

PÉTER APOR – JOSIP MIHALJEVIĆ
– CRISTINA PETRESCU

Collections of Intellectual Dissent: Historians and Sociologists in post-1968 Hungary, Romania and Yugoslavia

This chapter discusses two collections in Romania, one which was created in Yugoslavia and was donated to the Croatian State Archives by its creator in 1993, and two in Hungary. These five collections represent relevant examples of non-conformism in the fields of sociology and history. The Zoltán Rostás Oral History Collection and the Alexandru Barnea Photograph Collection from Romania are relevant because both are private collections which are not maintained by any institution and thus are typical of the great majority of the collections of cultural opposition created and preserved in Romania. They both illustrate how individuals who were directly involved in non-conformist acts in the past have tried to make sense of their own pasts when interviewed by the COURAGE researchers. Founded and maintained by the person who created their content, the collections highlight how endeavors initiated before 1989 as extra-professional interests or hobbies can become socially relevant after 1989, even in cases in which the respective collections remained in private possession. Finally, the two collections suggest that the strategy according to which people engaged in activities that could be labeled cultural opposition in Ceaușescu's Romania was to choose images in order to avoid using words or, if this was not appropriate, to choose spoken words to avoid using the written word.

In contrast, the Rudi Supek Personal Papers, a public collection maintained by the Croatian State Archives, is relevant because it demonstrates how intellectual dissent functioned under significantly different conditions in Tito's Yugoslavia. Dissent academics could maintain their public status to a much larger extent in Yugoslavia than in the other countries of the Eastern Bloc, which explains why their collections have become parts of public institutions and are part of the accessible archival heritage today. The two collections from Hungary reveal the rather elusive frontiers between official and oppositional academic expression and ways in which individuals journeyed between these zones. The Archives of Eötvös Loránd University (ELTE – Budapest) holds a particularly interesting collection. The collection, which is now presented as one of the highlights of the contents of the archives and, in many ways, thus the history of the university, preserves material related to the activities of the 1969–1970 Communist Youth committee at the faculty. The history of this archival section at ELTE and adjacent collections like Bakos'

Gábor Bethlen Foundation provides interesting insights into the roles of the disciplines of history and sociology in critical thinking in socialist Hungary and, more specifically, into the social-political room for maneuver between mainstream and semi-legal public spheres. A second example, István Kemény's sociological interview collection in the Voices of the 20th Century Archives, is relevant because it reveals that there were spaces within which criticism could emerge in official institutions and also indicates the limits of these spaces.

These collections epitomize the state of the two academic disciplines (history and sociology), which, after the field of economics, were the most thematically and methodologically affected by the ideological control of the party state. Implicitly, this chapter explores the rather neglected zone of dissent within the state-controlled academic institutions and tolerated professional careers, as compared to the usual approach of analyzing intellectual dissent expressed in samizdat or tamizdat publications, mostly by individuals who were active beyond the limits of tolerance. These collections are relevant because both shed light not only upon the grey zone of tolerated thinking within the frameworks of these two academic disciplines, but also upon the contexts in which these limits could be transgressed. In other words, this analysis captures the dynamics of ideological control under the former communist regimes and the constant quests of individuals to find the constantly changing niches that allowed greater liberty of expression.

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The year 1968 made a different impact on the construction of dissent cultures in Yugoslavia, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, and Poland on the one hand and Romania on the other.¹ Ideas of democratic socialism, critical Marxism and the experience of a transnational struggle for these ideals were very important in Yugoslavia. In 1968, the year of the student revolt and the invasion of Warsaw Pact troops into the Czechoslovak Republic, the *Praxis* (leading Marxist revisionist journal in Yugoslavia) orientation reached its peak and made the greatest social impact it ever had. Praxis intellectuals gave their support to students in 1968 and emphasized the potential of non-institutionalized forms of action, in particular the need to redefine the role of the intelligentsia in society.² Moreover, the Praxis orientation was largely an inspiration for student activism in 1968 in Yugoslavia. The first and the most energetic student protests took place in Belgrade in June, and almost all the Praxis-oriented professors at the University of Belgrade actively participated in the student move-

1 Klimke, Pekelder and Scharloth, *Between Prague Spring and French May*.

2 Klasić, *Jugoslavija i svijet 1968*, 72.

ment.³ That year's Korčula Summer School attracted the highest number of students, probably because of the famous speakers (Ernst Bloch and Herbert Marcuse) and the general topic ("Marx and the Revolution"). The topic symbolically matched the student riots and the happenings in Czechoslovakia, the occupation of which the School unambiguously condemned.⁴ After receiving information on the aggression against Czechoslovakia, the School cancelled the official program and signed a protest appeal to the world public on August 21. Although this appeal went almost unmentioned in the Yugoslav media, the French press published it. The world events in 1968 convinced the Yugoslav authorities that it was necessary to fight more decisively against the creators of critical thought.⁵ Vladimir Bakarić, the highest party leader in the Socialist Republic of Croatia (SRC), even said that their journal "expresses a modern American anti-communist orientation."⁶

1968 was a crucial event for the emerging intellectual dissent in Hungary as well, for two reasons. First, the shock of the open violent suppression of the experiment with democratic socialism in Czechoslovakia meant a clear watershed for intellectuals with diverse backgrounds, who now realized that socialism could not (or no longer) be democratized from within and increasingly started to see the Soviet Union as an imperialist great power that hindered democratic reforms in East Central Europe. 1968 was extraordinarily shocking for the generation of Marxist revisionists like Ágnes Heller, György Márkus, and Mihály Vajda, who had been part of the optimistic transnational movements of renaissance Marxism in the 1960s. The disappointment which came with the suppression of the Prague Spring set these intellectuals on a long road of dissent. First, they openly declared their support for the Czechoslovak reform movement in Korčula that summer and, later, they went exile in the mid-1970s, following repressive acts by the party.⁷ The fall of the Czechoslovak reform movement led many others from the younger generation to seek models of democratization elsewhere. Intellectuals like János Kis, György Bencze, and András Kovács started to discover ideas of Western liberalism. Others, like the poet Sándor Csoóri, were more attracted to democratic models of allegedly authentic peasant societies in Latin America and in the Hungarian countryside and, later, also in Transylvania. When the party authorities clamped down on the grassroots democratic movement of students at ELTE University Budapest in 1969, members of the younger generation also distanced themselves from official socialism.⁸ Many of them started to believe

