangers of mobilizing the working class for its own goals for (ethno-) national groups (as was the case for fascists in Italy and national-socialists in Germany). Rather, they have indicated that certain elements of individual identity are subject to progressive "enlightenment" in the form of nationalism through the psychologically well-designed indoctrination and support of media owned and served by the ruling class (Hanappi and Hanappi-Egger, 2014: 18-19).

SOCIAL TRANSFORMATIONS IN FORMER YUGOSLAVIA

Social transformations in former Socialist Federative Republic of Yugoslavia (SFRY) provide the best insight into dynamics of national and class identities. We observe dynamics of primacy of national over class and class over national identities in former SFRY through several time-periods and moments of decisive changes:

1. Socialist Yugoslavia formation - administration and centralization period (1945-1950) when the (working) class identity was built as a dominant identity,
2. Self-management and market socialism period (1965-1974) when the (working) class identity was reinforced,
3. Decentralization period (1974-1991) in which the national identities gradually took over the primacy over the class identity coinciding with the economic and political turmoil in SFRY,
4. SFRY break-up and formation of new states period (1991-1996) in which the national identification is at its peak,
5. Period of "building-up" and functioning of newly established states (1996-2008) with national identities primacy over class identities.
6. Period after the financial and economic crisis from 2008/2009 (2008-2015) gradual decline in national identities primacy and rise in class identities coinciding with the economic downturn in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Socialist Yugoslavia formation after the World War II is marked as period of changes in, then predominantly rural, country through serious efforts in establishing a system based on Marxist foundations and emancipating mainly rural and low or completely uneducated population. Changes are also visible in transformation of members of different ethnic groups into a working class members, i.e. giving primacy to being a member of a particular class (working class) over ethnic identities. Building up the workers' class identity was the foundation for building up what can be called

a civic or political nationalism (speaking in Rousseau's terms) in SFRY. There was (or at least there was a desire for) "general will" to build a society of citizens, whose solidarity is based on civic religion and indifferent to differences on any other basis. By creating a political nation that is surpassing ethnic identities and absorbing them, the working class identity was the key determinant of civic sovereignty. Political or civic form of nationalism "aims at uniting the members of particular community, irrelevant of their other belonging, by pointing out common belonging, symbols and institutions. [...] political or civic nationalism implies loyalty to the collective "self-determination" of entire population..." (Lakoff, 2000: 58).

Building up and strengthening the working class identity as formative basis of socialist Yugoslavia was particularly emphasized in the period of self-management and market socialism. This is particularly shown in the Program of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia (hereinafter: Program). As noted by Archer et al. (2016: 5-6), the Program recognized the dictatorship of the proletariat as the foundation of power. The dictatorship was based on the alliance between the working class and other working people, with the working class having the main role in the political system as the leading power of socialist society and development. Apart from the working class, the Program recognized the peasantry and other poor strata as the participants within society based on their labor. It pointed out the significance of common struggles to realization of individual and collective needs of the people and improve the living standards in line with the moto "to each according to his abilities" ["svakom prema njegovim mogućnostima"] and "to each according to his work" ["svakom prema njegovom radu"].

Beyond conceptualizing working-class as the basis and a driver of SFRY society and societal development, as well as pointing out the primacy of working/class identity over other identities, socialist Yugoslavia also recognized the concept of "peoples and nations" ["narodi i narodnosti"] (based on ethnic principles). Thus, SFRY left the space for change of identity primacy later on (from class to ethno-national identities) which occurred under social changes starting from the decentralization processes (from 1974 to 1991) and economic reforms from self-management and market socialism to open market economy (from 1980s onwards). Although the workers, in line with the Program, maintained the Yugoslav socialism heritage, following the idea of the communist revolutions, they have not entirely cast away other identities (such as ethnic and religious), but they kept these identities coexisting with the workers' identity which was considered as the primary at that time (Lowinger, 2009: 127). Exactly this pluralism in identities enabled 1980s to be marked as years of large number of workers' strikes and at the same time marking the beginning of mobilization of workers for the needs of (ethno-)national interests.

