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## National Movements, Regionalism, Minorities

### Introduction

This chapter discusses the patterns of cultural opposition in which individuals and organizations who identified themselves as members of minority groups engaged under Soviet-type systems in Eastern Europe. To better illustrate how acts of cultural dissidence committed by members of minority groups are reflected in the collections made available through our project, this chapter provides new evidence on the basis of four case studies. Two of them offer comparative insights into the acts of cultural opposition committed by members of large national minorities who protested against their mistreatment (*Alexander Vezekov* on the Muslim Turkish, Pomak, and Roma population of Bulgaria and *Stefano Bottoni* on ethnic Hungarians in Romania and Czechoslovakia). The contribution of *Ivo Banac* focuses on the Croatian question in socialist Yugoslavia, and *Andrei Cușco* analyses the Romanian national movement in the Moldavian Soviet Socialist Republic within the USSR.

The coexistence of different ethnic, national, and religious groups represented a major challenge for the Marxist ideology since the end of the nineteenth century, especially in the multi-ethnic areas of Central and Eastern Europe. After 1922, Soviet Russia became the first post-imperial European state to explicitly make the federal principle the basis of its structure. The immense transcontinental territory freshly conquered by the Bolsheviks was divided into autonomous republics, regions, districts, and even autonomous villages and kolkhozes. One (or sometimes more) of the cohabitating ethno-national groups was made “titular” holder of the respective areas, with large cultural prerogatives on the area of its traditional settlement. Under the framework of the Soviet “Affirmative Action Empire,” the promotion of non-dominant groups was applied to all non-Russian Soviet citizens in the context of an ideologically ambitious project aimed at forging Soviet-minded citizens.<sup>1</sup> The so-called *korenizatsia* (“implanting national roots” or “nativization”) implied the creation of non-Russian political and cultural elites who would be able to direct local politics within the framework of social and civic Soviet identity.

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<sup>1</sup> The term “Affirmative Action Empire” has been used in this chapter according to the definition provided by Terry Martin, *The Affirmative Action Empire*, 19.

Soviet power consciously set about creating ethnic groups and fostering their languages to hasten the transition from the feudal stage of social development via the bourgeois stage of nationalism to the envisioned socialist classless society. In doing this, the ruling elite gathered around Lenin and then Stalin took three basic premises as their points of departure. The first recognized the existence of the national question in a socialist state, despite the Marxist-Leninist orthodoxy, according to which nationalism was a blundering aspect of bourgeois ideology aimed to divert the working masses from class struggle. The second assumed the inevitable feature of the construction of national political entities at the present stage of social development. Finally, the third premise stemmed from the recognition of the national aspirations of peoples oppressed by the West European colonial powers. This premise was also the foundation of Lenin's firm belief in Great Russian chauvinism.

A clear contradiction remained between the intent to assert a "supra-ethnic" Soviet social identity and the institutionalization of the ethnic principle in the everyday governance of the peripheries. Lenin's New Economic Policy and *korenizatsia* of the 1920s were state-led policies of hastened progress from the stage of feudalism in economic and social organization to the stage of capitalism and the corresponding social organization represented by nations to a socialist classless society and centrally-planned economy. When Stalin put an end to the fragile social compromise reached through Lenin's New Economic Policy, paving the way for the forced industrialization and collectivization of the 1930s, many of the political premises of early Leninist *korenizatsia* entered a crisis. Hard-line agencies started to implement fierce repression of a significant portion of the Soviet population, including nationality groups which were considered a potential security threat to Soviet power, while soft consultative bodies and cultural bureaucracies continued to promote differing cultures, "national in form, socialist in content." In the mid-1930s, Stalin even gave ideological content to a positive re-evaluation of Russian national history—tacitly equated with the Soviet history of the newly founded socialist state—in an attempt to make Russian culture and historical identity the main unifying force of the peoples of the Soviet Union. For thousands of autonomous entities, *korenizatsia* came to an abrupt end, while in the autonomous republics, "nationally-deviated" elites were liquidated. Russian was imposed as the socialist Soviet language of intra-ethnic communication for the population of the Soviet Union, the *narodnosti* ("underdeveloped nationalities") and *natsionalnosti* ("developed nationalities") of which were to come ever closer to merging into a post-national, post-capitalist Soviet *narod*. Where it was not stopped, *korenizatsia* continued in a less overt manner to avoid contradictions with a new official state doctrine defined as "national bolshevism," a peculiar form of Marxist-Leninism that merged the aspiration to fulfil communist ideals with the ambition of resuscitating the traditional Tsarist great power. From the end of the 1930s to the death of Stalin, under the stimulus of collective terror, a particular form of "ideological" rather than ethnic xenophobia

emerged in the Soviet public sphere, destined to forge the social identity of ordinary Soviet people for decades.

World War II and its aftermath entailed not only the expansion of the Soviet sphere of influence in Central and Eastern Europe but also the adoption of Soviet-type practices which resulted in the aggressive homogenization of both territorial and social spaces in the Sovietized countries. Between 1939 and 1950, nearly 30 million Eastern Europeans fell victim to ethnic cleansing of various forms—from population exchanges and forced expulsion to internment in work camps and mass murder. The most enduring legacy of World War II was the genocide of Jews and Roma, but in Eastern Europe the upheavals and the aftermath of the war brought other consequences. The most lasting of these was not simply the introduction of the Soviet system, but the brutal nationalization of the physical and social spheres, which exerted an influence on institutions and mentalities that is arguably palpable today. The treatment of minorities in Eastern Europe following World War II depended primarily on two factors: the Soviet appraisal of the given minority's past activity and the wartime geopolitical status of the state in which the minority lived. In the case of Hungary, for example, the fact that the country would have been incapable of receiving two million refugees and that the fate of Hungarian minorities in the neighboring countries could have exercised a negative impact on the Hungarian Communist Party's room for maneuver and degree of social acceptance had to be taken into consideration.

With the pronounced exception of the expulsion of ethnic Germans from Czechoslovakia, Poland, and Hungary (to which the Allies had all given their consent in Potsdam), Soviet rule served temporarily to marginalize long-standing national rivalries, and the tight control exerted by the Soviet Union on its own satellites stimulated more tolerant nationality policies in multinational states in which the minority issue had long represented a factor of internal conflict and regional instability. The Soviet Union expected Eastern European states to abandon openly discriminatory policies toward national minorities. The political and cultural integration of minorities superseded the sharp ethnic tensions that had dominated politics and social policy in Eastern Europe in previous decades, notably with regard to the Hungarians of Romania and the Turks of Bulgaria.

Since 1945, a complex mechanism of ethnic balance and power-sharing helped the Romanian Communist Party strengthen its political legitimacy among different national and social groups. The communist national policy followed an integrative approach toward most minority communities, with the relevant exception of Germans, who were declared collectively responsible for the German occupation and were denied political and even civil rights until 1948. The 1.5 million Hungarians of Transylvania were provided with full civil, political, cultural, and linguistic rights to encourage political integration. The ideological premises of the Hungarian Autonomous Region followed the Bolshevik pattern of territorial autonomy. In 1952, Stalin even en-

couraged the Romanian Workers' Party leadership to introduce the only example of Soviet-style territorial autonomy for the Hungarians living in the Székely Land of south-eastern Transylvania. The Hungarians of the Székely Land would become a "titular nationality," provided with extensive cultural rights. Yet, on the other hand, the Romanian central power used the region as an instrument of political and social integration for the Hungarian minority into the communist state. The resulting Hungarian Autonomous Region (HAR) functioned as a "greenhouse" for the Hungarian minority in the region. The educational and cultural institutions, theatres, cultural centres, and folk dance groups established in the HAR played a vital role in the preservation of the archaic Székely Hungarian identity, albeit modified to suit socialist modernization. The greenhouse of the HAR provided the Székely Hungarians with a new identity discourse that was based only formally on official communist ideology and was rooted primarily in the egalitarian social outlook and Hungarian folk culture.<sup>2</sup>

