

# Yugoslavia's Hidden History: Partisan-Ustashi Collaboration in the World War II (1941–1945)

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**Abstract:** The aim of this article is to give a significant contribution to both Balkan and South Slavic historiography in clarification of the question of direct and indirect military-political cooperation between the Partisans of Corporal and Marshal Josip Broz Tito and the Ustashi leader (Poglavnik) Ante Pavelić on the territory of the Independent State of Croatia during the World War II (1941–1945) and to highlight the ideological and political roots and objectives of this cooperation. The article is mainly based on the primary archival documents housed in Belgrade, but never used by the official state's Titoist historiography, and on the testimonies of participants in historical events from the Yugoslav Army in the Fatherland (the so-called Chetniks) who were after 1945 in exile.

**Keywords:** Partisans, Ustashi, Josip Broz Tito, Ante Pavelić, Independent State of Croatia, Chetniks, World War II, Yugoslav Army in the Fatherland, Serbs, Croats

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## 1. Titographic “History” Against the Scientific Historiography

As more time passes after the death of “the greatest son of our nations and nationalities” – Josip Broz Tito (1892–1980), and as more and more are fading the tapes of the feature films about “heroic and patriotic combats” of Tito's Partisans made by his regime propaganda (such as “Battle of Neretva”, “Battle of Sutjeska”, “Republic of Užice”, “Battle for the Southern Railway”, “Red Land”, “Walter Defends Sarajevo”, “Raid on Drvar”...) <sup>1</sup> against the “occupiers and domestic

quislings”, the truth about the true character of this struggle and the World War II in the areas of the Independent State of Croatia from 1941 to 1945 is becoming re-researched by a critical Serbian historiography.

During Tito's Yugoslavia and, unfortunately, long time after 1991 the Yugoslav history of the World War II was, and still in many cases is, treated only as a „history“. However, we believe it is a time for the real science to deal with this period of the Yugoslav past, what means that finally a „historiography“ has to replace a quasi-science of politicized „Titography“. A phenomenon of the revolutionary taking

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<sup>1</sup> The feature film “Battle of Neretva” was the most expensive film ever made in Socialist Yugoslavia. It was extremely important for the Yugoslav regime that in those films will starring well-known Hollywood and other foreign actors in order to give to the regime more moral and political credibility from historical perspective. This credibility was important concerning both and the people of Yugoslavia and the international community, especially regarding the Western countries of the liberal democracy. For instance, in the movie “Battle of Neretva” together with the Yugoslav actors, the most important roles are given to Orson Welles, Franco Nero, Yul Brynner and Sergei Bondarchuk. In the film “Battle of Sutjeska”, the role of J. B. Tito, as a Partisan military leader, plays Richard Burton. However, all of these films are based on invented stories rather than on historical facts. Some of them are based on a pure falsification of historical truth like the film “Battle for the Southern Railway”, directed by Zdravko Velimirović, in which the destructions of the railways in Serbia and other sabotage actions committed by the forces of General Dragoljub Mihailović – the Yugoslav Army in

the Fatherland (named by Germans, Tito's Partisans and the Croats as the Chetniks) simply are attributed to Tito's Partisans. According to some experts, the Yugoslav state invested more money for making such kind of “war-Partisan” films than to all other films together for the very simple reason: the “war-Partisan” films were the most effective public lessons of history of the Yugoslav peoples in the World War II. They have been shown in primary and secondary schools and the students were taken to the cinemas to watch them as a part of history class curriculum. The contents of the films, of course, have been properly matched with the contents of the compulsory school history teaching program. Moreover, these films had even the function of the textbooks. However, not one of these “war-Partisan” feature films is made according to the real historical events so that they all remain in the realm of political propaganda of a totalitarian one-party system and the regime (see more in: Самарин М., *Фалсификати комунистичке историје*, 79–121). Recording of these films was directly supported by the Yugoslav People's Army as it is noticed at the beginning of the film “Republic of Užice”.

power in Yugoslavia during the World War II by Tito's Communists and Partisans, provoking for that purpose a civil war, still remains incompletely explained in the Yugoslav historiography due to a number of circumstances. The most important are in our opinion the next two: 1) a lack of original and authentic archival material; and 2) unwillingness and fear of the home Yugoslav historians to reveal the truth. What concerns the lack of relevant (original and authentic) historical sources for the period of the civil war and violent Communist revolution in Yugoslavia during the World War II, the main reasons for such de facto state of affairs are:

- Revolutionary winners in the civil war, Tito's Partisans (officially called by themselves as the People's Liberation Army of Yugoslavia) and the Communist Party of Yugoslavia, organized a deliberate and well-orchestrated policy of removal, and even physical destruction, of the archival material of both their own documents and the documents of their political enemies. The Titoists succeeded in short period of time after their military occupation of Belgrade and Serbia in October–November 1944 to eliminate almost all compromising authentic and original documents, which could challenge to a greater or lesser extent, politically coloured Titoist propaganda within the framework of the official (quasi)-historiography about the war years of 1941–1945. Thus, for example, in the Yugoslav archives the researcher can not find the key documents of Tito's Partisans open cooperation and collaboration with the Croat-Bosniak Ustashi, Albanian (Shqipetar) Fascist detachments and the German Nazi occupation forces, as well as an open anti-Serbian policy and military actions by Tito's Supreme Command of his revolutionary the People's Liberation Army of Yugoslavia and its subordinated operational command headquarters. Therefore, preserved German and Italian documents (archival material) and the memoirs (including and the diaries) of German and Italian commanders (for instance, by the General Edmund Glaise von Horstenau from Austria in service of the Wehrmacht)<sup>2</sup> are essential for uncovering the truth about the policies and real political objectives of Tito's forces, fighting for overtaking a political power in Yugoslavia in 1941–1945.
- The same winner in the civil war was after 1945 inserting for his enemies compromising archival documents and photos either to its own or enemy's files, which even today could be found in the archives on the territory of ex-Yugoslavia. Many of such inserted documents have been written after the war to be as a *corpus delicti* of the „anti-people's“ policy of the anti-communist and anti-fascist forces, but such policy of inserting the forgery and falsified historical documents and photos was systematically applied mostly to

compromise the Supreme Staff and other subordinated commanders of the Yugoslav Army in the Fatherland under the leadership of General Dragoljub Draža Mihailović.<sup>3</sup>

3 There are documents (i.e., the letters) with forged signatures of the commander of the Royal Mountain Guard – Nikola Kalabić, who was under direct command by General Mihailović (as for example, the letter from December 19–20<sup>th</sup>, 1945), and retouched photos of the “Chetnik” commanders, but mostly of Kalabić, who was attributed by the Communists to false betrayal of the Supreme Commander of the Yugoslav Army in the Fatherland. According to the Communist version, only due to this betrayal General Mihailović became located and arrested by the Titoist security service (led by Aleksandar Ranković - Leka) in March 1946. The most insidious Titoists' arson against General Mihailović is allegedly his, but in fact forged letter, (however in two versions and typed in the Latin alphabet), which is supposedly Draža Mihailović sent to “Dr. ALOIS STEPINAC, the Archbishop of Zagreb and the Croatian Metropolitan” („d-ru ALOJZIJU STEPINCU, nadbiskupu zagrebačkom i metropoliti hrvatskom“) on April 15<sup>th</sup>, 1945. In the letter General Mihailović was asking Archbishop Stepinac for close cooperation with the “Croatian people” (i.e., with the Ustashi and Home Guard soldiers) with Stepinac's blessing in order to halt “the victory of the Communist high tide”. If nothing else, to avoid the discussion of originality and authenticity of the letter from the technical point of view, it would be absolutely illogical that before the very end of the war, General Mihailović required close cooperation with the Croat Nazi Ustashi and Croatia's Home Guard soldiers (“domobranci”) against whom he was fighting during the whole war and who (especially Ustashi, composed by the Croats and Bosnian-Herzegovinian Muslim Bosniaks) committed terrible crimes of genocide against the Serb Orthodox inhabitants in Croatia, Dalmatia, Slavonia, Herzegovina, Srem and Bosnia (i.e., on the territory of the Independent State of Croatia). Moreover, it was a time when the Ustashi and Home Guard detachments were preparing to leave Yugoslavia in order to surrender to the American and British military authorities in Austria or Italy. Finally, General Mihailović was from the very beginning of the war absolutely aware that Pavelić's Ustashi and the Partisans of Josip Broz Tito are of the same anti-Serb army fighting for the Croat national interest. However, in this case it is of extreme surprising the sloppiness of the Titoist forgers who made the letter of the same matter in two different variants, but forgot to destroy the first (older) one, or at least to move it to safety. Specifically, in the shorthand notes to the Communist called the “process of the century”, i.e. the process to General Mihailović in 1946 in Topčider in Belgrade, Mihailović's facsimile letter to Archbishop Stepinac was released on a single page (97-th), but 39 years later the same letter was published in the Titoist collection of the “Chetnik” documents in the 14<sup>th</sup> book in the 4<sup>th</sup> volume on two pages (not on one page as the first version was written). In this second version of the letter, in comparison to the first one, it was changed the place of the address and the date of writing (typing) next to the last letter's paragraph, which appears in the later version on the second page of the letter. In the first version of this alleged letter by General Mihailović to Archbishop Stepinac the caption “Supreme Command, April 15<sup>th</sup>, 1945, Army General” with Mihailović's signature is below the text of the whole letter, but in the second version of the letter the caption “Supreme Command, April 15<sup>th</sup>, 1945” is put at the upper right corner of the letter over the beginning of the text of it. Both of these letters, nevertheless, do not have the appropriate Command memorandum, seal and a number under which they were registered in contrast to the original and authentic documents issued by the Supreme Command of the Yugoslav Army in the Fatherland. It is known that General Mihailović was signing himself as a *ђенерал* (deneral), but not as *генерал* (general) as it is in this case (Михаиловић, *Рат и мир ђенерала*, 365; *Collection of the documents and information*, XIV/4, 989–990. See also: Zečević, *Dokumenta sa suđenja Ravnogorskom pokretu; Izdajnik i ratni zločinac Draža Mihailović pred sudom*). This alleged letter to Archbishop Stepinac dated on April 15<sup>th</sup>, 1945 has and falsified signature of General Mihailović like in some other forged letters (for instance, to Brašić or to Mate Matićević). Original and authentic Mihailović's Latin script signature can be found in his letter to the Greek General Zervas, which is written in French language. This letter to General Zervas is dated on February 5<sup>th</sup>, 1944 and verified with clearly legible stamp “Command of the Yugoslav Army in the Fatherland,” that is, however, not the case, for example, with the stamp on the letter dated on November 29<sup>th</sup>, 1944 (29. studenog) to Mate

2 See, for instance: *Kriegsarchiv Wien* (KAW), Glaise von Horstenau's Inheritance (B/67) including and his diary notes from Zagreb from April 1941 to September 1944 (KAW, B/67-diary); Kazimirović, *Nemački general u Zagrebu*.