3 Ibid., 142.

4 Lešaja, *Praksis orijentacija*, 340–43.

5 Klasić, *Jugoslavija i svijet 1968*, 73–74.

6 Ibid., 56.

7 Rainer, "Prága – Korčula – Budapest."

8 Dénes, "Diákmozgalom Budapesten 1969-ben." See the ELTE student movement collection in the COURAGE Registry, s.v. "1969 Budapest student movement", by Pál Zoltán, 2018. Accessed: July 2, 2018. (forthcoming).

that democratic and solidarity-based societies might exist elsewhere: in Allende's Chile, in the democratic socialist movements or liberal societies in the West, or among the provincial and minority cultures in the region. Second, the experience of 1968 was an important factor that accelerated the process of establishing linkages between the older generation of 1956ers, like Árpád Göncz⁹ and György Krassó¹⁰, and the younger generation of 1968ers. The Soviet military intervention in Czechoslovakia was crucial to convince the 1968ers that their cause was truly similar to that of the 1956ers, with whom, until then, they had had only sporadic contacts.¹¹

As compared to other countries in the Soviet bloc, Romania experienced the events in August 1968 as a moment of celebration, not mourning. The Romanian Communist Party (RCP) and its newly elected leader capitalized politically from what appeared then to be a straightforward criticism of the Soviet-led invasion of Czechoslovakia. Thus, joining the party became a widely accepted norm of upward mobility, while the party itself managed to accomplish a new stage of societal penetration,¹² turning the hitherto selective community-building into a veritable nation-building process.¹³ Obviously, such an event had an overwhelming effect upon the generation which experienced this moment, paralyzing its non-conformist discourses or activities, which could have appeared pro-Soviet, since the RCP was anti-Soviet, or at least had managed to cast itself as such. A decade later, criticism of the system of values represented by the RCP only very slowly and timidly developed. However, these kinds of manifestations of disagreement emerged mostly from less institutionally controlled individuals, such as the writers who only belonged to the loose organization of the Writers' Union, which did not require daily professional activity within its confines. In contrast, the academic milieus at universities and research institutes represented rather highly constrained professional environments, from where any dissenting individual was instantly expelled. The limits of tolerance in this respect are illustrated by the case of Doina Cornea, the French lecturer at the Babeş–Bolyai University in Cluj/Kolozsvár, who was forced into early retirement in 1983 for having disseminated among her students a samizdat with self-made translations from an exiled Romanian author.¹⁴

9 COURAGE Registry, s.v. "Family Collection of Árpád Göncz's Heritage", by Béla Nóvé, 2018. Accessed: July 2, 2018. (forthcoming).

10 COURAGE Registry, s.v. "Documents of György and Miklós Krassó (1956-1989)", by Zoltán Pál, 2018. Accessed: September 26, 2018, doi: 10.24389/3747.

11 On this generational dynamic see Apor and Mark, "Mobilising Generation."

12 Kocka, "Eine durchherrschte Gesellschaft."

13 Jowitt, *Revolutionary Breakthroughs and National Development*; D. Petrescu, *Explaining the Romanian Revolution of 1989*.

14 COURAGE Registry, s.v. "Doina Cornea Ad-hoc Collection at CNSAS", by Cristina Petrescu and Corneliu Pintilescu, 2018. Accessed: October 6, 2018. COURAGE Registry, s.v. "Doina Cornea Private Collection", by Cristina Petrescu and Corneliu Pintilescu, 2018. Accessed: October 6, 2018.

As far as sociology and history are concerned, the intrusion of the party state reached levels probably never reached in other countries in the Soviet bloc. At the same time, the fate of the two academic disciplines in the post-war period offers an interesting internal comparison. Before the communist takeover, sociology represented, with only few exceptions, the domain of the small group of the urban left-oriented intellectuals, while history was the playground of the liberal and/or nationalist intellectuals. After the communist takeover, prominent professionals in both disciplines had to endure longer or shorter terms in prison, which led to the death of quite a number of academics.¹⁵ However, sociology, unlike history, was also ousted from universities together with all its practitioners, who had to survive by taking different jobs which required fewer qualifications. Interestingly though, the nationalist turn of the Romanian communist regime in the 1960s also meant the recuperation of the largest majority of the sociologists and historians who previously had been marginalized or even imprisoned. From the realm of the prohibited, these former academics crossed the borders after the end of the period of political repression in 1964 into the realm of the tolerated, and some of the most gifted among them even made it into the realm of the supported. This was the case of sociologist H. H. Stahl, who, after having endured years of ostracization, was called on to underpin the reintroduction of sociology into universities in the mid-1960s,¹⁶ or historian Constantin C. Giurescu, who after having spent five-years in prison became the key author and disseminator of the Romanian national narrative of the Ceaușescu period, conveyed through mass-produced books and cinematic narratives.¹⁷ While the party state was co-opting pre-communist professionals, it also gradually reinforced its ideological control of the very content of academic production. The strategies applied to the two disciplines were different, however. Sociology came back to universities only as a separate section of the highly ideological faculty of philosophy, where it became a mere specialty in 1977, when the study of philosophy and history were merged into a unique faculty. Thus, genuine sociological research was rather limited in communist Romania.¹⁸ In contrast, historical studies abounded, but their focuses and methods were hardly professional. Scholars who hoped to have their writings published had to be sure their narratives harmonized with the official national narrative, which was regarded as the only accepted, unique “truth” about the past and thus was part and parcel of the official documents approved by the Eleventh Congress of the RCP in 1974. Accordingly, national history was cast not only as a long series of more than 2000 years of struggles for unity and independence, i.e., ever

15 COURAGE Registry, s.v. “Sighet Memorial – Museum Collection”, by Cristina Petrescu and Cristian Valeriu Pătrășconiu, 2018. Accessed: July 2, 2018.