During the early years of this period, Stalin successfully manipulated the national pride and territorial demands of the peoples of Eastern Europe in order to establish a new ethnonational culture that was "national in form and socialist in content." The Marxist concept of class conflict eliminated nationalism as the key factor sustaining the formation and development of Eastern European nations as part of the more general affirmation of new social bodies over the reactionary colonial powers. The malleable character of the anti-colonial Leninist premise is key to understanding the complex dynamics of the changing approach to the nationality question of the ruling communist parties of Central and Eastern Europe from the 1950s to the late phase of the Cold War. It was this—officially never revised—premise that made it possible to elaborate a theoretical framework for the territorial autonomy of Hungarians in Transylvania in the early 1950s, and ten years later it was the same argument that allowed the Romanian communist regime to manipulate it as an instrument of legitimacy against the Hungarian minority in Transylvania. The successful management of ethnic conflict increased the ability of the RCP to control the territory and, at the same time, provided the ruling party with an utterly useful precedent for the far larger "nationalization" of the Romanian communist regime, which, beginning in the late 1950s, resulted in national communism, an aim achieved without making use of pre-war nationalist discourse. After the Hungarian revolution of 1956, repression affected a great number of Hungarian individuals accused of nationalism and irredentism. The decisive shift from a class-dictatorship toward the ethnicized totalitarian regime promoted by Nicolae Ceaușescu was thus the product of the Gheorghiu-Dej era, and as such, it represented the logical outcome of a long-standing mixing of Bolshevism and more traditional state-building ideological tenets.

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2 Bottoni, *Stalin's Legacy in Romania*.

As for Bulgaria, in the first decade after the communist takeover, minority policies followed a tolerant and integrative path compared with the pre-World War II period. The Soviet style of the cultural autonomy for Bulgaria's Turks was ensured by the importation of Turkish-language teachers from Soviet Azerbaijan. They distanced Bulgaria's Turkish from Turkey's Turkish with the use of Azeri-style Sovietisms, and they secularized the culture of Bulgaria's Turks by rejecting the "clerical" Arabic script. The relatively tolerant policies of the early communist era stimulated in some Turkish intellectuals a sense of nostalgia for it after the national policies of the Bulgarian regime became increasingly restrictive. It must be noted, however, that even if nationalism in Bulgaria was not less pronounced than in Romania, the Bulgarian communist regime did not follow an independent path vis-à-vis Moscow, unlike its Romanian counterpart. Authorities in Sofia incorporated into their intellectual mindset elements, categories, and narratives of the national ideology of the monarchic period. This became obvious not only through the continued use of the traditional national historical narrative: the 1971 version of the Coat of Arms also visualized this by showing the year 681 as a reference to medieval Bulgaria. The official policy towards minorities also followed these patterns, and, thus, it was supposed to have a national identity-forming effect. This effect unquestionably came into being due to the identification of the Turkish minority as historical heirs to the Ottoman oppressors, but also due to the official policy of not recognizing the Pirin-Macedonians as a minority and their enforced identification as Bulgarians. The continuous labelling of the Pomaks as "Bulgarian Muslims" served similar purposes. These examples illustrate the pendulum between inclusive and exclusive policies implemented by the Bulgarian socialist governments, which were necessarily associated with a normative definition of the "self" and the "other." The connection between policies and identity suggests that there were debates among the leading circles of the regime about the patterns in which the nation would define its identity by distinguishing itself from the outside. These debates were indicators of uncertainty concerning how to draw the borderline between the "Bulgarian self" and the "other." Moreover, the debates indicated shifts in Bulgarian everyday politics: they were subject to changes that came together with shifts of the abovementioned borderline.

In a regional perspective, beginning in the 1960s, the unresolved tension between nation-building and internationalist communism stimulated a surge of nationalizing policies, ethnic hatred, nationally fueled bilateral tensions, and a quest for genuine regionalist arrangements in Yugoslavia. The unrest in Yugoslavia's Slovenia, Croatia, and Kosovo resulted in 1974 in the drafting of a new constitution which infused the existing federal setting with an ethno-national character that gave its constituent republics with extensive legislative and executive powers. The new constitution also provided the two autonomous provinces in Serbia—Vojvodina and Kosovo—with potent local governments which until 1988 maintained the right to veto the cultural and

administrative decisions of federal bodies. The political authority of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia proclaimed in the 1974 constitution actually represented the exercise of power by eight state parties—one in each of the six constituent republics and the two autonomous provinces. Marshal Tito as the symbol of Yugoslavia, the federal presidency and government, and the Yugoslav federal army, which was composed primarily of Serb, Bosnian Serb, and Montenegrin elements, remained the guarantors of Yugoslav national unity at the institutional level. This fuzzy federalism nevertheless guaranteed broad compromises between central control and local autonomy for nearly a decade. After the death of Tito in 1980, the absence of a charismatic leader produced a political crisis in Yugoslavia that the new system of authority based on rotational representation among the constituent republics proved unable to alleviate.

Beginning in the 1970s, the resurgence of ethnic issues became one of the principal vectors of cultural opposition activities in the Soviet-type systems of Eastern Europe. The oppositional activity of these individuals and groups involved in public performances or private acts of dissent related to ethnic or minority issues rarely brought about immediate internal political change. However, after the 1975 Helsinki Final Act, the protection of minority rights became an integrant part of the general discourse on human rights even in a “homogenous” country like Poland, where local dissidents appealed for the respect of Polish co-ethnics in the Soviet Union, and this shift of attention helped cast light on the previously neglected nationality issues in Eastern Europe. The mounting national conflicts in the socialist world as reflected in the cultural activity of non-dominant groups described in this chapter raised Western awareness and weakened the legitimacy of the one-state party at home and abroad.

## Cultural Opposition and Minority Groups

### *Bulgaria*

Turks were by far the largest minority in communist Bulgaria. During the socialist era, they constituted roughly 10 percent of the population and up to 15 percent together with other Muslim populations (that is, Slavophone and Romani-speaking and Tatar-speaking). Although the early years of the communist regime brought some relief for the previously oppressed minorities, the demographic weight of the population with a Turkish background raised growing concern among the Bulgarian communist authorities, to the point that they did not even consider creating an autonomous region for the Turkish minority similar to Kosovo and Metohija, and Vojvodina within the Republic of Serbia in Federal Yugoslavia or the Hungarian Autonomous Region

in Romania (1952–68). Unlike the Jews or Armenians of Bulgaria, Turks were not allowed to have even a separate “cultural organization” after 1944. In practical terms, Bulgaria made use of the Soviet experience in national policies by taking know-how from Azerbaijan.

Restrictive measures intensified after the late 1950s: education in Turkish was gradually abolished after 1958, and only optional Turkish language classes were available in the following years; at the same time, restriction were imposed on various religious practices; books were published in Turkish until the end of the 1960s; the use of Turkish and Romani was completely banned after 1984 and Turks were forced to adopt Bulgarian names in 1984–85. In the early 1970s, the central authorities stopped publishing statistical data concerning Turks and other Muslim minorities, and they simply decided not to collect such data for the 1985 population census (already after the peak of the assimilation campaign); the last census for which people were asked about religion was the one held in 1956. Thus, the first census taken after the fall of the regime gave a clearer picture of the spatial distribution and the social profile of these minorities.

