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### Communist "Normal" Life: The Criticism of Daily Life under a Totalitarian Regime

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Communist “Normal” Life: The Criticism of Daily Life under a Totalitarian Regime

Miss Rawee Archewa

An Independent Study Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the  
Requirements

For the Degree of Master of Arts in European Studies

Inter-Department of European Studies

GRADUATE SCHOOL

Chulalongkorn University

Academic Year 2020

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วิถีชีวิต “ปกติ” ของคอมมิวนิสต์: บทวิพากษ์ชีวิตประจำวันภายใต้ระบอบเผด็จการเบ็ดเสร็จ

น.ส. รวีร์ อาชีวะ

สารนิพนธ์นี้เป็นส่วนหนึ่งของการศึกษาตามหลักสูตรศิลปศาสตรมหาบัณฑิต

สาขาวิชายุโรปศึกษา สหสาขาวิชายุโรปศึกษา

บัณฑิตวิทยาลัย จุฬาลงกรณ์มหาวิทยาลัย


ปีการศึกษา 2563

ลิขสิทธิ์ของจุฬาลงกรณ์มหาวิทยาลัย


Independent Study Title	Communist “Normal” Life: The Criticism of Daily Life under a Totalitarian Regime
By	Miss Rawee Archewa
Field of Study	European Studies
Thesis Advisor	Assistant Professor TUL ISRANGURA NA AYUDHYA, Ph.D.

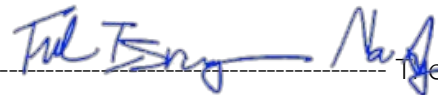
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Accepted by the GRADUATE SCHOOL, Chulalongkorn University in Partial Fulfillment  
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รวีร์ อาชีวะ : วิถีชีวิต “ปกติ” ของคอมมิวนิสต์: บทวิพากษ์ชีวิตประจำวันภายใต้ระบอบเผด็จการเบ็ดเสร็จ. (Communist “Normal” Life: The Criticism of Daily Life under a Totalitarian Regime) อ ที่ปรึกษาหลัก : ผศ.ดร. ตฤย์ อิศรางกูร ณ อยุธยา

อำนาจของระบอบคอมมิวนิสต์จากสหภาพโซเวียตแผ่กระจายมายังยุโรปตะวันออกในยุคหลังสงครามโลกครั้งที่สอง โดยเน้นย้ำในเรื่องความเสมอภาค ความแตกต่างของระบอบการปกครองในสองข้างยุโรปทำให้วิถีชีวิตและความเป็นอยู่ของประชาชนมีความแตกต่างกันอย่างชัดเจน ยุโรปตะวันตกที่เน้นในด้านสิทธิ เสรีภาพก่อให้เกิดแนวคิดบริโภคนิยม ทำให้เศรษฐกิจเจริญรุ่งเรืองตามมาด้วยความกินดีอยู่ดีของประชาชน ตรงกันข้ามกับยุโรปตะวันออกที่อำนาจทุกอย่างถูกควบคุมด้วยรัฐ ยิ่งไปกว่านั้นตัวผู้ปกครองคอมมิวนิสต์ไม่สามารถตอบสนองความต้องการของประชาชนได้ ในขณะที่รัฐสร้างตึกใหญ่โตและทันสมัย แต่ประชาชนยังติดอยู่กับความยากจน อาหารที่มันต์ที่คับแคบ การขาดแคลนอาหารและของใช้ที่จำเป็นในชีวิตประจำวัน ตลอดจนปัญหาการคอร์รัปชัน ตลาดมืด และระบบการติดสินบน ในกรณีนี้ ผลงานเขียนของสลาวเนกา ดรากูลิช (Slavenka Drakulić) นักข่าวและนักเขียนชื่อดังชาวโครเอเชียผู้ซึ่งเคยสัมผัสประสบการณ์ภายใต้ความกดดันของระบอบเผด็จการเบ็ดเสร็จ ได้เขียนประสบการณ์ส่วนตัวประกอบกับการสัมภาษณ์ผู้หนีชาวยุโรปตะวันออกที่ประสบเหตุการณ์แตกต่างกันไป ในหนังสือชื่อ How We Survived Communism and Even Laughed และ Café Europa ที่เล่าถึงเหตุการณ์และความรู้สึกของคนในช่วงระบอบคอมมิวนิสต์ และบาดแผลที่ยังไม่ลบเลือนซึ่งติดตัวผู้คนไปจนถึงช่วงการปฏิวัติเป็นระบอบประชาธิปไตยแล้ว จนทำให้ผู้ศึกษาได้เรียนรู้ว่าระบอบการปกครองมีผลต่อวิถีชีวิตผู้คนเป็นอย่างมาก อีกทั้งระบอบที่ไม่สามารถตอบสนองความต้องการของประชาชนจะไม่ได้รับการสนับสนุนจนนำไปสู่การล่มสลายของระบอบเผด็จการคอมมิวนิสต์ในประเทศยุโรปตะวันออกในปลายปี ค.ศ. 1980

สาขาวิชา ยุโรปศึกษา  
ปีการศึกษา 2563

ลายมือชื่อนิสิต.....

ลายมือชื่อ อ ที่ปรึกษา.....

## 6384011020 : MAJOR EUROPEAN STUDIES

KEYWORD: Eastern Europe, equality, Slavenka Drakulic, How We Survived

Communism and Even Laughed, Café Europa, everyday life, Communist regime

Rawee Archewa : Communist “Normal” Life: The Criticism of Daily Life under a Totalitarian Regime. Advisor: Assist. Prof. TUL ISRANGURA NA AYUDHYA, Ph.D.

The communist regime in Eastern Europe came after the end of Second World War by promoting the equality of people. The difference between West and East with two regimes obviously classified the living of people; the Western bloc emphasized on rights and freedom fostering the expansion of consumerist ideology. Consequently, the economic in the West developed, followed by the prosperity and well-being of people. In contrast to the Eastern bloc, it was controlled by the state and the evidences showed that the communist leaders could not serve the people's wants and needs. While the communist state created their enormous and extravagant buildings, people had to live in the crowded apartments. There were the shortage of food and necessities, as well as the corruption, black market, and bribery grew. Slavenka Drakulić, the famous Croatian journalist and writer who experienced the life under the oppressive totalitarian regime, wrote the book namely 'How We Survived Communism and Even Laughed' and 'Café Europa' talking about the everyday life under communism and its 'scar' on people after democratization. These self-writings told me that the regime had much impact to the individual's life. And the regime which could not serve the people's wants and needs, would not survive as the evident from the demise of communism in Eastern bloc in the late 1980s.

Field of Study: European Studies

Academic Year: 2020

Student's Signature.....

Advisor's Signature.....

575 01031

Tul Isangura Na Ayudhya

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Rawee Archewa

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## Introduction

After the Second World War in 1945, besides million people were killed during the war, there were a lot of crises which happened: the economic downturn and the increasing unemployment rate. However, the anti-fascist ideology was occurred in the post-World War II in both of Western and Eastern Europe known as the 'European Consensus', but it could not reduce the power of communism in the Eastern bloc.<sup>1</sup> Thus, the communist regime became influence in the time of suffered people by promoting the equality of every people. On the other hand, Eastern Europe could be the 'Soviet satellite state' as a defense buffer to protect the Soviet motherland leading by Stalin at that time. The Stalinization of Eastern Europe was held under the monopoly political parties in which there was no independence of state's political power. As the communist rule, all farms, industries, lands, property, and the profitability would belong to the state; only the government could decide how much the wages should be paid to the workers. Under Stalinism, all people had jobs, but their incomes were very low. As well as the consumer goods, they were scarce and costly. Conversely to the communist ideology, it was strong, controlled, and oppressive.

Eventually, the Berlin wall was constructed in 1961 in the period of Nikita Khrushchev who was the leader of the Soviet Union, symbolized the dividing of Europe between two enormous powers in the time of the Cold War: the United States' democracy in Western Europe and the USSR's communism in Eastern Europe. Due to de-Stalinization under Khrushchev policy, there was more relaxing control throughout the Soviet satellite state. Until the mid-1970s, the Eastern European countries were controlled by the states' leaders: Husák (Czechoslovakia), Honecker (GDR), Zhivkov (Bulgaria), Jaruzelski (Poland), and Kádár (Hungary). These men did not return to Stalinism but transformed themselves to be the 'father' of oppressive society in which they increasingly controlled in order to stabilize economy in the

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<sup>1</sup> Dan Stone, *Goodbye to All That?: a History of Europe since 1945* (Oxford University Press, 2014), 9.

time of the economically depressed and eliminated dissidents as well as some improved legitimization which concerned anti-fascism on their own way.<sup>2</sup>

Then in the 1980s, there were the economic reforms by Mikhail Gorbachev with his 'new thinking' which was opened more on the free market and foreign investment. Consequently, a good relationship between Margaret Thatcher and Gorbachov appeared in Dan Stone's book.<sup>3</sup>; it was important for other countries' perspective; especially in the US that the Soviets had more accessibility. Also, it tended to reduce the rigidity of the Soviet system. Although the standard of living in the Eastern bloc was improved, it was still a far way behind the West. Moreover, the lack of consumer goods remained; there were no variety of goods and not many choices to buy.

According to the establishment of the 'nomenklatura'<sup>4</sup>– a new class group of persons who held an important role to control the communist state, this minority of people got the privileges, for instance, a better housing and being able to access Western consumer goods. The corruption grew in form of the bribery as well as the freedoms of speech were blocked. Besides, the Communist government employed the state security police and informants to spy on the citizens on phones, mails, and so on to prevent any information against the communist regime. As a result, more than 454,000 people were arrested.<sup>5</sup> Thus, all these circumstances could not make the people believe that the communism could serve their better life. Finally, 'Western Europe won the soft war of material goods and cultural influence'<sup>6</sup> in which people understood more about their rights and liberty by receiving some

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<sup>2</sup> Stone, *Goodbye to All That?: a History of Europe since 1945* 155.

<sup>3</sup> Stone, *Goodbye to All That?: a History of Europe since 1945* 176-79.

<sup>4</sup> Milovan Djilas, *The New Class: an Analysis of the Communist System*, Division of Gryphon ed. (Delanco, NJ: Classics of Liberty Library, 2006), 76-83.

<sup>5</sup> James Heinzen, "Informers and the State under Late Stalinism: Informant Networks and Crimes against Socialist Property 1940–53," *Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History* 8, no. 4 (2007): 789-815.

<sup>6</sup> Giovanni Arrighi, "The World Economy and the Cold War, 1970–1990," in *The Cambridge History of the Cold War*, ed. Melvyn Leffler and Odd Westad (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 23-44.