16 Rostás, *Monografia ca utopie*.

17 Giurescu, *Amintiri*.

18 Rostás, “The Second Marginalisation of the Bucharest Sociological School.”

since the Dacian, pre-Roman times but also as the pre-history of the RCP itself. Historians were only called on to add small details to the existing story, which was meant to forge the national-communist variant of Romanian national identity.¹⁹

In Yugoslavia, sociologists and historians worked under varying conditions. Since 1906, there had been a Department of Sociology at the Faculty of Law in Zagreb, based on the Western European tradition. After the Second World War, sociology was considered a “bourgeois science,” and the existing sociology departments in Yugoslavia were abolished or reorganized for political reasons. In the 1950s, there were discussions on relationships between Marxism and sociology and its “western methodology” but the process of making sociology a recognized academic discipline did finally begin. Beginning in the late 1950s, the sociology departments within the faculties of Philosophy were set up again. The first one was in Belgrade in 1959.²⁰ The course of Sociology of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences in Zagreb separated from the Department of Philosophy and became a department in 1963.

The government put pressure on other branches of the sciences as well, such as history. Yugoslavian historiography was also exposed to the demands of the ruling ideology. After the Second World War, it was determined that historiography should evolve in the Marxist direction (or spirit). The authorities argued that the study of history should focus on the history of the labor movement, the history of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia (LCY), and the history of the People’s Liberation struggle, and it should promote the concept of the “brotherhood and unity” of Yugoslav peoples. The last principle entailed the suppression of studies on interethnic relations, especially, those between Croats and Serbs.²¹ Historians reacted differently to these ideological pressures, but most of the ones who were dealing with earlier periods of history accepted it only nominally. Dogmatic Marxism never gained significant sway in a methodological sense, especially in Croatian historiography.²² Also, Yugoslav historiography was not homogeneous. Although there was cooperation between historians and institutions on various federal (Yugoslav) historiographic projects, within the Yugoslav republics, there were national historiographies which were concerned primarily with their own (national) histories.²³ Although there was a common “historiographic market” (within the borders of Yugoslavia), the trend towards the “nationalization” of historiography existed almost from the very beginning of the existence of Socialist Yugoslavia.²⁴ In the case of Croatian and Serbian historiography from 1945 to

19 C. Petrescu, “Historiography of Nation-Building in Communist Romania.”

20 Bogdanović, *Sociologija u Jugoslaviji*, 23.

21 Roksandić, “Srbi u Hrvatskoj u hrvatskoj i srpskoj historiografiji,” 212.

22 Janković, *Mijenjanje sebe same*, 27.

23 *Ibid.*, 16; Najbar-Agičić, *U skladu s marksizmom ili činjenicama*, 248–63.

24 Janković, *Mijenjanje sebe same*.

1990, a unified concept of history was never established. Instead, different visions of national histories were produced.²⁵

Some authors consider the isolation of Yugoslav historiographies the most important consequence of communist rule. Budak sees the causes for this in political circumstances, "which for a long time did not stimulate contacts with foreign scientists."²⁶ Croatian, Serbian, and Slovenian historiographies lost interest in the histories of other peoples and regions, and thus they came to stress the national character of each and pushed historians towards nationalism.²⁷ Unlike sociology, which expanded horizons and sought to become more involved in international exchange, historical science was moving toward parochialism. While sociology carved out its position and flourished under communism, history remained mostly closed within its existing frameworks. On the other hand, when the communist system collapsed, and Yugoslavia with it, history became much more socially relevant than sociology. The new nation states needed new national paradigms, which, in turn, were based on pre-war national mythologies. In this context, history served as a useful tool.

In Hungary, sociology was institutionalized later inside the official socialist academia. As was the case in Yugoslavia, in the Stalinist 1950s in Hungary sociology was considered a "bourgeois false science." In fact, the way in which sociology was institutionalized contained subversive potential. In this process, a major role was played by András Hegedüs, the former Stalinist prime minister, who in the wake of 1956 turned to revisionist criticism of official socialism. Hegedüs became an ardent supporter of sociological research and social criticism and was instrumental in establishing the Sociological Research Centre at the Institute of Philosophy in Budapest in 1963. As the first director of the Centre, he succeeded in employing critical Marxist thinkers ousted from university teaching, most importantly Ágnes Heller and Mária Márkus, György Márkus' wife. Hegedüs was intensively interested in Western leftist social criticism, particularly the Frankfurt School and Anglo-American New Left. He established relationships with sociologists and thinkers such as Charles Wright-Mills, Serge Mallett, Lucien Goldmann, and André Gorz. He also followed debates about democratic socialism among the Italian post-Stalinist left, and he had extensive contacts in Italy.²⁸

By the late 1960s, however, the party center also recognized the importance of sociology, which was connected to a crucial shift in the Cold War antagonism. Abandoning military and political confrontation, emphasizing the need for peaceful coexistence and economic and consumerist competition on the same pitch with capitalist countries, mainstream socialist culture start-

25 Czerwiński, *Semiotyka dyskursu historycznego*, 292.

26 Budak, "Post-socialist historiography in Croatia since 1990," 131.

27 *Ibid.*, 130–31.