The reason for this policy of inserting the forgery documents and other material to the „Chetnik“ files can be easily explained and understood if it is known that from the very beginning of the civil war between Tito's Partisans and Serbia's patriots in July 1941 and especially between Tito's detachments and Mihailović's Yugoslav Army in the Fatherland from November 1941 until March 1946, when Mihailović was arrested by the Communist security forces, the Yugoslav Army in the Fatherland was the only military and political enemy who seriously stood on the way to the Communist taking over the power in the whole country. Knowing the pre-war political aims of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia, it is not surprising that its armed forces began the civil war on July 7th, 1941 in Western Serbia, and tried to finish it with capturing Mihailović alive what they finally succeeded on „March 13th, 1946 in a house on the road Vardište-Priboj in Eastern Bosnia under still unknown circumstances“.<sup>4</sup> The Titoists needed the General much more alive than dead in order to publically, in the name of the „people“, discriminate him, his movement and the Yugoslav Government in Exile (in London) in a rigged process of the Stalinist type for „collaboration“ with the occupying forces, and finally to formally legalize their revolutionary way of taking power in the country. However, there were exactly Tito's Partisans who on their way to power collaborated during the war with the foreign invaders and primarily with their domestic satellites, and most of all with the Croat-Bosniak Ustashi.

## 2. With Historical Sources for the Historiography Against the Titographic “History”

As for clarifying the issue whom Tito's Partisans kept as their main, if not perhaps the only, political-military opponent and enemy during the entire World War II in Yugoslavia, that is directly related to the topic of this article - the Partisan cooperation and collaboration with the Croat-Bosniak Ustashi, we will here present the transcript of one archival, original and authentic Partisan document from the period of their “struggle for the national liberation”. From this document is clear against whom the Partisans were fighting and against whom they did not fought, but what is the most important it is clear from the document what fore they fought four years (this document is written in Latin letters and consists grammatical and linguistic errors):

Matićević (Самаринић, *Фалсификати комунистичке историје*, 36). The U.S. findings on how Titoist propaganda experts after the World War II created the photographs of alleged Mihailović's army collaboration with the Germans and the Ustashi are published in the recent book: Симић, Дража. *Смрт дужа од живота*. In the same book it can be found a new evidence of how it is mounted the judicial process against General Mihailović in Topčider in 1946, or in other words, how the Titoists removed the original documents from the files issued by the authorities of Mihailović's “Chetniks” during the war and instead of them were putting the fake documents as the originals. The book is also offering the proves on the Communist torture of the arrested General.

4 (Николић, *Историја Равногорског покрета*, III, 314.

Dear Isa, you will wonder how I presented you this letter. But let it not make doubt to you. When we will once meet you, we will explain everything. Here is what it is about. You have with the Sixth Brigade, augmented with the parts of the Majevisa of Fruška Gora detachment, immediately to move between Goražde and Medjedje on Sandžak side and there to clean terrain from the Chetniks in the direction of Zlatibor and Čajniče. Here you will catch a connection with the left wing of our First Division and receive further directives.

On your way, i.e., during the move, do not fight with the Germans, do not undertake any action on the railway as it is in the interest of our current operations. Send even before your move your couriers towards Ustikolina, where they will catch a connection with our units.

Our most important task now is to destroy the Chetniks of Draža Mihajlović and break his administrative machine which is the greatest threat for the further national-liberation struggle.

Everything else you will find out when we meet.

In the Eastern Bosnia, leave smaller detachments whose task will now be to fight against the Chetniks and to mobilize the new men. Making stronger of the Sixth Brigade must not go at the expense of speed of moving to direction indicated above.

29-III-1943 g.

With comradesly greetings

(signed by Josip Broz Tito, Aleksandar Ranković and Sreten Žujović)<sup>5</sup>

From this archival *corpus delicti* we think that it is clear who was the only enemy to Tito's revolutionaries who were in Yugoslavia nothing else but only the client detachments of Stalin's Red Army.<sup>6</sup> It is of extreme importance to emphasize that this document is signed by Josip Broz Tito himself. We would like to stress as well and the fact that his political party's leadership several times at the Comintern's meetings in Moscow in the interwar period were issuing the directives to destroy the Kingdom of Yugoslavia as a “Greater Serbia created by the Versailles Order” after the Great War. Therefore, it is not surprise that in this document the Chetniks of Draža Mihailović (considered as the Serb nationalists) are the only real enemy who was standing on the Communist way to build a new Socialist Yugoslavia primarily at the expense of the Serb national interests.<sup>7</sup>

A similar letter to the above one, which was sent to the Communist commander Isa Jovanović, and signed by the top Communist leadership – Tito, Ranković and Žujović, is a letter in the form of a military order, which was written and signed by Tito on March 30<sup>th</sup>, 1943. This letter (also written

5 *Archives of the Military-Historical Institute* (AVI), Belgrade, Staff of the Supreme Command, Chetnik Archives, K-12, 30/12 (Letter to Isa, March 29th, 1943).

6 About the relations between the Communist Party of Yugoslavia and the Soviet Union see in: Sotirović, *Shaping the Borderlands of Pax Sovietica Commonwealth in Central and Southeastern Europe*.

7 About the anti-Serbian character of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia see in: Sotirović, *Антисрпски карактер Комунистичке партије Југославије*.

in the Latin script) is addressed to the Headquarters of the Bosnian Corps of the People's Liberation Army of Yugoslavia:

*All your fights direct against the Chetniks in Central Bosnia and Krajina, and fight only in defense against the Ustashi if you are attacked by them.*<sup>8</sup>

Official Yugoslav state historiography of the 1980s and the 1990s, has "quite appropriate" responses to these *corpus delicti* archival documents from the World War II that there was an apparently only separate case, which can be explained by at that time military and political situation on the front in western parts of Yugoslavia as the Germans organized the military operation "Weiss 1" and "Weiss 2" (the "Battle of Neretva") against Tito's Partisans and as it is known, a drowning man clutching at straws and catches. However, the central point of Tito's offer to the Germans in March 1943 was not the only tactical maneuver due to the "new unfavorable situation" in order to save a head, but rather it was a strategic policy and practical actions by Broz's Supreme Command during the entire World War II in Yugoslavia. The truth was that the Germans organized offensive "Weiss 1" and "2 Weiss" not against Tito's Partisans, but in fact against Mihailović's Chetniks in order to destroy them in Krajina, Bosnia, Herzegovina and Dalmatia prior to the Allied landings on the eastern coast of the Adriatic Sea.<sup>9</sup> By making a direct agreement with Tito's political representatives of the Supreme Command in March in 1943 ("The March Agreement") the Germans were actually sent the Partisans to the Chetniks on the Neretva River in order to do the job for them. Tito's fighters met the German requirements singing the song "the Partisans prepare your machine guns to fire at the King and the Englishmen!"<sup>10</sup> Thus, the common and the only enemy of both the Germans and the Partisans were the Chetniks (the Yugoslav Army in the Fatherland) led by General Dragoljub Draža Mihailović. The Chetniks were in the spring of 1943 prepared to wait and accept the Anglo-American allies in

Dalmatia. For the Germans, the Anglo-American invasion of Dalmatian and/or Montenegrin sea coast meant the opening of a second front in Europe and retreat back to Germany, while the same Anglo-American action with the help of the Chetniks meant for Tito's Partisans the end of a policy of the Communist takeover of Yugoslavia.<sup>11</sup>

It is necessary to draw attention to the episode from the Soviet "Republic of Bihać" in Bosnia-Herzegovina established by Tito's Partisans in 1942 when the Partisans when leaving the territory of Bihać under the German offensive in Spring 1943 by force launched a large part of Serbian civilians with them, but not Croatian and Muslim, to the River of Neretva and possibly further towards Serbia. It was moved by force c. 40,000-50,000 Serbian civilians and this Partisan action had a three-fold function: 1) the civilians were the shield for the Communist leadership and the Partisan detachments who were going to fight the crucial battle against the Royal Chetniks on the left bank of the River of Neretva; 2) in this way the (anti-Serb) ethnic cleansing of the area was done; and 3) the Serbian civilians were prevented to escape to the neighboring safe area around Gacko which was under the Chetnik control. On this occasion the Supreme Commander of the Yugoslav Army in the Fatherland, General Draža Mihailović sent to the Yugoslav Government in London the following dispatch:

Because of this Communist terror the masses of the people are retreated from Bihać to Glamoč. As soon as the Germans approach, the unprotected peoples are left to the mercy of the Germans and the Ustashi who mercilessly massacred them. Who escaped by chance is freezing in the snow and ice. Between Drvar and Glamoč there are over 500 frozen corpses of women and children. This is more than a horror. It is a struggle of the Communists who are encouraged by the foreign propaganda to systematically destroy our [Serb] people.<sup>12</sup>

However, after the World War II, the Yugoslav state and party historiography has placed the thesis that in the above case (Serbian) people voluntarily went with Tito's Partisans. In the other words, it was a "humanitarian action" in order to rescue the civilians what Josip Broz Tito confirmed in 1948 at the Fifth Congress of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia in Belgrade literally saying the following:

With our army of huge crowds of 50,000 women, children and old men retreated towards Livno ... All units were left in their positions, while the Supreme Command with the three Proletarian Divisions retreated to the River of

<sup>8</sup> Archives of the Military-Historical Institute, Belgrade, A copy of Tito's personal letter.