Western ideologies, followed by people came to the street calling for a new system. Then, it became the Fall of the Berlin Wall in 1991. There were no longer communist countries in Eastern European bloc. Nevertheless, the democratization in the East was not a bed of rose; they struggled with the old regime. Thus, the ‘Return to Europe’ strategy of the European Union was started as the assistance to develop the Central and Eastern neighbor in many aspects; to prepare them for the EU enlargement within a hope for better life of Eastern European citizens like some of them said *‘one day, perhaps only a few year from now, Slovenia and Croatia will become members of the European Union. All these papers and tensions, all our fears and insecurity, will suddenly become obsolete.’*<sup>7</sup>. Not only the four freedoms: goods, services, persons, and capitals from the EU were one of the Eastern people’s expectations for their easier life and more income, but also the EU values; democracy, human right, fundamental freedom and rule of law in their country will be protected which also illustrated the security of their needs.

There are some studies saying about the situation of the communist regime, particularly Dan Stone’s Post War European History providing one chapter, namely ‘Responding to the order without life? Living under communism’ which mentioned about the scarce of food and basic needs, the intervention of the state, the policy changing under the different leaders and its results. Moreover, Dan Stone also wrote about the everyday life under communism related to the historical context in the book, namely ‘Goodbye to all that’. Not only the existence studies allow us to understand the overall situation in Soviet Union and the Eastern European after post-war, but they also show that past from the social perspective whose experiences are rarely discussed in the historical research. According to Slavenka Drakulić’s book, namely ‘How We Survived Communism and Even Laughed’ and ‘Café Europa’ describing the life under communism and after the Fall of Communism in Eastern European countries, Slavenka Drakulić is a Croatian writer and journalist who traveled to the Eastern European and interviewed the women in Hungary, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Bulgaria, and East Germany which highlights on their everyday lives, feelings and positions at that time. Thus, I decided to use these two books as

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<sup>7</sup> Slavenka Drakulić, *Café Europa* (New York: Penguin Group, 1999), 169.

primary sources to understand the situation under the communist regime and the time after the communism collapsed. It might be clear that communism could not serve the better standard of living for their people. Therefore, this study attempted to answer and criticize the questions; how did the system affect the individual life tangibly at that time? As well as what were the people's expectation and 'scar' from the communist regime related to the everyday life of people who used to live under the communism? I hope that we will see the 'normal life' of communist society; more understand about the positions of people, especially in women in the time of communism and transition period that we can imply to the system's ideology behind.

Initially, I will start with Abraham Harold Maslow who created the motivational theory of human in the form of pyramid mode called 'Maslow's hierarchy of needs', dividing into a five-level of needs. From the lowest of pyramid identifying the basic needs, there are physical needs consisting of food, clothing, residence, and the basic things for the people to survive. Then, it goes up to the security and safety needs, love and belonging needs, as well as esteem and self-actualization respectively. The lowest needs must be satisfied before the individual can enjoy the higher-up needs.<sup>8</sup>

## I. Basic Needs & Poverty

Regarding this chapter, I described the lowest needs of the hierarchy related to the communist regime. As the Maslow theory identifying about the basic needs, it is about the concrete thing that can be seen and touched, as well as consumed on a daily basis.<sup>9</sup> In the time of segregation between the West and East, the Western side became the consumer society – the people bought a good by their feeling as

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<sup>8</sup> Robert Taormina and Jennifer Gao, "Maslow and the Motivation Hierarchy: Measuring Satisfaction of the Needs," *The American Journal of Psychology* 126, no. 2 (2013): 1.

<sup>9</sup> Taormina and Gao, "Maslow and the Motivation Hierarchy: Measuring Satisfaction of the Needs," 156.

Thorstein Veblen called ‘conspicuous consumption’.<sup>10</sup> It was aiming at the decencies of life in which people, especially the middle class bought things which were more comfortable such as vacuum cleaners, washing machines, refrigerators, etc. Moreover, it can be considered as a status symbol. However, some concerns from Daniel Miller that the consumer society will affect to environmental aspect in order to consume for a variety reasons beyond necessity such as social ostentation to compensate the stress of work.<sup>11</sup> The European society after the Second World War focused on the individualist and emphasized on people’s privacy influenced by the ‘American dream’ ideology. Also, it could be presented as ‘the salvation of the progressive essence of western bourgeois culture.’<sup>12</sup> However, the meaning of consumerism in Eastern Europe became differential; the consumerism of totalitarian states was controlled by the government which aimed to develop the communist state for the availability of ‘common’ goods.<sup>13</sup> Also, the communist consumer ideology of Khrushchev continued ‘set out his goals of creating communist-style consumer behavior in an apparent admission that the relentless pursuit of production had neglected citizens — and especially women’s needs.’<sup>14</sup> Most of the money were spent on the military, infrastructure, space competition, heavy industries such as steel and coal industry which was related to weapon producing for showing up how strong the communist state were, as well as persuaded the citizens

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<sup>10</sup> Rosemary Wakeman, "Veblen Redivivus: Leisure and Excess in Europe," in *The Oxford Handbook of Postwar European History*, ed. Dan Stone (Oxford University press, 2014), 423-32.

<sup>11</sup> Terry Leahy, "The Perils of Consumption and the Gift Economy as the Solution Daniel Miller’s Consumption and Its Consequences," *Green Journal* 1, no. 35 (2013): 1-2.

<sup>12</sup> Greg Castillo, "East as True West: Redeeming Bourgeois Culture, from Socialist Realism to Ostalgie," in *Imagining the West in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union*, ed. György Péteri (Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2010), 89.

<sup>13</sup> Dan Stone, "Responding to ‘Order without Life’? Living under Communism," in *The Oxford Handbook of Postwar European History* ed. Dan Stone (Oxford University press, 2014), 168-69.

<sup>14</sup> Maria Todorova, *Remembering Communism: Genres of Representation* (New York: Social Science Research Council, 2010), 349. See also Susan Reid, "Cold War in the Kitchen: Gender and the De-Stalinization of Consumer Taste in the Soviet Union under Khrushchev," *Slavic Review* 61, no. 2 (2002): 211-52.

dedicating to the common goods and public sphere. It tends to be ‘bourgeois viciousness’ instead of ‘socialist cosiness’<sup>15</sup> Nevertheless, there are some pieces of evidence showing that communism could not serve the basic needs of its citizens and they were unsatisfied with that. The consumer goods like household appliances, automobiles, clothes, televisions, housing, and even the food became scarce and expensive.

Slavenka Drakulić described the time she visited her Bulgarian friend ‘Evelina’, the university’s assistant professor. When she arrived, Evelina was preparing food for party:

*I peel potatoes, perhaps six pounds of them. She will make a potato salad with onion. Then she will bake the rest of them in the oven and serve them with... actually nothing. She calls it ‘a hundred-ways potato party’ – sometimes humor is the only way to overcome depression. There are also four eggs for an omelet and two cans of sardines (imported from Yugoslavia), plus vodka and wine, and that’s it, for the eight people she has invited. We sit around her table: a Bulgarian theater director who lives in exile in Germany, three of Evelina’s colleagues from the university, a historian friend and her husband, and the two of us. We eat potatoes with potatoes, drink vodka, discuss the first issue of the opposition paper *Demokratia*, the round-table talks between the Union of Democratic Forces and the communist government, and calculate how many votes the opposition will get in the forthcoming free elections – the first. Nobody seems to mind that there is no more food on the table – at least not as long as a passionate political discussion is going on. ‘This is our food,’ says Evelina. ‘We are used to swallowing politics with our meals. For breakfast you eat elections, a parliament discussion comes for lunch, and at dinner you laugh at the evening news or get mad at the lies that the Communist Party is trying to sell, in spite of everything.’ Perhaps these people can live almost without*

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<sup>15</sup> Stone, *Goodbye to All That?: a History of Europe since 1945* 153.

*food – either because it's too expensive or because there is nothing to buy, or both – without books and information, but not without politics.*<sup>16</sup>

This is the situation of middle-class party in Eastern bloc. Although everyone was well-educated and most of them were employed, they were in the same situation, 'poverty'. Otherwise, they could not find something to eat in grocery store – 'the half-empty shelves' with a few cans of beans, pasta, rice were found in Eastern store was the best case for food situation because some of Slavenka Drakulić's friends found only vinegar and mustard on shelves or only onion and garlic were available in store. Thus, these situations were fostered people to discuss about the system and politician itself. While they were talking about the election, parliament, political news, someone was looking toward the table and apartment; the politic showed their impacts to every single time of life as if it joined in every portion of meals. According to the quote, the foods were run out, but the conversations still went on. This showed how people were passionate to have a better life. They were all in the shared apartment. Even though Evelina was the assistant professor in university, her education did not guarantee her salary and her better living. She shared apartment with her student friend because she could not afford to rent the apartment alone. (The housing policy at that time was changed, the new government did not provide a free apartment and the price was more than half of people's income). They were in the party, but they had nothing to eat, except the potato dishes and alcoholic beverage. The party was the symbol of happiness and close relation without pressure. However, 'a hundred-way potato party', the several ways of potato cooking, could imply that the people were making their illusions for their willingness to have the plenty of food. This showed about the consumerism ideology; people wanted to choose and seek the happiness with a variety of food, as well as the democratic and liberal ideology already existed in people's mind before communism collapsed. On the other hand, 'a hundred-way potato party' could be the desperation of system, so people adapted themselves to survive with a few choices of food and not variety of choices for happiness. Correspondingly, as identified in

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<sup>16</sup> Slavenka Drakulić, *How We Survived Communism and Even Laughed* (New York: Haddon Craftsmen, 1992), 16-17.

Rada Cristina study about the result of Romanian macroeconomic plan in Nicolae Ceaușescu period which focused on eliminating the foreign debt, the investment policy was increased on export and cut the imports, nearly 50% reducing on consumer goods production. As a result, it directly affected the living standard and foods were shortage; cooking oil was especially hard to get, and bananas were sold only on the black market.<sup>17</sup>

The situation in communist country was not only basic things like food shortage, but also the lack of space due to the dwelling which the government provided. Slavanka Drakulić described the apartment's condition in Eastern European countries when they had no chance to buy or rent on their own:

*It was a four-room apartment, but two of the post-revolutionary rooms were assigned to other tenant, a couple who had no connection with us. ... The government divided big apartments into rooms, forcing complete strangers to live in a kind of commune. ... The only problem was the bathroom, located in their part of apartment. The common bathroom was also their kitchen, and most of the time the sink and even the bathtub were crowded with dishes. Later on, we erected a wall of plywood between ours and the tenants. The wall was thin: one could here coughing and springs or floor board squeaking. But it gave us the illusion of having our own, private territory, a life unwatched by strangers.<sup>18</sup>*

The people could not own the private property; it had to provide by the state which was not sufficient and efficient. One family had to live in the same apartment with 'others' and 'strangers'. It showed that there was no sense of privacy at all. Moreover, they could not decide on their own who they wanted to live with because the apartment belonged to the government and the citizens were only a 'tenant' who paid their rental to the state by their labour. The word 'communism' has its root from 'commune'. This is the state's determination for people to live with others. Conversely, the people created the wall to show that they wanted to divide

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<sup>17</sup> Rada Cristina, "Daily life under communism: The case of Romania," *SEA-Practical Application of Science* 2, no. 1 (2014): 275.