28 Csizmadia, *A demokratikus ellenzék*, 28.

ed to discover the territory of everyday life as the most important remaining field where the distinction between capitalism and socialism could be plausibly played out. In Hungary, the first broad sociological investigation into varying lifestyles were launched in 1969. In many ways, the research conducted between 1969 and 1971 was an experiment, as it focused on an agricultural area of the country to test the limits of shaping lifestyles. The research program of the Institute of Sociology of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences showed a growing concern among intellectuals and members of the party leadership with the study of lifestyles: the idea on which the research was based emerged from the rather worrisome acknowledgment of the fact that lifestyles in the village remained unchanged and traditional in spite of previous programs the fundamental goals of which had been to usher in transformations in these traditions. The sociological program was motivated by an explicit objective of policy making: as the report on the research stressed, sociologists, struck by the resilience of some of the aspects of traditional lifestyles and the apparent ineffectiveness of programs which had been adopted, sought a better understanding of lifestyles in order to develop more effective programs to shape them. Lifestyles were considered the deepest essence of socio-cultural structures and, hence, the most important aspect to take into account when social programs were designed.²⁹ The interest of the party center and government administration in sociological knowledge guaranteed a certain level of safety for sociologists. It also created a chance for critical views to emerge within the walls of official institutions, and it explains how people were able to cross the borders separated discourses which were compatible with the party's agendas and discourses which were oppositional.

History functioned under somewhat different conditions in the Hungarian socialist state, but its institutionalization provided similar room for expressions of dissent. History was crucial for the state and nation building venture of Hungarian Stalinists in the 1950s, so the discipline enjoyed a high level of institutional esteem but also suffered profound purges. After 1956, historians who became critical of official socialism, like Péter Hanák (1921–1997), were ousted from universities. Universities, particularly in the capital, became highly conservative or, more precisely, loyal to the party line in terms of history education, and they remained so up until 1989. In contrast, the Institute of History of the Academy of Sciences, which had no teaching functions, brought together historians of various orientations. Hanák himself, who had been part of the 1950s radical establishment, was able to maintain his influence inside the Institute. Directors Zsigmond Pál Pach (1967–1985) and György Ránki (1985–1988), loyal party members but also men who showed professional solidarity, regularly protected employees of the Institute. The Institute, thus, became a home for both loyal historians and critical dissident intellectu-

29 Losonczi, "Életmód és társadalmi változások."

als at the same time. Gábor Gyáni or Gábor Klaniczay³⁰ of the younger generation disseminated samizdat publications at the Institute, and Miklós Szabó even delivered lectures at the flying universities held by the democratic opposition.

2

In Romania, in hostile academic environments, a few professionals connected to the two disciplines tried not to break the rules, but to bend them. The Zoltán Rostás Collection of oral history interviews and the Alexandru Barnea Collection of photographs illustrate the limited opportunities in communist Romania to transcend borders from the clandestine to the institutionalized. Professionals in the fields of history and sociology engaged in more or less prohibited activities out of either a kind of social commitment, not so much with the hope of bringing about any changes, but rather to leave behind testimony for the next generation, or simply as a hobby. Of these two collections, the Zoltán Rostás private collection³¹ stands out as something unique in the context of Romania in the 1980s. It is an extraordinary example of a passion that developed in the grey zone of tolerance permitted by the regime into a profession after the fall of the regime. It is ironic that the creator of the collection initiated his endeavors following a unique opportunity to be exposed to genuine debates among professionals on both sides of the Iron Curtain. This opportunity was created by the World Congress of Historians in 1980, which Romania organized to mark the nationalist-communist celebration of the alleged 2050 years of continuous existence on the current territory of the country. This event was an external stimulus in the foundation of this collection, because it allowed Zoltán Rostás to benefit from a transfer of professional knowledge and become familiar with the methods of oral history, which were totally unknown in Romania. This kind of transnational exchange of ideas was extremely rare in a country which was as culturally isolated as Romania was after the so-called July Theses. These “theses” proclaimed in 1971, hampered the free circulation of professionals to and ideas from the West. One consequence of their adoption was the gradual emergence of an alternative professional identity. When he embarked down this unusual path in communist Romania, however, Rostás did not realize that he was doing something that demanded courage, but only that he had undertaken an intellectual project that would be interesting and useful as a way of bringing new material to enrich the documentary resources for social history. Rostás was also perfectly aware that he

30 COURAGE Registry, s.v. “Gábor Klaniczay’s private collection”, by Heléna Hunák, 2018. Accessed: October 08, 2018.

31 COURAGE Registry, s.v. “Zoltán Rostás Oral History Private Collection”, by Cristina Petrescu and Cristian Valeriu Pătrășconiu, 2017. Accessed July 2, 2018.

could not publish the oral history interviews that he intended to carry out, because the themes that interested him would not suit the official narratives. At the same time, oral history was not explicitly forbidden, which meant that his undertaking could be classed as “tolerated” by the regime, at long as it remained a largely private venture. However, in their content, the oral history interviews recorded by the owner of the collection in the 1980s conflicted with the official system of values. Initially, Rostás aimed to capture not only the societal changes, but also the cultural diversity of Bucharest. His multicultural vision clearly conflicted with the homogenizing vision of the party state. This collection also stands out because it preserved the memory of the school of sociology, which was destroyed by the communist regime. Today, the recordings in this collection constitute documents without parallel, since in the period in question Rostás was the only person who collected these kinds of testimonies on prohibited or marginalized topics. Reflecting on his own past activity through the prism of the COURAGE research questions, he emphasized how important it was to be able to evaluate the limits of the political system in order to know the extent of the regime’s tolerance. “What I was doing when I went to do interviews was my own affair. The regime did not forbid me, but nor did it encourage me; it was something tolerated. I would always tell anyone everything about what I was doing. That was my way of avoiding attracting the attention of the Securitate.” Indeed, there was no surveillance file on Rostás in the Archives of CNSAS, which indicates that he succeeded in maintaining the clandestine character of his activities until 1989. His underground activity, however, became extremely important after 1989, when he made use of his experiences and the collection he had gathered to contribute decisively towards the institutionalization of oral history in the Romanian academic world and helped further the introduction into his profession of Western standards. In short, this collection illustrates that even one non-conformist can make a difference.