<sup>9</sup> On direct cooperation between Tito's Partisans and Pavelić's Ustashi in the area of the so-called "Republic of Bihać" indicates German general Fortner who commanded the German 718-th Division. In his report of December 26<sup>th</sup>, 1942 it was assessed that the Communists ruled the territory around Bihać in the length of 250 km. and the width of 100 km. On this territory according to him, there were about 63,000 Partisans. In a new report of January 6<sup>th</sup>, 1943 General Fortner reported to his superiors that Tito's Partisans in this region "could get the booty in food and weapons without problems" from the garrisons held by Croatian Home Guard (*domobrani*) and the Ustashi (*Collection of the documents and information*, vol. XII, book 2, 952; *Collection of the documents and information*, vol. XII, book 3, 18). It has to be noticed that all the so-called "liberated territories" by the Partisans westward from the River of Drina were in the "Independent State of Croatia" and that in fact they were given to them by the Croat Nazi regime in Zagreb. The garrisons held by the Croatian Home Guard and the Ustashi which have been under the "attack" by the Partisans in fact were not defended and they very quickly surrendered. That was a game played by both the Partisans and the Croatian armed forces as a very smart way how to provide the Partisans with the food, arms, ammunition and medicaments. Of course, the local German commanders new very well what was going on.

<sup>10</sup> The song was in original language: „Partizani spremite mitraljeze da pucamo na kralja i Engleze!“.

<sup>11</sup> The Comintern adopted in 1935 the view that due to the impending threat of Nazi Germany and the war (as an exponent of the Western bourgeoisie) against the Soviet Union, the Yugoslav Communists will not work anymore on destruction of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia. Contrary to the prior-1935 Comintern policy, Yugoslavia has to be as stronger as possible in order to as longer as resist the German attack before the German invasion of the Soviet Union. After the German invasion of the Soviet Union on June 22<sup>nd</sup>, 1941 and during the whole war, Moscow's position was that Yugoslav Communists under the guise of "anti-fascist struggle" would take over the power in the country at the end of the war after which Yugoslavia will join the Soviet military, political and economic bloc.

<sup>12</sup> Кнежевић, *Слобода или смрт*, 186.

Neretva.<sup>13</sup>

In reality, however, this civilian people protested and demanding to be allowed to be transported and provided with food and clothing in order to survive a harsh Bosnian-Herzegovinian winter. What happened after this protest we can find in the following source:

Reluctance of the people, the elderly men, women and children - the Communists declared as a type of rebellion, sabotage, Fascism and all other. They were then killing on the spot. They killed for every little thing. They killed mothers, who were fighting not for himself, but for the salvation of their children, because they did not want to lead them to the death. Political commissars, "popular committees", field workers and their servants, were at work. They were going from house to house, expelling from them the women and children. They were expelling them into the street, on the road. They were putting this poor people in the convoy of death, which was going through the Golgotha, on which had to die.<sup>14</sup>

It is clear that in this action (Serbian) civilians had to play the role of "human shield" of Broz's Partisans in the coming conflict in the valley of the River of Neretva against the main and sole military and political opponent – Mihailović's Chetniks (supporters of the Royal Yugoslav Government in exile). The Communist detachments went to Neretva in ("March") agreement with the Germans. The later had a plan to defeat the winners from the final battle between the Partisans and the Chetniks in the valley of the River of Neretva in Herzegovina and in this way to destroy both enemies – the Partisans and the Chetniks. For that purpose, after the Communist victory on the left bank of the River of Neretva over the Chetniks, the Germans with the Ustashi immediately launched the new offensive ("Schwarz", that is called in Yugoslav Communist historiography as the "Šutjeska" or "the Fifth enemy offensive").<sup>15</sup> About the personal destiny of one part of (Serbian) civilians from this "Column of death" says, drawing on the evidence by Mane Pešut, another witness of the event - Vladimir Dedijer (the Jew, who was after the war official biographer of Josip Broz Tito), but this time from the Communist side:

The mother is going tonight barefoot on the ice, with some rags around the legs, which are so long to pull the frost to it. On the back in the bag baby hook. Another kid pulls the arm, while the third kid, the oldest one, is going and weeping. They did not eat anything for two days... I approach one window boarded. Someone cries from the ground. I walked around the house, went down to the road

and came to the door of the ground floor. I saw through the broken doors the people who were sitting around the fire, covered with the blankets, silent, motionless. A child cries out with a loud voice. Something struggled under a blanket. I walked up as closer as and cried as hard as I could. The wrestling stopped, but not and the child's voice. The blanket was lifted, revealing the face of the mother, whom I saw today with three children. Glassy eyes, she was all in a sweat. I realized what was happening. She was smothering her own baby. She was tired of. Gripping, gripping, looking for the bread. She was tired, hungry, back of her was painful from wearing the youngest kid, the hands were painful of carrying the rest of two kids. She just wanted to release both the child and herself from the further horrors. If I came a minute later – at the morning we would find only a dead body of the child. It is no coincidence that this woman said at the evening when I met her on the road: "Holy Death, take me!"

For the twenty-one day she escapes from Banija region with the children before the "Prinz Eugen Division" and the "Devil's Division". She walked on the frost 350 kilometers.<sup>16</sup>

About mass suffering of (Serbian) civilians from the "Column of Death" in February 1943, that is above-mentioned, there is an eye-witness testimony by the commander of the "Dinara Chetnik Division," Duke (vojvoda) Momčilo Đujić, whose testimony sheds a whole new light on official Yugoslav state Titoist historiographical phrases about Partisan's "humanity" in the "Battle for the Wounded Men" (the "Battle of Neretva" or German "Weiss") in the winter/spring of 1943:

The Communists disseminate that the Germans, the Ustashi and the Chetniks go together in order to kill everyone. And they took with them many women and children from the Lika region [in present-day Croatia]. I was around Grahovo [in present-day Western Bosnia] waiting for Tito's columns and was collecting these peoples [Serbian civilians], accommodating them in my villages and later on returning them to their homes. Many women, however, dragged the little children with them: mother did not want to leave a child! Tito cleverly came up with the idea - as the army moves slowly because the women and children – that a special battalion would take the children and mothers let them go with their husbands. Nurses and special units reportedly will take care of the children. And now, he has taken these children ... about one hundred and fifty. Beneath a mountaintop of the Mt. Šator there is the Šator's Lake with fresh water. There was here a state house for the forest guards. It was a luxury villa in mountain style. All those kids, I counted their skeletons, were put in this house and the house was put on fire.

I came a month later, it was the snow, and little bones of these children were sticking out from the snow. This picture also I can not forget. We did not have a

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>14</sup> Пешут, *Револуција у Југу*, 225.

<sup>15</sup> The Partisan Supreme Command Staff with Josip Broz Tito succeeded to „break“ the enemy surrounding during the „Swartz“ offensive exactly on the part of the line hold by Croat Ustashi soldiers what can be another one direct proof of (Croat-led) Communist collaboration with the (Croat) Ustashi movement. After that, very weak Partisan detachments succeeded to establish another one „liberated territory“ in Bosnia lasted for several months around the city of Jajce that was also (as previous „Bihać Republic in 1942“) existing exactly on the territory of the Independent State of Croatia.

<sup>16</sup> Пешут, *Револуција у Југу*, 227.

photographic camera, but one scene could be taken as an eternal monument: a mother from Lika region (Ličanka) who did not want to hand over her children, sat on a stone of the forest trail, approximately one km. from that house. The bodies were not disintegrated, they were still frozen. The mother was keeping one child on her breast, one child on his knees caught her under the armpit, and one was lying on the ground, the oldest, taking with his arms her legs. This image was never out of my head. And who would not want to kill the Communists, who would not want to kill the Ustashi?<sup>17</sup>

That this first-hand testimony about the behavior of Tito's Partisans with the wounded men in early spring in 1943 is not invented and/or occasional, and that in fact corresponds to the actual situation on the ground during the World War II (as opposed to Yugoslav Communist movie the "Battle of Neretva", also called as the "Battle for the Wounded Men") gives us another relevant source from the same 1943, from December. This document is also historically very important for resolving the enigma of war life and work of Josip Broz Tito of whom it is written so far an impressive number of biographic studies, but usually without reference to all relevant and reliable archival documents and testimonies. In all of these biographical writings still it remained unresolved question of his true origin and his distinctive character up to his seizure of power in Yugoslavia by armed forces of the Partisan detachments which originated from the territory of the Independent State of Croatia and were mainly composed by the Serbs.<sup>18</sup> In order to contribute to the writings of both Tito's true (war time) biography and his Partisan movement we present in bellow paragraph one of extremely important archival documents which is putting much more lights on the nature of the Communist movement in Yugoslavia during the World War II.