<sup>18</sup> Drakulić, *How We Survived Communism and Even Laughed* 87.



their private space from the community. However, the wall was only the ‘illusion’ for not seeing each other; they remained heard ‘*coughing and springs or floorboard squeaking*’, certainly that even the intimate relation among husband and wife could be heard by neighbors. Additionally, the quote also identified about hygiene in apartment. Not only the family and ‘others’ had to use the same bathroom, but bathroom also used for another function; they always founded sink and bathtub were crowded with dishes because the apartment contained one kitchen which belonged to the author’s family. So, another tenant had no choice to clean their dishes in common bathroom. Otherwise, they had to erect their own kitchen with low cost and hardly found the materials. Although the housing policy in some countries were changed as mentioned previously, the price was high, so it was hardly affordable alone. The state tried to make the illusion of freedom to people. It seemed liberal that they could rent what type of room they wanted, however, as the state provided low income which was contrary to a high price apartment. It was obvious that they could not rent and buy their own privacy alone.

Similarly, Vlasopolos and Kassabova also explained about the crowded apartment in the 1950s-1980s in communist states in which the citizens had to share the common facilities; it destroyed the private life that the state provided insufficiency like those apartments as the ‘last refuge of humanity’<sup>19</sup>. This lack of privacy circumstances defined by Luca as ‘intimate publics’ created by the totalitarian government who tightly controlled and closely watched their people which were absurd and oppressive.<sup>20</sup> Besides, it hardly believed that even the state like Russia (after the Fall of the Soviet Union) got the first largest in terms of area, the estimated living space per person was less than five square meters in 1950.<sup>21</sup> The lack of space existed throughout under the communist regime, the citizens had to

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<sup>19</sup> Anca Vlasopolos, *No Return Address: A Memoir of Displacement* (New York: Columbia UP, 2000). See also Kapka Kassabova, *No Return Address: A Memoir of Displacement* (London: Portobello, 2008).

<sup>20</sup> Ioana Luca, "Communism: Intimate Publics," *Biography* 34, no. 1 (2011): 70-82.

<sup>21</sup> Henry Morton, "Housing in the Soviet Union," *Proceedings of the Academy of Political Science* 35, no. 3 (1984): 69-80.

wait for the new apartment that the state provided for a long queue; otherwise, they used half of their salary to illegally exchange with the old and alone person. And it was a cycle; the illegal exchange could be usual, once you were getting old and alone, you would get money from a new family and moved to their smaller one.

The situation would be even worse for the woman in a time leading by the masculine. Not only did the women have a heavy burden of housework, but also Mark Pittaway showed that because males had served the military in the Second World War, the female workers were increasing, 53 percent of woman participating in industrial sector.<sup>22</sup> However, there was nothing to help them more comfortably in the house. According to several studies, while the consumer goods and household equipment were widespread in Western bloc and almost westerners could afford<sup>23</sup> (i.e. washing machine, refrigerator, vacuum, etc.), the rest rarely had a chance to buy detergents or gloves. So, the distinctive odor covered all around communist areas. Not only the housework, but also the basic things like toilet paper, fine underwear and even the sanitary napkin which women wanted in every month were hardly found:

*‘No’ she said resolutely. ‘I’m not going to use it!’ I stood for a moment in front of shelf in the drug store, holding a package of cheap toilet paper in my hand. ‘My God’, I almost screamed, ‘how I would like to slap your face! Where do you think you live? I grow up without all those fancy things you have, from bath foam to deodorants, perfumes, and gels, and I’m none the worse for it!’ An old lady standing beside us looked at us and nodded with a smile, as if she had heard this quarrel before. All of a sudden, as I listened to my own words, I realized they were not mine. I had heard them somewhere before, in politicians’ speeches, at school, in textbooks. The same kind of argument, the same kind of logic ideologizing the past: we didn’t have anything, but we still were happy. It was a lie, and I was participating in it. I took one more look at the bunch of coarse brown folded*

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<sup>22</sup> Mark Pittaway, "Making Postwar Communism," in *The Oxford Handbook of Postwar European History*, ed. Dan Stone (Oxford University press, 2014), 269-70.

<sup>23</sup> Stone, "Responding to ‘Order without Life’? Living under Communism," 167-68.

*sheets, then put them back sighing...In postwar Yugoslavia, toilet issue was obviously not a very important product, and it wasn't produced regularly (when it was produced at all), much less distributed. Toilet paper fell into an incredibly broad category of luxury items, such as furs, perfumes, gild rings, woman's hats, gloves, or stocking, chocolate, candy, washing powder, or toys, even milk and meat – it all depended. The general rule was that anything at any time could be proclaimed a luxury.<sup>24</sup>*

The quote showed about the state overlooking the ordinary life of people. It was not yet to talk about aesthetic things, for instance deodorants, furs, gild rings, etc. Even the basic needs like toilet paper, sanitary napkins, washing powders which were cheap and easily found in the West became luxury in the East. As usual, when it was inadequate, the price would be higher that the people could not pay for it. This showed how the government ignored to improve the living standard of citizens. In case of toilet paper, it was true that toilet paper was not necessary in the past, but once it was created and could make people more comfortable, why the leaders did not recognize it? Perhaps the soft and fragile things like textiles, napkins, or even the women could represent the weakness of the communist states. Maybe, they were not concerned over the matter. They just did not pay attention to their people's ordinary life. As the government ideology at that time, the state was the most important thing rather than the citizens which they had to sacrifice the comfortability and convenience for the well-being of the state. For example, the building at that time was in form of the enormous concrete building, extravagant, and I found a building was made in the shape of UFO. These could show the strong, prosperity, and supremacy of the communist countries when comparing with the crowded dwelling of the citizens. It obviously showed that what communisms were focusing. Instead of trying to produce the basic needs adequately for the people wants and made it cheaper, the states chose to create propagandas for people to live happily with poor, unhygienic, and conditional ecological living. When the totalitarian government tried to convince the ecological idea, it seemed like they asked people to give up a better standard of living. The fact that people did not believe, but to

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<sup>24</sup> Drakulić, *How We Survived Communism and Even Laughed* 69.

continue their life, they had to adapt themselves and made a biggest lie to their children as if they agreed with the government. The difference between the state and mother's lies was that the state could produce it, but they did not, whereas mother lied to her daughter because she could not afford it.

Additionally, the state said that they were all equal; the higher class in Slavenka's book pointed out about her friends got sick and it was the first time that she really knew what the toilet paper should be:

*He was a nice and quiet boy, but he wasn't really a very popular person because he was driven to school in a black limo, thereby underlining the differences between us. The teacher sent me to his house to show him the new assignment. It was there that I discovered a kind of paper I had never seen before: thin, soft, double-sided, in a light blue color that matched the blue of the walls. On the back of the door a spray was hanging, and when you pulled the cord, the whole toilet would smell of a pine wood. 'Austria', said my friend, when I asked him where it came from, as if it was obvious. This paper couldn't be compared with the rolls we were buying, because even if rolls were a giant step toward a better future, the paper in them was really only a little bit softer than Golub, which made one constantly aware of a system that neglected basic human needs.<sup>25</sup>*

These could clearly illustrate three things; first, the elites or higher classes existed in the communism, so everyone was not equal. As her friend was driven to school in a black limo, he was likely to be the son of communist politician or the important person. Second, the toilet paper and deodorant spray could not be bought domestically. Therefore, it should be someone buying from the West or from the bribery or the worst case was that the communist leader also bought from the smuggling in the black market. Lastly, it proved that the leader or the politicians in parliament were also the humans; they knew what was comfortable and what it should be for a good living standard. They bought it for themselves but ignored the citizens.

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<sup>25</sup> Drakulić, *How We Survived Communism and Even Laughed* 72-73.

Moreover, there were also inequality through the bourgeois society; the commune classified the level of people by appliances such as cars, televisions, washing machines, refrigerators, and other household equipment. Even though the countries started to produce them, it was very expensive for normal people to buy them, so it proved that those who could buy had earning and high social status enough.

*The wife still washed laundry by hand, but it was one of the signs of how rich they were. They kept the washing machine in the kitchen, covered it an embroidered tablecloth, showing it proudly to every visitor.<sup>26</sup>*

Thus, these things were not only for comfort, but people bought them for the symbol of the higher class. The clearer thing was seen in Dan Stone's study; the fair society could not be seen in communism because there was some popular and elite support claiming that they wanted to create an equal community.<sup>27</sup> Although the equality existed in most of the citizens who lived in crowded apartment, there were equal in poverty. The bare economic indicators from Dan Stone's book said that communist European countries could create the advanced technology and wealth as high as Western Europe.<sup>28</sup> This can imply that only the people were in poverty, not the state. Consequently, a further question was made because of the lack of household appliances. How could they have this kind of thing? The question was brought back to the politicians, about the bribery, smuggling, corruption, and black market which will appear on the next chapter.

In the period of Leonid Brezhnev, the leader of Soviet Union in 1977, the weakness of USSR became increasing as the new policy 'Détente' in the Cold War, the relaxation of strained relations between USSR and US, leading to the sign of Strategic Arms Limitation Talks (SALT): the agreement to control the arms, weapons and nuclear using by two sides. However, the tension became again when USSR deployed the nuclear missiles in Eastern Europe, followed by the US throwing out of the SALT II agreement in 1979. Finally, the Détente completely stopped when

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<sup>26</sup> Drakulić, *How We Survived Communism and Even Laughed* 49-50.

<sup>27</sup> Stone, "Responding to 'Order without Life'? Living under Communism," 168.

<sup>28</sup> Stone, *Goodbye to All That?: a History of Europe since 1945* 7.

Brezhnev died in 1982.<sup>29</sup> Nevertheless, some study pointed out that Détente had a long term impacts; not only did it facilitate the exchange between East and West, but it also fostered the rise of domestic movement because Eastern people received the West ideologies concerned right, and international framework.<sup>30</sup> Apart from the policy and the transmission of culture, the lack of basic needs was also the part of rising, starting from Poland because the price of food in Poland increased very sharply in 1970, and the worker came out to protest as a result. Many Polish workers were arrested by the communist state. The much-vaunted Krushchev fulfilled the women's needs and followed by the failure under the Brezhnevian period. The Eastern women were still spending their time in queues hoping that there was something to buy as a common culture. The agriculture was extremely neglected; many people relied on their relatives in countryside for supplying food. Also, the focus on the heavy industry caused the pollution and environmental damaging.<sup>31</sup> All of these fostered the rise of revolution in the late 1980s until the Gorbachev's policy: 'Glasnost (openness) and Perestroika (restructuring)' were the demise of USSR fulfilling the dissident's dream.

