

## Separating victory from defeat:

### A comparative analysis of AVNOJ-NOV and EAM-ELAS strategy

The proposal's central aim is to present a comparative analysis of the two biggest anti-Axis guerilla movements in the Balkan peninsula during the World War II. Both the Yugoslav AVNOJ-NOV and the Greek EAM-ELAS were guerilla movements that had as a driving force the respective Communist Parties of these two countries. Both Communist-led movements succeeded in waging a fierce resistance fight against the Axis occupying forces, while politically radicalizing the masses by inspiring the goal of a new sociopolitical regime based on the socialist principles, or the "people's power" (*λαοκρατία*). The scope of this study is to point out that crucial strategic decisions made by the two actors in political and military level, combined with the interaction of the complex international environment, affected the outcome of the war.

Initially, the analysis highlights aspects of the political strategies of the domestic Communist Parties and focuses on how they were formed during the WWII, and also, how they were impacted by the "popular front" orientation of the Comintern. Also, the author tries to compare the military strategies of AVNOJ and EAM, and to measure the importance of NOV and ELAS to the overall Allied strategy in the Balkans. The last year of the German Occupation proved to be a period of escalating fight, but also the period during which the two movements had to make critical political and military decisions according to their former strategy. In this context, the role of the "external factor" is also examined, firstly by taking into consideration the influence of the Soviet Union in the two actors' decision-making, and secondly their tumultuous relations with the British Empire.

Therefore, on the one hand, the proposal argues that the defeat of ELAS during the Battle of Athens was a *military* defeat, due mainly to the flawed political strategy of the "bourgeois democratic alliance", proposed by EAM. On the other hand, the AVNOJ's victory was mainly the outcome of a decisive and flexible political and military strategy and *less based* in the foreign intervention (Stalin-Churchill agreement), as part of the modern historiography claims.

The proposal's literature comprises a variety of primary (official documents- archives, first-hand accounts) and secondary sources, as outlined below:

## Primary sources:

### Official documents-archives

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