Almost all questions regarding Turks in Bulgaria could hardly be addressed without considering non-Turkish-speaking Muslim minorities in the country (Pomaks, who were Bulgarian-speaking Muslims, and Muslim Roma) because some of the members of the later communities self-identified as “Turks,” which in turn was a major concern for the authorities. In addition, when possible, repressive and assimilation measures against the Turkish minority were first “tested” on Pomaks and Roma. The brutal campaign of the forced renaming of the Turks in 1984–85 was preceded by similar campaigns against Pomaks and Muslim Roma.<sup>3</sup>

Under state socialism, Turks and Muslims in Bulgaria were marginalized both socially and geographically, and precisely this marginalization can help us understand the forms of “cultural opposition” in which these communities engaged. Before 1878, many Turks inhabited the urban centers of power, while Slavophone Orthodox Christians (Bulgarians) lived mostly in the countryside. The situation changed after Bulgaria became an independent State. Many deprived Turks came to live in relatively poor areas, mostly in the north-east and in the south-east of the country, and mass rural-urban and urban-urban migration during the communist period did not improve the situation; the majority of Pomaks inhabited the Rhodope region in the south. Turks and Muslims were and remained under-urbanized compared to the Bulgarian majority: according to the 1992 census, only 31.6 percent of the Turks were living in cities, compared to 71.6 percent of the “ethnic” Bulgarians (who represented 67.2 percent of the urban population of Bulgaria). More-

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3 For a general overview: Stoyanov, *Turskoto naselenie v Bălgariya mezhdū polyusite na etnitcheskata politika*; Gruev and Kalyonski, *Văzroditelniyat protzes*; Avramov, *Ikonomika na “Văzroditelniya protzes.”*

over, the urban population among Turks was concentrated almost exclusively in small and medium-sized towns in the traditional Turkish regions. The education level of the Turkish population was considerably lower than the average, an unsurprising consequence of the liquidation of the Turkish language in public schooling and also of the fact that many Turks had only rudimentary or no knowledge of Bulgarian. According to the 1992 census, 11.4 percent of Bulgarians had a university education, compared to only 1.2 percent of the Turkish population; 33.6 percent of Bulgarians had a secondary school education compared with only 15.8 percent of the Turks. The proportion of people working in agriculture was considerably higher among Turks and Muslims, but even Turks and Muslims in non-agricultural professions were mostly blue-collar workers in industries and in the “constructions” sector. They only rarely had jobs in the tertiary sector.

Obviously, these phenomena were interrelated, and it seems that the educational system played crucial role. In communist Bulgaria education was important not only for learning, but also for social mobility, including migration to cities. Secondary schools were located almost exclusively in urban settlements, and universities were located in big cities, the most important ones in the capital, Sofia. Thus, the lower level of education among minorities directly limited their chances of settling in cities, and especially in big cities. Ordinary people were usually finding jobs as workers in neighboring towns and cities, while people with higher education and higher social status more often migrated (travelling longer distances) to the capital and other big cities.<sup>4</sup>

The marginalization and the low social status of this minority was due not only to the direct discrimination it suffered at the hands of a national state, but also to the fact that the Turkish/Muslim community was regularly drained by expulsion waves, which affected primarily urban dwellers and the non-agrarian population, first and foremost the elites, including intellectuals. This phenomenon is clearly visible in the emigration wave of 1950–1951, when some 155,000 Turks left Bulgaria. Later, an agreement between the two countries allowed around 115,000 relatives of previous emigrants to resettle in Turkey during in 1969–1978. Finally, during the summer of 1989, a wave of more than 360,000 people crossed the border in less than three months, and around 250,000 of them settled permanently in Turkey. During the rest of the communist period, emigration to Turkey was practically impossible, but the Bulgarian state security regularly reported on the desire of various individuals to emigrate to Turkey.

It should be underlined that both for ideological reasons and pragmatic considerations the communist authorities tried to address the professional, educational, and social challenges faced by Turks and Muslims. The communist authorities were interested first and foremost in overcoming mass illiteracy among Turks and Roma, and the fact that illiteracy rates decreased con-

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<sup>4</sup> Baeva and Kalinova, *Vāzroditelnyat protzes*, 70, 72 and 109.



siderably (without disappearing) was seen as a success of the communist regime. But as already shown, minorities dramatically lagged behind in their levels of education, and most members of the minority groups only attended school for the mandatory period of eight years. Education was first seen as a tool for political indoctrination, and during the first years of the regime schooling in Turkish was encouraged. After 1958, the authorities changed their approach and gave preference to education in Bulgarian, which was intended to facilitate the integration (i.e. assimilation) of Turks. Another target was religion, seen as the main cause of the alleged backwardness among Turks and Muslims but also as a form of culture which encouraged "Turkish nationalism." Restrictions were passed concerning mosques attendance, the wearing of the headscarf, circumcision of male children, and "oriental clothing" (the Orthodox Bulgarian peasants were allowed to stick to their traditional garb).

Otherwise, measures regarding social and economic development were usually disguised as regional programs. Special programs for regions inhabited by minorities were introduced beginning in the 1960s in parallel to economic decentralization. In what concerns the Turkish minority, a symptomatic example is the government decree of July 1, 1970 regarding the socio-economic and cultural development of the Kărdzhali, Silistra, Razgrad, Shumen, and Tărgovishte counties, i.e. the counties with considerable Turkish populations. The program focused primarily on industrial investment in these regions. In a similar way, policies concerning the Pomaks usually referred to the county of Smolyan (70 percent of the inhabitants of the county of Smolyan were Pomaks). The last program for regional development concerning the areas inhabited predominantly by the Turkish minority dates from 1985 and refers to the county of Kărdzhali; it focused mostly on education as the most powerful mechanism to assimilate Turks.

Even when measures for specific counties were giving positive results in terms of industrialization and rising incomes and living standards, it was not always the respective minority that benefited. A good example is the positive discrimination for enrolment in universities. Until 1964, there were quotas for Turks, Pomaks ("Bulgarian Muslims"), etc., but from this point on, quotas were only used for counties with large Turkish or Pomak populations; in practice, those who benefited more often than not were Bulgarians.<sup>5</sup>

Traditionally, Turks and Muslims in Bulgaria were successfully pacified (and otherwise they were silenced), and only the most brutal repressive measures provoked open discontent. Pomaks protested against the attempts to change their names in 1963 and on many occasions when their names were forcefully changed in 1970–75. In a similar way, the forced renaming of the Turks in 1984–85 provoked unrest and a couple terrorist acts were committed. The first mass demonstrations before the fall of the communist regime

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5 Boyadzhieva, *Sotzialното inzhenerstvo*, 177; Yalămov, *Istoriya na turskata obshtnost v Bălgariya*, 346.

were organized by Turks in May 1989. They involved several tens of thousands of people in total. Still, it should be underlined that the reactions of Turks and Muslims to these repressive measures were overwhelmingly non-violent, while the recourse to mass resistance and terrorism remained a minority option.

Any form of “cultural opposition” was much more difficult for intellectuals of Turkish and Muslim origin than for the rest of the population because members of these minorities were under constant pressure and strict control of the state, and nationalism in communist Bulgaria was strongly anti-Turkish, anti-Muslim, and anti-Roma. The political pressures put on the Turkish elites were much more intense: educated Turks were very often forced to become collaborators of the state security forces (or leave for Turkey), and the same is even more true of Muslim clerics (the *imams*).<sup>6</sup>

Moreover, cultural opposition in communist Bulgaria was often disguised as exaltation of national traditions and the national past (as a reaction to strong Soviet/Russian influence), and this process was to a large extent tolerated and appropriated by the authorities. Turkish and Muslim intellectuals obviously could not follow this line, except when they were talking about regional identity and traditions (e.g. the Rodopi region or the town of Shumen). Actually, in what concerns intellectual activities, traces of “cultural opposition” could be found in later publications of poems,<sup>7</sup> diaries, and other texts written for private use.<sup>8</sup>

Still, even in this context Turks (and other Muslims) managed to preserve their identities despite unification policies. Among Turks, the proportion of believers was considerably higher than among the Bulgarian/Orthodox Christian majority.<sup>9</sup> Despite the fact that education in Turkish was severely limited and later abolished, the language was widely used on the everyday level. That was due to the fact that the majority of Turks were living and even working together. The fact that they were living predominantly in rural areas and small towns also favoured the preservation of various “Muslim” and/ or “Turkish” traditions. Turkish identity was thus preserved to a large extent due to the abovementioned social and spatial segregation. In addition “Turkishness” had undeniable prestige among other Muslims in the country, and some Pomaks and Muslim Roma self-identified as “Turks.” That was yet another form of opposition to the unifying policies of the national state.