This is a top-secret document issued by the Special Police Department of the Command of the City of Belgrade about "Tito" on December 13<sup>th</sup>, 1943 archived in the *Archives of Yugoslavia* in Belgrade. It was sent to the Presidency of Government of Serbia:

This Department has the honor to report to the Presidency that it was received a notice containing certain details of the Partisan army, the personality of their "commander" Tito, his way of life, as well as about the relationship between him, his closest associates and his army. These notices are received from the persons who some time ago, came from Montenegro.

That was received notice that Tito with his [war] Staff last

summer spent in the mountains near Nikšić and at a place called "Goransko". Here at "Goransko" Partisan staff organized and a medical service using the local hospital, where and wounded Partisans were getting a medical help. In the hospital were getting medical help and the local people from whom partly this notice is received. What concerns the personality of Tito, the data we had are absolutely identical with the data received from these persons. In addition to already known data we received and those that Tito is mid-height, his exterior is smooth, he carries a civil suits which are mostly new. He speaks a corrupted Serbian language, which resembles to Kajkavian [speech].

The relationship between Tito, his staff and members is authoritative in both official dealings and private life. This difference is reflected in particular in Tito's dealing with his co-workers, even with the closest. And his way of life is very different from the life of the others, as Tito has a plenty of food, a variety of sweets, having immoral life and beside him a young Jewish girl with whom he previously lived, while his "army" receives very little food. Such poor food gets even sick - wounded Partisans.

His most intimate environment along with the others makeup and a Jew Moša Pijade and former Yugoslav officers general Orović Savo and captain Jovanović [Arso], although about these two it is claim that they accidentally joined them [Partisans]. Among other things, it is reported that Tito's Staff is composed by just younger people, except their important officials.

Tito's Staff is very mobile and it is a rare case to be at one place for a longer time. Movement occurs always when it is received a notice from the intelligence about coming danger. Such a case occurred with the last place of being, where from originated these data. During moving from the mountain and the place called "Goransko" the Partisans burned all the archives, as well as the very building where they stayed, and even 40 of their most seriously wounded [soldiers], as they frequently do it.

Their intelligence service is developed very much and mainly for this service they use the local women, rarely local men, whose external looking did not draw attention of the local authorities. From the same source we know today that Tito and his Staff are in the mountains between Plevlja, Pavino Polje and Nikšić.

Front notification is given to the title, with a request for knowledge and using it.

According to the order, the Administrator of the City of Belgrade, Head of the Department of Special Police. Inspector.<sup>19</sup>

We think that the most important value of this document is in exactly what happened at the very end of this story according to the report. This is the claim that Tito's Partisans killed during their withdrawal all of their 40 seriously wounded comrades, i.e. all of those who could not move

<sup>17</sup> Глигоријевић, Србија на западу, 132–133

<sup>18</sup> It was published in Belgrade in 2010 so far the first collection of more than 250 top-secret documents from Yugoslav and Soviet (today Russian) archives about Josip Broz Tito: Симић, Деспот, *Тито, строго поверљиво. Архивски документи*. About the results of psycho-political analysis of Tito's personality see: Адамовић, *Три диктатора: Стаљин, Хитлер, Тито. Психополитичка паралела*. This is so far the best and most completed Tito's psycho-biography. One of the most glorifying Tito's biography by the western authors is: Fajn, *Diktatori mogu imati blagotvoran uticaj: izuzetan slučaj Josipa Broza Tita*. One of the most balanced and objective Tito's biographies so far is: Симић, *Тито: Феномен 20. века*.

<sup>19</sup> *Archives of Yugoslavia* (AJ), top secret report of Belgrade special police about „Tito“ (originally written in Cyrillic and stamped).

what means at the same time all of those whom the others had to carry. And this is not for the first time, but it is already common practice by Tito's soldiers as claimed by the source. That is what testifies local informants whose testimonies are the foundations of writing of this police report. So, in reality probably it left nothing from post-war Partisan propaganda about Partisan humanity for their wounded comrades as presented, for instance, in well known Tito's regime's sponsored Partisan action movie "Battle on the River of Neretva" (about the event from 1943).

In the context of our particular contribution to the revision of official Titographic "history" of "our [Yugoslav] nations and nationalities" during the World War II we would like to deal in the next pages with the crucial research problem of this paper: the real nature of the relationships between Tito's Partisans and Pavelić's Ustashi. In fact, after the breakup and dispersal of Titoslovakia in the 1990s at the hands of the researchers are coming more and more of the relevant archival material confirms (so far only the "Chetnik propaganda from abroad" according to the Yugoslav Titographic "historians") the open, systematic and strategic cooperation of the Croatian Ustashi with Tito's Partisans (two armies from the same state territory – Independent State of Croatia, and both led by the Croats). In this particular case, which we would like briefly to elaborate, we will deal with documented collaboration between the Nazi Ustashi and the Communist Partisans in the area already mentioned above – the territory around Gacko. More precisely, the territory of the Valley of Gacko in the Independent State of Croatia (today in the Republic of Croatia).

This valley as a whole Gacko area is named after the River of Gacka which spreads from Medak over Gospić and Gorski Kotar until Serbian Moravica in the north nearby the border with Slovenia (Kranjska). In this area there were Italian, Ustashi, Partisan and Chetnik ("Dinara Chetnik Division" under the command of a former priest and a war duke Momčilo Đujić) military formations. Tito's Partisans with the Soviet military insignia during the entire war period tried by the military strikes of guerrilla type to take over this area from the hands of the "Dinara Chetnik Division", but they did not succeed. One of the crucial reasons for their failure was the fact that the local Serbs (who have been a majority of population in the area) mainly sided with the royalist Chetniks (the Yugoslav Army in the Fatherland), but not with the Croat-led Partisans. However, the crucial reason for such policy of the local Serb population was double-natured: 1) the apparent cooperation with Pavelić's Ustashi by Tito's Partisans, and 2) participation in the genocidal anti-Serb policy of the Ustashi regime in Zagreb by the Communist-Partisan "Supreme Staff of Croatia". It was exactly in this area during the World War II to happen an open and unequivocal collaboration between the Ustashi and the Partisan unites. One of the classic examples of such collaboration was the case of two Croat brothers – Ivo Rukavina, a commander of the Communist-Partisan "Supreme Staff of Croatia" and Juca Rukavina, a commander of the most notorious Nazi Ustashi military (SS) formation –

the "Black Legion".<sup>20</sup>

About what kind of concrete Partisan-Ustashi collaboration on the military field, in this case was told by historical first-hand source which is saying that the Communist formations were drawn on a "people's assembly" in the village of Kunić at a time when 1,500 Ustashi soldiers were passing through the territory of Kordun and Lika with the aim to slaughter the local Serb villagers. So, at the moment when one brother Croat penetrates with his combatants to destroy as much as he can what is Serb, at that same moment, another brother Croat instead of defending the people from slaughtering he is withdrawing his military forces from the direction of passing of the formations of the second brother to some "people's" conference. In the other words, those who had to protect the people from slaughtering are rather going to the rural political gatherings.

This is what Mane Pešut, as whiteness, wrote about this event:

While the Partisan heroes played a wheel<sup>21</sup> and having rejoicing, the Ustashi freely exercise their bloody feast. What was the prey, hunting Serbs, was visible at the best according to the kind of killing. Booty was so great, that the Ustashi did not have a time in their innate principle, firstly to do a sadistic torture against the victims and then to kill them, but only to cut their necks. The biggest crime was committed in Tržić and Primišlje and then in Veljun and Perjasica. Many of the victims, who did not die immediately, were transported by the bullock carts to the Chetnik territory in Plaški, where they were given the first aid. Throughout the whole period of the massacre it was not fired a single Partisan rifle to the Ustashi.

This evidence largely resembles the case of the "bloody Kragujevac October" from 1941 when Tito's Partisan units literally had a great rejoice in the nearby village of Divostin during the shooting of Kragujevac civilians (2,300 including and 300 pupils from the city Gymnasium) in front of the city (Šumarice) by the Germans. The Communist leaders explained their behavior to Divostin peasants that, according to their strategy, whoever is not with them (the Partisans) is against them.<sup>22</sup>

However, this is not the end of the collaboration story of two Croat brothers from a family of Rukavina. In fact, there

20 Пешут, *Револуција у Лици*, 181–217. Mane Pešut was a commander of the battalion of „Dinara Chetnik Division“. After the war he immigrated to the West Germany where he wrote mentioned book that is a first-hand historical source written in a form of memoirs. Pešut was editing in West Germany the journal „White Eagles“.