In contrast, the Alexandru Barnea Collection of photographs of historical monuments and entire Bucharest neighborhoods which were about to be demolished by the Ceaușescu regime offers a good example of the most typical cultural opposition undertaking practiced by historians.³² In part because they enjoyed very little liberty in their writings, which were supposed simply to illustrate the 1974 party theses on national history, historians in Romania tried to capture images of what was about to become of the past before it was forever gone without trace. If the previous collection needed an external impetus, this collection was triggered by an internal stimulus: the implementation of the so-called program of urban systematization. This euphemistic name was used to denote a policy of erasing entire areas of traditional urban architecture, dominated by villas and historical monuments, in

32 COURAGE Registry, s.v. “Alexandru Barnea Photograph Private Collection”, by Cristina Petrescu, and Cristian Valeriu Pătrășconiu, 2017. Accessed: October 08, 2018.

order to provide space for the construction of the communist style of housing, i.e. large blocks of flats. The Romanian communist regime, which was increasingly using history to legitimize its authority, was removing any remnant of a historical heritage that did not fit its atheist values, such as the old churches and monasteries. The demolition of these historical monuments represented one of the most typical dissident topics in Romania in the 1980s; it also generated the only collective letter of protest endorsed by historians and their only resolute action to internationalize this type of criticism of Ceaușescu's domestic policies.³³ Compared to a public protest, the Alexandru Barnea Collection epitomizes what might be called a form of passive resistance towards the policy of homogenizing and systematizing the urban landscape of Romania, which stopped one step short of a public and open expression of disagreement with the policy. The passive resistance found form in the immortalizing on photographic paper or on slides of the historic monuments about to be destroyed, as illustrated by Alexandru Barnea, a passionate amateur photographer, who turned his hobby into an act of cultural opposition. If the critical discourse of dissidents regarding the abusive demolitions served completely to discredit the Ceaușescu regime internationally by the end of the 1980s, the silent action of those who photographed the historic monuments condemned by the regime ensured the preservation of their memory for future generations. This passive resistance, which was practiced not only by historians, but also by architects,³⁴ was not tolerated by the communist authorities. Areas undergoing demolition could only be photographed clandestinely, and if the secret police noticed that anyone intended to photograph an urban area before the bulldozers destroyed, it immediately took action to prevent this. It, thus, telling that the Securitate opened and kept a surveillance file on Alexandru Barnea. However, summing up his attitude towards the communist regime, Barnea says, "I was somewhere on the edge of the system, and didn't stand out very much either one way or the other. I could see what was happening, I could see that it was bad, that what the people of the regime were doing was harmful, and my photographs are a manner of speaking about the truth of that period." In contrast to the Zoltán Rostás Collection, the Alexandru Barnea Collection did not have a huge social impact; the only public role it played came with the publication, after 1989, of an article presenting the clandestine photographs taken in the 1980s. The relevance of the collection, however, resides not in its public impact, but in the typicality of its topic. The concern for preserving images of the vanishing historical heritage in Romania in the late 1980s, whether through photo-

33 Giurescu, *The Razing of Romania's Past*.

34 COURAGE Registry, s.v. "Andrei Pandele Photograph Private Collection", by Cristian Valeriu Pătrășconiu and Cristina Petrescu, 2018, Accessed: October 6, 2018.

graphs or by other means (for instance paintings)³⁵, is comparable in magnitude only to the concern in Hungary for the rights of members of the Hungarian minority communities in the surrounding countries in this period.

Opportunities for the expression of dissent were different in socialist Yugoslavia. For critical sociologists or historians, it was possible to remain in official institutions. This made it easier for them to move between the zones of conformism and dissent. This condition, in turn, was connected to their neo-Marxist intellectual background and social networks. The rise and fall of neo-Marxist intellectual dissent in Yugoslavia can be observed through some fascinating collections, including the Rudi Supek Personal Papers, a public collection maintained by the Croatian State Archives. Croatian sociologist Rudi Supek (1913–1993) systematically collected his private archive, which was supplemented by his heirs after his death in 1992. They finally donated the archive to the CSA in 2005. The collection offers numerous insights into many aspects of Supek's productive academic career, as well as his criticism of the social system. The fund was never hidden from the Communist authorities, nor was it censored, and today it is very well preserved and accessible to the public. It shows how sociology in Yugoslavia evolved from a discipline almost entirely dependent on the ruling communist regime in the direction of cultural opposition. This collection shows that there were opportunities to express dissent without breaking the law and even some opportunities to use the official infrastructure to voice disagreement. It also shows the limits of this kind of dissent and the transition between resistance and conformism. Supek's collection offers a revealing illustration of the specificity of the relationship between the Yugoslav authorities and the group of intellectuals gathered around the critically oriented journal *Praxis*. The State funded their journal and their Summer School in Korčula, but at the same time, they were criticized by the communist political leaders.

Rudi Supek was the primary initiator and the President of the School, which was held every summer until 1974. Originally conceived of as an academic lesson, the School soon became an international event which held open critical discussions on a different subject each year. It was an international gathering of philosophers and sociologists from all over the world. They advocated a neo-Marxist approach to philosophy and sociology. Soon, this group was called *praksisovci*, meaning Praxis intellectuals, and their approach was dubbed *Praksis Orientation*.³⁶ The starting point of the Praxis Orientation

35 COURAGE Registry, s.v. "Gheorghe Leahu Private Collection", by Cristina Petrescu and Corneliu Pintilescu, 2017. Accessed July 2, 2018.