Although the communism was fallen, the consumer of sign was remaining in Café Europa book, Slavanka Drakulic described about café in Eastern Europe after the revolution:

*Here the coffee is prepared differently and served in big cups with whipped cream and cinnamon or chocolate on top, just like in Vienna. There are also several kinds of Viennese cakes and tarts sitting in glass cupboard lit by a neon strip, which turns a yellow vanilla cream cake into a greenish one and gives a sickly grey hue to the peaches and strawberries on the tarts. They are nothing like real Viennese cakes, elaborate, rich and opulent; in fact, there is nothing in this café reminiscent of the big European city, except its name.*<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> Stone, *Goodbye to All That?: a History of Europe since 1945* 196-206.

<sup>30</sup> Jussi Hanhimäki, "Ironies and turning points: détente in perspective," in *Reviewing the Cold War*, ed. Odd Westad (2000), 327.

<sup>31</sup> Stone, *Goodbye to All That?: a History of Europe since 1945* 207-08.

<sup>32</sup> Drakulić, *Café Europa* 6.

The café at that time represented the feeling of freedom of people, the feeling of revolution on its system by using a non-variety western name such as Café Europa, Café Viennese, etc. The cakes in Café looked well, but the taste was not. Also, the wall painted with pastel pink was over-decorated, clean and cute which was not necessary for the changing in reality which existed as a trend at the time of hopefulness for the people feeling of its value. The café used the thing that people saw in the West to be the symbol of consumerism and people enjoyed even though they hardly paid for: *‘Youngsters are seated at round, fake-marble tables, most of them drinking tea, probably because that is all they can afford here.’*<sup>33</sup> Before the revolution, the Eastern European café way had a very limited menu: no milk and juice, a single bag of tea served in several cups with a poor taste of teacups. ‘Coke’ was the only hope they could get from café; more than beverage to quench their thirsts; it seemed like it was the representative of everything from the liberal part of the world that you could afford it. And it was the one of not many things from ‘outside’ which were available in all over the communist area.<sup>34</sup> Therefore, Coke was a ‘bridge’ to connect people from the West to East. The Eastern people knew what the consumer society looked like from their design of packaging, the flavor of freedom, as well as the hopefulness from the refreshing that the consumerism provided in the world of little red can.

Moreover, the shortage of everything affected people’s behaviors. Even though their apartments were crowded and unhygienic, they could not stop collecting things and being unintentionally ecological. Some people could not get rid of the habit of washing plastic yogurt cups, cans, and shoeboxes because it could be used for keeping things or planting: *‘A shoebox is almost like a computer, full of neatly stored data necessary to survive in a system that is designed to destroy the individual’.*<sup>35</sup> At that time, only shoebox could be used as one of the private spaces because it could keep things in with no one saw it (like a plywood wall, the illusion of privacy in apartment), and it was benefit for managing space in crowded dwelling

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<sup>33</sup> Drakulić, *Café Europa* 7.

<sup>34</sup> Drakulić, *How We Survived Communism and Even Laughed* 13.

<sup>35</sup> Drakulić, *How We Survived Communism and Even Laughed* 184.

that the government provided insufficiently. Due to the poverty, they found that the cotton underwear had ability to absorb dust for cleaning their apartment and turned it into something else until it had surely not any longer benefit. In addition, there was the example that clearly described how fear of shortage as the result from its system, regarding in the-seventy-grandma's cupboard:

*It was full of neatly soiled detergent that had turned almost to stone, bottle of rancid oil, several kilos of sugar, flour, and coffee (apparently the household staples), some packages of tea, biscuits, pasta, cans of tomato paste (she loved Italian cooking), bean, and even a kilo or two of salt... The food was stored on the lower shelves. On the upper ones was everything else, such as a roll of white tulle, quite a bit of wool in different colors, brand new and repaired pantyhose and stockings (I believe even from before World War II), black and brown hair dye, shampoo, soaps, hand creams, toilet paper, outdated antibiotics, aspirins, insulin (even though nobody in the family is diabetic) and some other pill without labels, absorbent cotton, and about five or six packages of sanitary napkins. Rather than warehouse, her cupboard looked like a museum of communist shortage.<sup>36</sup>*

The lack of things not only made people unsatisfied with the system, but also left its 'scar' to the people. According to author's grandma who lived under the communist regime, she collected everything even it already expired, because she could remember what was going on at that time. The competition of power would benefit for the winners, but until the end of the day, it created fear and shortage of everything, especially in the time of war and nuclear annihilation would foster the situation even worse and the 'scar' would be even bigger. The long experience told them that it was necessary to collect, otherwise they could not survive. Although the situation had changed, the people's traumas were not disappearing.

Furthermore, the cumulative behavior also affected to children at that time which they collected the Western trashes for their desirability as the 'collecting of sign'. On the other hand, it can imply as a 'hope' beyond the border:

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<sup>36</sup> Drakulić, *How We Survived Communism and Even Laughed* 187-88.



*My hunger as a child for a nice cellophane candy or chocolate wrapper that I could get only from a friend at school whose father lived abroad. I would press them between the pages of a book, and then look at them, at the foreign words like framboise or sucre or chocolatier, still smelling of their extravagant, delicious contents I had never tasted... The only kind of candy we had was called 505 sa crtom, and it came in a red metal box, only present for New Year's... No wonder, because at that time, in the early fifties, there was only one candy factory, named after the war hero Josip Kras.<sup>37</sup>*

Slavenka Drakulić explained about her poor life as a communist child. Candy and chocolate were desirable for kids but rarely found in the East. Every time when she got a candy from her friend whose father worked abroad; it was precious thing that she could ever have. So, after finishing her candy or chocolate inside, she collected a nice candy or chocolate wrapper by pressing them between the pages of book to keep them and preserved their smell longer. For some kids, it was a trash, but not for the Eastern children. This showed how precious of that candy in her notion. Also, the nice cellophane candy with foreign word could represent the happiness, prosperity, and freedom abroad that she dreamed of. The only one candy she ever had from her country only presented for the New Year celebration, originated from the one factory with the war hero name. This can imply about the monopoly and nationalization of communist state that there was no competition and government could decide when they wanted to distribute candies to kids. Moreover, the war hero name could represent the heroism and war implied about communism's ideology related to the exploitation, oppression and domination which occurred in the communist period.

While the Western and developed countries enjoyed their consumption and they tried to create the trend to be more ecological in the following era, the communist citizens remained poor and unintentionally ecological. According to Slavanka Drakulic's explanation, it said if the politician had the opportunity to see their cupboard, closets, drawer, etc. rather than to pay attention to the forbidden books or anti-state material, *'They would have seen the future that was in store for*

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<sup>37</sup> Drakulić, *How We Survived Communism and Even Laughed* 186.

*their wonderful plans for the communism itself. But they didn't look'.<sup>38</sup> So, the Fall of Communism in Eastern Europe not because of the system itself, but it was caused by unsupported people who were being overlooked by their government. In particular, the women who played the important roles in houses and participated in almost every object in the houses including foods and home appliances were covered in the kitchens and toilets. Therefore, the lack of these things made women could not perform well in houses comparing to the West which had an abundance of household equipment in a cheaper price. Moreover, it may have an impact on family in terms of bad performance of being mother and wife. It sounds like an excuse, but they tended to have more time to do anything rather than spending most of the time to do laundry without washing machine and queuing with hope to find some food for their families. These could become the failure of the next generation because the children were not treated enough by their parents. As considering the quote of Mikhail Gorbachev in 1987 '*Over the years... we failed to pay attention to women's specific rights and needs arising from their role as mother and homemaker, and their indispensable educational function as regards children.*'<sup>39</sup> Afterward, communism was collapsed in the Eastern Europe and followed by the Fall of the Soviet Union a few years later.*

## II. Safety and Security Needs & State Intervention

To define the safety and security needs regarding Maslow's theory, it covered both concrete and abstract things, such as criminal assault, war, social chaos, disease, as well as the unemployment, financial security, medical insurance, pension, and overall as a stable life.<sup>40</sup> In this chapter, I pointed out about the insecurity under the communism from the state's intervention to protect the system. Although they could not achieve that, the communism left their ideologies and failures that

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<sup>38</sup> Drakulić, *How We Survived Communism and Even Laughed* 189.

<sup>39</sup> Suzanne LaFont, "One step forward, two steps back: women in the post-communist states," *Communist and Post-Communist Studies* 34, no. 2 (2001): 203-20.

<sup>40</sup> Taormina and Gao, "Maslow and the Motivation Hierarchy: Measuring Satisfaction of the Needs," 157.

apparently performed after the revolution. The post communism brought many problems caused by the economic liberalization. People lost their jobs that used to be protected by the state, followed by the absence of free childcare. *‘We see democratic structures without democratic practice, it is still stability, albeit wobbly...’*<sup>41</sup> The democratic society in Eastern bloc at that time seemed different to the West; the system was steady but distorted.

Slavenka Drakulić described about Tanja’s story the thirty-six-year journalist who poisoned herself with gas in her apartment after the newspaper published her article about political critics, followed by the ‘consultation’ with the communist party leader about the editorial policy in newspaper. And the ‘explanation’ from editors about the serious mistake of her article had revealed:

*‘We, the editorial board, admit our mistake in not having had complete control of our newspaper that unfortunately, the unwanted ideas appeared. We will make sure it doesn’t happen again.’... I can see Tanja, sitting beside her desk on the seventh floor of the glass and aluminum building on Ljubljanska Avenija, reading the fresh newspaper that still smelled of printer’s ink, leaving her hand black with it. She read it and read it, thinking, as had many victims before her: No, this is not possible; this must be some mistake. Perhaps that was the moment when she finally saw through all the illusion surrounding her. She saw the glass wall of her reality splintering. What struck her the most? Not only the words, but the meaning of the action. The rejection of her journalist, as a colleague, as a person. Her editorial board, people she knew, people she had worked with for more than ten years, other party members – because she was a member of the Communist party, she couldn’t possibly have been a commentator on the most important daily newspaper without this pedigree – they all renounced her. As soon as the ‘explanation’ came out, she felt as if she had ceased to exist: ‘You know,’ she told me, ‘my colleagues don’t dare to say hello to*

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<sup>41</sup> Stone, *Goodbye to All That?: a History of Europe since 1945* 240-43.