21 The wheel (*kolo*) is a typical popular playing of the Serbs.

22 When the (trans-Drina) Partisans occupied the city of Kragujevac in Central Serbia in October 1944 they executed several thousands of civilians under the accusation to be the „collaborators“ and „national betrayers“ of whom 4,700 were buried at the same graves as those from October 1941 execution case. However, in 1945 the Communist authorities of Yugoslavia officially reported to the International Red Cross organization in Geneva that the Germans executed 7,000 Kragujevac civilians in October 1941. In the other words, all corps from the Kragujevac „Šumarice Memorial Park“ (2,300+4,700) are officially treated after the World War II by both the Yugoslav (titographic) historiography and state authorities as those executed in October 1941 by the Germans.

is evidence by Captain Ilija Popović, who was an officer of the American intelligence service known as the OSS (later the CIA) who was sent as an intelligence connection to Tito's Partisan units during the conference in Tehran in November 1943.<sup>23</sup> The American officer with his own eyes saw the Ustashi commander Juca Rukavina as a guest at a banquet organized by the Partisan Staff, just during the time of the session of the "big three" in Tehran, when among other things, it was discussed and the fate of the post-war Yugoslavia. On this occasion, the Political Commissar of the host Partisan detachments invited and Captain Ilija Popović to the dinner and the banquet event. From this dinner and banquet we have a first-hand source testimony from the U.S. intelligence officer Ilija Popović who wrote:

I came to a house and saw two Lieutenants (Ustashi) and Major Rukavina (also Ustashi) as they are sitting around table. Major Rukavina was wearing a German suit with the German Iron Cross. I then said to Commissioner: "I did not come to Yugoslavia to sit and eat with the bloodsuckers who murdered Serbian people. I have come to fight against them." Four times I came to Yugoslavia and never saw that the Partisans were fighting the Germans. From Yugoslavia I brought out many wounded men to Italy and every man told me that his wounds are not from the enemies, but: "My wounds are from my brother"<sup>24</sup>

On direct cooperation and collaboration between the Communist Partisans and the Nazi Ustashi on the territory of the Independent State of Croatia indicates and the map of the Ustashi crimes against the Serbian population made by Bogdan L. Bolta (a participant in the war events) who in his book on Gračanska Chetnik Brigade concludes on the basis of the facts:

We know that where there were the Chetnik units in Southern Lika, or anywhere, the Ustashi were not able to kill a single Serb through the mass slaughtering. But there, where there were the Partisans, and even with their strong forces, such as they had in the Central Lika and Krbava, in the counties of Uduba and Korenica, the Ustashi in those local Serbian villages were without disturbance massacring [the Serbs] during the war, just they did it and

in 1941. It has been proven that the party Partisan Command of Croatia in the summer and fall of 1942 intentionally was removing the Partisan units from the Serbian villages in this part of Lika, in order to open the way for the Ustashi, to commit massacres in them.<sup>25</sup>

To the same conclusion about the Partisan-Ustashi political and military collaboration on the territory of the entire Independent State of Croatia tells and another one map named as "Massacres of the Serbs in Yugoslavia (April 1941–August 1942)" from the book: Кнежевић, *Слобода или смрт*, 44.

New German documents from the German archives on collaboration between the Partisans and the Ustashi in their joint fight against the Chetniks (the Yugoslav Army in the Fatherland) of Jezdimir Dangić<sup>26</sup> are published in 2005 in Belgrade scientific journal *Vojnoistorijski glasnik (Military Historical Review)* issued by the Military Historical Institute dealing with the review of the book by the German historian Klaus Schmider *The Partisan War in Yugoslavia 1941–1944*. According to the book review, the author of the book claims that the collapse of the Chetnik units of Jezdimir Dangić in Bosnia and Herzegovina was "influenced by tactical cooperation between the Ustashi and the Partisans at the beginning of April 1942, which lasted about two weeks. During this period, the Ustashi twice delivered ammunition to the Partisans".<sup>27</sup>

We would like to point out to a document from the Yugoslav archives, which also clearly indicates to direct collaboration of the Partisans with the Ustashi. It is, in fact, the order by the Supreme Headquarters of Josip Broz Tito's "People's Liberation Army and the Partisan Detachments of Yugoslavia" (NOV i POJ)<sup>28</sup> as strictly confidential dispatches that is registered under № 785 dated July 25<sup>th</sup>, 1943. A part of the order that is for us at the moment of the most importance is:

To as soon as establish the connection with the Ustashi of the comrade Drekalom, who is sent by the General Staff of the Ustashi in Zagreb. He is visiting the places where there are Ustashi units and propagates, i.e. orders, a fusion of Ustashi with the Partisans...according to obtained instructions from Zagreb. So far, he visited all of the Ustashi units that are located in the Coastal area, and as

23 The Allies (USA, UK and USSR) of the anti-Fascist coalition at this conference, which lasted from November 28<sup>th</sup> to December 1<sup>st</sup>, 1943 recognized the Partisans of Josip Broz Tito as the allied and anti-Fascist force, but only under the pressure by Stalin and, more importantly, the Partisan movement became recognized by the "big three" as the only legitimate political representative of the whole Yugoslavia. On the conflict between on one hand the Soviet Government and on the other the Yugoslav Royal Government in London and the Yugoslav Army in the Fatherland, see: Popović, *Jugoslovensko-sovjetski odnosi*, 90–108. One of the best mini anthologies of the documents of the Government in exile of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia during the World War II was published in 2008: Николић, *Владе Краљевине Југославије*.

24 This testimony by the American Captain Ilija Popović is taken from the journal *Погледи*, Kragujevac, № 74, January 11<sup>th</sup>, 1991. As direct evidence of collaboration between Tito's Partisans and Pavelić's Ustashi during the World War II serves and authentic photo showing the Ustashi soldier (standing) and one Partisan (on horseback) to be handled in their uniforms and with guns surrounded by several of their fellow soldiers. The photo is published in: Самарџић, *Фалсификати комунистичке историје*, 163.

25 Bolta, *Gračanska četnička brigada*, 205–206.

26 Major Jezdimir Dangić was a commander of the Chetnik units of the Yugoslav Army in the Fatherland in the Eastern Bosnia and Herzegovina till April 1942. On this territory he was protecting Serbian civilians from the Croat Ustashi massacres. He became arrested in April 1942 by the Germans and sent to the lager of Styj (Stryi) in at that time the Southeastern Poland (Galicia, present-day Ukraine).

27 Citation according to the book: *Равногорска омладина у рату 1941–1945*, 332.

28 That was official name for the Partisan units of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia from December 1942 till March 1945. From March 1945 till 1951 Tito's armed forces were named as „Yugoslav Army“ (JA), but from 1951 their name was „Yugoslav People's Army“ (JNA). However, their original name from July 1941 till January 1942 was „People's Liberation Partisan Detachments of Yugoslavia“ (NOPOJ), but from January till December 1942 they changed the name into „People's Liberation Partisan and Volunteer Army of Yugoslavia“ (NOP i DVJ).



rearmost he visited Imotski. After the meeting in Imotski he went publicly to the Western part of the Imotski county's villages of Studenica, Aržano, Lovreno and Čista, in order to determine the details with them. With him cooperates Boglić, a Ustashi Headquarters' member from Omiš, like most of the Franciscan friars, who on his account are doing the fiercest propaganda in this direction. These data were received from comrade Colonel A. Jovanović and as completely accurate they are submitted to you for the orientation. In regard with this, immediately get in touch with comrade Drekaló and if you have not done it in relation to previously issued instructions start with the organization of the "U-2" territory on this basis.<sup>29</sup>

### 3. Agreements on Collaboration

From all the above we believe that it is clear that the coordination of military operations, political and tactical cooperation between Tito's Partisans and Pavelić's Ustashi during the World War II on the territory of the Independent State of Croatia was planned and systematically carried out during the whole war. From the military and tactical sense, this cooperation was based on an agreement between Corporal/Marshal Josip Broz Tito and Führer Ante Pavelić at the end of December 1941 when at the meeting between Secretary-General of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia, Josip Broz Tito and representatives of the Croatian Ustashi in Rogatica (Bosnia) was obtained the consent by the Ustashi leader Ante Pavelić to deliver weapons and ammunition to Broz's Partisans and to permit for them both an uninterrupted residence and free passing through the territory of the Independent State of Croatia. Based on this agreement between two Croat armies the Partisan supreme military and political leadership resided on the territory of the Independent State of Croatia from January 25<sup>th</sup> until the May 25<sup>th</sup> 1942 without any interruption in the Bosnian town of Foča although in this region there were both Ustashi and Italian garrisons and even to the range of their guns, mortars and machine guns. This smooth residence of the Partisan military and political leadership of almost half a year on the territory of the Independent State of Croatia was a result of the signing Ustashi-Partisan agreement on collaboration after January 12<sup>th</sup>, 1942 when Tito's special commissioner Edvard Kardelj (a Slovene), as a member of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia, went from Čevljanovići (nearby Rogatica) to Zagreb in order to sign this agreement and then travelled to Ljubljana. The Ustashi deputy from Sarajevo came to Tito's headquarters in Foča already on February 16<sup>th</sup>, 1942 with Pavelić's personal letter for the formation and arming of the Communist "Second Proletarian Brigade". The ammunition and weapons from the Ustashi were soon delivered to this newly formed Partisan

brigade on the territory of Mataruga, near Čajniče. On this occasion, the Ustashi delivering of the ammunition and weapons by one Ustashi major from notorious "Black Legion" of Jure Francetić was accepted by the Partisan commander Sava Kovačević (later on in 1943 he was shot in the back from the Partisan rifle during the "Sutjeska Battle") and Sava Brković, a senior Communist political commissar. Such a well-armed just formed Partisan the "Second Proletarian Brigade" was immediately sent to a nearby battlefield around Srebrenica and Vlasenica in the Eastern Bosnia, where in collaboration with the local Ustashi formations was fighting against the detachments of the Yugoslav Army in the Fatherland under the command of Majors Dangić and Todorović.