In the period of Yugoslav socialism development until 1980s, the supra-ethnic identity of "Yugoslavism" was developed in parallel to the working-class identity. The "Yugoslavism" was based on the idea of "brotherhood and unity" of all peoples and nations (i.e. ethnic groups at the SFRY territory) focused on preservation of antinationalist state ideology based on the workers' self-management (Lowinger, 2009, p. 133: 136). However, this identity of Yugoslavism was not sufficiently rooted in the collective mind as witnessed by the period of ethnic and religious identities domination over Yugoslavism and working-class identity. Also, the very characteristics of Yugoslav socialism development in the period until the end of 1970s additionally contributed to this through changes in the perception of workers' self-management. On one hand, in the periods when the focus was on market socialism, the managerial aspect was more applied, i.e. workers' self-management was deemed as freedom to manage business decisions for purpose of maximizing income; on the other hand, in the periods when the focus was on economic planning, the workers' self-management gained class dimension (Turkish-Comisso as cited by Music in Archer et al., 2016, p. 136).

In late 1970s and during the 1980s, the SFRY transforms its economic (later on also political) system opening up its market and liberalizing economy, largely due to pressures from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and other international (financial) institutions. These changes relied upon set of urgent measures, characterized as "shock therapy" (applied also in other, then communist, countries) advocated by the economist Jeffrey Sachs. The shock therapy comprised of measures of liberalization, stabilization and privatization, with the greatest consequences and effect laid upon the working class (which was as trigger for numerous, but not interconnected, workers' protests across SFRY) (Gowan, 1999; Lowinger, 2009).

As a reaction to economic reforms deepening the social inequalities among SFRY population, the workers' protests represented the beginning of mobilization of workers' dissatisfaction for the purpose of maintaining the privileged positions of nationalist blocs already completely formed during the 1980s. One of the examples is the case of Rakovica workers' protests. Rakovica, as industrial suburb in Belgrade, was a place of workers' protests in 1988. The workers protested against changes in the system which resulted in weakening the economy and impoverishing of workers. Rakovica workers advocated for changes in the approach of republic's and regional authorities:

"They argued that regional political and economic bureaucracies exaggerated particularistic national interests and identities, thus blunting the working-class instinct for unity. Instead, or parallel to, an empowered Serbia, Rakovica promoted a new federal body, consisting of direct representatives of

Associated Labour, which could potentially provide a counter-balance to the disintegrative trends and release direct producers from the political tutelage of the republics and provincial politicians. In this scheme, the shortest and the simplest way to achieve a common market and federal cohesion was the political emancipation of the working class. The end goal of these proposals for political reform remained a more egalitarian society." (Music in Archer et al., 2016: 139).

At first, the workers' identity and abstract concept of working class unity was the basis of Rakovica workers' protests. On the one hand, workers organized through local union fought against increasing social inequalities and for larger workers' political power; while on the other hand party officials emphasized the significance of "national question" of Serbia along with liberal economic reforms (Music in Archer et al., 2016: 143). However, in October 1988, during the protests at Federal Assembly [Savezna skupština], Slobodan Milošević, then leader of the League of Communists of Serbia, held a speech through which he pacified the workers coming all "in a militant mood, armed with economic grievances", to then return to work as, as "journalist Jagoš Đuretić described (...): 'people arrived as workers and left as Serbs" (Music in Archer et al., 2016, p. 133). This example is more illustrative to show the changes in national and class identity relations in former SFRY. Those series of workers protests (there were 5588 of those in the period between 1980 and 1988 across SFRY) (Jovanov as cited by Lowinger, 2009: 28) were followed by larger mobilization of workers for the particular nationalist interests culminating in conflicts from the beginning of 1990's when the national identity takes the primacy over class identity.

In the period of conflict and final fall-apart of SFRY, apart from the large number of human casualties, many enterprises and industrial giants were collateral damage. This period is characterized by complete suppression of workers' identity in favor of ethno-national ones. Politics of maintaining the (ethno-)national identity along with introduction of liberal market economy was the main state-building guide for countries emerging from the SFRY ashes. Along with privatization processes assisted by the international community, this lead to further impoverishment of workers, deindustrialization and shutting down of former industrial giants who used to hire hundreds of workers. In the end, it led to flexibilization of work and dismembering the former working class into ethno-national groups. In this period, workers from this area became primarily Serbs, Croats, Bosniaks, Macedonians, Montenegrins, etc.