36 In Lešaja's book, the term *praksisovci* is defined as "thinkers of the *Praksis Orientation*" and is translated as *Praxis Thinkers*. Lešaja, *Praksis orijentacija*, 246. We prefer and use the term "Praxis intellectuals."

was Marx's contention concerning the importance of the "ruthless criticism of all that exists."³⁷

The editorial of *Praxis* and the directors of the Korčula Summer School continued to publish their journal and to hold their summer meetings until the mid-1970s. They were always careful not to cross the limits, bearing in mind that they still lived and worked in a society in which the Communist Party had absolute power. They focused their criticism on different aberrations in society, mostly blaming "bureaucratic elements" and rarely addressing the authorities directly. Furthermore, there were some differences between the Praxis group in Zagreb and the Praxis group in Belgrade. While almost all Belgrade university professors participated in student demonstrations in 1968, only three university professors in Zagreb (Gajo Petrović, Milan Kangrga, and Mladen Čaladarević) showed a significant interest in the student movement. The rest remained passive. Rudi Supek said he was sick at the time. It is difficult to grasp the real reasons for the passiveness of the Zagreb intellectuals. Klasić suggests that the reasons could include opportunism, conformism, lack of civic courage, and the fear that support for students would endanger the existence of the *Praxis* journal and the Korčula Summer School.³⁸

Nevertheless, the final act against the Praxis intellectuals began in 1973, when the official party newspaper *Komunist* characterized their School as a form of "political opposition" and "the philosophy outside the Party," alluding to the open character of the School and the participation of intellectuals from abroad. Although Supek responded in a letter addressed to the *Komunist* journal defending the principle of "free discussion among various people who had different opinions,"³⁹ the School could no longer receive any funding, neither from political nor from academic institutions, so the 1974 session was the last one. At the same time, the editors of *Praxis* were accused of being as revisionists who had abandoned Marxism in favor of subjectivist philosophy. The authorities denied further financing for the journal, and although they did not officially ban the journal, printshops were instructed not to accept further issues from Praxis, which prevented the editors to continue with publishing.⁴⁰

37 Lešaja, *Praksis orijentacija*, 246. On the other hand, a philosopher Neven Sesardić believes that the Praxis orientation does not represent a radical critique of the political system because the idea of the "ruthless criticism of all that exists" was formulated first by Josip Broz Tito at the 8th congress of LCY in 1964. Sesardić, *Iz analitičke perspektive*, 228.

38 Klasić, *Jugoslavija i svijet 1968*, 208–13.

39 Letter from Rudi Supek to Milan Rakas, editor-in-chief of *Komunist*, 9 October 1973. In COURAGE Registry, s.v. "Rudi Supek Personal Papers", by Josip Mihaljević, 2017. Accessed: July 2, 2018.

40 COURAGE Registry, s.v. "Letter from the Joža Rožanković printing press addressed to the Praxis editorial board, notifying them of the cancellation of printing services, March 19, 1975.", by Josip Mihaljević, 2017. Accessed: September 26, 2018. For more on self-managing censorship see the chapter on censorship in the Handbook.

The case of the Praxis intellectuals shows that critical thinking could emerge within the institutions, even within institutions that were ideologically important to the authorities. The Praxis phenomenon only appeared within the discipline which was considered “maidservant of ideology.” Praxis Intellectuals primarily gathered in the Department of Sociology and the Department of Philosophy of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences in Zagreb. So, sociologist Rudi Supek’s collection also offers vivid insights into the development of sociology as an academic discipline. At the beginning of communist rule in Yugoslavia, education, the arts, and the sciences were subjected to ideological demands, and most of the professors from the social sciences were members of the Communist Party. The Party appointed loyal or acceptable cadres at the universities and the institutes that were important from the perspective of communist ideology, so the interpretations of society and history were burdened with ideological mystifications.⁴¹ Supek, however, was not a mere implementer of party directives, but also a first-class scholar. Though he was a Marxist and Communist in his youth, he never became a member of the CPY. At the end of 1939, he went to Paris, where he studied psychology and became a member of the Communist Party of France (CPF) and a member of the French resistance during the Second World War. In 1942, he was arrested in Paris, and in 1944 he was held in Buchenwald, the infamous Nazi concentration camp. After the war, he continued his education in Paris, where he completed his PhD in psychology at the Sorbonne in 1952. In 1948, after the proclamation of the Informbiro Resolution against Yugoslavia, the leadership of the CPF asked Supek to attack Josip Broz Tito and the Yugoslav leadership publicly. He refused, and he withdrew from the CPF and returned to Yugoslavia in 1950. He worked as an academic researcher at several institutions, leaving a distinctive mark on the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences in Zagreb, where he was one of the founders of the Department of Sociology in 1963. He is the author of over twenty scholarly books, primarily in the fields of sociology and psychology. He also wrote one of the first books on ecology in Yugoslavia. His works have been translated into English, German, Italian, Czech, Hebrew, and Japanese. He was the president of the Sociological Society of Croatia and the Yugoslav Society of Sociology. Supek is the author of the concept of “the polydeterminism of social phenomena,” which he studied on an individual, group, and institutional level. Jürgen Habermas once said Supek was one of the fathers of modern sociology.⁴²

Supek’s post-war experiences, primarily his belief in the importance of free academic research and his negative experiences with party bureaucracy, distanced him from the Party. His disagreement with the communist regime stemmed from his understanding of the position of intellectuals in society. In his assessment, sociologists should be a critical counterbalance to the ruling

41 Supek, “Refleksije na prekretnici milenija,” 810.

42 Bosnar, *Osobni arhivski fond Rudi Supek*.

system of power, and he found himself compelled to move away from dogmatism and uncritical idealism. By conviction, he remained a Marxist, but he replaced dogmatism with the belief that socialism cannot be achieved without democracy and free, open discussion.