J. B. Tito at the end of March 1942 sent his two officials, Ivo Lola Ribar and Petar Velebit, to negotiate an agreement with the Ustashi authorities on getting certain territory for the Partisans in the Independent State of Croatia in the case that they will be expelled from Montenegro (under Italian protectorate) due to a popular revolt against both the Communists and the Italians. I. L. Ribar and P. Velebit (both Croats) went together with the Ustashi Colonel Bećir Kulenović (a Muslim Bosniak) from Zagreb. While Bećirović left in Sarajevo until the day when a meeting with Tito should be agreed upon, Ribar and Velebit continued travelling together with the assigned Ustashi escort soldiers and arrived in Foča via Goražde to J. Broz Tito on April 1<sup>st</sup>, 1942. Then it was agreed about the exact date of the meeting between Tito and the official representatives of the Independent State of Croatia in the town of Rogatica – April 5<sup>th</sup>, 1942. From the Partisan side this meeting with the Ustashi representatives was attended by Tito himself, Peter Velebit and a member of the British military mission to Tito's Supreme Headquarters – Major Terence Atherton.<sup>30</sup> As the negotiators from the side of the Independent State of Croatia appeared Sulejman Filipović and Bećir Kulenović together with other Muslims from Sarajevo. On this occasion in Rogatica it was agreed between the Ustashi and the Partisans on the precise conditions under which Tito's forces can cross over (from the east to the west) the territory of the Independent State of Croatia to their assigned areas in the Western Bosnia. On this "liberated" (by the Titoist historiography) territory in the second half of 1942 the Communists proclaimed the "Republic of Bihać" that was after the "Republic of Užice" (in the autumn 1941 in the Western Serbia) the second Soviet-style republic founded by Tito's Communists and Partisans on the territory of Yugoslavia.

At the beginning of June 1942, due to the anger of the people of Montenegro to the politics of the "left turn" by the

29 Citation according to the book: *Равногорска омладина у рату 1941–1945*, 336.

30 Major Terence Atherton (1903–1942), who was married to a Muslim from Sarajevo, was together with his technician liquidated by Tito's Partisans around April 16<sup>th</sup>, 1942 at the moment when he wanted to send a radiogram to his British command about the result of an agreement between Tito's and Pavelić's representatives. However, Broz after the liquidation officially announced that the British major, together with General Novaković, left his headquarters and defected to the side of the Chetniks who had allegedly killed him.

Partizans and the red terror by the Communists (“Tito’s dogs’ cemeteries” in Montenegro and the Eastern Herzegovina) Broz was in Plužine eventually forced to make a decision on the implementation of the agreement with the Ustashi in Rogatica. Following this decision, the remains of the First and Second Communist Proletarian Brigades, along with a Third Sandžak Brigade and two Montenegrin proletarian brigades started in early June 1942 to leave the territory of Durmitor Mt. in the Northern Montenegro by crossing over Volujak. Broz’s detachments were on their way from Kalinovik to Trnovo supplied by Sarajevo Ustashi with trucks full of food and ammunition. However, the official Ustashi report says that those tracks the Partisans captured from the Ustashi who have been allegedly ambushed and attacked by the Partisans on the road. This farce with alleged capture of large quantities of weapons and ammunition from the Ustashi by the Partisans will be very often repeated until the end of the war when even very well equipped and supplied Ustashi garrison were “seized” by the Partisans, but in fact they were voluntarily and amicably handed over to the Communists according to the Ustashi–Partisan bilateral agreements. It is necessary to mention that the German command in the territory of the Independent State of Croatia, headed by Glez von Horstenau, accepted both direct and indirect cooperation agreements between Pavelić’s Ustashi and Broz’s Partisans in order to maintain a balance, a control of the warring forces, and most importantly, the mutual destruction of the Partisans and Mihailović’s Chetniks.<sup>31</sup> However, this cooperation Berlin, and especially Hitler, never approved.

A ceded territory within the Independent State of Croatia to the Partisans encompassed the area between the towns of Karlovac, Livno and Petrinja with a center in the town of Bihać. At such a way, the Ustashi regime in Zagreb provided “liberated territory” to Broz’s soldiers of about 15 districts of Bosanska Krajina, Lika, Korduna and Banije, but this fact did not stop the Ustashi to continue with their genocidal policies against the local Serbian civilians on this territory ceded to the Partisans for the very reason that the Partisans did not defend civilians at all.<sup>32</sup> On this, according to the

Communist post-war historiography, “liberated territory” (“Republic of Bihać”), Josip Broz Tito convened in Bihać two days (November 26<sup>th</sup>–27<sup>th</sup>, 1942) session of the first revolutionary “people’s council” (i.e., a Bolshevik Soviet) – Anti-Fascist Council for the People’s Liberation of Yugoslavia (AVNOJ).<sup>33</sup> The same AVNOJ had a year later (November 29<sup>th</sup>–30<sup>th</sup>, 1943) also two days session (the “Second” one) on the Ustashi controlled territory in Bosnia-Herzegovina in the town of Jajce when Broz’s Communists decided to proclaim themselves as the only legitimate political power in the country – i.e., committed a *coup d’état*. However, both of these AVNOJ sessions were absolutely undisturbed by the local Ustashi detachments and Croatian government in Zagreb. The Second session in 1943 was held on the newly “liberated” territory by the Partisans from the Ustashi where it was proclaimed a new Soviet (Bolshevik) republic (“Republic of Jajce”) in the Central Bosnia-Herzegovina. Broz’s Partisans on the ceded territory around Bihać were successively aided by the Ustashi government in Zagreb in combat gear, weapons, ammunition and food so that they were completely able to reorganize their detachments and to transform them into a powerful army to be ready for conquering of Serbia. On this “liberated” territory with Ustashi support Tito succeeded to form from survived Serb refugees before the Ustashi soldiery the First and Second Proletarian Divisions, Third Montenegrin Strike Division, two divisions of Krajina Serbs, one division of Lika Serbs, one division of Banija Serbs and one Dalmatia

31 About German-Partisan cooperation at the local level can be shown by the fact that strong German forces in the fall 1941 simply handed over to Tito’s Partisans entire city of Užice in the Western Serbia with the factory for the manufacturing and repairing the weapons and ammunition. It is very strange and unusual that the Germans did not destroy or dismantle this factory before they left the city regardless the fact that they had quite enough time to do that. Moreover, there was no real need for the Germans to leave the city at all taking into account the fact that the Partisan units have been at that time weak. Military-political interplay between the Partisans, the Germans and the Yugoslav Army in the Fatherland on the area of occupied Serbia during the World War II was analyzed in the book: Grujić, *Boromejski čvor*.

32 The Independent State of Croatia was declared on April 10<sup>th</sup>, 1941 as fascist state. However, in many ways it was different from its models and the sponsors: the Nazi Germany and the Fascist Italy. The Ustashi ideologues have always openly insisted that this state was based primarily on the teachings of the Roman Catholic Church especially from the time of the so-called “Social Catholicism”. The state was mainly a Roman Catholic dictatorial ideological construction based on the idea of the medieval crusades against the infidels (in this case against the Orthodox Serbs). It was accepted Vatican’s standpoint that democracy,

parliamentarism and liberalism are destructive teachings leading to atheism of the society. Croatian Roman Catholic masses in the Independent State of Croatia were swayed by the ideological propaganda that this Roman Catholic country creates a future community of God on earth, but of course, without infidels – the Orthodox Serbs. Therefore, the main route guidance became “Civitas Dei”. In contrast to the Orthodox Christianity, which was declared to be unbelief, the Islam was accepted as a nest of the Croatian nation. A basic Ustashi political goal was to create through a comprehensive genocide against the Serb Orthodox population a necessary majority of the Croatian Roman Catholic population within the borders of the Independent State of Croatia (including and Bosnia-Herzegovina). According to the original Ustashi concept, the first huge concentration and death camp for the Orthodox Serbs was to be built somewhere in the sector of the lower River of Neretva in Herzegovina. However, since the Italian occupation authorities did not allow the Ustashi regime in Zagreb to build such a camp on their (southern) occupation sector of the ex-Yugoslavia, the Ustashi government did it on the River of Sava in the village of Jasenovac that was in the German occupation (northern) zone (Екмечић, *Дуго кретање између клања и орања*, 445–446). On the direct complicity of the clergy of the Roman Catholic Church in the commission of the crime of genocide in the death camp of Jasenovac is best illustrated by the fact that three commanders of this death and sadistic camp were the Roman Catholic priests alongside with the another fact that a huge number of them (especially the members of the Franciscan order) participated in the Ustasha crimes against the Orthodox Serbs in the Independent State of Croatia. Most bloodthirsty among all Roman Catholic priests was the commander of Jasenovac death camp – a monk Miroslav Filipović-Majstorović (known as “friar Satan”), who was before the war, a Franciscan friar and a chaplain in the village of Petričevac in Bosnia. Friar Filipović was even once held a Holy Mass in a Roman Catholic church in the bloody Ustashi uniform and with a gun on the belt through which pulled the priest’s cassock (Алмули, *Јевреји и Срби у Јасеновцу*, 263). About the role of the Roman Catholic Church in the baptism and the massacres of the Orthodox Serbs in the Independent State of Croatia, see: Ривели, *Надбискуп геноцида*.

33 AVNOJ – „Antifašističko vijeće narodnog oslobođenja Jugoslavije“.

division (around 25,000 soldiers). Later, all of these Partisan divisions became a core of the Communist army in its conquest of Belgrade and Serbia in the autumn 1944.<sup>34</sup>

It was during staying in this ceded territory within the Independent State of Croatia by the Ustashi regime in Zagreb in the middle and second half in 1942 when the Politbureau of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia revealed to us the essence of the Communist-Partisan way of combat for the sake of the revolutionary conquest of power. It was exactly a speech given by the top Communist Moshe Pijade at the First session of the AVNOJ in November 1942 in the town of Bihać in the Western Bosnia who, as a senior member of the Politbureau of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia, shortly and clearly explained what was the best way of creating a Partisan army led by Josip Broz Tito:

It is necessary therefore to create so many homeless people in order to be the majority in the country.

