

FOREWORD

THE HUNGARIAN REVOLUTION OF 1956: Yugoslav and Post-Yugoslav Perspectives

FIVE YEARS AGO WE LAUNCHED A COLD WAR research and publishing program covered by *LimesPlus* journal with the issue *Challenging the Shadow of the Iron Curtain* (2013) dedicated to the urban culture and the everyday life in Eastern Europe (Balkans-Finland-Baltic states). This volume, *The Hungarian Revolution of 1956: Yugoslav and post-Yugoslav Perspectives* was conceived during the roundtable discussion of Croatian and Serbian historians held in Belgrade on 13 December 2016. Our main topic was Yugoslavia, with its policies and the public impressions, and the neighboring Hungarian Revolution of 1956. Instead of the semi centennial, we managed to mark only the sixty years from the Hungarian Revolution. The delay probably confirmed unwillingness in a general need to face all the consequences of the absence of organized resistance to the Soviet domination and communism in the Second Yugoslavia. The inability of Yugoslavia to understand and support the Cold War resistance movements in Eastern Europe (DDR, Poland, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, occupied and annexed Baltic republics) was one of the permanent symptoms of its general political weakness that led to its violent end and disintegration.

The 1956 was one of the “worst” years of the Cold War. After the failure of the discontents in DDR in 1953, and in Poland and Hungary in 1956, Eastern Europe was left to decay and dictatorship until the Prague Spring in 1968. After the suppression of the Hungarian Revolution, the U.S. left their allies in the Suez crisis. Yugoslavia approached the Soviet Union. The Western Europe remained deprived of political and moral willingness to accept the consequences of the Soviet occupation and repression, and the collectivist experiments in Eastern Europe, regardless the previous experiences, and similarities, with Nazism and fascism.

Yugoslavia played an important role in Hungarian Revolution. Despite the known facts, we needed new research, perspectives and interpretations. The central points were the Khrushchev and Malenkov meeting with the Yugoslav pres-

ident Tito on the Brijuni residential resort, and the forthcoming Tito's success to persuade Khrushchev to choose János Kádár instead of Ferenc Münnich as the new Hungarian leader. The faith of Hungarian refugees, especially these who fled in Yugoslavia, was not of a less importance within the cadre of the neighboring relations.

For me, personally, this topic has an additional peculiar importance. My father, historian and professor Radovan Samardžić collaborated for several years with professor Béla Király, the army general and the commander of the National Guard in the 1956 Hungarian Revolution, who led the attack on the building of the Central Committee of the Communist Party. From 1964 professor Király taught Military History at Brooklyn College, New York. Maybe that is why this volume could be dedicated to all our successful human ties and all our missed chances.

In Belgrade, 25 December 2017.

Nikola Samardžić