The most radical form of opposition of Turks and Muslims to the oppressive policies of the Bulgarian state was emigration or, more precisely, the readiness to emigrate to Turkey. The paradox is that emigration was in fact

6 *Dārzhavna sigurnost i malčinstvata*.

7 Karahüseinov, *Ne po noti*; Karahüseinov, *Bolkata na otkrovenieto*; Zafer and Chernokozhev, *Kogato mi otneha imeto*.

8 Aziz Nazmi Şakir-Taş, “Avtobiografijata na Şakir Mehmet Şakir ot s. Mak (ili teftertcheto na dyado),” v. Lozanova and Mikov, *Isljam i kultura. Izsledvaniya*, 250–74.

9 Stamenova, *Etnosozialni aspekti na bita v Iztochnite Rodopi prez 70-te – 80-te godini*, 138ff.

desired by the authorities, which regarded it as a way to get rid of the most active strata of the Turkish and Muslim population.

Among the collections pertaining to cultural resistance in communist Bulgaria, the one named “Resistance of Turkish Minority in Bulgaria”<sup>10</sup> merits mention.<sup>11</sup> This collection was started in 2010 at the initiative of a young scholar. It includes personal memories and items which once belonged to members of the Turkish minority of Bulgaria. The collection sheds light on life of ethnic Turks in Bulgaria and their responses to the discriminatory and assimilatory politics of the communist government. The collection includes oral history interviews with roughly one hundred people who lived under the Bulgarian communist regime and who today live mostly in Turkey. It also contains about thirty photos and about thirty scanned documents, such as documents about detention in a forced labor camp, or “concentration camp” as Dinç, Vildane (Alieva, Vildane) has defined it, and government enforced exile.

### *Romania and Czechoslovakia*

A similar trajectory to that experienced by the Turkish population of Bulgaria can be discerned in the roots of cultural resistance to state-socialism in Czechoslovakia and even more powerfully in Romania from the 1970s onwards. The communist leadership of Romania maintained flexible policies toward the more than 1.5 million Hungarians of Transylvania, who had successfully integrated into early Romanian communist society after World War II, and the 600,000 Hungarians in Czechoslovakia enjoyed linguistic and cultural rights under the communist regime that had been denied to them after World War II because of the accusation of collaboration with Nazi Germany in the dismantlement of democratic Czechoslovakia.<sup>12</sup>

Minority policies in Romania and less dramatically in Czechoslovakia started changing in the late 1970s, when the communist parties of the two countries came largely to ignore Leninist norms of nationality policy, making it impossible for Hungarian party leaders to call them to account in those terms. In both countries, a new and assertive-minded Hungarian political and cultural elite started to emerge, which recognized how the minority question could not be handled within the anti-democratic framework of state socialism, especially after the publication of the anti-Hungarian work by Ion Lăncrăjan entitled *Cuvînt despre Transilvania* (A word on Transylvania) in Romania with official backing in 1982, which was met with widespread outrage among local Hungarian intellectuals.<sup>13</sup>

10 COURAGE Registry s.v. “Resistance of Turkish Minority In Bulgaria”, by Anelia Kasabova, Dr., 2018. Accessed: September 24, 2018.

11 Uzunova, *Niakoga, v 89-a. Interviuța i reportazhi ot arkhiva na zhurnalistkata ot radio “Svobodna Evropa” Rumyana Uzunova.*

12 Bottoni, *Long Awaited West*, 16–24.

13 Novák, *Holtvágány*, 84–85.

Opposition in Slovakia to Gustav Husák's normalization after the 1968 Prague Spring was rooted in the underground activity of the Catholic Church, which countered that of the pro-communist Pacem in Terris movement. Small though influential opposition groups formed among the members of the Hungarian minority population living in Slovakia, too. These groups voiced objections to both the assimilatory policies of the government of the Slovak Socialist Republic in Bratislava as well as, throughout the 1980s, the construction of the Gabčíkovo-Nagymaros Dams on the Danube River between Czechoslovakia and Hungary. Opposition groups protested that the diversion of the river channel that would have been necessary to achieve the latter objective would have caused major environmental damage. The arrest in November 1982 of one of the most prominent opponents of the proposed dams in Czechoslovakia, the Hungarian geologist and author Miklós Duray, caused an outcry both in the West and in Hungary. In the 1980s, the issue of environmental protection was especially relevant in Slovakia, where many heavy-industrial centers had been built during the period of post-1968 consolidation. The struggle to improve the quality of life in Slovakia united the region's Slovaks and Hungarians, who frequently found themselves in opposition to each other on cultural issues.<sup>14</sup>

In the early 1980s, the Ceaușescu regime embraced a program of complete cultural liquidation and social disintegration. This change increased internal resistance and provoked international protest both in the West, where Ceaușescu's appeal was continually waning, and in the East. Relations between Hungary and Romania deteriorated steadily, and in Romania the question grew from a political matter into a cardinal security problem, while the issue of Hungarian refugees received the most international publicity. Until the mid-1980s, authorities in socialist Hungary maintained an ambivalent attitude toward Hungarian refugees from Romania. While some Hungarian officials tolerated the refugees, others took strict measures against them, sometimes even deporting them back to Romania at the request of Romanian authorities. However, after Hungary signed the UN Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees in March 1989, the country admitted more than 30,000 Hungarian asylum seekers from Romania until the collapse of the Ceaușescu regime.<sup>15</sup>

In the 1980s, the manifold crisis of the Romanian communist regime was combined with its shift towards ethnocentrism and national exclusivism. The worsening living conditions of co-ethnics on the far side of the border with Romania caused growing upset and dissatisfaction in neighboring Hungary, where the communist political leadership could not openly raise the national issue due to the constraints related to the doctrine of non-interference in the

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14 An overview of the situation of the Hungarian minority in socialist Czechoslovakia in Popély, *Fél évszázad kisebbségben*.

15 Kaszás, *Erdélyi menekültek Magyarországon 1988–1989*.

internal affairs of other socialist countries. For both the liberal and the populist opposition, the issue of the mistreatment of the Hungarian minorities in the Soviet Bloc became a pivotal argument in their criticism of the Kádár regime. The international reputation and connections of the Hungarian democratic opposition in the 1980s allowed them also to exert strong pressure at home and abroad, presenting the nationality problem as one of human rights and airing it frequently in samizdat literature. The editors of the Transylvanian Hungarian samizdat publication *Ellenpontok* (Counterpoints) and the members of the Duray Committee, which was established to give international publicity to the founder of the Legal Aid Association of the Hungarian Minority in Czechoslovakia, belonged to the same period.<sup>16</sup> Beginning in 1983, *Erdélyi Magyar Hírlap* (Hungarian Press of Transylvania) functioned as a powerful instrument of influence on Romania's image in the West. It was a samizdat publication which worked in cooperation with the Committee for Human Rights in Romania (CHRR), a New York-based civic initiative founded in 1976 by second-generation American Hungarians with the aim of providing information on the worsening situation of the Hungarian minorities. The transnational advocacy of the CHRR owed its success to the professionalism of their members, who focused on the protection of human and minority rights and maintained clandestine contacts with prominent members of the Hungarian communities of Romania and Czechoslovakia. In early 1978, CHRR managed to get a letter by former ethnic Hungarian party leader Károly Király to Romanian prime-minister Ilie Verdet on the minority rights violations in the country published in several Western media outlets. On February 1, 1978, the *New York Times* also published the letter sent in September 1977 to Romanian senior party officer János Vincze as an op-ed ("An Ethnic-Hungarian Communist in Rumania Complains to His Party about Bias"). The US State Department became increasingly involved in the Hungarian issue through civil rights activist and Assistant Secretary of State for Human Rights and Humanitarian Affairs Patricia M. Derian, who coordinated the newly created Bureau of Human Rights and Humanitarian Affairs. The Hungarian issue started to become part of a "human rights basket" accepted as a common norm by Western diplomacy after the 1975 Helsinki Final Act.<sup>17</sup>