*me any more. I feel as if I'm invisible. Nobody wants to have coffee with me, but you can't drink your coffee alone.'*<sup>42</sup>

As same as many victims before, there was the 'normal' situation of dissident who was rejected by the state because she was considered as a dissident against the regime, and also the 'enemies of the people' defined by communist party. The smell of ink would not yet disappear, but the long relationship with other people immediately ended as if they did not know each other before, even she used to be one of their members for over ten years. The bad situation is that not only the state tried to discredit her, but also convinced the society to 'judge' her as identified in the state's explanation. If they did not believe the state, they must pretended to believe unless they would end as 'disobedient journalist' like her. The critics of system were not allowed in communism whereas it unrestricted in democracy. This showed the sense of controlling covering all aspects in the totalitarian area. There was no freedom of expression; the news agencies organized by the state as spokespersons. The journalists were also the mechanism for helping the communist party made the illusion in society: closing people's eyes from outsiders, convincing people to believe in government and system, creating hope for the future life, and living happily with the equal poverty. Besides, the one who did not obey the order would get imputed and eliminated. There was no future for the dissident because the society also rejected them. How could they live in the commune with ignorance, invisibility, and nonexistence? The situation would be even worse for the community which lacked space including the physical space, and the chance for expression. The deprivation which the state pressed her was tragic because there was no way out in communism and not any better path for emigration (see Ulrike life who escaped from GDR in 1984).<sup>43</sup> Although she could find a new job, it was hardly possible to be a journalist or a same kind of career that she loved. It seemed like she was died without being killed, and nobody knew how long it could be because for their generation: *'It seemed that communism was eternal, that we were sentenced to it*

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<sup>42</sup> Drakulić, *How We Survived Communism and Even Laughed* 5.

<sup>43</sup> Drakulić, *How We Survived Communism and Even Laughed* 33-42.

*and would die before seeing it collapse.*<sup>44</sup> The society at that time believed that the communism was eternal in which they had to live with it for their whole life. Additionally, the quote also talked about the privilege that Tanja used to get because she related with someone who had a power, so she could be a journalist in the most important newspaper. This can imply to the inheritance or bribery that occurred as the failure of communist regime. Thus, the opportunity for the lower class who wanted to be in the important role in communism was blurry.

Similar to Slavenka Drakulić, her job as a journalist had been monitored by the state security police visibly. According to her decision to meet her ‘censor’ after he contacted, his appearance was like the ordinary people rather than ‘Comrade Inspector M’ from the state security police who were in charge of press. Their conversation was going on as usual about the political situation, inflation, food price, and even about his family. He also asked banal question about her relationship with the dissident. She could answer him easily because her job was about the connection and information; it was possible for her to know some enemies of state. Then, *‘he looked somehow waste, as if he would rather be somewhere else, doing something else’*. The conversation ended with his word:

*‘You see, I’m not like some of my colleagues. I don’t believe in crudeness. My opinion is that one should follow journalists’ work from a distance, get to know them well. And then, if they repeat serious mistakes, warn them tenderly. It is usually enough: journalists are smart people.’ At the word ‘tenderly,’ I began to feel very uneasy ‘You know,’ he continued, looking behind me, through the window of the café, ‘In a certain way, we are friends. I know all of your articles, your books. And I know not only what but how you think, how you will react to certain issues. I must admit I only wanted to see you. You look much prettier than in your photos.’*<sup>45</sup>

When we look at his gesture that she described after they talked for a while, it seemed that the conversation was not necessary for him. However, his clarification while talking with her as she said if he really needed to find her error *‘he will find*

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<sup>44</sup> Drakulić, *How We Survived Communism and Even Laughed* 7.

<sup>45</sup> Drakulić, *How We Survived Communism and Even Laughed* 79-81.

*evidence even if it doesn't exist. The guilt I'm talking about is not a question of facts but of their interpretation.*' showed that the communist authority did not want a truth because they already knew that she had done nothing wrong. However, he wanted to show the power of their authority and threaten the journalist not to do against the state by their work and even notion. Because they could find something to slander the citizens who did not had any chance to prove themselves. It was the paranoia of communist party and hubris of trying to control's people minds.<sup>46</sup> Also, the communism provided too much power to the authority to intervene the individuals without international framework. In term of the GDR security police known as 'Staatssicherheit (Stasi)' Karsten Jedlitschka's study identified that Stasi handled various tasks including service and secret police, criminal prosecution, bodyguards placed passport inspector at border crossing and involved in the weapons and technologies trades. Thus, the Stasi was a huge and powerful organization with 91,000 full-time employees, and employed 189,000 of unofficial informers, estimated at 1 for 180 GDR citizens. So, we can assume that several millions of citizens and foreigners were violated their rights.<sup>47</sup> I would say that this is a form of communism controlling in Eastern bloc to secure their system.

The viciousness of state security police did not only monitor, but also disguise in a form of intimated relation. According to the Josie Mclellan's studies<sup>48</sup>, after the Western sexual revolution in the late 1960s which influenced to the East, sex was separated from love. The prostitution was formed; however, the state decided to use the prostitute as a weapon to spy on dissidents. Some prostitutes were voluntary because they could earn the additional income as the informers, but some worst cases were blackmailed and intimidated by Stasi. The prostitutes were encouraged to destroy individuals for example to blackmail senior church by sex party pictures. Also, they were commanded to terminate the married life of dissident

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<sup>46</sup> Karsten Jedlitschka, "The Lives of Others: East German State Security Service's Archival Legacy," *The American Archivist* 75, no. 1 (2012): 81.

<sup>47</sup> Jedlitschka, "The Lives of Others: East German State Security Service's Archival Legacy," 82-83.

<sup>48</sup> Josie Mclellan, *Love in the time of communism: intimacy and sexuality in the GDR* (Cambridge University press, 2011), 100-07.

couples, like Gerd and Ulrike Poppe; the Stasi instructed male informers to invite Ulrike out to concert and theater for breaking their couple life and ending up with divorce. Similar to Vera Wollenberger, the activist founded that Knud, her husband and father of her two children, was the spy assigned by Stasi for over ten years. She discovered that her husband was informing about her work in peace group. As a result, she was fired from her work and forced to emigrate to England. During being abroad, he continued to report about her health, discussion with son, habits, as well as intercepting her letter. According to Vera Wollenberger's description which published in German book namely 'Virus der Heuchler: Innenansicht aus Stasi-Akten', Josie Mclellan translated into English that:

*How does that work?' she asked herself after 'Knud-Donald' was exposed, 'that somebody is such a loving father and then write reports like that? How can a person do that? I just don't understand it' As she wrote, the experience of betrayal was 'indescribable', one that she would not wish on her 'worst enemies'. 'I would have rather sat in a Stasi jail for years than to have had to go through that'.<sup>49</sup>*

This was the example of the state and its system done to the dissidents and activists. There was no human rights and private space for the persons who did not agree with the system. The relation like husband and wife were also interfered. It was clear that even the intimate relation between husband and wife were also revealed to the state. It was not only to destroy one life as a wife, but also to include their two children who were born by the state's order. How could person imagine that her husband and father of her two kids was the enemy? It was too long for a person to act as a husband with a fake love. How could the state destroy the individual on this way? Not only did they steal their happiness, but they stole the entire of person life as a wife, and children who had father from the state. While the party tried to protect their system, the individual life was destroyed. The worst was that there was no one who dared to criticize, call for their right, or reveal to the society what the state had done to them.

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<sup>49</sup> Mclellan, *Love in the time of communism: intimacy and sexuality in the GDR* 105.

Furthermore, the state used the ‘assertive’ policy to secure their system and themselves with no privacy of document and phone call either the journalist or the ordinary people:

*For me, something else was normal, for example to see that my mail arrived open, especially mail from abroad, or to observe that letters from London, Stockholm, or New York sometimes take a week, sometimes a month, and sometimes never come at all. Due to bad weather? It is normal that I don't even ask myself how come my books or publications arrive all too often clumsily packed in a plastic bag with a ridiculous stamp, DAMAGE IN TRANSPORT. After all, that is a pretty correct explanation of what happened to it. I also never doubted that my telephone and the private phones of my friends were tapped – and as for the phone at my magazine, it was never even in question. We learned to recognize the signs of tapping: the phone rings, you pick up the receiver, and as soon as you start talking, there is that characteristic clicking sound on the line. Marko or Jozo or Ivan just plugged in. Hi, fella – we even used to salute the person on the other end of the line if we were in a good mood, continuing the conversation with a friend as if nothing had happened – or nearly so. But it was not much of a joke.<sup>50</sup>*

Apart from the apartment was crowded with people and no space for people's privacy, mail and phone call were also tapped by the government without permissions. As Slavanka Drakulić's description, they knew the sound and symbol that the certain phone call or mail were already checked by characteristic clicking sound or tried to naïve by ‘damage in transport’ signs on letters. Therefore, the state did not care about whether people knew about they were being monitored. To recognize that someone was observed was unacceptable, illegal, and considered as violation to people's privacy in the West. Due to the enormous power of the communist state, people could do nothing. Similarly, the end of paragraph implied that the Eastern people were unsatisfied with the government assertive actions, as well as it affected the mentality of people in term of insecurity:

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<sup>50</sup> Drakulić, *How We Survived Communism and Even Laughed* 98.



*An apartment was a metaphysical space, the only place where we felt a little bit more secure. It was a dark cave into which to withdraw from the omnipresent eyes of the state. I know it sound silly, and I even feel embarrassed to think about it, but when I read Orwell's 1984, the thing that frighten me the most was the TV screen that I was also a camera, a spy. It was so chilling, and the fear stayed so deep within me, for years I refused to buy a TV, saying that I could do without it. And I could, because it had only one state-owned channel, brainwashing and boring us to death. But this was not my real reason, only an excuse.<sup>51</sup>*

Although we could not find the evidence about the state did spy on people by the television in apartment and Orwell's 1984 was just a novel, this showed the 'scar' that the communism left in people's mind. Similar to British historian Timothy Garton Ash, who lived in East Berlin during the 1980s as a doctoral student, described about unsecured and uncertain atmosphere in his diary: *'Suspicion is everywhere. It strikes in the bar, it lurks in the telephone, it travels with you in the train. Wherever two or three are gathered together, there suspicion'*.<sup>52</sup> People lived with the distrust and fear because the totalitarian police were involved in everywhere and every time including public sphere and private areas such as phone, mail, and even in their rooms; the family relation as well as the intimate relation were being monitored. Moreover, the quote also identified about the state belonging to the TV channel. It was impossible to find a good thing to see on TV. The government controlled what the people consumed; there were no variety and they rejected different kind of music (i.e. rock music) because only the reason that the party was not satisfied. As a result, it was boring to keep listening what the state tried to falsify for hiding the past.<sup>53</sup> Also, they tried to brainwash how to be a good communist member and dedicate their labour to the state. However, these were not actually the reason for an author to refuse buying a television for a year. The fact was that they could not afford it.

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<sup>51</sup> Drakulić, *How We Survived Communism and Even Laughed* 91.

<sup>52</sup> Timothy Ash, *The file: A personal History* (New York: Random House, 1997), 72.

<sup>53</sup> Cristina, "Daily life under communism: The case of Romania," 274.