Therefore, we need to burn. We will fire and withdraw. The Germans are not going to find us, but they will for revenge burn villages. Then the villagers, who will remain without a roof, will by themselves come to us and we will have the people with us, and we will thus become a master of the situation. Those who have no home or land or cattle, will quickly join us, because we promise them a big heist. The harder it will be with those who have some property. We will attract them by lectures, theater performances and other propaganda... We will gradually go through all the provinces. The farmer who owns a house, land, cattle, a worker who receives a salary and bread for us is useless. We have to make them homeless, proletarians... Only unfortunates become the Communists, because we have to create the misfortune, to throw the masses to desperation, we are mortal enemies of any welfare, law and order...<sup>35</sup>

#### 4. The Roots and Reasons for the Collaboration between the Ustashi and the Communists/Partisans

The roots and causes of the wartime collaboration between the Ustashi and the Communists/Partisans date back to the time of the prewar Kingdom of Yugoslavia, and, on the basis

of documentary material, at least from the year of 1932. The reasons for this collaboration were of the ideological-political nature and their basis is a common goal of both sides to destroy the Kingdom of Yugoslavia and on its ruins to form the new states including at the first a Greater Croatia. In order to achieve this goal, the Communist Party of Yugoslavia was logically supporting all anti-Yugoslav movements and their actions and, of course, has sought to establish close cooperation with them. Given a fact that the Croats were the most numerous in Yugoslavia after the Serbs as well as that their financial and industrial bourgeoisie was strongest in the country it was logical that the Communist Party of Yugoslavia will support all kinds of Croatian nationalism, anti-Yugoslav policy and separatism for the sake of breaking the Kingdom of Yugoslavia. Such policy the Communist Party of Yugoslavia even officially included into its party program as a long-term political goal of the Yugoslav Communists. Therefore, it is not at all surprising that in the interwar period, the Communist Party of Yugoslavia openly supported, even in its public media, (a Greater) Croatian Revolutionary Organization (*Hrvatska revolucionarna organizacija* – HRO), i.e. the Ustashi movement, formed in 1929. For instance, the official “Magazine of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia (Section of the Communist International)”, how exactly was the title of the magazine – *Proleter*, at No. 28 from December 1932 (i.e., less than two years before the assassination of the Yugoslav King Alexander in France by the Croatian Revolutionary Organization) published an article on the support of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia to the Ustashi movement. The first and main paragraph of the article reads as follows:

The Communist Party welcomes the Ustashi movement of Lika and Dalmatian peasants and placed itself completely on their side. It is the duty of all Communist organizations and every Communist to facilitate the movement, to organize and to lead. At the same time the Communist Party indicates the current shortcomings and mistakes in this movement, which are explained by the fact that the Croatian Fascist elements are playing in the movement so far a significant impact. (Pavelić Perčec), who are against developing of one Serbian mass movement against Greater Serbian military-fascist dictatorship because they fear that such movement will turn not only against the dictatorship but also against themselves and their Italian masters. Therefore, they are limited to the actions of small units and methods of individual terror.<sup>36</sup>

Such a Communist perspective on the Communist-Ustashi collaboration is directly inspired by the attitudes of the Stalinist Comintern (under direct and hegemonic leadership of Georgian Josef Visarionovich Dzhugashvili Stalin) on the resolution of the “national” questions across Europe. It means in practice that any real or fabricated nation have the right to self-determination to the final territorial secession. Therefore, the Communist Party of Yugoslavia, influenced by

34 Минић, *Расуте косту (1941–1945)*, 140, 173. Here we will mention one documentary report by the German army general, obergruppenführer Arthur von Flebsa, from the territory of the Independent State of Croatia on Ustashi-Partisan open collaboration. A sector of Flebsa's commands included the South Dalmatian and parts of Bosnian-Herzegovinian territory. The General was in 1943 and 1944 sending the military reports directly to Himmler in Berlin and he took his private war diary. So, Flebsa writes about five Ustashi officers who went to the Partisan side but before that they issued to their men a short command: “Run away to save your lives!” ... “Ustashi battalion at the confluence of the River of Neretva is unable to reject even the simplest attack by the bandits, they are running cowardly away after the first bullet... and they are informing the Partisans. One Ustashi detachment even sold the ammunition to the Partisans” (Tagesbuch Nr. Ia&545).

35 *Archives of the Military-Historical Institute* (AVI), Belgrade, Speech by Moshe Pijade at the First session of AVNOJ, Staff of the Supreme Command, Chetnik Archives, K-12, 30/12.

36 *Proleter*.

the Comintern, accepted the standpoint that the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes (from 1929 the Kingdom of Yugoslavia) was a “Versailles creation” in 1919 despite the fact that Croatia’s Zagreb proclaimed the unification with the “Kingdom of Serbia and Montenegro” even during the war on November 23<sup>rd</sup>, 1918,<sup>37</sup> i.e., before the start of sessions of the postwar international conference in Paris and the castles around the city. In fact, the Communist Party of Yugoslavia’s Central Committee’s Politbureau adopted an official position of the Comintern from its Fifth Congress in Moscow in 1924 following the suggestions of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia itself, that the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, as a “Versailles creation of a Greater Serbia”, has to be destroyed what meant that every anti-Serb and anti-Yugoslav alliance and action were legitimate and welcome. On this occasion, it was adopted and issued a special resolution in Moscow on the national question in Yugoslavia with a request for creation of independent states of Croatia, Slovenia and Macedonia, i.e., for territorial destruction of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes. At the same time, the Croatian Republican Peasant Party (the HRSS) was by Stalin himself labeled as an advanced and revolutionary party with which the Yugoslav Communists should cooperate. Here it is necessary to point out that the resolution of the Comintern in 1924 did not schedule an independence of Bosnia-Herzegovina and Montenegro from Yugoslavia and also did not determine any borders of “Slovenia”, “Croatia” and “Macedonia”. Therefore, the question of the republican-national borders was practically left to be solved by the Yugoslav Communists by themselves after the war with a new Moscow policy that (Communist) Yugoslavia has to exist. It was finally done in 1946 without any public debate on the border issue and with official proclaiming of the three new nations: the “Montenegrins”, “Macedonians” and “Muslims”. The Communist Party of Yugoslavia accepted the 1924 Comintern policy on the rights of peoples to self-determination up to the final territorial secession from existing and internationally recognized states. This policy was in the case of Yugoslavia finally realized in the 1990s with dissolution of the country by the Communists themselves. In sum, in 1924 under the direct influence of the Comintern the Yugoslav Communists have adopted the official position of Soviet Moscow that the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes /Yugoslavia was an artificial creation of the Versailles Order after the World War I that became a formal justification for the Yugoslav Communists to adopted an official policy guidelines on the destruction of Yugoslavia until 1935 when the Comintern changed a policy towards Yugoslav state and its territorial integrity. Anyway, Communist-Ustashi collaboration was a crucial one in any combination of the destruction of Yugoslavia from inside (no matter before or after the World War II).

The Communist final policy about breaking up the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes/Yugoslavia was finally shaped at the Fourth Congress of the Communist

Party of Yugoslavia in Dresden in November 1928 (held in the building of the Party School of the Communist Party of Germany – “Rosa Luxemburg”) when the destruction of the Yugoslav state was included in the official program of the Party. At the same time, the Yugoslav proletariat was called to the fight to defeat the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes and to contribute to the victory of the Soviet government in Moscow in the coming imperialistic war planned by the Western countries against the Soviet Union. On this occasion, it was adopted and the revolutionary task of the Yugoslav Communists to lead the peasants and other oppressed national masses in the upcoming civil war in order to destroy the “current imperialistic state of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes for full national independence of the oppressed nations, the overthrowing of the bourgeoisie, the workers’ and peasants’ government and for the establishment of a Balkan federation of the republics of the workers and peasants”.<sup>38</sup> Here should be given a special attention to the fact that the text of the 1928 “Dresdner Resolution” of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia in the linguistic sense is very much coloured with a standardized vocabulary of the Croatian language which says a lot about the character of the leadership of the Party, which phrased the Resolution. The Yugoslav Communists in their anti-Yugoslav and anti-Serbian policy were even ready to collaborate with Mussolini’s Italy or Horthy’s Hungary in order to destroy their main political enemy – the Kingdom of Yugoslavia. Thus, Milan Gorkić (i.e., Joseph Čizinski, who was from the second half of 1932 an interim Secretary General of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia, appointed directly by the Comintern in Moscow) declared in April 1929 that in the case of rebellion in Croatia the Party must make “temporary strategic agreement with foreign imperialism” (Italy and Hungary) and even to give to those countries some Yugoslav territories, for the sake of destroying Yugoslavia and her regime of the “Greater Serbian hegemony” with the help of Rome and Budapest.<sup>39</sup> Subsequently, the Yugoslav Communists were during the World War II loyal to this Gorkić’s declaration and guidelines, collaborating with both the German occupiers and Pavelić’s Croat Ustashi.<sup>40</sup>

The 1928 “Dresden Resolution” of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia was a direct supporting response to the conclusions adopted at the Sixth Congress of the Comintern in 1928 in Moscow that the world is coming closer to a general crisis of the global capitalism which will be followed by the Western imperialistic war against the USSR. Therefore, the Comintern in Moscow issued a directive to all its branches (i.e., the Communist parties) abroad that the Communists have to be prepared for participation in direct class conflict in order to break bourgeoisie order in their

38 Petranović, *Istorija Jugoslavije 1918–1988*, 160. On the territory of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes the first Soviet (Bolshevik) republics were created in Labin, Ptuj and Southeast Banat. In Banat it was established agrarian republic in November 1918 as the „Soviet Republic of Kusići“.

39 Petranović, Zečević, *Agonija dve Jugoslavije*, 191.

40 Минић, *Расује косту (1941–1945)*; Šmider, *Partizanski rat u Jugoslaviji 1941–1945*.

37 Trifunovska, *Yugoslavia Through Documents*, 151–153.

countries by the socialist revolution and to replace it with a socialist order. For that reason, the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia already in 1928 after its congress in Dresden issued a directive for organizing of the armed uprising in the Kingdom of Yugoslavia for the sake of its dissolution.