The collections concerning the multifaceted oppositional activity of literary historian Éva Cs. Gyimesi through her manuscripts and the bulky investigative file produced on her in the 1970s and the 1980s by the Romanian state security represent valuable testimony to intellectual dissent by a solitary member of a persecuted minority in the name of universal human rights.

As a staff member at the Babeş-Bolyai University in Cluj-Napoca, Éva Cs. Gyimesi was assigned in 1977 to the position of teaching Transylvanian Hungarian literature. The study of the original sources from the interwar period

16 Bárdi, Fedinec, and Szarka, *Hungarian Minority Communities in the Twentieth Century*, 349.

17 Bottoni, "The Committee for Human Rights in Rumania."

radicalized her attitude towards the dictatorship at a time when the number of annually admitted Hungarian students to the Faculty of Hungarian Literature began a gradual decrease. In this context, her unconventional lectures gained a mark of active opposition. She became a self-conscious dissident in 1982–83, when she initiated a fund-raising campaign to help the authors of the first samizdat published in Romania (but in Hungarian for the ethnic Hungarian audience, called *Ellenpontok/Counterpoints*). The Romanian political police started harassing her for her scholarly activity and also for her petitioning actions against the forcible transfer of ethnic Hungarian graduates to faraway workplaces. In 1985, she and her husband Péter Cseke joined an informal intellectual cénacle called *Limes-kör* (Limes circle), which had been founded by one of the editors in the *Kriterion* Publishing House in Bucharest, Gusztáv Molnár. Limes was a debate club, an inspiring community that granted public space and intellectual feedback to marginalized intellectuals.<sup>18</sup> In reaction, beginning in 1986, all publishing houses denied Gyimesi the right to have her works published. Following this decisive step towards openly opposing the communist regime in Romania, the repressive measures against her intensified, but so did her dissident activity against the forcible relocation of Transylvanian Hungarian graduates to other regions of Romania and, in 1988–89, against the systematization plan, which would have led to the demolition of several thousand villages around the country. In the last period of the communist dictatorship, Gyimesi came close to the Cluj-based Doina Cornea, a leading Romanian dissident. In the fall of 1988, Gyimesi, Ivan Chelu, Marius Tabacu, and Enikő Kós visited Cornea in her home to express their solidarity with her solitary struggle. This contact was intended to help the Romanian opposition activist with medicines acquired from abroad and food, which was in short supply, and also by giving her an opportunity to send messages outside the country and offering encouragement. The Romanian communist authorities failed to stop this spontaneous outbreak of solidarity, although they did everything possible to convince the public that the Hungarian Gyimesi and the embodiment of Romanian national values, Doina Cornea, could not walk common paths or share common political ground. The last chapter in Gyimesi's anti-regime activity came in the autumn of 1989, when signatures were collected in Cluj-Napoca to express solidarity with dissident Calvinist pastor László Tókécs of Timișoara. The protest was signed by several Hungarian intellectuals, including Gyimesi.

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18 The most comprehensive documentation on the activity of Limes Circle in 1985–87 can be found in the personal file opened on Gusztáv Molnár by the Romanian state security. Arhiva Consiliului Național pentru Studierea Arhivelor Securității, fond Informativ, dosar 236674, vols. 1–4.

## National Conflict on the Soviet Periphery: the Case of Moldova

The trajectory of cultural opposition in Soviet Moldavia suggests that the language of nationalism/national rights was the dominant form of challenging the legitimacy of the regime on the Soviet periphery. The national movement in the MSSR focused on the critique of the Soviet nationality policy and condemned perceived discrimination against the “titular nationality” of the MSSR—the Romanian-speaking majority—by the Soviet state. Relations between the Soviet party leadership and their Romanian counterparts had an oscillating dynamic that had a certain impact on the intensity of nationalist mobilization in the MSSR. In the late 1950s, internal developments in the cultural sphere within Soviet Moldavia consecrated the victory of the Romanian cultural and literary standard, enshrined by the linguistic reform of 1957. A process of “latent Romanianization” of the “Moldavian” language and literature ensued, although it was never extended to the alphabet, as Moldavian was consistently written and printed in Cyrillic only.<sup>19</sup> As long as Soviet-Romanian relations remained friendly, this did not elicit any significant negative political consequences in the MSSR. The situation gradually changed beginning in the mid-1960s, both due to Romania’s alleged distancing from the USSR in foreign policy and to the new Soviet Moldavian leadership under first party secretary Ivan Bodiul, who inaugurated a more assertive and repressive policy in the national sphere. “Local nationalism” became a frequently invoked threat, especially in the late 1960s and early 1970s, when the Soviet Moldavian authorities launched several official “campaigns” against it.<sup>20</sup> The activities of the main Moldavian “national activists” (the Usatiuc-Ghimpu-Graur group, Alexandru Șoltoianu, Gheorghe Muruziuc, Zaharia Doncev, etc.) were partly linked to the post-1968 context. Fears concerning the stability of western frontier areas (including the MSSR) increased following the Prague Spring and Romania’s apparent defiance of the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia in August 1968. The local activists frequently protested against the “imperialist,” “colonial,” and pseudo-federalist nature of the USSR. The reaction of the repressive apparatus enhanced the visibility of the national opposition as the most significant alternative to the Soviet official discourse. This was due to the legacy of Khrushchev’s Thaw and to the emergence of certain groups among the local intelligentsia who challenged the regime’s interpretation of the Soviet nationalities policy. This section will focus on two examples of “national opposition” in the MSSR, drawing on two relevant collections: the “National Patriotic Front,” which challenged the Soviet authorities on the basis of a radical national platform, and a case of “national opposition” from below involving a Moldavian worker, Gheorghe Muruziuc. Although these cases were isolated and reflected the views of a small minority of the population of

19 On the concept of “quiet / latent Romanianization,” see: King, *The Moldovans*, 106–12.

20 Țurcanu, *Istoria românilor*, chapter XXVII.

the MSSR, they reveal the nature and limits of “national opposition” on the Soviet periphery.

The Usatiuc–Ghimpu–Graur group, or National Patriotic Front, is a significant example of resistance by ethnic Romanians to the Soviet “nationalities policy” in the MSSR.<sup>21</sup> This group was the only well-structured oppositional organization in the MSSR in the post-Stalinist period. Its members formulated clear-cut demands spelled out in numerous documents produced mostly by Gheorghe Ghimpu and Alexandru Usatiuc. Those documents were critical of the Soviet regime and vaguely suggested that the situation could have been ultimately changed via a gradual rapprochement of formerly Romanian territories with Romania. The 1968 context prompted the articulation of Usatiuc and Ghimpu’s “national dissident” message, which added to the fears of the Soviet authorities, who resorted to repressive measures against “local nationalism” in the western republics, notably in the Baltic republics, Ukraine, and Moldavia.