Even though the totalitarian polices were eliminated likewise the demise of communism in Eastern bloc, the insecurity and uncertainty changed the form to the economic unstable, no jobs, high cost of living and remaining poverty. *'The different today is no longer the lack of choice, but the fact that very few people can afford luxuries'*.<sup>54</sup> Although they had more choices, the basic needs remained expensive like luxurious things:

*When I go home to Croatia I buy two kinds of goods; cheap food and household items, to save money; and expensive cosmetics, perfumes, soaps, drinks, cigarettes and sweets that I give away as a present.*<sup>55</sup>

The shortage of foods and things still remained because of the poverty and also the higher price comparing to the West. Thus, people preferred to buy goods from the West for going back home. And some people chose to cross border to buy the cheaper goods in the West, however, they were always stuck with the unnecessary rules at the border. Even though some people had a steady job, they could not afford to buy nappies for her son. So, they had to work the second job in order to survive. Besides, the bribery, smuggling and corruption were not disappeared:

*His dream was to have a kiosk of his own. In Albania, it represents a quick way of getting rich... These kiosks literally grow up overnight and already more than 2,000 of them appeared in the two years between 1992-1994 in Tirana alone. If you have a relative in Italy, Turkey or anywhere abroad, who will put up some money, if you have access to the 'channels' to obtain smuggled goods, and if you know whom to bribe in the state administration to get permission for such a business, you can have a kiosk in the space of a day.*<sup>56</sup>

The politician still had the benefits from the bribery and corruption. The kiosk became the symbol of prosperity and freedom. Because if they had kiosk, they could create their small business which was making them have more money and freedom. Therefore, this ideal fostered the growth of number of kiosks. However, post-

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<sup>54</sup> Drakulić, *Café Europa* 41.

<sup>55</sup> Drakulić, *Café Europa* 40.

<sup>56</sup> Drakulić, *Café Europa* 58.

communist life was not a bed of roses, the creation of kiosk came up with the state administration's permission, so it opened the channels for the bureaucrats to make the additional income from small businesses for getting their space to sell their goods. The more kiosks created, the more income of bureaucrats and politicians would reflect. Moreover, the smuggling goods that sold in kiosk were also the money creators for them. In contrast with the economic instability at that time, people were unemployed which led to the poverty. Some did not have money even to buy foods. As a result, the small business was not going as their expectation. Other than that, Slavenka Drakulić also mentioned about the tax did not go to the right pocket; the politicians were rich instead of state because of the corruption. Consequently, if the state were poor, it was impossible to talk about welfare, free healthcare, pension, or any new infrastructure. The kiosk and freedom that the people got could be considered as '*They are living in an illusion of a capitalist society, as well as with the illusion of freedom or democracy*'. The kiosk and democracy only represented as a hope for getting rich, the willingness of better living standard. But when looking back to the reality, everything was still depended on the politicians and they remained poor or poorer than before.

Likewise, the Vladimir Shlapentokh study mentioned that the rise of corruption after 1991 was unavoidable because of the leaders who were the main factor to encourage the corruption for their own benefit and the structure at that time created the favorable condition. Therefore, the corruption distributed to the citizens, especially in the young generation. They believed that the bribe was the only way to become successful. While the corruption was spread in every part, it created the weakness of control that the law could not enforce and '*the army almost totally demoralized*'<sup>57</sup> Moreover, Dan Stone's mention about Albania was the most obvious example of the state failure such as eliminating press opposition and Albanian people could not be possible to find chance for wealth under the capitalism.<sup>58</sup>

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<sup>57</sup> Vladimir Shlapentokh, "Corruption, the Power of State and Big Business in Soviet and Post-Soviet Regimes," *Communist and Post-Communist Studies* 46, no. 1 (2013): 147-58.

<sup>58</sup> Stone, *Goodbye to All That?: a History of Europe since 1945* 239.

Although under the communism, much of GDP was being spent on military, industrial and other major infrastructure projects rather than on ordinary citizens' wants and needs, the communist countries argued that they were able to increase living standards without their citizens having to suffer about the instability of living under capitalism.<sup>59</sup> Their argument might partly be true because living under the communism, the state provided everything unless it was shortage and inconvenient. However, after the democratization, not only did they get freedom, but they also got unemployment, no welfare and involved, they had to pursue everything on their own. As a result of the controlling in communism, people were treated like poor children and were told what to do by the state. Once you got freedom, they could not survive. Somebody was suffered as Slavenka Drakulić explained:

*As I soon discovered, the people were on their way to visit the grave the executed dictator Nicolae Ceaușescu. This would have been his seventy-fifth birthday. And had he been alive, what a celebration it would have been! A national holiday, no less, with hundreds of flags fluttering, Ceaușescu's picture exhibited in every shop window, decorated with red carnations, and, of course, a special television broadcast in which he would address the nation. The biggest event would have taken place in the main football stadium, packed to the rafters, where young people would have performed carefully choreographed kind of mass 'ballet' for the Greatest Son of Romania; gray-haired academicians would have made speeches about his extraordinary historical merit; poets would have recited their poems glorifying him and kindergarten children would have sung appropriate songs... they started to sing and call out slogans. 'Unite, workers, unite! Say no to the capitalist slavery!' they sang as if they really believed in these words. Then an old but vigorous man shouted: 'Why were you murdered?', while people around him recited like a Greek chorus, 'Americans and Russians are to blame for our poverty?' Indeed, for a moment I felt as if I were present at the staging of a soc-realist drama about the proletariat, as if these people were actors, not real people. A woman wrapped in a black woolen shawl*

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<sup>59</sup> Stone, "Responding to 'Order without Life'? Living under Communism," 168.

*came out, in front of the chorus. 'Before we used to send our children to summer camps!' she exclaimed, waving her fist in the air towards the invisible enemies who had taken away summer camps from her children, as if she would take her revenge at any moment. Then another woman took her place 'With my pension, I can buy one kilo of meat a month' she said. It was expressed like a prepared statement, in a matter-of-fact voice without anger, but perhaps with sadness. Her performance got strong support from the chorus, who sang, 'Yes, yes,' to echo her words.<sup>60</sup>*

Although Nicolae Ceaușescu, Romania's tyrannical communist dictator were the symbol of devastated past, surprising that the democratic government and many people celebrated and respected the leader who was executed by firing squad in front of citizens who were stolen their life, prosperity and well-being for over 20 years (1965-1989). Some might get confused, why they had to celebrate to the dictator. Perhaps, the communist was disappeared only its name. According to the author describing about kindergarten children singing the song with communist slogan, as well as the celebration occurring in the main football stadium, his pictures were seen in every shop, the television was broadcasting, national holiday showed how enormous of event they ever had in Romania and could consider that this celebration was from someone's order and already got the permission from the democratic government; so, some of the government might be dictated from the communist party or even related to the former dictator, Nicolae Ceaușescu. As a result of economic instability after the Fall of communism, it caused the people to fall under the poverty, unemployment and uncertainty. There were many people thinking of the communist past. Someone might think that even though the communism was oppressive and there was no freedom, they still had something to eat (even only the onions or potatoes) and jobs. This was the impact of its system because the system tried to treat people with the state's money, fed them with a few foods, and provided the little space to live. The people had no responsibility for themselves except for working to the state monopoly by their labour and got decent holidays. As well as Hungarian feminist, Eniko Bollobas wrote about the benefit of

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<sup>60</sup> Drakulić, *Café Europa* 118-20.

women enjoying under communism such as a full employment, free health care, maternity leave, and cheap abortion. It sounded good, but she argued that practically, the quality of the services provided was quite pitiful, cheap and poor.<sup>61</sup> It was impossible to live in capitalism with the guaranteed financial stability. However, the different was that the more they work would reflect the money they could earn. The standard of their living in democracy depended on their ambition, whereas the communist could not provide them the better living standard even if they were hardworking. However, this kind of ideology was unappropriated for all, especially for elders: *'There were mostly elderly people: they looked like retired workers, old soldiers, peasants, old Communist party apparatchiks; people who perhaps had profited from the previous regime and for whom the change had come too late'*.<sup>62</sup> It seemed like people were in jail for a long time, but you got freedom when they were getting old. How could they survive by themselves? Consequently, this showed that the people did not focus on the system, but the result of system itself. If the communist regime could offer them the better living standard, they would enjoy and support them.

In addition, the communist ideology still remained in many aspects of the society after the Fall of Communism. Although Sofia was booming with a new enterprise created from the capitalist hunger, they could not compete with others. Because they did not understand about the service: *'Yet here a smile is a sign not of courtesy, but of the inferiority of the smiler. Capitalism might be here, but there is no understanding of its principles: the tenet that a customer is always right'*. Sofia became the Capitalism, but they had no smile because people never had money, they did not aware of its power. Also, *'The liberated communist working class has its pride and the concept of serving someone does not fit its new ideology or egalitarian principle.'*<sup>63</sup> The concept of Marxism still appeared as a root of the

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<sup>61</sup> Eniko Bollobas, "Totalitarian lib: the legacy of communism for Hungarian woman," in *Gender Politics and Post-Communism: Reflections from Eastern Europe and the Former Soviet Union*, ed. Nanette Funk and Magda Mueller (New York: Routledge, 1993), 201-06.

<sup>62</sup> Drakulić, *Café Europa* 120.

<sup>63</sup> Drakulić, *Café Europa* 50-51.

society in which they were all equal; no need to serve and having pride in themselves even if that certain pride could not make their living better. Besides, the idea of working still followed the former rule: *'The public toilets were absence of normal standards of hygiene because the individual had no responsibility to the public sphere, just doing by orders from somebody higher'*.<sup>64</sup> If the leader did not tell them, it was unnecessary for them to clean. Because at the end of the day, they would get the same amount of money. Under communism, everyone was taught to be content with what they had and could not want for more. Therefore, normally, every job was done just for finishing, but not for trying their best, for example the doctor: *'You wanted a kidney examined? You had to shelf out some bills and pass them to the nurse under the table. Had a molar that was bothering you? Pay the doctor and he would take care of it, or even might throw in some anesthetics'*<sup>65</sup>

*... what people today miss the most is the security they have lost with the fall of communism: jobs pensions, social and medical security, maternity leave, sick leave. As a result, you don't invest, build or save in the name of the future. You just grab what there is today, because it might not be there tomorrow. So future is still non-existent in practical terms: it is distant and blurred and not yet to be trusted. A restaurant owner explained this to me very simply when I asked him why he didn't lower his prices, since his restaurant seemed pretty empty. He told me 'I have to take all I can today, because I don't know what will happen tomorrow, whether I will have a same chance again'*<sup>66</sup>

During under the communist, people was living under the insecurity and suspicion because of the state interference and no freedom of expression, the democratization made them more liberal. Subsequently, it followed by the insecurity of foods due to the poverty, bribery smuggling and corruption which led to the absence of state's welfare. The Eastern society after the demise of communism was no sense of safety and security at all; first, the pension, health insurance and proper holiday that they

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<sup>64</sup> Drakulić, *Café Europa* 35.