WORKING CLASS GOES TO HEAVEN?

Reconstruction and development in former SFRY countries after its breakup was done with the active involvement of international community (IMF, World Bank, European Union and various embassies and agencies). The process entailed parallel introduction of democratic procedures and economic development of conflict-torn countries based on liberal principles keeping up the Sachs' postulates of liberalization and privatization. Although these principles were applied in all former SFRY countries, the results of the political and economic system transformation processes were the most visible in Bosnia and Herzegovina. This is largely due to the 1992-1996 war and post-war reconstruction and development programs applied, as well as process of reconciliation of ethnic groups in conflict.

Already during the war atrocities, ethno-national elites and war-mongers privatized former social enterprises, mostly large industrial complexes and factories, first through the „ethnicization" process and turning them into public/state enterprises (i.e. through one ethnic group, dominant at the particular territory, claiming the enterprises' ownership) and then through later privatization process through which most of these enterprises became ownership of local ethno-national political elites and their followers. The privatization processes in B&H resulted in: almost complete deindustrialization, dismantling of former industrial giants that used to hire thousands of workers, large number of bankruptcy procedures, firing of remaining workers and their impoverishment, increase of number of unemployed and number of workers who were left with no retribution or severance pay after privatization and bankruptcy. Combination of those factors lead to complete suppression of working class. Privatization stripped the workers of the control over their enterprises and took away the material basis for their further work and living (Majstorović et al., 2015; Kurtović, 2015).

Increasing unemployment rate (in just 6 years from 2008 to 2014 the unemployment rate in B&H jumped from 23.4% to 27.5%), high level of corruption, all-encompassing deindustrialization process resulted in thousands of working place loss leading workers and their families into poverty (Kraft in Horvat and Štiks, 2015: 204). According to Agency for Statistics of B&H data, relative poverty rate was 18.2% in 2007, 17.9% in 2011 and 16.9% in 2015, with growing in-work poverty with almost quarter of employed workers in B&H lacking decent income to provide the minimum required nutrition for themselves and their family members (Papić, 2017: 15). The abovementioned indicators, along with consequences of bad privatization processes such as bankruptcy and complete shut-down of privatized enterprises including the total sale of any property left, as well

as thousands of workers deprived of the salaries they earned and existing in labor-law vacuum, contributed to rising of workers' uprising culminating in early 2014.

Workers of privatized, bankrupt and closed factories such as „DITA“ detergent factory from Tuzla, Factory of Transport Units (Tvornica transportnih uređaja (TTU)) Tuzla, "Konjuh" furniture factory from Živinice, „Fortuna“ shoe factory from Gračanica and many others, who, due to economic transformations and changes in ownership structure of their enterprises were unable to have their earned salaries paid and realize their fundamental legal rights to health and pension insurance, started the series of protests. In February 2014 these protests fueled the citizens' revolt also in other cities in B&H (from Tuzla, through Sarajevo to Bihać). Workers and other protesters emphasized economic and social problems (high unemployment, low wages, unpaid salaries, poverty and hunger) as the main problems of all citizens in B&H. In this way, workers turned over the mainstream discourse of ethno-national unity into „unity in hunger“ (i.e. by socio-economic status) discourse. Protesters' slogans such as „We're hungry in three languages“ (indicating unity of all three ethnic groups in B&H along the same line) or „Who saws hunger – reaps rage“ (alluding on ethno-national elites who brought workers and citizens into poverty) actually express turnaround and again strengthening of class (self-)identification compared to ethno-national one.