The leaders of the National Patriotic Front did not question the nature of the communist regime, but rather the legitimacy of Soviet rule in Bessarabia and Northern Bukovina. Anti-communism was an implicit dimension of the National Patriotic Front’s program. However, given its nationally inspired message, the Soviet regime perceived this organization as a security threat, so in its final verdict the Soviet regime emphasized the organization’s intention to “break the MSSR and part of Ukraine away from the USSR.” The group’s members were viewed as dangerous because they were contesting several myths and implicit principles of the Soviet nationalities policy, notably the existence of an independent Moldavian nation and of a distinct “Moldavian” language, as well as the declarative principle of “equality among nations.” This “anti-Soviet” organization condemned Russification and ethnic discrimination against the Moldavians by the Soviet authorities. This organization fits the pattern of other dissident movements on the western Soviet periphery, as it emerged from the way its members manipulated Soviet legislation during the trial and appealed to foreign audiences (notably the United Nations and Radio Free Europe).

The collection’s materials fit into two categories. First, they comprise the documents produced by the members of the National Patriotic Front before their arrest by the KGB, including various memoranda and open letters addressed to the Romanian communist leadership, Radio Free Europe, and the UN. The bulk of the surviving documents were confiscated by the KGB during searches. Unfortunately, some of the most interesting documents were either lost or destroyed by the KGB. This is the case of the most comprehensive policy statement produced by the members of the National Patriotic

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21 COURAGE Registry, s.v. “Usatiuc–Ghimpu–Graur Collection (National Patriotic Front) at National Archive of Moldova”, by Cristina Petrescu and Andrei Cusco, 2018. Accessed: September 24, 2018, doi: 10.24389/4453



Front: the report of its First Congress. According to the memoirs of Alexandru Usatiuc, its founder and main leader,<sup>22</sup> the congress took place in 1967 and did not have a traditional plenary format, but staged a series of meetings in small groups which were subsequently summed up in a programmatic document.<sup>23</sup> However, according to an interrogation held by the KGB in 1972, the First Congress of the National Patriotic Front took place in late 1969 and early 1970. The Congress' report allegedly reviewed the history of Bessarabia and Northern Bukovina, and it gave an estimate of the number of Romanians who had lived on those territories but had been persecuted by the Soviet authorities. It also criticized the policy of Russification of the native population.

Among the surviving documents, several memoranda addressed to Radio Free Europe / Radio Liberty are especially significant. In the context of the interrogations of the group members, KGB officials noted that after 1967 the RFE intensified its activities aimed at "subverting the unity, cohesion, and friendship between the peoples of the USSR and those of the other socialist countries, fomenting nationalism, inciting tendencies towards emigration, and spreading anti-Soviet hysteria." In 1968–71, the RFE/RL broadcasts were allegedly paying increasing attention to the "Bessarabian question" and the "rebirth of nationalist tendencies within the [Moldavian] republic."

Among other documents produced by the group members, one should emphasize their personal letters and notebooks, which were excellent illustrations of their ideas and personal trajectories. Valeriu Graur's personal notebook provided ample information on his contacts with suspicious persons during his frequent trips to Romania in the late 1960s, especially with surviving leaders of the early twentieth-century national movement in Bessarabia, such as Pan Halippa and Gherman Pânteia.<sup>24</sup>

A second and much larger share of the collection's documents consists of interrogations and testimonies provided by the group members after their arrest. Although produced under pressure at the KGB headquarters, these testimonies are valuable sources of information on the activities of the organization. The accused reconstructed the story of their meetings, their contacts, and the circumstances of the production and elaboration of the confiscated incriminating materials (memoranda, diary notes, personal notebooks, correspondence, etc.). Both prominent leaders of the organization, Usatiuc and Ghimpu, shared to a large extent the same views concerning its program and main objectives, although they differed in their views regarding relations with Romania. Ghimpu advocated the separation of Bessarabia and Northern Bukovina from the Soviet Union and their subsequent unification with Romania. Usatiuc believed that these territories should first gain their independence from the Soviet Union and create an independent state (named the Mol-

22 Usatiuc-Bulgăr, *Cu gândul la "o lume între două lumi."*

23 Saka, *Basarabia în Gulag*.

24 Roman Jr., "Povestea fabuloasă a unui rus care s-a trezit român"; Interview with Valeriu Graur.

davian People's Republic), while unification with Romania should take place much later, as a part of a long and gradual process.

The Supreme Court of Justice of the MSSR completed the hearings in the case on July 13, 1972. It sentenced the main leader of the National Patriotic Front, Alexandru Usatiuc, to seven years in a high-security labor correction colony in Perm (a city on the banks of the Kama River near the Ural mountains) and to five years of exile in Tyumen. Gheorghe Ghimpu was sentenced to six and Valeriu Graur to four years of hard labor.

The case of Gheorghe Muruziuc is atypical compared with the usual pattern of opposition to the Soviet regime.<sup>25</sup> Muruziuc was a worker with no previous record of "anti-Soviet" activity. His main act of defiance was to raise the Romanian tricolour flag over a sugar factory in Alexăndreni, Lazovsk District (now Sângerei District) on June 28, 1966, i.e. on the twenty-sixth anniversary of the annexation of Bessarabia by the Soviet Union. The initial impetus for his rebellious act came from a combination of social dissatisfaction (couched in ethnic terms) and an acute sense of inequity. Beginning in March 1966, he began to express his dissatisfaction in ethnic terms and openly voiced his opinions regarding discrimination against the "Moldavian nation" by the dominant Russians. Muruziuc expressed increasingly radical opinions in several conversations held with co-workers, friends, and acquaintances. In his assessment, Bessarabia had been illegally annexed by the USSR in June 1940. Therefore, the policies of the Soviet state resulted in ethnic discrimination against the "Moldavian nation" and eventually in the disappearance of Moldavian national culture, language, and customs. Although initially he saw unification with Romania as a possible solution to preserving "Moldavian" cultural and ethnic specificity, during his interrogation by the KGB, he argued for the creation of an independent Moldavian state comprising the Romanian region of Moldavia, although separate from the USSR.<sup>26</sup>

The most important documents in the collection relate to Muruziuc's testimony and incriminating material evidence, including photos of the flag, later destroyed by the KGB. The final accusatory act is also of some interest, since it provides a synthetic account of Muruziuc's actions, his motivations, and the grounds for the accusation. Muruziuc's testimony reveals the sources of his opposition to the regime. His discontent was first formulated for purely material reasons, but he gradually became aware of the national dimension of the injustice he perceived. His conversations with his more educated acquaintances and his reading of some "subversive" poems by classic Romanian writers were direct motivations to take action.

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25 COURAGE Registry, s.v. "Gheorghe Muruziuc Collection at SIS Archive Moldova", by Cristina Petrescu and Andrei Cusco, 2017. Accessed: September 24, 2018, doi: 10.24389/23399

26 On Muruziuc's case, also see: Tașcă, "Eroii nu mor niciodată! Rezistență anticomunistă: Tricolorul lui Gheorghe Muruziuc."

Muruziuc's case raises several questions. The leniency of his sentence, two years of forced labour, seems striking compared to later cases of "nationalist opposition" in the late 1960s and early 1970s. The Soviet authorities did not wish to attract undue attention to the actions of a "lone wolf." The attitude towards any organized opposition was much less tolerant, as was proven by the harsher punishments for "nationalist propaganda" in the post-1968 context. Nevertheless, Muruziuc's claim to represent the collective opinion of the "Moldavian nation" did raise concerns. Muruziuc's social background might also have played a role. While most cases of individual dissidence featured intellectuals or people with an "unreliable" family background, Muruziuc was a worker and came from a peasant milieu. The importance of social status was obvious during the assessment of the impact of Muruziuc's ideas, clearing the two people closely involved in his case (Trachuk, a policeman, and Scripcaru, a lawyer) of all charges, following a protest filed by Scripcaru in 1968.