<sup>65</sup> Cristina, "Daily life under communism: The case of Romania," 277.

<sup>66</sup> Drakulić, *Café Europa* 66-67.

used to get from the government were missing. Second, people at that time were stuck with the old regime's ideologies; everyone was equal, no service, lazy, obeying the order. Also, people did not care about the 'common' things because it belonged to the state, so they tried to grab and cheat as they wanted and could. Third, because the elites and politicians could get the money by the corruption, smuggling, money laundering and some other mafia styles, this shaped the perception of people towards money at that time. Moreover, the long experience under communism and the unpredictable democracy taught them that no one was getting rich by working, they learned to cheat the foreigners because they were the symbol of prosperity. Also, the other business criminal was seen throughout the Eastern European.

To conclude, there were misunderstandings about democracy in both of politicians and citizens. When the state did not provide welfare, they were all independent. People had to survive but they did not know how to achieve; they started seeing the leaders who succeeded from the corruption. The liberalism was distorted that everyone could cheat on others freely. Also, the state was the loser; no tax from unemployed people, money spent for bribery; so, there was no financial contribution for the public sphere. Furthermore, no one cared about the law enforcement because they were all cheated. Thus, these factors fostered the Eastern bloc that it could not develop in the proper way; there was no new infrastructure and the existence looked unfinished, the streets were not yet asphalted and had no name, streetlights, and shop. And it was even worse when there was the fall of rain; the mud came out to the street. It was unhygienic, and the people were 'unsafe'.

### **III. Esteem Needs & Gender**

Esteem needs, as an overall concept, is defined as the lack of respect of himself or herself or the lack of respect which a person receives from other people.<sup>67</sup> These kinds of needs are located in the middle of pyramid. In this chapter, I focused on the willingness of women concerning beauty, admiration, and

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<sup>67</sup> Taormina and Gao, "Maslow and the Motivation Hierarchy: Measuring Satisfaction of the Needs," 159.



satisfaction. Initially, I have to admit that these kinds of aesthetic things and self-esteem are far beyond the basic things but it still relate to the everyday life. Moreover, the lack of these things will affect their mentality which leads to the unhappiness under the communism. Also, it can be the observable evidences to characterize the position of women in the communist society related gender aspects.

In the limit of expression under the communist world, to be more attractiveness, to show their identity, and to improve their social status, the women had to create many attempts and the easiest way to express themselves was the appearances such as outfits, make-up, healthy hair, good shape, etc. First of all, Slavanka pointed out the fur cloth as the symbol of higher class. Likewise, the washing machine, fur cloth could represent how much the owner could earn. It was a visible symbol of wealth and luxury, especially in the poor Eastern bloc. Fur cloth would be even more expensive and hardly affordable for the bourgeois; so, the Eastern classes could be divided easily by this kind of outfit. According to Slavanka Drakulić describing about her mother's willingness: *'She had decided to buy a fur. She was saving money for it, calculating carefully where and how to buy it, and even found a shop that gives three months' credit'*. Even if her mother lived on the coast, it was not cold enough to wear fur cloth, her mother continued doing her dream project by the three-month-credit. She said *'You know, I have wanted to buy a fur like this for forty years'*.<sup>68</sup> Although it was not necessary, she wanted to buy because it illustrated that she had enough money. On the other hand, this revealed the suppression of mother that she lived under the poverty for a long time and she desired to be free by this fur cloth as the illusion of freedom, even if the reality was not yet existed.

It was similar to the make-up and hair dye as if women were born with it. Although they were hungry and had many burdens inside and outside the house, women still wanted to be beautiful even though the results were not as good as they expected:

*Once I was in Warsaw, a friend told me about a spate of red-haired woman: suddenly it seemed that half of the women in the city had red hair, a*

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<sup>68</sup> Drakulić, *How We Survived Communism and Even Laughed* 140-41.

*phenomenon that couldn't pass unnoticed. It might have been a fashion caprice. More likely, it had to do with the failure of the chemical industry to produce or deliver other kinds of dye. Imagine those women confronted by the fact that there is no other color in the store where they buy their dye and knowing that if there isn't any in one store, it's generally useless to search others. There is only the one shade of red. (I've seen it; it's a burgundy-red that gives hair a peculiarly artificial look, like a wig.) They have no choice – they either appear untidy, with bleached ends and unbleached roots sticking out, or they dye their hair whatever color they can find. So they dye it, hoping that other women won't to this same conclusion. They don't exactly choose.<sup>69</sup>*

There were a full of red hair women in Eastern Europe because the monopoly factory owned by the totalitarian government producing only one shade of hair dye. It was similar to the pale-pink lipstick which did not match with their color eye, Dream Complex cream, the only cream available in the early 1950s, as well as the spike-heeled white boots which seemed to be popular in Eastern European countries but the fact that there was nothing else to wear. When we considered about the nationalization at that time, the government was the one who monopolized everything and distributed it to the people equally. This indicated that the state controlled what a woman should be or the way that the women should appear. The beauty of women was designed by only one shade, so it made them look artificial and appear all the same likewise robots which were created from one factory. Besides, due to the bad quality of hair dye, it followed by the untidy and unhealthy hair. Although they could choose whether they wanted to dye it or not, due to some reasons such as the elderly persons who owned the grizzled hair, they did not and could not choose what color or the quality of hair dye. Even though they had enough money to buy the better quality, they decided to buy the only one on shelves because no one knew where and when they could find it again. Communism controlled the beauty with their ideology; everyone had to be the same, no identity, and no individuality. Everyone was a part of community as its slaves. Thus, hair dye

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<sup>69</sup> Drakulić, *How We Survived Communism and Even Laughed* 24.

or the things with the different color could be a sign of hope. The hope which their life would be different, a freedom of choosing would appear, as well as their life as an individual would be recognized.

While the future in communism was blurring as same as the women needs, their hope appeared on the foreign magazine and followed by the black market:

*To avoid uniformity, you have to work very hard: you have to bribe a salesgirl, wait in line for some imported product, buy bluejeans on the black market and pay your whole month's salary for them; you have to hoard cloth and sew it, imitating the pictures in glamorous foreign magazines. What makes these enormous efforts touching is the way women wear it all, so you can tell they went to the trouble. Nothing is casual about them. They are over-dressed, they put on too much make-up, they match colors and textures badly, revealing their provincial attempt to imitate Western fashion. But where could they learn anything about self-image, a style? In the party-controlled magazines for women, where they are instructed to be good workers and party members first, then mothers, housewives, and sex objects next, - never themselves?<sup>70</sup>*

The explanation showed that women loved to see herself beautiful. They wanted to be different as an individual should be. They wanted to have their own identity, not be the same as others. It was a kind of self-actualization: *'In Francine du Plessix Gray's book Soviet Women, the women say that they dress up not for men, but to cheer themselves up in a grim everyday life or to prove their status to other women.'*<sup>71</sup> To be beautiful was not only for more attractiveness, but it was also respecting themselves. The person who were looking good and well-dressed could be defined as a symbol of consumerism, urbanization, good health, as well as rich in which she had time to take care of herself. However, to be beautiful in communism had to put much effort rather than the Western women did. They had to transform their old clothes for imitating the picture in a foreign magazine. This was not because they wanted to do it or it was women's duty, but it was the only way to be dressed

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<sup>70</sup> Drakulić, *How We Survived Communism and Even Laughed* 26.

<sup>71</sup> Drakulić, *How We Survived Communism and Even Laughed* 26-27.

nicely. However, their attempt might not enough; the imitation was not likely the same. The Eastern women appeared to be over-dressed, matching in poor taste because they could not find the good example in which was rarely found in communism. As I guess, until the foreign magazine came to the East, it was likely outdated: *'living under such conditions and holding Vogue magazine in your hands is very particular experience – it's almost like holding a pebble from Mars'*.<sup>72</sup> The foreign fashion magazine was crucial because the only one kind of domestic women magazine was controlled by communist party which taught women to respect and obey the communist party as a good workers, as well as a mothers and housewives for their family. Not only did the women had many roles as tough workers, they represented as sex objects for man's desire and childbearing machine of the states. According to the Josie Mclellen's mention about after the post-World War, the communist state had lost many workers from war, so they encouraged teenagers in an attempt to increase birth rate.<sup>73</sup> In particular the Romanian government, all married couples were convinced to have four children.<sup>74</sup> These points, once again, the state controlled every people's aspects, not at least their consideration to give birth but even they were poor and not ready yet. Besides, the approach of the state toward woman did not show any status of women as an individual who had rights to decide their own identities. Even though the states ignored the aesthetic things, they tried to be beautiful in their own ways. Regarding Dan Stone's mention about situation after the lack of consumer good in Stalin period, Khrushchev came into power with his goals to produce more on citizens' needs and especially women goods, but eventually he could not do that. It followed by the creation of black market, smuggling, hard currency, particularly the deutschmark and the dollar, and also high instance of bribery, as well as the corruption in everyday business.<sup>75</sup> The black market came to their life at that period. It sounded promising because goods were imported from the West. Due to high demand, women had to participate a long

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<sup>72</sup> Drakulić, *How We Survived Communism and Even Laughed* 27.

<sup>73</sup> Mclellan, *Love in the time of communism: intimacy and sexuality in the GDR* 22-51.

<sup>74</sup> Carol Douglas, "Women in Communist Countries," *Off Our Backs* 16, no. 9 (1986): 13.

<sup>75</sup> Stone, *Goodbye to All That?: a History of Europe since 1945* 153.

queue to consume the taste of urbanization, then purchased it with your whole month salary. These showed the hope of women towards beauty, they had to put effort and pay a high price in order to satisfy and be more attractive. Otherwise, they had to find the traditional method which they had learned from their mothers as the Western women magazine called ‘natural cosmetic’:

*Her hair is very long and brown; she washes it with Camillaflor powdered shampoo. It's the only brand that exists and features brunette or blonde on the paper package. She rinses her hair in water with vinegar so as to leave it soft and silky. My thin, blond hair has to be rinsed with the juice of half a lemon – its smell follows me the whole afternoon. And while she lies there, with a cucumber mask – or a mask made of egg whites, or a yogurt mask if it is winter, or a chamomile wrap to remove puffiness under the eyes after a bad night's sleep or quarreling with my father Years and years later, I will remember every detail of how beautiful she was at that moment, a magician who created beauty out of nothing. She ignored reality, the fact that there was no choice, fighting it with the old beauty recipes that she had learned from her mother and grandmother.<sup>76</sup>*

The natural skincare would represent for a long time since her mother and grandmother, and there was no sign to stop them. Nothing developed by the communist state except its power; people still fell under the poverty, the food was scarce, it lacked space and basic needs, and it was not talking about cosmetic and other choices for people and women. The natural cosmetic was also represented in the Western, it was a good way for smooth and good-looking skin. However, the different was that women in the West had choices to choose whether they wanted the natural or the chemical way, but the Eastern women had only one way to choose because there was no other way around.