Despite the attacks on Praxis intellectuals, Supek continued his career at the University until he retired. He was given numerous awards and acknowledgements abroad (i.e. not in Yugoslavia) for his academic work, including the National Order of the Legion of Honour (*Ordre national de la Légion d'honneur*) in 1989. After the democratic changes in Croatia after 1990, he was critical of the new democratically elected government, as he believed the state was heading towards destructive nationalism.

The collection of the ELTE Budapest student movement reveals similar conditions in Hungary. The move away from public politics, which was triggered by experiences of activism in 1968–1973, provided an opportunity for several activists to find positions in official institutions. For these activists, who had developed a strong commitment to tackling poverty and social backwardness, remaining faithful to their original ideals meant searching for ways of continuing their social activism using the opportunities provided by official institutional infrastructures. They gave up their earlier political involvement, but saw opportunities to translate their activist ideals into policy and practice by working within marginal but still official institutions devoted to social issues such as poverty or improving rural societies and culture. True, they distanced themselves from conventional politics, but they believed in doing politics without being political, in their own terms.

István Bakos, former secretary of the ELTE Budapest university KISZ reform committee, emphasized the connections between his activist commitment to the improvement of living conditions in rural areas and his subsequent engagement with rural research and his work in academic management in support of young researchers and academic coordination in the National Council of Collective Farms. Bakos regularly pointed out the contrast between his intention to take part in serious social activism programs, when institutions appeared to offer opportunities to do so, and his recurring disappointment with the party state, which hindered most such initiatives. On the one hand, he explained his mental collapse and his conflicts with the authorities (he was fired from the Academy of Sciences because of an interview he did as part of research on Hungarian scholarship and academia). On the other, he also highlighted his achievements within official institutions. For Bakos, his continued career at the specialized state institutions, like the Secretariat of Committee for Academic Policy, the Institute for Academic Management, or the Ministry of Culture, was an obvious and logical consequence of his commitment to his original activist goals, to which the tensions between him and the party elites testify.

Obviously, using the languages of sociological or historical concerns, there were ways to transgress the borders of tolerated and non-tolerated prac-

tices. In many ways, this was one of the outcomes of the political practices and discourses of official socialism in Hungary. Party and Communist Youth leaders encouraged broader participation in social activism and political debates even for those who were often critical of certain segments of official socialist practices, as long as they did not challenge the centralized techniques of rule of the one-party state. Debates about the meanings of ways of life or socialist democracy were, indeed, encouraged, particularly from the mid-1960s onwards.

In fact, these political and cultural practices shaped the student revolt in Budapest in 1969. The participation of students in decision making, social activism, and self-organization was initiated by the party and the Communist Youth organs, which sought ways to create room for the young generation for safe, but also unprompted, activism undertaken with the aim of improving socialism. Universities were understood as particularly important spaces for such programs, and the improvement of university democracy was one of the highlights of party and Communist Youth politics in 1969. The core content of the ELTE university archives' student movement collection, the journal *Kari Híradó* (Faculty News), was a legal public forum for student debates. Typically, participants in the student movement understood their program as bettering socialism in the country: creating more opportunities for the poor, raising professional standards, and democratizing public debates.

In this context, their trajectories after the end of the surge in student activism represented a rupture, rather than continuity. Those who turned towards professional careers in official institutions as historians or sociologists often played down the contemporary political content of the university reform movement. Critical reason turned into professional concerns and the radical or experimental mind often found fulfilment in sophisticated expertise. This was the case with Bakos and Gábor Hargitai, who in the 1970s and 1980s worked as coordinator of a social research project in central (party and government) organizations. These individuals remained socially concerned, often with critical implications, particularly about the conditions of the rural and urban poor, but their projects could be adapted to harmonize with the programs and discourses of official, often even marginal institutions. For them, the 1969 idea of politically reforming socialism proved a failure, a project impossible to be continued, but possible to be translated into societal or cultural terms.

This dynamic of distancing and rupture made it difficult to make sense of the experiences of student activism back in 1969. In many ways, István Bakos preceded the 2008 rediscovery of the movement by finding a possible meaning of the early records of a generational revolt. In a 1994 collection of his essays, Bakos framed his identity in terms of social activism and community service: the articles and other short writings drew a continuous line from his early engagement with university reform, the work he did to promote the cause of equal access to higher education, and the establishment of

cultural foundations until he came to work in the Ministry of Culture before and after 1989.⁴³

His most important achievement in this vein is the Gábor Bethlen Foundation, which currently preserves a relevant collection devoted to minority rights and folk culture. Bakos and other like-minded populist intellectuals, who at the time had been focused on national minority cultures and indigenous folk culture and framed these as the core of national identity, had initiated a public foundation in the early 1980s. The foundation began to function in the 1980s in the form of a civic network, though it was formally registered only in 1985. Alongside literary authors, historians were prominent members of this group, for instance Csaba Gy. Kiss. The collection of the Bethlen Foundation illustrates the dynamics of negotiation between critical intellectuals and the party center in Hungary. On the one hand, the party leadership tried to exploit the group of populist intellectuals, and particularly their commitment to the rural poor, in order to expand its political-cultural background and, to a certain extent, also to build up a credible national(ist) reputation for the party state, especially in the 1980s. On the other, populist intellectuals were also referred to as a potential threat on which the party would have to clamp down in order to avert the dangers of nationalism. These ambivalences are eloquently reflected in the history of the Bethlen Foundation collection. On the one hand, the party center considered populist intellectuals real partners in a, largely simulated but nonetheless still ongoing, public debate. On the other hand civic initiatives were hindered and the possible translation of intellectual debates into political policy was prevented.