The first concrete political cooperation between the Croatian Ustashi movement and the Yugoslav Communists occurred already in 1932 when the Communists called all Yugoslav peoples in open rebellion against the Kingdom of Yugoslavia in order to assist the Croatian national revolutionaries (the Ustashi) in their fight against the royal dictatorship (introduced on January 6<sup>th</sup>, 1929). This Ustashi uprising broke out in September 1932 when, with the help of Mussolini's Italy, an Ustashi group attacked a Yugoslav gendarmerie station in the village of Brušani at Velebit Mt. in Dalmatia with the intent to launch a mass uprising against the Kingdom of Yugoslavia for the establishment of an independent Greater Croatia on the basis of the "Croatian historical and state's rights". Thus, in this case, Mussolini's Italy, Pavelić's Ustashi and the Yugoslav Communists became politically united in their mutual collaboration.

One of the most important documents and details from the history of pre-war collaboration between Pavelić's Ustashi and the Communist Party of Yugoslavia is a concrete and comprehensive "Agreement between the Communist Party and the Croatian Ustashi liberation movement" reached in June 1935 and signed by Moshe Pijade for the Communist side and Dr. Mile Budak for the Ustashi movement in a prison of Sremska Mitrovica. The aim of this agreement was a very clear and unambiguous: a total destruction of the Yugoslav state and everything that was Serbian and Christian Orthodox.<sup>41</sup> The text of the agreement became publically known in the World War II as Serbia's government of General Milan Nedić reprinted it several times and at such a way informing the Serbs who were the Communists and Broz's Partisans and for whom and what fore they have been fighting in the war. However, it is true that from a historiographical-scientific-methodological point of view there is a problem of authenticity of this crucial document on Ustashi-Communist collaboration as the text of the agreement is preserved only in the transcript, i.e. not in the original form. Therefore, the only argument against the Communist-Ustashi collaboration by the post-war titographic "historiography" is that this document was misused as pure war propaganda by the government of General Milan Nedić ("Nedić's forgery") against the patriotic freedom fighters Partisans. However, by using the basic principles of analogical methods we come to the conclusion that such an agreement (written, signed or oral no matter) between the Communists and the Ustashi certainly existed since the

crucial points of it on the destruction of the Orthodox Serbs were implemented by both sides during and after the World War II. In this sense, we have to notice at least six facts:

1. The Communist Party of Yugoslavia did not issue any communiqué in regard to the proclamation of the Independent State of Croatia in Zagreb on April 10<sup>th</sup>, 1941 but we know that the Yugoslav Communists were well known for their propensity for issuing the party's communiqués on every political occasion and new situation.
2. Broz's Partisans during the whole World War II even did not think to try to liberate the most notorious death camp in Europe – Jasenovac (the "Ninth Circle of Hell", the "Balkan Auschwitz") in which the Ustashi soldiers killed up to 700,000 men including and children of whom the ethnic Serbs were the overwhelming majority.<sup>42</sup>
3. After the war the new Communist authorities transformed the death camp of Jasenovac into very beautiful park by destroying and removing all camp buildings and other material proofs of the genocide (totally different policy in comparison with the post-war Auschwitz, for instance). It is even erected a monument (called "Cracked Rose") in 1966 devoted to all camp's victims but which consists of four Latin letters "U" which Pavelić's Ustashi soldiers wore on their caps as an official insignia of the movement.
4. Josip Broz Tito (of Croat-Slovene origin), as a President of the post-war Yugoslavia for 35 years, never visited the place of Jasenovac and never participated in any of annual commemoration meetings on the place of this wartime „slaughtering house“ or any other mass-grave place of the Serbs on the territory of the Ustashi-run Independent State of Croatia.
5. About direct wartime collaboration between the Croatian Ustashi and the Croat-led Communist Party of Yugoslavia and its People's Liberation Army (the Partisan movement) of Josip Broz Tito in order to be solved the Serbian question in the Independent State of Croatia indirectly tells the case from July 31<sup>st</sup>, 1966 just at the opening ceremony of the memorial museum to the victims of the Jasenovac death camp (a "factory of death"). In fact, as one of the guests and also the official representative of the governing structures of Croatia at this ceremony was present and the President of the Parliament of the Socialist Republic of Croatia – Stevo Krajačić, who was one of the most trusted associates of Tito. However, when the opening ceremony ended but thinking that the microphones are muted, Krajačić turned to the Serbian Partisan soldiers (his wartime comrades) telling them literally: "Here, we kill you not enough". Nevertheless, the microphones were not turned off and as a consequence after this scandal Krajačić was forced to resign from the post.<sup>43</sup>

41 The most important parts of this Communist-Ustashi collaboration agreement is published in: Самарини, *Сарадња партизана*, 66–67 according to *Archives of the Military-Historical Institute* (AVI), Belgrade, Agreement Pijade-Budak. Additional facts on the Communist-Ustashi collaboration, the Communist-German collaboration and the role of J. B. Tito in the WWII see in: Pirjevec, *Tito i drugovi*, 104–272.

42 [www.jasenovac.org](http://www.jasenovac.org); [www.jasenovac-info.com](http://www.jasenovac-info.com).

43 Ривели, *Надбукнут геноцида*, 99.

6. It was a very fact that many Ustashi soldiers and officers during the war, but mostly in 1944 and 1945 when it was already clear who is going to be a loser and who a winner, changed a side and finished the war as Tito's Partisans and therefore participated in the Communist mass terror against Serbia's civilians in 1944/1945 when Serbia became occupied by the Partisans who came from the territory of the Independent State of Croatia. It is estimated that at that time up to 100,000 Serbia's Serbs lost their lives under the Partisan-Ustashi terror under the name of a fight against the "collaborators" with the Germans, i.e., the Chetniks. Nevertheless, two cases of a changing side by the top Ustashi officers are here of extreme relevance as the examples:<sup>44</sup>

- A Croat Franjo Pirc was a commander of the Royal Yugoslav air squadron on April 6<sup>th</sup>, 1941 when the German Luftwaffe started the war against the Kingdom of Yugoslavia by heavily bombing its capital – Belgrade. However, on the military air-port in the city of Niš in Serbia Captain Franjo Pirc burned all his airplanes except one which he used to fly to the Germans who sent him to Croatia where he became a chief commander of all air forces of the Ustashi Independent State of Croatia. During the war, there is a testimony of the US officer Ilija Eli Popovich (of the Serb origin) who was at Tito's General Staff how on one occasion the Ustashi chief commander of all Croatia's air forces – Franjo Pirc came in the official car of the Independent State of Croatia with all Ustashi insignias escorted by the Ustashi soldiers to Josip Broz Tito who organized to him a welcome ceremony with a Partisan guard of honor. Tito was very kind with and welcome to Pirc for whom Broz organized and reach banquet at evening. However, Franjo Pirc at the end of the war joined the Partisans and was appointed by Tito as a commander of the Yugoslav (Partisan) Military Air Forces. Officially, according to the post-war Communist titography, Pirc was even the establisher of the military air forces of the Communist Yugoslavia. After his retirement, Pirc was appointed for the Yugoslav ambassador in Argentina – the country that accepted a huge number of the Ustashi after May 1945.
- A Croat Ustashi General Marko Mesić was a commander of the Ustashi troops during the Battle of Stalingrad where he was arrested by the Soviet soldiers. However, under the personal intervention of Josip Broz Tito, all arrested Croat soldiers became transformed into the People's Army for Yugoslavia's Liberation under Mesić command fighting as a part of the Soviet Red Army. Therefore, redressed Croat Ustashi soldiers took a participation in the Red Army's „liberation“ of Serbia in October 1944

committing the war crimes against her civilians. Nevertheless, a General Marko Mesić became after the war appointed as a commander of the Guard of Josip Broz Tito for many years.

## 5. Conclusions

1. Collaboration between the Croat Ustashi movement and the Croat-led Communist Party of Yugoslavia and its Partisan movement during the World War II on the territory of the Ustashi-governed Independent State of Croatia was a systematic, direct and above all anti-Serb oriented with the main political task to solve the Serbian question on this territory on the most brutal and Croat-favor way.
2. The roots of this collaboration are from the inter-war period when both the Ustashi and the Communists reached an agreement on destruction of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia and the Serbs for the sake of creation of a Croat dominated Greater Croatia.
3. For the Yugoslav Communists and their Partisan movement during the World War II the only military-political enemy was the Yugoslav Army in the Fatherland (the Ravna Gora Movement) commanded by the General Dragoljub Draža Mihailović
4. In order to defeat the Yugoslav Army in the Fatherland, as the only legal representative of the only legal government of Yugoslavia, the Communists collaborated with both the Ustashi and the Germans.
5. After the World War II the Communist quasi-historiography („titography“) did everything to falsify a role of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia and its Partisan movement during the war in order to present itself as a patriots and freedom-fighters.<sup>45</sup>
6. Even today, 70 years after the end of the World War II, the most hidden and untouchable topic of historiographical investigation on the territory of ex-Yugoslavia regarding the World War II history of the Yugoslav peoples is collaboration of the Yugoslav Communists and their Partisan detachments with the Ustashi regime in Zagreb and the Germans.<sup>46</sup>

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<sup>45</sup> With regard to the issue on the titographic forgeries about Josip Broz Tito, Broz's Partisans and the Ravna Gora Movement in 1941–1945, see: Сотировић, *Кривотворине* ([www.partizani.blog.com](http://www.partizani.blog.com)); Самарцић, *Фалсификати комунистичке историје*.

<sup>47</sup> For instance, there is nothing on this issue even in recent historiographic works on the WWII in Yugoslavia like: Fišer, *Balkanski diktatori*.

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