The trajectory of the protagonists of these collections after 1991 was different, highlighting the different nature and impact of their activities. Ghimpu, Usatiuc, and Graur were celebrated as prominent fighters for national rights and freedom under Soviet rule. Although Ghimpu was the only one to enter active politics in post-independence Moldova, the group received wide public recognition and was memorialized through publications, interviews, and official decorations. On the contrary, Muruziuc remained unknown to the public, although he succeeded in restoring his legal standing. A new stage in the reassessment of the collection materials was linked with the activity of the Commission for the Study and Evaluation of the Communist Regime in Moldova (2010). Due to their membership in the Commission, several historians were granted access to previously classified KGB files, which resulted in publications and dissemination activities. Among the latter, the transfer of the Usatiuc-Ghimpu-Graur Collection to the National Archive of the Republic of Moldova (ANRM), following a special decision taken as part of the legal measures recommended by the Commission, was the most significant. In recent years, public interest in national opposition under communism remained low, despite the efforts of professional historians. This is also due to the disinterest of political stakeholders, who, aside from the brief upsurge of 2010–11, are reluctant to seriously engage with the communist legacy and to initiate any public debates concerning this subject.<sup>27</sup>

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27 Other related collections in the COURAGE Registry: COURAGE Registry, s.v. "Alexandru Șoltoianu Collection at National Archive of Moldova", by Andrei Cusco, 2017. Accessed: September 24, 2018, doi: 10.24389/2773; COURAGE Registry, s.v. "Mihai Moroșanu Private Collection", by Andrei Cusco, 2017. Accessed: September 24, 2018, doi: 10.24389/16768; COURAGE Registry, s.v. "Zaharia Doncev Collection at SIS Archive Moldova", by Andrei Cusco, 2017. Accessed: September 24, 2018, doi: 10.24389/5772.

## Regionalism and Power Competition in Federal Yugoslavia: the Case of Croatia

The Croatian issue within socialist Yugoslavia gained momentum in the late 1960s and early 1970s amid Yugoslavia's intensive contacts with Western societies, which created problems and open conflict unknown in the other socialist countries. Mass unemployment, high inflation, and the introduction of free-market elements to the controlled economy heightened ideological conflict within the League of Communists of Yugoslavia and brought ethnic tensions to the surface beginning in the mid-1960s. The forced resignation of the feared ideological hard-liner Aleksandar Ranković from his position as head of the political police in 1966 on charges of plotting against Tito caused widespread surprise in Yugoslavia. Ranković had engaged in vehement arguments with President Tito and Edvard Kardelj regarding the pace of economic reform. To many Yugoslavs, particularly Slovenes, Croats, and Kosovars, Ranković represented an embodiment of the Serbian party elite, which opposed nationality rights. An investigation following Ranković's resignation revealed that thousands of Croats and Kosovo Albanians had been registered as potential enemies of the state purely on ethnic grounds. Rapid liberalization came with the reorganization of the internal-security apparatus.<sup>28</sup> Moreover, the expansion of opportunities to travel abroad occurred at the same time as the student protests in Western Europe, thus placing young Yugoslavs in a position to gain greater exposure to the upheavals than other Eastern Europeans. In this politically fluid context, Croatian demands were based partially on economic considerations and partially on cultural factors related to national identity.<sup>29</sup> In 1967, a group of linguists issued the Declaration on the Status and Name of the Croatian Literary Language, in which they requested greater protection for the Croatian language, while the student protestors demanded the right to use pre-World War II national symbols and to sing banned national songs in public. An increasing number of opposition intellectuals and university students participated in the "Croatian Spring," which coalesced around *Matica hrvatska*, a public institution and publisher. During the "Croatian Spring" of 1971, members of the opposition demanded recognition of the homogeneous ethnic and linguistic conditions within the Socialist Republic of Croatia and even requested that the United Nations grant the republic a separate mandate within the organization. The radicalization of the Maspok movement elicited protests among Serbs. Worried by the potential impact of the Croatian demands, Tito suppressed the mass movement through intimidation, purges of the leadership group, and the arrest of Maspok leaders, including the former Partisan and military historian and future president of

<sup>28</sup> Radelić, *Hrvatska u Jugoslaviji 1945. – 1991.* 360–66.

<sup>29</sup> Cipek and Spehnjak, "Disidenti, opozicija i otpor – Hrvatska i Jugoslavija 1945. – 1990." 260.

Croatia Franjo Tuđman. The 1972 “normalization” was accompanied by a wave of repression and ideological purges and temporarily suppressed political debates over the national issue in Yugoslavia, but it failed to settle unresolved political issues, which the country’s 1974 constitution likewise failed to address.<sup>30</sup>

The Bogdan Radica Collection<sup>31</sup> is a personal archival fund which Croatian diplomat and intellectual Bogdan Radica founded in the late 1940s. It contains vital records related to the history of Croatian political emigration and constitutes an outstanding trove of materials on cultural opposition to the Yugoslav communist regime. Bogdan Radica (Split, 1904–New York, 1993) was a leading Croat liberal intellectual, journalist, and diplomat. Having interrupted his university education in the mid-1920s, he embarked on a career in journalism, writing as a correspondent for various Croatian newspapers from Italy and France, as well as, beginning in 1929, for the Yugoslav state news agency Avala from Greece and Turkey. Moreover, from 1930 to 1935 he served as the first press attaché at the Yugoslav Legation in Athens and from 1935 to 1939 as a press officer attached to the Yugoslav delegation to the League of Nations in Geneva, where he enjoyed a considerable presence in the Greek and Swiss press.

While in Geneva, Radica married Nina Lombroso Ferrero, the daughter of eminent Italian historian and antifascist exile Guglielmo Ferrero. Thanks to Ferrero and his circle, Radica became an habitu  of a broad circle of democratic and liberal intellectuals in France and Switzerland, many of them exiles from Bolshevik Russia and Fascist Italy. This earned him the enmity of the Mussolini regime and led to the decision of the Yugoslav government, in 1940, during the period of Serbo-Croat Agreement and the Cvetkovi -Ma ek coalition government (1939–41), to station Radica across the Atlantic as the chief of the press department of the Yugoslav Legation in Washington.<sup>32</sup> After the partitioning of Yugoslavia in 1941, when the Yugoslav legation in Washington became a center of anti-Croat, Greater Serbian propaganda, which smeared all Croats with a fascist brush, Radica broke with bolted diplomatic discipline and, in March 1942, was transferred to the newly-established Yugoslav Information Centre in New York. He increasingly turned his diplomatic post into a venue for the dissemination of objective information on what was happening in occupied Yugoslavia, which in turn took on the shape of advocacy on behalf of Tito’s Partisans. In October 1943, he refused a new diplomatic assignment in Argentina and was dismissed by the royal government-in-exile.