Apart from the cosmetics and outfits, the result of many burdens for the women as a labours, wives, mothers, they were overlooked from the state, it made them older than they really were:

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<sup>76</sup> Drakulić, *How We Survived Communism and Even Laughed* 21-22.

*... we don't even look like women. There are no deodorants, perfumes, sometimes even no soap or toothpaste. There is no fine underwear, no pantyhose, no nice lingerie. Worst of all, there are no sanitary napkins... Walking the streets of Eastern European cities, one can easily see that the women there look tired and older than they really are. They are poorly dressed, overweight, and flabby. Only the very young are slim and beautiful, with the healthy look and grace that go with youth.*<sup>77</sup>

The limit of basic and aesthetic needs made them not much to look at because there was no cosmetic to make them more beautiful and hide their age. Only girls looked good as they were young. Besides, someone faced with unsatisfied smell and obesity because the perfumes were luxury and there were not many choices to eat. Even the state provides the free dental care, the people still had broken teeth due to the shortage of toothpaste. Also, the dentist did not perform well. Slavenka mentioned about her dentist when she was child. Her family had to go to military hospital, her dentist was a young student of dentistry drafted into the army. She gave them a chance to improve their experience as a dentist; however, the result was shown as six of her teeth were missing. All this aesthetics challenged that what the women faced were from the failure of state which was not seeing people as an individual.

It may go too far to talk about cosmetic because even sanitary napkins which were a basic need of women were shortage. As Slavanka said about her first sanitary napkin made by terrycloth which her mother bought it when she was teenager, *'The napkins had buttonholes at each end to fasten them to the belt, so they wouldn't slip.'*, and she had to hand-wash and hang it in the bathroom to dry overnight. The time flew thirty years, when she traveled to Eastern Europe with her disposable tampons, it was easier for women to throw it away after used instead of handwashing it. Her friend asked her to leave her disposable tampons because she could not find in East. Surprisingly, it had been thirty years for the state to recognize this kind of necessity. More than thirty years, woman had to wash their sanitary napkin, but nothing changed.

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<sup>77</sup> Drakulić, *How We Survived Communism and Even Laughed* 31.

Moreover, to stuck with the small apartment with her parent even though they had husband and child made them depressed, followed by eating unhealthy and not much choices of food leading to the obesity. For example, Masa, an economist, returned to her parent after she divorced. Her whole life had been controlled by her parent and she had rarely a chance to create a new family. '*I don't remember the last time I dated a man*' Masa said. These would be the reasons for the stress of women who faced the lack of space and choice leading to the sense of self-esteem and belongingness would reduce.

It was not only the lack of apartment, but also the space for expression for women's rights. In the communism, feminist was considered as the state enemy. According to the spy mentioned in the previous chapter, plus some received threatening letters, got divorced as an accuse of neglecting their families; the number of feminists in Eastern Europe could '*count on their fingers*'. Kristina, the feminist friend of Slavanka told her about the questionnaires that asking women if they thought it should have a feminist organization and everyone answered yes. Then, she also asked them if they wanted to join the feminist organization, only 10 out of 100 answered positively. The eastern society did not understand about the feminism; they thought that feminists were the lesbian group. But actually the feminist was the women who engaged with the movements for the better situation of their lives and their interests<sup>78</sup> in which Molyneux talked about the concept of women's interest which concerned the ability to complement their roles as wives, mothers and labor.<sup>79</sup> Thus, the overall definition of the feminist is the women who acted as several roles in the society called for the rights, lead to the better living standard of all women either physical living or mental needs. Consequently, the feminists remained in communism because of various reasons such as the serious society question like against abortion policy or the everyday life question of one married teacher said '*Because my husband always interrupts when I talk. It's hard to*

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<sup>78</sup> R. Ray and A. C. Korteweg, "Women's Movements in the Third World: Identity, Mobilization, and Autonomy," *Annual Review of Sociology* 25 (1999): 47-71.

<sup>79</sup> Molyneux M., "Mobilization without emancipation? Women's interest, state and revolution in Nicaragua," *Fem. Stud.* 15, no. 3 (1985): 443-60.

recognize discrimination when you live with it', and also some wanted to preserve the number of feminist because 'Woman don't take initiative here; they wait for somebody to solve their problem – that's very typical for polish women' she said. In Poland, and similar to other communist Eastern European countries, there were not many feminists because there was no initiative in Eastern woman:

*I see that when I visited the novelist Erzsebet. She is a thin, quiet woman, and even though she has written four novels, she doesn't sound self-assured at all. We talk. Her husband – a journalist and novelist, too – sits there, drinking vodka and pretending he is not interested in a discussion about woman in Hungary. 'I'm lucky' she says. 'I didn't have to work' When I ask her what she thinks of feminism, she pauses. 'I don't understand what these women want,' she responds, glancing shyly at her husband. At that point, he just can't stand it anymore. 'You want to know who, in my opinion, was the first feminist?' he asks me, as if his argument is so strong that will persuade me forever against feminism, his face already red from vodka and barely concealed anger. I'll tell you who she was – Sappho from Lesbos.' I see Erzsebet blushing, nervously playing with her glass. But she doesn't utter a word.<sup>80</sup>*

This was the position as a wife in communist society. In many Communist countries, people were focusing on the family because it was the only place they could trust.<sup>81</sup> Regarding to Erzsebet, her life seemed good and lucky as she did not have to work. However, actually, she had no respect to herself and from others, because she depended on her husband including the money and notions. As her husband responded to author and the gesture that Erzsebet did to him. It showed that she had no confidence to express her notion because of her husband's behavior that threatened and tried to occupy not only her, but also the other females like Slavanka. More than that, the ideology of communism which was no space for women's expression and oppressive in the society, even in the family would foster Erzsebet reducing her self-respect. Even if her husband did not understand about

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<sup>80</sup> Drakulić, *How We Survived Communism and Even Laughed* 131.

<sup>81</sup> Douglas, "Women in Communist Countries," 13.



what the feminist really was, she could not argue or even utter the words. Her life belonged to him. She was controlled. When we considered about the feminism and Erzsebet, these proved that there was no respect for women in both of commune and family. Likewise, Zsuzsa, the single mother with two kids, she told Slavanka about the reasons for divorce:

*'I felt so passive, as if life was just passing me by. I worked, took care of the children and the house, but I was in a state of deep hibernation,' says Zsuzsa. 'Something was missing, and it was a space for myself. When there is no space in society to express your individuality, the family becomes the only territory in which you can form it, exercise it, prove it, express it. But a family is too limiting, there is not space enough in it for self-expression either, and negative feelings accumulate very soon. We started to hate each other, but we stayed together because of the bigger enemy, waiting for each of us, out there – the solidarity of victims, I guess.'*<sup>82</sup>

The pressure and failure of the state could destroy the family life. It sounded a dilemma because the communism did not provide the private space, so people had much participation on the society. On the other hand, there was no sense of expression in public or any other way, including in family. Imagine that the apartment was tiny, and they have to share with others, every conversation could be heard by other tenants, so they could not speak out loud or make some arguments in family. Other than that, the recognition of person as an individual, especially in women disappeared. The society and family did not let them talk and express. The same ways as men represented as a soldier and labour. There were also no identity and unrecognized as an individual. Both of male and female were serving the state as if its slave. However, due to women's duty in house, they were serving everyone in family and were dominated by male. The woman seemed to have a lower status than men, because they had many duties and dedicated their life to the family and the state for the great revolution plan. Thus, if the women could not hold all these

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<sup>82</sup> Drakulić, *How We Survived Communism and Even Laughed* 107.

burdens; they let themselves alone. It followed by the belonging needs which define as a need in relation with someone<sup>83</sup> were disappeared.

*We live surrounded by newly opened porno shops, porno magazines, peepshows, stripteases, unemployment, and galloping poverty. In the press they call Budapest ‘the city of love, the Bangkok of Eastern Europe.’ Romanian women are prostituting themselves for a single dollar in towns on the Romanian-Yugoslav border. In the midst of all this, our anti-choice nationalist governments are threatening our right to abortion and telling us to multiply, to give birth to more Poles, Hungarians, Czechs, Croats, Slovaks.<sup>84</sup>*

The state allowed female to work equally. Either female or male had to dedicate themselves to the common productivity. While men could have porno magazine and prostitute to consume and release the stress with sex service by women, there were lack of happiness of women's willingness combining with the violation and fear from the state threatening to force them giving birth or the abortion which relied on their population policy. Other than that, some women had to abandon their dignity to work as a prostitute for very little money because they had no choice or any better path.

The concept of individual should be raised in this topic which every human was different, and they wanted to have their own identity, happiness and self-assured. However, the communist regime could not serve their desires because they forced people to be in commune, then treated them by looking at the overall situation and emphasized on equality. Especially for the women as identified previously, the state never provided the choices for them; so they never chose. It became to the reduction of self-respect. Also, it undermined the sense of self-responsibility that would be an impact after the communism collapsed.

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<sup>83</sup> Taormina and Gao, "Maslow and the Motivation Hierarchy: Measuring Satisfaction of the Needs," 158.

<sup>84</sup> Drakulić, *Café Europa* 132.

## Conclusion

The tragic of communist regime in this study concerned the everyday life of ordinary people that the state provided equally. It became shortage even the basic need could not be served. The pursuit of freedom occurred because people knew that the communism could not serve their necessities and failed to reach their obligation. However, when the time of democracy came, it was not the same as their expectation. It might be better or worse depending on each people who gained benefit or loss, but overall, the sense of communism were not disappear; likewise the 'scar' of people to remember their 'miserable normal life' was not eliminated and their standard could not compare to the otherness.

When we were considering the theory of Karl Marx which emphasized on classless system because most of the workers were poor in contrast with the employers. These became the increasing of gap between two levels of people. Thus, to against the class struggle, they suggested that all productions should be nationalized; own by the commune and private property was nonexistent.<sup>85</sup> It seemed good but too fanciful in practical because the political level owned too much power leading to excessive use of power to dominate the citizens. As the result of lack in 3 fundamental needs; basic needs, safety needs, and esteem needs covering either physical or mental aspects, the evidences proved that these necessities were occurred in the sense of people as the instinct for having life. As well as the choices for deciding on their own should be the basic freedom of human. On the other hand, living in commune should appear in order to improve the relationship. However, it had to come with the appropriate way in which they should have the status on society and their privacy should not be violated. The concept of capitalism and democracy might be more appropriate for the people's wants and needs. Although every system had their own identity and there were some people gaining and losing, but the common thing was about the crucial things of being a human; having rights, freedom, happiness, equality in prosperity, and having proper principles to control them.

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<sup>85</sup> Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *Manifesto of the Communist Party* (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1848), 26-27.

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