This dynamics, nonetheless, provided room for several historians to move effectively between official infrastructures and oppositional networks. For instance Csaba Gy. Kiss, a founder of the Bethlen Foundation, was employed in official institutions during late socialism and, thus, could develop a considerable oeuvre focusing on the comparative cultural history of nations and nationalisms in Central Europe. From this perspective, he also developed criticism of official socialism as a state that suppressed national minority rights and authentic national cultures. Still, it was possible for him to pursue a proper professional career and also to engage with oppositional civic activism.

Sociologists or historians who fell out of any official institutions also often perceived their intellectual trajectories as a break with their experiences of 1969. Miklós Haraszti's trajectory eloquently represents such tendencies. Haraszti, who was one of a group of radical leftists advocating social equality, rights of the poor, and self-management in the 1960s, remained an ardent critique of official socialism in the 1970s and 1980s. As a political activist, he was never employed in official academic institutions, but he did pursue his own auto-didactic sociological research projects. His samizdat sociological

43 Bakos, *Közszolgálatban*.

book on the harsh conditions and vulnerability of factory workers in Hungary became a bestseller in dissident circles and a highlight of relevant samizdat collections such as that of the Petőfi Literary Museum in Budapest. In his retrospective recollections, Haraszti often played down the contemporary socialist or leftist content of the university reform movement. For him, the meaning of the revolt was rather its anti-authoritarian content. Haraszti grew disappointed with socialist and Marxist politics around 1969 and, although, he remained a political activist, this new politics represented a rupture with the old approach of improving socialism.

The journey of Haraszti's sociology could be compared with a few other sociology-related collections, particularly Zsolt Csalog's records in the National Library and Péter Ambrus' material at the Voices of the 20th Century archives. Both Csalog and Ambrus conducted sociological work outside the frameworks of institutional networks, and they both focused on the marginalized groups of Hungarian socialist society, such as the Roma and the urban slum population of Budapest. In their work, they shed light on the inability and unwillingness of the socialist state to integrate these groups and address the challenges they faced. As a consequence, they had trouble publishing, and their research materials were circulated mostly in the clandestine public sphere and were integrated into major public academic institutions only after 1989.

While it was possible to articulate critical views within the frameworks of official institutions, the tone of this criticism was strictly controlled and there were firm limits, as it is aptly illustrated by the collection of István Kemény. At the end of the 1960s, István Kemény, a sociologist who was always on periphery under state socialism, was appointed by the Office of Councils to conduct a survey on the Roma in Hungary. The Institute of Sociology of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, which was Kemény's employer at the time, was the home of the research program. Kemény was granted relative freedom: he selected his own team members—mainly scholars who belonged to the younger generation. Kemény organized seminars for them in the Institute every Tuesday.

Kemény soon lost his job, however, because of a public lecture he held at the end of 1970, in which he presented his other project, a research project about poverty in Hungary. Kemény insisted in this lecture that there were poor people in Hungary too, and this contention constituted a candid rejection of one of the central tenets of the official ideology of the regime. Kemény, thus, violated a taboo, and he was gradually deprived of any opportunity to continue his work. Kálmán Kulcsár, director of the Sociological Institute, prohibited him from organizing the "seminars" in the Institute. Kemény tried to withdraw into the private sphere: he continued his seminars at private apartments, and he organized research projects the participants of which used pen-names until early 1977, when he emigrated. The afterlife of Kemény's sociological collection also demonstrates the interlinkages between the official spheres and the spheres of dissent in intellectual life in Hungary. Although Kemény himself was fired in 1973, his interview collection remained in the

Institute for another 16 years. In the middle of the 1980s, Gábor Havas, a former team member of Kemény's, was informed that the Sociological Institute intended to eliminate the research materials from 1971. Havas decided to transport the documents to his home, which he could do without being hindered. Thus, Kemény's collection survived in private hands.⁴⁴

The two collections from Romania illustrate that, in contrast with socialist Yugoslavia and Hungary, cultural opposition in Ceaușescu's Romania was not really possible within the frameworks of the institutionalized study of history and sociology, but existed only in the form of clandestine hobbies, which bore little or no fruit for the professional careers of those involved until 1989. Both collections represent a subsequent generation of sociologists and historians, born after the Second World War, exclusively socialized under the communist regime, but without a direct experience of repression. Both collections were founded in the 1980s, at a time of profound decay, when the communist welfare system and the nationalist-communist ideology had reached their limits of self-legitimation. The time of true believers was long past. Open dissent was rather rare. Most individuals who did not want to support the regime out of opportunism tried to find ways of constructing an alternative niche for themselves. In the country of anti-political privatism,⁴⁵ of public duplicity for the sake of private interests and not the common good, solutions were always personal. Thus, the scope of collecting as illustrated by the two cases in question was purely personal, not public. Moreover, unlike political dissidence, which was future-oriented, cultural opposition as reflected by these two collections was past-oriented and aimed at preserving what the communist regime was destroying. It is rather incidental that the Zoltán Rostás Collection became highly relevant in the post-communist period, while the Alexandru Barnea Collection remains a mere example of a non-conformist activity undertaken in the past which was typical for Romania of the late 1980s. Given the audio-visual culture of that time, the two collections taken together suggest that words were weapons more powerful than images, and the written word was definitely more feared than the spoken. In this respect, the very act of creating the content of these collections required more than a pen and some paper. Zoltán Rostás needed a performing tape recorder, and Alexandru Barnea needed an excellent camera. Both benefitted from the use of equipment used in the West to carry out their activities, so their culturally oppositional undertakings were possible only because there was a breach somewhere in the Iron Curtain leading to Romania. To summarize, the two collections illustrate that cultural opposition among historians and sociologists existed even under the adverse conditions of the Ceaușescu regime. Driven by intellectual curiosity and/or a sense of moral responsibility, its practitioners aimed to regain some dignity and mental comfort at a time when

44 Kovács, Szabari, and Lénárt, "(Fel)talált tudomány."

45 Jowitt, *The New World Disorder*.

the fall of the communist regimes in East-Central Europe could hardly have been anticipated.

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