Convinced that the new Communist-dominated government of Josip Broz Tito would bring Yugoslavia social and ethnic equality, the ideal of the

30 Zubak, “The Croatian Spring,” 194–200.

31 COURAGE Registry s.v. “Bogdan Radica Collection”, by Stipe Kljai , 2018. Accessed: September 24, 2018.

32 Radica, *Živjeti i nedoživjeti*.

democratic intelligentsia, Radica hastened to Belgrade in April of 1945, a month after the establishment of the provisional and still multiparty Yugoslav government, and took up the post of assistant minister in the Ministry of Information. He was quickly disappointed. Shocked by the brutality and totalitarian practices of the new regime, particularly in Belgrade, his native Split, and Zagreb, Radica quickly beat a hasty exit out of Yugoslavia. He was in Italy by October 1945 and afterward became a leading figure in the democratic Croat emigration, dividing his time between New York and the Ferrero estate in l'Ulivello near Florence, Italy. In Italy, he kept clandestine contacts with visitors from Croatia. Throughout, he maintained a ferocious pace of commentary in the émigré press, but he also published in English and Italian. He was associated with various American institutions that promoted democracy in Eastern Europe (the Free Europe Committee, the Mid-European Studies Institute), as well as with the overarching organization of Croat exiles (the Croat National Committee). He also taught history at the Fairleigh Dickinson University in Teaneck, New Jersey.<sup>33</sup>

The Bogdan Radica Collection originates from a donation of his private papers made by Radica in 1988 to Sterling Memorial Library at Yale University.<sup>34</sup> These papers are available to researchers on microfilm (call number: MS 1588). Radica was determined to transfer these materials to Croatia. In 1996, several years after his death, the originals of the Yale collection were deposited at the Croatian State Archives in Zagreb (akv. 16/1996). Somewhat later, in 2001 and 2006, Radica's daughter Bosiljka Radica donated the remainder of his papers from l'Ulivello (akv. 21/2001; 43/2006) to the same central Croatian archival institution. The reunited collection contains official reports, correspondence, and newspaper clippings that throw detailed light on the activities of Croatian and Yugoslav political emigration during and after World War II. Since Radica maintained extensive correspondence with a very broad segment of the political émigré community but also with many friends in Yugoslavia, his collection is a very important source on all types of oppositional activity at home and abroad. The information on these oppositional activities was in turn disseminated among American governmental and academic communities, as well as elsewhere in the West, completing the circle of information on the closed East European societies, particularly on Yugoslavia, whose anti-Soviet stand occasionally translated into silence about the ongoing abuses typical of all Communist party states.

The aforementioned collection is of tremendous importance from the point of view of the national-minded cultural opposition under Tito's Yugoslavia. Bogdan Radica was a typical representative of the liberal Croat intelligentsia not only in his general outlook, but in the evolution of his views on the Croat national question. He himself repeatedly stressed his debt to Ante

33 Blažeković, *Bio-bibliografski leksikon suradnika Hrvatske revije*, 439–40.

34 See Jukic and Kaplan, "Guide to the Bogdan Radica Papers."

Trumbić (1864–1938), the mayor of Split (1905–7) and the leader of the “New Course,” a movement among Croat politicians, especially in Dalmatia, in favour of finding common ground with the Serbs and, in contrast with mainstream Croat politics, drawing closer to the Hungarian opposition against pan-Germanisms that stemmed from Berlin and Vienna. Croat politicians of this orientation favoured a federal Yugoslavia, but were sorely disappointed in Serbian policies which viewed the South Slavic unification after 1918 as nothing more than the expansion of the pre-war Serbian state. Serbian leadership was determined to impose its will by the crudest centralist measures, frequently with the use of military and police repression. As a result, Serbian rule in time alienated practically all the pro-Yugoslav forces in Croatia, but also most other non-Serbian political elites. Though Radica entered the Yugoslav diplomatic service after the establishment of the royal dictatorship (1929), his position was increasingly untenable, as he himself became convinced that the Croatian opposition, led by the Croat Peasant Party (HSS) of Vladko Maček in the 1930s, represented the best option for a democratic, federal state.

Radica abhorred the radical nationalist movements, like those of the pro-fascist Ustašas, and experienced in America all the consequences of the ignominy that the Ustaša misrule in satellite Croatia brought upon Croatian Americans. Under the circumstances, sandwiched between royal Yugoslav diplomacy, which favoured the Great Serbian guerrillas (Chetniks) in occupied Yugoslavia, and the promise of a democratic federation, without Greater Serbian hegemony and national inequality (which the Communists promised to eliminate), Radica increasingly saw the solution of the national question in his native land in Tito’s partisans, who naturally downplayed their revolutionary intentions for the duration of the war.

Back in Yugoslavia in 1945, Radica quickly saw through the “democratic” mask of the Tito regime. He experienced the fear and repressive measures and use of fear of a violent communist revolution, which was proud of mimicking Russian Stalinism, but did not see through the new set of inequalities that communist centralism imposed on the new Soviet-style federal republics. This would happen in time, after his flight to the West, where he would spend the rest of his life. Radica became increasingly vocal not only as a critic of the Yugoslav dictatorship, something that frequently fell on deaf ears among Western statesmen after the Soviet-Yugoslav split of 1948, but also of a new variant of national inequality that gave Serbs not only vast numerical advantages in bureaucratic and military appointments and an edge in the allocation of domestic investments, but also oversight in the shaping of cultural and linguistic identity in much of Yugoslavia. Tito’s slogan of “brotherhood and unity” started to ring hollow and became, as Radica increasingly insisted, nothing but a veil for a new type of inequality.

Members of the Croat intelligentsia of a pro-Yugoslav orientation, who could freely state their views only in the emigration (including notable figures

like Ivan Meštrović, Jozo Kljaković, Ante Smith Pavelić, Dominik Mandić, and Radica himself), increasingly abandoned Yugoslavism and started preparing the intellectual foundations for a democratic and independent Croatian state. When Tito crushed the 1971 Croatian Spring, i.e. the reform movement that the Croat Communists permitted and led from 1967 onwards, he shattered the illusion that inequalities could be removed under the Yugoslav regime. The Croat emigration, in response, became rewired and prepared for Yugoslavia's demise. The old divisions between the heirs to the various wartime factions were largely overcome and laid to rest.

In the 1970s and 1980s, Radica took a leading role in the process of re-defining the Croat national question, both as an influential author and as a political activist. His columns in the émigré press (*Hrvatski glas* /Winnipeg, Canada/, *Nova Hrvatska* /London/, *Hrvatska revija* /Munich-Barcelona/) and several books, mainly autobiographical in character, among them importantly *Hrvatska 1945* (Croatia 1945)<sup>35</sup> and *Živjeti nedoživjeti* (To live and not to live to see), vols. 1–2,<sup>36</sup> had significant impact on political thinking both at home, where they were smuggled and illicitly distributed, and in emigration. Radica's new message, in favour of Croatia's independence, was presented without shrill tones, reasonably, and at an impressive level of intellectual sophistication. The manuscripts of these and other book-length writings, as well as of shorter and practically day-to-day journalistic pieces, are in the Radica collection and are a great source on the most important political and intellectual trends in Croatia and Yugoslavia for the period of the Communist dictatorship. Moreover, Radica became involved in the work of the Croatian National Council (HNV), a coordination of various émigré organizations that sought to present the case for Croat independence to the international community.

Bogdan Radica lived to see the democratic transition in Croatia (1990) and the country's independence (1991), but he was embittered by the Yugoslav succession wars that followed. He was honoured by being invited into the Commission for Croatia's new constitution in the fall of 1990. His death in 1993 occurred at the height of the Bosnian war and was almost unnoticed among the collective tragedies of the period. Only a decade later, after the republication of Radica's *Agonija Europe*<sup>37</sup> (originally published in Belgrade in 1940), was Radica rediscovered and his reputation significantly revived. Two symposia and a number of articles, many enhanced by the availability of his papers in Zagreb, are only the beginning of the new interest in Radica. His role in domestic and European intellectual history of the 1930s, his wartime struggle in America, and his commanding post-war position in the democratic emigration can no longer be ignored. Incorporation of Radica and his pa-

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35 Radica, *Hrvatska 1945*.

36 Radica, *Živjeti i nedoživjeti*.

37 Radica, *Agonija Europe*.



pers in the new research and reinterpretations of Croatia's twentieth-century history would represent a much-needed step in the direction of a more tempered and pluralistic view of some of Croatia's most distressing and controversial historical dilemmas.

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