Similarly to the Rakovica workers protests from 1988, when the workers initially reacted to crisis gathering around slogan of much needed social wealth redistribution and solidarity, workers' (and later on other social groups) protests in B&H also emphasized the class dimension of uprising. As shown earlier in the case of Rakovica, workers uprising was later on manipulated by connecting the economic requests with national question and establishing „national unity“ and mobilization against workers' unity (Music in Archer et al., 2016: 148). However, as noted by Arandarenko (2001), workers united again in 2000, but this time not fighting for work but fighting against Slobodan Milošević, seeing him as one of the main breakers of economic progress and survival in Serbia (p. 177-178). In the case of 2014 protests in B&H, local ethno-national elites and privatization profiteers were the main 'enemy' against which the revolt was directed. Albeit no significant turn or manipulation of uprising for ethno-national mobilization occurred, protests were pacified by simultaneous action of ethno-national elites and international community through programs such as 'Compact for Growth and Jobs' which tried (although unsuccessfully) to respond to demands and socio-economic problems behind the protests. After 2014, there is a clear return of discourse of socio-economic (class) inequalities, need for better status of workers and reduction of poverty compared to, by then dominant, ethno-national discourse.

CONCLUSION

In one of his speeches, Engels stated that "only proletarians can destroy nationality, only awakened proletarians can contribute to the twinning of different nations" (quoted by Brenner, 2018: 45). Similarly, in the cases presented here, the reversal of the discourse of primacy from national identity to class and vice versa shows the power of action of the working class mobilized either for the pursuit of class interests or for the needs of ethno-national interests. This paper gives examples of social circumstances that led to the development and strengthening of the worker's identity and its primacy over the (ethno-) national, and examples of how certain crisis moments served as a driver of change and diminution of the importance of the workers' identity, while raising the importance of national identity in the former Yugoslavia. Workers' protests and strikes served as the basis for changes in discourse in both cases. The recent labor and civil protests that have caused the change of discourse in Bosnia and Herzegovina from ethno-national to class-based leave the question of the possibility of developing a new class policy based on the unity and solidarity of workers and the poor instead of the current ethno-national unity. Although the focus of this paper has been on a limited period and on the territory of the former SFRY, in the context of today's growing inequality at the global level, the impact of globalization, and the growing criticism of neoliberalism (especially after the crisis on European soil), it would be necessary to raise the question of the connection between events on a global and European level in the context of growing class discourse, with developments in the former SFRY seen as a European (semi) periphery. In answering this question, it will be important to include the problem of the reproduction of ethno-national identities among generations who grew up in the transition period and whose political discourse presented socialist heritage not as an alternative worker's identity but as a potential threat to the loss of ethno-national solidarity. For nation-states, as the former SFRY republics are now established, unambiguous collective loyalty and exclusivist fidelity is required, with the rejection of other identities or their absorption within an ethnically based, primordial national identity. However, economic changes in production, driven primarily by transnationalization, globalization and deterritorialization of markets, threaten to produce new crises in national economies and fiscal systems, what makes possible for the national unity to be shaken under the burden of class differences that cannot be absorbed, as announced in the examples cited in this work.

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RADNICI U POST-SOCIJALIZMU: IZMEĐU KLASNOG I NACIONALNOG IDENTITETA

Sažetak: *Društvena transformacija i prelazak iz socijalističke u liberalnu tržišnu ekonomiju u Bosni i Hercegovini, kao i drugim zemljama bivše Jugoslavije, praćena ratnim dešavanjima, stvorila je brojne ekonomske i društvene izazove: deindustrijalizaciju, visoku nezaposlenost, sumnjive privatizacije, osiromašenje, etničko rivalstvo i strukturne promjene. U ovom radu posmatramo pomenute društvene procese s fokusom na identitarne politike koje su za rezultat imale transformaciju klasnog identiteta u nacionalni identitet radnika. Osnovna pretpostavka je da određeni kritični društveni momenti služe kao okidač za "promjenu" u primatu klase nad nacionalnim identitetom i obratno. Kako bismo adresirali ovo pitanje, koristimo slučajeve radničkih otpora/štrajkova/protesta tokom društvene transformacije iz socijalističke u tržišnu ekonomiju, te nakon izvršene privatizacije i vladavine etno-nacionalnih politika u zemljama bivšim članicama Jugoslavije.*

Keywords: *klasa, identitet, nacionalni identitet, radnici, post-socijalizam.*